

INCIDENT REPORT

OVER 25 AHMADIS CHARGED FOR OFFERING PRAYERS IN SURJANI TOWN, KARACHI – 6 ARRESTED



Date: 07 March 2025

Location: Surjani Town, Karachi, Pakistan

Summary

On 7 March 2025, police in Surjani Town, Karachi, arrested six Ahmadis and charged over 25 for holding congregational prayers in their mosque. The arrests followed pressure from a hostile mob, led by Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) activists, who surrounded the site and demanded action. Instead of protecting the worshippers, authorities yielded to extremist demands, detained the Ahmadis, and sealed the mosque. The case, filed under Sections 298 and 34 of the Pakistan Penal Code, stemmed from a TLP complaint alleging the use of Islamic rituals during prayers.

Incident Details

On 7 March, a hostile crowd gathered outside an Ahmadi mosque in Surjani Town, chanting inflammatory slogans and demanding police intervention against the worshippers attending the Friday prayer service. When police and rangers arrived at the scene, mob leaders pressed them to take action against the congregation. Instead of dispersing the mob, law enforcement entered the mosque and took the worshippers into custody.

Following the arrests, the mob proceeded to the police station, further pressuring the authorities to file criminal charges. Under duress, the police registered case number 290 under Sections 298 and 34 of the Pakistan Penal Code and formally arrested six Ahmadis. The mosque was subsequently sealed, depriving the community of their place of worship.



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Legal Context: The Mansoor Ali Shah Judgment

This incident violates the Supreme Court's ruling in the Tahir Naqash case, delivered by Justice Mansoor Ali Shah and Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan. While Article 260(3) classifies Ahmadis as non-Muslims, the judgment affirms their citizenship and rights to dignity (Article 14), religious freedom (Article 20), and equality (Article 25). Justice Shah declared: "To obstruct a non-Muslim minority from practising his religion within his place of worship is against our democratic Constitution and repugnant to the spirit of our Islamic republic." The Surjani Town arrests and sealing defy this protection of private worship rights.



Broader Context and Escalating Pattern of Persecution

In recent weeks, systematic crackdowns against Ahmadis in Pakistan have intensified, driven by extremist sway over state institutions.

- **Worship Suppression in Recent Weeks:** Just a week prior, on 28 February, 22 Ahmadis were arrested in Daska for offering congregational prayers. On the same day as the Daska incident, authorities registered a case against 23 Ahmadis in Bhagtanwala, Sargodha District, also for offering Friday prayers. Though the Ahmadis in Sargodha secured pre-arrest bail and avoided detention, extremists staged a sit-in outside the Bhagtanwala police station, demanding the closure of the community's place of worship.



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- **Mob Pressure on Law Enforcement:** Extremist groups are increasingly using mob tactics to influence police action, resulting in arbitrary arrests and legal harassment of Ahmadis. This pattern is evident across all three recent incidents—Daska, Sargodha, and now Surjani Town—where extremist pressure has directly influenced police actions.
- **Dangerous Shift in Persecution Tactics:** Historically, persecution of Ahmadis has intensified during religious festivals such as Eid-ul-Adha, when they are targeted for practices like animal sacrifice. However, recent weeks have witnessed an alarming shift, with authorities and extremist groups now targetting even routine Friday prayers. This represents a dangerous escalation that effectively denies Ahmadis their most basic right to worship. By targeting regular congregational prayers, authorities have established a precedent that could potentially eliminate all forms of collective religious expression for the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in Pakistan.

Urgent Calls to Action

Given the seriousness of this incident and the broader trend of Ahmadi persecution, the International Human Rights Desk calls for:

1. The immediate and unconditional release of the six Ahmadis detained in Surjani Town, Karachi.
2. The removal of baseless charges against all arrested Ahmadis, including those detained in previous incidents such as Daska and those charged in Sargodha.
3. Accountability for extremist groups inciting mob violence and pressuring authorities into unjust persecution.
4. Firm action by Pakistani authorities to uphold constitutional guarantees of religious freedom and prevent further violations of Ahmadi rights.
5. International human rights organisations to engage with Pakistani authorities and exert diplomatic pressure to end the persecution of Ahmadis.

Conclusion

The unjust arrest of Ahmadis in Surjani Town, the sealing of their mosque, and the increasing influence of extremist groups over state institutions demonstrate a worsening crisis of religious freedom in Pakistan. The alarming synchronicity of the Daska, Sargodha, and Surjani Town incidents within a one-week period indicates a coordinated campaign of persecution against Ahmadis across multiple regions of Pakistan. This growing trend of targeting Ahmadis for worshipping peacefully is a clear violation of fundamental human rights and directly contradicts the principles established in Justice Mansoor Ali Shah's landmark judgment.

If urgent intervention does not occur, the persecution of Ahmadis will continue to escalate, further jeopardising the rights of all religious groups. The international community must take swift action to address this crisis before further violations take place.