Just last week, the United Nations human rights experts issued an unusually sharp rebuke to Pakistan, expressing that they were “shocked at reports of increasing violence against vulnerable communities on grounds of their religion or belief.” Their statement, published on July 24, carried the weight of decades of frustration. “Pakistan must break the pattern of impunity that has allowed perpetrators to act without restraint,” the UN panel urged, calling for immediate investigations, prosecutions, and reforms to protect the country’s religious minorities.

> Independent @UN_SPExperts on #Pakistan □□:
>
> “We are shocked at reports of increasing violence against vulnerable communities on grounds of their religion or belief. Pakistan must break the pattern of impunity that has allowed perpetrators to act without restraint.“ pic.twitter.com/ZtFu3UHg30
>
> — United Nations Geneva (@UNGeneva) July 24, 2025

The statement was the latest in a chorus of international condemnations that have done little to slow an increasingly brutal and systematic campaign of discrimination. Pakistan’s minority communities—Ahmadiyya Muslims, Christians, Hindus, and Shi’a Muslims—find themselves not merely neglected but actively targeted, often with state complicity. Amnesty International, in its latest country report, called this “systemic repression.” Human Rights Watch went further, labeling blasphemy-related violence in 2025 as “intensified terror against communities who have nowhere to turn.”

For many Pakistanis, this crisis is woven into the fabric of daily life. For the rest of the world, it is a story of moral urgency—and of international failure.

The Anatomy of Persecution

A Climate of Fear, Sanctioned by the State

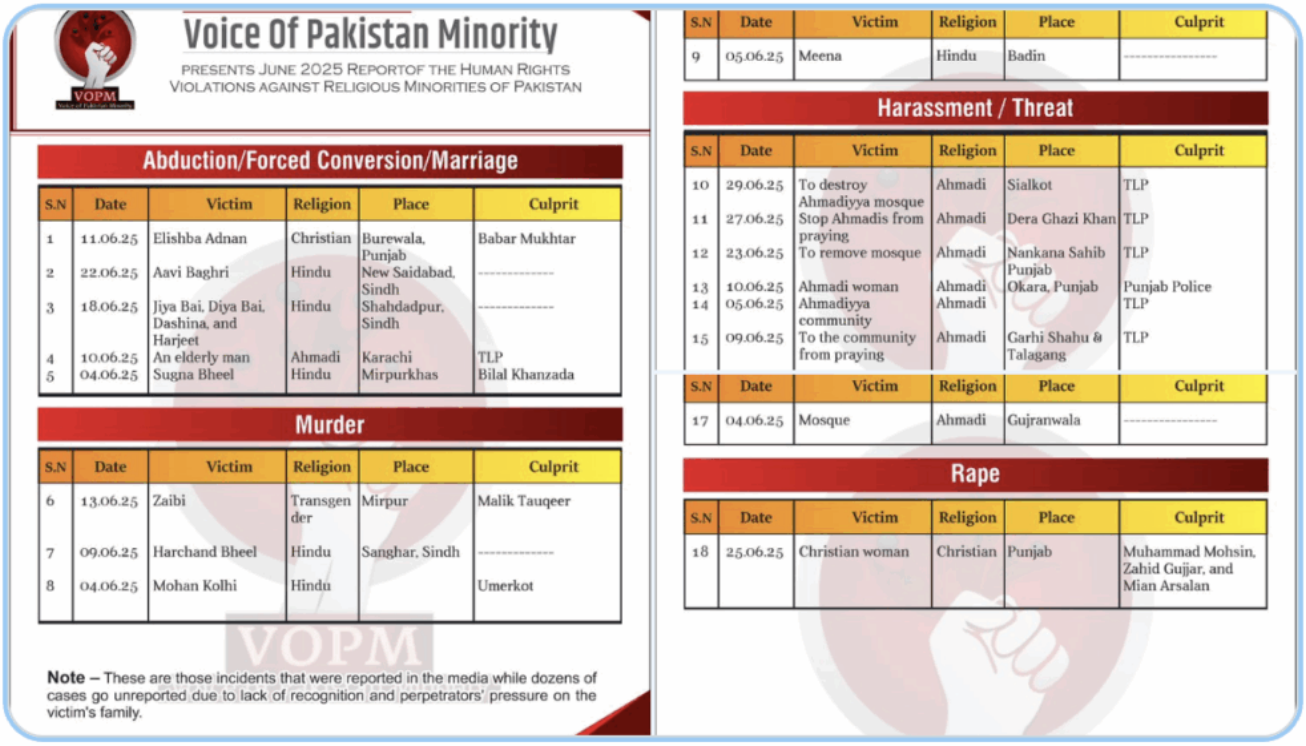
The violence is neither sporadic nor random. The UN report accused Pakistani

authorities of “tacit official complicity,” arguing that law enforcement’s habitual refusal to intervene had emboldened extremists. “The cycle of fear,” the experts warned, “prevents both people and institutions from upholding the rights and dignity of these minorities.”

