

INCIDENT REPORT

TRAGIC KILLING OF TWO AHMADI MUSLIMS IN MANDI BAHAUDDIN SPARKS OUTCRY AGAINST EXTREMIST VIOLENCE

Date: June 8, 2024

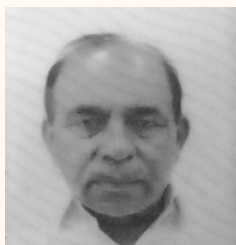
Location: Saadullah Pur, District Mandi Bahauddin

Summary of Incident:

On June 8, 2024, in Saad Ullah Pur, District Mandi Bahauddin, two Ahmadi men were brutally killed in broad daylight in separate attacks. The victims were identified as Ghulam Sarwar, aged 62, and Rahat Ahmad Bajwa, aged 30. The first victim, Ghulam Sarwar, was returning home after attending Zuhr prayers at the Ahmadiyya mosque when he was shot dead near his house. Twenty minutes later, Rahat Ahmad Bajwa was returning home from his catering business when he was also killed by gunfire near the village mosque. The alleged assailant, a teenager identified as Syed Ali Raza, was arrested by the police. He confessed to murdering the Ahmadis on religious grounds during interrogation.

Victims:

1. Ghulam Sarwar (62 years old).
2. Rahat Ahmad Bajwa (30 years old).



Context of Violence Against Ahmadis:

This incident is part of a broader pattern of violence and discrimination against the Ahmadiyya community in Pakistan. Ahmadis face severe societal and legal discrimination, often fuelled by extremist rhetoric and a lack of governmental protection.

Response:

Amir Mahmood, a spokesperson for the Ahmadiyya Community in Pakistan, condemned the killings and urged the government to prosecute those promoting violence and hatred against Ahmadis. He highlighted the intensification of anti-Ahmadi hate campaigns in Mandi Bahauddin over the past few years, which have seen certain clerics openly threatening violence against members, including pregnant women and even an Ahmadi police officer stationed in the area. He also cited recent viral videos emerging from Jhelum showing individuals affiliated with Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) inciting violence against Ahmadis.

In a statement issued on the social media platform X, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan strongly condemned the murders and called on state authorities to take decisive action against the alleged perpetrator and anyone else responsible for inciting faith-based violence.

Impact of TLP:

The TLP, an extremist political party known for its radical views and anti-Ahmadi positions, has played a significant role in fuelling hatred and violence against members of the community ever since its emergence on the national political stage. The inflammatory rhetoric propagated by TLP leaders has exacerbated religious tensions and emboldened both extremists and everyday people to commit acts of violence against Ahmadis with impunity.

Conclusion:

The recent murders of two Ahmadis in Mandi Bahauddin underscore the severe and persistent persecution faced by the Ahmadiyya community in Pakistan.

Domestic authorities in Pakistan must take decisive action to curtail such violence and ensure the protection of Ahmadis. This includes enforcing laws that safeguard religious freedom, holding perpetrators accountable, and dismantling extremist ideologies that fuel hatred and violence.

Furthermore, human rights stakeholders and the international community have a crucial role to play. The international community, including organisations such as the United Nations, must actively engage in advocating for the rights of Ahmadis, ensuring their safety, and promoting policies that uphold human dignity and freedom of belief. Furthermore, the relevant UN Special Rapporteurs, particularly those on freedom of religion or belief and on extrajudicial, summary, or arbitrary executions, should take notice of these killings and related matters. Their engagement can help ensure international scrutiny, bring attention to human rights violations, and press the Pakistani government for accountability and reform.