



Newsreport March, 2004

Still another case under the Blasphemy Law

Chak 227/G.B; District Faisalabad : A case was registered by the police against Mr. Muhammad Iqbal, Ahmadi, under the dreaded and infamous **PPC 295C**, on March 23, 2004 (the Republic Day) at police station *Tarkhani*, Faisalabad, vide FIR No: **73/04** on behest of a mullah, *Hafiz Zulfiquar Ali*, the Imam of the local mosque. The accused faces death punishment in this fabricated case of blasphemy.

Mr. Iqbal joined the Ahmadiyya Community in 1990. No other member of his family is an Ahmadi; in fact, they all oppose his move to exercise freedom of choice in matters of faith. His parents also turned against him and approached the local mullah to bring their son back to the fold of the majority. As the mullah is bankrupt in the art of friendly persuasion, he proceeded to use the deadliest weapon in the state arsenal, the Blasphemy Law, to force the Ahmadi back into the mullah's herd. The mullah's accusation is fabricated and false. No Ahmadi can ever be blasphemous to his own prophet. However, the police are too dumb to understand that. Apparently they have no instructions to be careful and meticulous in registration of cases under this law, although the government gives that impression to the Human Rights circles.

Mr. Iqbal applied for bail before arrest. The magistrate provisionally accepted his plea; now it is subject to confirmation. It is to be seen if Iqbal remains free to defend himself against this very grave but false accusation.

It is obvious that authorities have done little to discourage registration of fabricated cases under the PPC 295C. Personal vendetta continues to be one of the prime motives for misuse of this law of highly doubtful standing.

Plight of three Ahmadis

Chak 405P; District Rahim Yar Khan : It would be recalled that approximately four months ago Mr. Muhammad Ismail, an elderly Ahmadi president of the local community and his two sons were arrested under Ahmadi-specific law, **PPC 298C**. State functionaries are always obliging, so the magistrate subsequently not only refused their application for bail but also callously added the gruesome **PPC 295A**, under which an accused can be tried by an Anti-terrorism Special Court. This case is nothing but an attack by a local mullah (indirectly supported by state instruments) on members of a peaceful religious community.

The victims of the case thereafter approached the Sessions Court for bail, only to be turned down. Then they appealed to the High Court against the decision of the Session Court. That is, where the case now rests.

In the meantime, Mr. Ismail the respectable elderly president, Mr. Tayyab the competent doctor and Mr. Tahir the headmaster of the local school stay behind bars awaiting the outcome of their

application for bail and in anticipation of the marathon trial that is to follow in the years ahead. Life is no more going to be the same for them. Such is the evil of these religious laws.

Chak Sikandar recalled

Gujrat : Seven months ago, 10 Ahmadis were arrested at Chak Sikandar on a false accusation subsequent to the murder of a mullah and his son. The police have found no substance in the accusation, however the trial and incarceration goes on. Apparently, in these circumstances, a court should at least release the accused on bail. So a plea for bail was moved with the Sessions Court for seven men who were accused of abetment etc. It is surprising that the court rejected the application.

In the meantime, the opposition gang moved a fresh case with the Court for prosecution of the accused. The Court, without examination of the witnesses, accepted the case for prosecution. According to the attorney for the accused this is not according to the law, and he told the court accordingly.

The situation is indicative of the difficulties faced by the accused who are innocent; the police have no case against them; and they suffer unduly behind bars for a crime they did not commit. The system refuses to provide them relief that is their due and an obligation of the state.

An attestation sans rationalite

Islamabad : Recently the Election Commission reintroduced an 'Attestation' for Muslim voters who apply to be registered at the occasion of the annual revision of electoral rolls. The 'Attestation' makes interesting reading, as one has to try hard to see the link between its wording and the concept of joint electorate that the government is professedly introducing.

حلف نامہ و اقرار نامہ

میں مسمیٰ/سمات _____ ولد/دختر/زوجہ _____ حلفیہ
 اقرار کرتا/کرتی ہوں کہ میں خاتم النبیین حضرت محمد ﷺ کی ختم نبوت پر مکمل اور غیر مشروط طور پر ایمان رکھتا/رکھتی ہوں۔ یہ کہ میں کسی ایسے
 شخص کا/کی پیروکار نہیں ہوں۔ جو حضرت محمد ﷺ کے بعد اس لفظ کے کسی بھی مفہوم یا کسی بھی تشریح کے لحاظ سے پیغمبر ہونے کا دعویٰ کرے ہو
 اور نہ ہی میں ایسے دعویٰ کو پیغمبر یا مذہبی مصلح مانتا/مانتی ہوں۔ نہ ہی میں قادیانی گروپ یا لالہ ہوری گروپ سے تعلق رکھتا/رکھتی ہوں یا خود
 کو احمدی کہتا/کہتی ہوں۔

دستخط

_____ نام

_____ پتہ

Translation :

“I.....S/o, D/o, W/o..... hereby solemnly declare that I believe in the absolute and unqualified finality of Prophethood of Muhammad (peace be upon him) as the last of prophets, and I do not recognize any person who claims to be a prophet in any sense of the word or of any description whatsoever after Muhammad (peace be upon him) or recognize such a claimant as prophet or religious reformer, nor do I belong to the Qadiani Group or Lahori Group or call myself an Ahmadi.”