No community feels this more acutely than the Ahmadis. Constitutionally declared non-Muslim in 1974, Ahmadis are barred by law from identifying as Muslims, publicly practicing their faith, or referring to their places of worship as mosques. In 2024 alone, Human Rights Watch recorded multiple incidents of Ahmadi mosques being desecrated, cemeteries vandalized, and religious literature burned. Graveyards are routinely defiled; even in death, Ahmadis are not spared.

Voice of Pakistan Minority (Urdu)
@vopm_urdu

Here is the monthly report of the atrocities meted out on religious minorities in #Pakistan for June 2025.
We saw an increase in the atrocities against the #Ahmadis throughout the month. Yet the perpetrators of the crimes continue to roam freely.
#ProtectPakistanMinorities



Voice Of Pakistan Minority

PRESENTS JUNE 2025 REPORTOF THE HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AGAINST RELIGIOUS MINORITIES OF PAKISTAN

Abduction/Forced Conversion/Marriage

S.N	Date	Victim	Religion	Place	Culprit
1	11.06.25	Elishba Adnan	Christian	Burewala, Punjab	Babar Mukhtar
2	22.06.25	Aavi Baghri	Hindu	New Saidabad, Sindh	----------
3	18.06.25	Jiya Bai, Diya Bai, Dashina, and Harjeet	Hindu	Shahdadpur, Sindh	----------
4	10.06.25	An elderly man	Ahmadi	Karachi	TLP
5	04.06.25	Sugna Bheel	Hindu	Mirpurkhas	Bilal Khanzada

Murder

S.N	Date	Victim	Religion	Place	Culprit
6	13.06.25	Zaibi	Transgender	Mirpur	Malik Tauqeer
7	09.06.25	Harchand Bheel	Hindu	Sanghar, Sindh	----------
8	04.06.25	Mohan Kolhi	Hindu		Umerkot
9	05.06.25	Meena	Hindu	Badin	----------

Harassment / Threat

S.N	Date	Victim	Religion	Place	Culprit
10	29.06.25	To destroy Ahmadiyya mosque	Ahmadi	Sialkot	TLP
11	27.06.25	Stop Ahmadis from praying	Ahmadi	Dera Ghazi Khan	TLP
12	23.06.25	To remove mosque	Ahmadi	Nankana Sahib Punjab	TLP
13	10.06.25	Ahmadi woman	Ahmadi	Okara, Punjab	Punjab Police
14	05.06.25	Ahmadiyya community	Ahmadi		TLP
15	09.06.25	To the community from praying	Ahmadi	Garhi Shahu & Talagang	TLP
17	04.06.25	Mosque	Ahmadi	Gujranwala	----------

Rape

S.N	Date	Victim	Religion	Place	Culprit
18	25.06.25	Christian woman	Christian	Punjab	Muhammad Mohsin, Zahid Gujjar, and Mian Arsalan

Note – These are those incidents that were reported in the media while dozens of cases go unreported due to lack of recognition and perpetrators' pressure on the victim's family.

The state's role in enforcing this exclusion is explicit. Ahmadi voters remain on separate electoral rolls. Their religious sites are routinely shuttered by police, and blasphemy charges—often fabricated—lead to detentions, disappearances, and, increasingly, extrajudicial killings.

Blasphemy Laws: Pakistan’s Legal Weapon Against Dissent

The cornerstone of this persecution lies in Pakistan’s blasphemy laws, which impose the death penalty for derogatory remarks about Islam or the Prophet Muhammad. Though no executions have taken place under these laws, Human Rights Watch reported that vigilante killings surged in 2024, with “mobs killing at least four people accused of blasphemy,” including an elderly Christian, Nasir Masih, who was lynched in May 2025. Arrests were made in his case, but authorities quickly released the suspects, reinforcing, in the words of the UN panel, “a pattern of impunity.”



