

Notice: Undefined index: et_header_layout in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1214

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PAKISTAN: Police accused of desecrating Ahmadi graves

Police accused of desecrating Ahmadi graves

At least 45 tombstones in Ahmadi cemetery targeted after complaint about community's use of holy verses on tombstones.

By Kamran Chaudhry

UCA News (08.02.2022) – <https://bit.ly/3JfrM5F> – Pakistan's leading rights body joined other rights groups in condemning the desecration of 45 gravestones of Ahmadiyya people,

allegedly by policemen, calling it a worrying trend that is targeting the minority Islamic sect.

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan said it was “appalled to learn” that some police officers allegedly desecrated the graves in Hafizabad district of Punjab province on Feb. 4 and 5.

The desecration followed “complaints from a local resident who objected to the community’s use of holy verses on its tombstones,” the rights commission said in a Feb.7 tweet.

“Worryingly, such acts are becoming almost routine, leaving members of the Ahmadiyya community as beleaguered in death as they are in life. The desecration of graves is an affront to human dignity and must not be permitted,” it said.

“If the government is sincere in its bid to make Pakistan a more inclusive society, it must counter and punish all such acts.”

Officials in Rabwah, the Ahmadiyya community headquarters in Punjab province, are using social media to condemn the desecration.

“This graveyard has been there since 1974. The illegal acts taken by the DPO Hafizabad against the Ahmadiyya Community is not only a violation of Human Rights but also an act that has further dimmed the face of our beloved country Pakistan in the eyes of the International Community,” the Press Section of Jama’at Ahmadiyya Pakistan said in a series of tweets yesterday.

“Who says life is safe in Pakistan. Ahmadis here are not safe even in their graves. Where should one go when those responsible for your protection stalk you,” Amir Mehmood, who handles communications for the Ahmadi sect, said in a Facebook

post.

Ahmadis are considered by mainstream Pakistani Muslims as heretics because of their belief that their founder Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was a prophesized messiah.

In 1984, President General Zia ul-Haq promulgated Ordinance XX introducing Ahmadiyya-specific laws to prohibit Ahmadiyya people from indulging in “anti-Islamic activities” by restricting them from referring to themselves as Muslims or preaching their belief.

The Ahmadiyya population in Pakistan has declined over almost two decades, according to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics report on the sixth Population and Housing Census-2017, released last year.

Ahmadiyya people make up 0.09 percent of Pakistan’s population of 207.68 million. But the 1998 census showed that they formed 0.21 percent of the 132 million people in Pakistan at the time.

Last year police in Sharaqpur Sharif, also in Punjab province, registered blasphemy cases against 11 Ahmadiyya people and organizers of the community for inscribing Islamic phrases on gravestones.

According to Rabwah records, 39 Ahmadiyya corpses were exhumed, while 69 burials of Ahmadiyya people were denied in the common cemetery from 1984 to 2018.

Photo : The desecrated tombstones of Ahmadi graves in district Hafizabad, Punjab province. (Photo: Amir Mehmood)

[Further reading about FORB in Pakistan on HRWF website](#)

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