Amazing is the absurdity to which the state has to submit to maintain its unholy link with the mullah.

The price of being Not Guilty

Chak 646/G.B; District Faisalabad : Mr. Munir Ahmad, Ahmadi was acquitted by the Additional Sessions Judge Jaranwala on March 15, 2004. He was charged under **PPC 295B**, a blasphemy clause for which the punishment is life imprisonment. It would not be inappropriate to briefly place on record the ordeal of the accused.

Mr. Munir Ahmad is a schoolteacher in District Faisalabad. In September 2000, a miscreant *M. Tufail* himself tore open a religious book titled '*Alim-ul-Ghaib*', threw it away, and put the blame on Mr. Munir Ahmad. Tufail agitated the public on the grounds that the book was based upon teachings of the Quran and Hadith. Thus he managed to assemble a mob and led the same to the police station. The police received his application, and conveniently registered a case under **PPC 295B**, although the clause is specific to defiling of the Holy Quran. Mr. Munir Ahmad was placed behind bars. The Sessions Court rejected his plea for release on bail, so he remained in prison for a while, before he was released while under prosecution that lasted three and half years. Such prosecution, under threat of imprisonment for life can be very stressful for an innocent man. It costs him profusely in time, money and peace of mind. Some may not be able to bear up with the resulting stress and strain. Most Ahmadis have no prior experience of police, judiciary and prisons etc, so they find it extremely hard to take it in the stride. Mr. Munir suffered all of this for three and half years - for nothing.

He is happy that he got acquitted; he could have ended up in prison for life.

Tension at Ghasitpura

Ghasitpura, 69/R.B; District Faisalabad : The Ahmadiyya community here is faced with the joint attack by the troika of mullahs, politicians and the administration. It suits all of them to set aside morality and higher values, and cooperate mutually to act against Ahmadis. What happened on March 5, 2004 shows how it works. A few local miscreants enjoy the support of mullah *Faqir Muhammad* (who was detained under the Goonda (Rascals) Act by a Commissioner, some years ago) of the Khatme Nabuwwat organization and *Dr. M Shafiq*, a member of the Provincial Assembly. They arrived at about 5 p.m. escorted by a contingent of

police and took away by force the amplifiers of the Ahmadiyya mosque. The incident disturbed the local Ahmadiyya community greatly.

Subsequently, Ahmadis arranged for some pressmen to come and visit the site of the incident and make inquiries for themselves to make a fair assessment.

The Mulla and the Police perturb young girls

District Narowal; March 21, 2004 : Ahmadi young girls from the Ehdipur area had assembled in the village Chanani for a religious community program. It was an open-air program, under a tent. They rigged a small 'deck' for the purpose of sound amplification. A mullah, *Qari Afzal* could not tolerate Ahmadi girls exercising a routine freedom, so he telephoned the DSP and the police SHO of Baddomallhi. The powerful SHO arrived promptly and taking the course of least resistance ordered the girls to not only switch off the 'deck' but also to stop the program. He agreed, with some difficulty, to permit them to partake community lunch; but no more. Thus came to end a harmless program and an outing of little girls.

Later the Superintendent of Police came to know of the incident but decided to maintain discreet silence. He treated this enormity as a blip event.

Violence in court premises

Abbotabad; February 21, 2004 : Mr. Moti-ur-Rehman, his father and his cousin Mr. Zahid Aziz are facing prosecution under Ahmadi-specific law **PPC 298C** since October 2001. Almost every month they have to present themselves at a court in Mansehra, NWFP. Mr. Rehman has to come all the way from Azad Kashmir, Mr. Aziz from Rawalpindi, while the septuagenarian father from Abbotabad. At these occasions they are exposed to abuse and threats by religious extremists. The defendants have to make deliberate efforts to avoid provocation and an altercation. On the hearing on February 21, their attorney was unable to come, so the miscreants became bold and assaulted physically Mr. Rehman and his cousin. They grabbed them by the collar, punched and kicked them. Thereafter, they fled. The two, however, were relieved to see that the gangsters had spared their elderly co-accused who sat at a bench in the corner.

Ahmadis in prison for their faith

1. Ten Ahmadis of Chak Sikandar are in prison since September 2003 on fabricated charges of murder they did not commit.
2. Four Ahmadis of Takht Hazara are in prison for the last approximately two and half years. At Takht Hazara, 5 Ahmadis were killed in anti-Ahmadiyya riots. Mullah Athar Shah who precipitated the riots was set free by the court. He is now operating in district Khushab on a similar mission.

3. Mr. Ismail, president of a local Ahmadiyya Community and his two sons, a doctor and a teacher, are in prison awaiting bail and trial under Ahmadi-specific law. The case was registered in December 2003.

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