Civil society activists and members of the Christian community hold placards and shout slogans during a protest to condemn the attacks to churches in Pakistan

Christians, who make up roughly 1.6 percent of Pakistan's population, are especially vulnerable. Blasphemy allegations are often motivated by personal vendettas or land disputes, forcing entire communities to flee. Once abandoned, their homes and businesses are seized by others, rarely restored.

The blasphemy laws have become, in effect, a mechanism of ethnic cleansing, argues the US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), which has repeatedly recommended designating Pakistan a "Country of Particular Concern." The Commission's 2025 report highlighted how "religious minority communities—particularly Christians, Hindus, and Shi'a and Ahmadiyya Muslims—continued to bear the brunt of prosecutions under Pakistan's strict blasphemy law."

The Gendered Dimension of Persecution

For minority women, persecution is often gendered and brutal. Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International have documented cases of women detained under fabricated blasphemy charges and subjected to sexual violence in custody. Forced conversions and marriages are a long-standing crisis: Hindu, Christian, and Sikh girls—some as young as twelve—are abducted, forcibly converted to Islam, and married to their captors.

In a UK Parliamentary debate earlier this year, lawmakers called these practices a "serious abuse of human rights that robs women and girls of the right to choose their own future." Letters from the UK Foreign Office to lawmakers, including Lord Alton of Liverpool, describe ongoing diplomatic engagement with Pakistan over forced marriages and abductions, but little has changed on the ground.

> 2 important replies from @HFalconerMP Minister for Pakistan about persecution of Sikh,Christian & Hindu minorities-including forced marriages & conversions & the troubling situation in Parachinar. UK aid must champion minorities & FoRB. @APPGFoRB @APPGPakMin @JavaidRehman pic.twitter.com/hjZdgkK1NB

> — Lord (David) Alton (@DavidAltonHL) July 23, 2025

The Legal Architecture of Exclusion

A Constitution That Disenfranchises

The Pakistani constitution itself enshrines discrimination. Ahmadis are officially classified as non-Muslims and barred from using Islamic terminology. Electoral laws segregate them onto separate voting lists, effectively silencing their political voice. Christians, Hindus, and Sikhs are often excluded from government jobs and face systemic bias in education and housing.

“Many are relegated to low-paying jobs like sanitation work and live in neglected neighborhoods lacking basic utilities,” reports Amnesty International. Temples, churches, and gurdwaras are routinely vandalized or occupied illegally. Media coverage of these abuses is minimal, with state regulators frequently censoring minority voices.

The International Outcry—and Its Limits

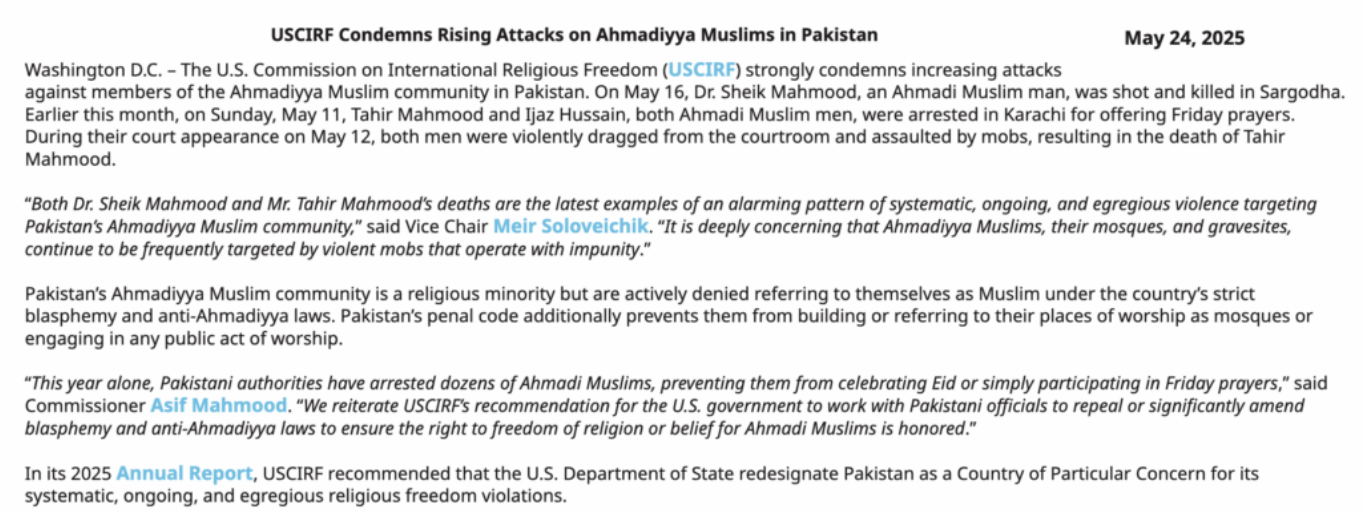
The UN has been unambiguous in its criticism. Its July 2025 statement urged Pakistan to repeal blasphemy laws, prosecute perpetrators, and guarantee the safety of religious sites. Amnesty International echoed this, calling for “immediate remedial measures to ensure a sense of safety and security, particularly to the Ahmadiyya community.”

