



AHMADIYYA



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Urgent
Human Rights

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Brutal murder of two Ahmadi doctors in Multan

Multan: We regret to report gruesome murder of an Ahmadi couple, both doctors, at their residence in Wapda Colony, Multan, in the afternoon of March 14, 2009. Both were tortured and suffocated by the assailants. The deceased Dr Shiraz Ahmad Bajwa was 37, while his wife Dr Noreen Bajwa was 29.

On the day of the incident the couple came home for lunch at about 2:45 p.m. They resided in Wapda Colony which otherwise is a well-protected residential area, guarded by security staff at the gate. About an hour later, their maid reportedly found them murdered, and she reported the fact to the security staff.

The body of Dr Shiraz Bajwa was found lying in the bedroom, hands tied behind his back, mouth gagged, eyes blindfolded and with visible marks of strangulation apparent. The body of Dr Noreen Bajwa was found in the living room, hands tied behind her back, mouth gagged, blindfolded and bleeding from the nose.

Dr Shiraz was an eye-specialist who had worked at many hospitals including the Fazle Umar Hospital at Rabwah, a charitable institution of Ahmadiyya Community. Dr Noreen worked at a children's hospital. Both of them had excellent academic and professional careers and enjoyed good reputations. Both were popular among their colleagues. Although they faced threats for some time due to their being Ahmadi, neither of them ever reacted to the provocation that they faced.

The tragedy is heightened further by the fact that Bajwas were expecting their first child in months ahead.

The murderers took away nothing precious. The cash, jewelry and other valuables belonging to the couple were found intact. The assailants were blinded apparently by hate and malice to commit this grisly act in a merciless manner. Multan is a headquarters town of anti-Ahmadi opposition. They make no secret of their ill-will and hatred on sectarian grounds. It is also the centre of intense anti-Ahmadi propaganda and hate-promoting publications. Last year they mounted a major effort to deprive Ahmadis of their prayer centre. The administration and the police responded with great care and mellowness to their challenge to Ahmadis' limited freedom of faith and worship.

Recently the authorities had issued a warning to all concerned that sectarian and militant elements had prepared a long hit-list of Ahmadiyya locations and personalities. These attacks had picked up in frequency and gravity in recent weeks. Thus all available evidence clearly demonstrates that this was a case of targeted murder. Both of the deceased were killed because they were Ahmadis.

It is learnt that the police are investigating. Senior police officers have visited the site; however they are keeping their findings confidential. Pakistani police have a reputation to trace such murders that leave a trail of ample evidence behind, provided they are encouraged to reach the source, and political considerations are not allowed to retard the investigation process.