



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 15, 2023

AHMADIYYA MOSQUE IN PAKISTAN DESECRATED

THREATS ISSUED BY TLP MEMBER

THE MOSQUE BORE AHMADIYYA MOTTO 'LOVE FOR ALL, HATRED FOR NONE'

Jhelum, July 14, 2023 – We report with deep distress and condemnation the desecration of an Ahmadiyya mosque in Kala Gojran, Dist. Jhelum. Shockingly, the minarets of the mosque were demolished by the police, succumbing to pressure from members of Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP).

This deplorable act was carried out under the threats and campaign by extremist elements in the area aimed at targeting Ahmadiyya mosques. A few days ago, Asim Ashfaq Rizvi, a member of Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP), openly threatened the DPO Jhelum that if the minarets were not demolished within twenty days, he would mobilize people to forcefully bring them down (*Video¹ & translation¹*)

Subsequently, on July 14, 2023, the local Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) summoned the management of the Ahmadiyya mosque and demanded the voluntary destruction of the minarets, threatening police action if they refused.

Despite the efforts of the local Ahmadi community to engage in a dialogue with the police regarding the legality of the construction of the minarets, their pleas were disregarded.



Before



After

In a deeply troubling turn of events, a police squad arrived at the Ahmadiyya mosque around midnight. The officers confiscated the mobile phones of Ahmadis present and detained them briefly at the Jhelum City Police Station. They proceeded to tear down the minarets, leaving the place of worship desecrated. Additionally, they completely damaged the CCTV system. After completing the destruction of the minarets, the detained members of the Ahmadiyya Community were released.

¹ <https://twitter.com/lamAmirMahmood/status/1680132000194379777?s=20>



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The Ahmadiyya Muslim community strongly condemns this act of violence, religious intolerance, and the misuse of authority by the police. This incident marks the 10th attack during 2023 and the 45th attack on Ahmadiyya mosques since January 2020, highlighting the ongoing persecution faced by the Ahmadiyya Muslim community in Pakistan.

Last year alone, 14 Ahmadiyya mosques were targeted and desecrated, while in 2021, 14 mosques, and a further 7 in 2020.

It is important to highlight that the mosque, apart from being a place of worship, prominently displayed the Ahmadiyya motto "Love for All, Hatred for None" on its front wall. This motto represents the Ahmadiyya community's commitment to love, peace, and inclusivity, transcending religious differences and fostering unity among all humanity. Ahmadis firmly believe in promoting love and compassion, rejecting hatred and animosity towards any individual or group.



This incident further underscores the challenges faced by religious minorities in Pakistan, particularly Ahmadis, who have endured targeted persecution for years. This collaboration between law enforcement agencies and extremist elements is disheartening, reflecting a disturbing trend of hatred and intolerance. It serves as a stark reminder of the obstacles encountered by religious minorities and the urgent need for their protection and security.

In response to this incident, the spokesperson of the Ahmadiyya Community in Pakistan expressed, "The administration's decision to demolish the minarets of our Place of Worship, instead of safeguarding the Ahmadis, is deeply disheartening and a blatant infringement on the rights of the Ahmadiyya Community. It is distressing to witness such actions taken to appease hate mongers, undermining the principles of religious freedom and tolerance."

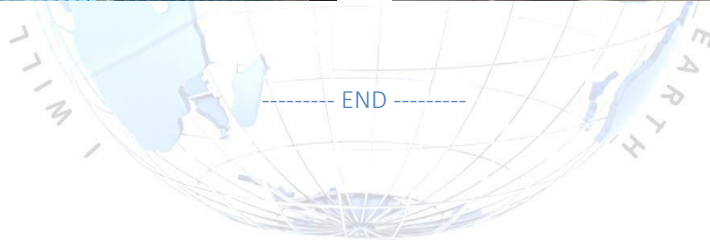
The spokesperson further stated, "We would like to highlight that the Supreme Court, through SMC No. 1 of 2014², issued guidelines for the protection of places of worship, emphasizing the establishment of a specialized police force for their security. We urge the authorities to uphold these guidelines, thoroughly investigate this incident, and hold those responsible accountable for their actions. The Ahmadiyya Community remains steadfast in its commitment to peace, harmony, and the motto of 'Love for All, Hatred for None.'"

We call upon the global community to condemn the limitations on religious freedom and pressurize the Pakistani government to swiftly implement measures ensuring the safety and security of Ahmadis. Additionally, upholding the fundamental rights of all individuals, including Ahmadis, will foster an inclusive society and bring long-term benefits to Pakistan. Together, let us advocate for equality, justice, and the protection of religious minorities.

² <https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/559e57644.pdf>



Some pictures of the incident



ⁱ Translation of the threat message by Asim Ashfaq of TLP: "The DPO Jehlum (District Police Officer) and the Jehlum administration have a twenty-day deadline to demolish the minarets of the worship place in Kala Gujran. If they fail to do so, then, God willing, on the 10th of Muharram, precisely on the 21st day from today, the devoted servants of the Holy Prophet will gather at 10 o'clock in Yaadgar Chowk. They will march while chanting slogans and remove those signs with their own hands."



Asim Ashfaq of TLP