> NEW: Pakistan’s blasphemy laws perpetuate religious discrimination and are used to target the poor and minorities in unlawful evictions and land grabs. These accusations have had devastating consequences for those affected. https://t.co/gdaLqwdGis pic.twitter.com/dpSzV2AiiB
>
> — Human Rights Watch (@hrw) June 9, 2025

USCIRF’s recommendations have been equally clear: suspend aid or apply

diplomatic pressure until Pakistan demonstrates progress. Yet Western governments have been cautious, wary of destabilizing a key regional ally.

The UK and US have repeatedly linked aid and bilateral engagement to human rights progress. In the UK Parliament, lawmakers have condemned "widespread evidence of the state actively supporting discrimination," particularly through blasphemy laws. The US State Department, under pressure from USCIRF and Congress, has debated stronger sanctions but stopped short of labeling Pakistan a "Country of Particular Concern," a designation that carries trade and aid consequences.



USCIRF Condemns Rising Attacks on Ahmadiyya Muslims in Pakistan **May 24, 2025**

Washington D.C. – The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) strongly condemns increasing attacks against members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community in Pakistan. On May 16, Dr. Sheik Mahmood, an Ahmadi Muslim man, was shot and killed in Sargodha. Earlier this month, on Sunday, May 11, Tahir Mahmood and Ijaz Hussain, both Ahmadi Muslim men, were arrested in Karachi for offering Friday prayers. During their court appearance on May 12, both men were violently dragged from the courtroom and assaulted by mobs, resulting in the death of Tahir Mahmood.

"Both Dr. Sheik Mahmood and Mr. Tahir Mahmood's deaths are the latest examples of an alarming pattern of systematic, ongoing, and egregious violence targeting Pakistan's Ahmadiyya Muslim community," said Vice Chair Meir Soloveichik. *"It is deeply concerning that Ahmadiyya Muslims, their mosques, and gravesites, continue to be frequently targeted by violent mobs that operate with impunity."*

Pakistan's Ahmadiyya Muslim community is a religious minority but are actively denied referring to themselves as Muslim under the country's strict blasphemy and anti-Ahmadiyya laws. Pakistan's penal code additionally prevents them from building or referring to their places of worship as mosques or engaging in any public act of worship.

"This year alone, Pakistani authorities have arrested dozens of Ahmadi Muslims, preventing them from celebrating Eid or simply participating in Friday prayers," said Commissioner Asif Mahmood. *"We reiterate USCIRF's recommendation for the U.S. government to work with Pakistani officials to repeal or significantly amend blasphemy and anti-Ahmadiyya laws to ensure the right to freedom of religion or belief for Ahmadi Muslims is honored."*

In its 2025 Annual Report, USCIRF recommended that the U.S. Department of State redesignate Pakistan as a Country of Particular Concern for its systematic, ongoing, and egregious religious freedom violations.

https://www.uscirf.gov/news-room/releases-statements/uscirf-condemns-rising-attacks-ahmadiyya-muslims-pakistan

Some incremental progress has been achieved through Western-backed civil society initiatives that provide legal aid to victims and document abuses. But without structural reform, these efforts remain band-aids on a deep wound.

Stories of Violence: Recent Cases

The names of victims tell their own story. Nasir Masih, a 70-year-old Christian lynched in Punjab, symbolizes the dangers of mere accusation. In Sindh, at least three Hindu girls were reported abducted and forced into marriage this year,

according to Western media and local activists. Dozens of Ahmadi mosques have been demolished or sealed by police, while cemeteries continue to be desecrated with impunity.



Members of the Christian community chant in protest as they condemn attacks on Christians.

Legal harassment is pervasive. The Dawn newspaper has documented cases where minors and women with disabilities are charged under blasphemy laws and left to languish in pre-trial detention for years.

> In #Pakistan, an underage #Hindu girl, Komal Meghwar, from Tando Allahyar, Sindh, was Kidnapped, Rape, forcibly converted to Islam at Madina Masjid, Mirpurkhas.

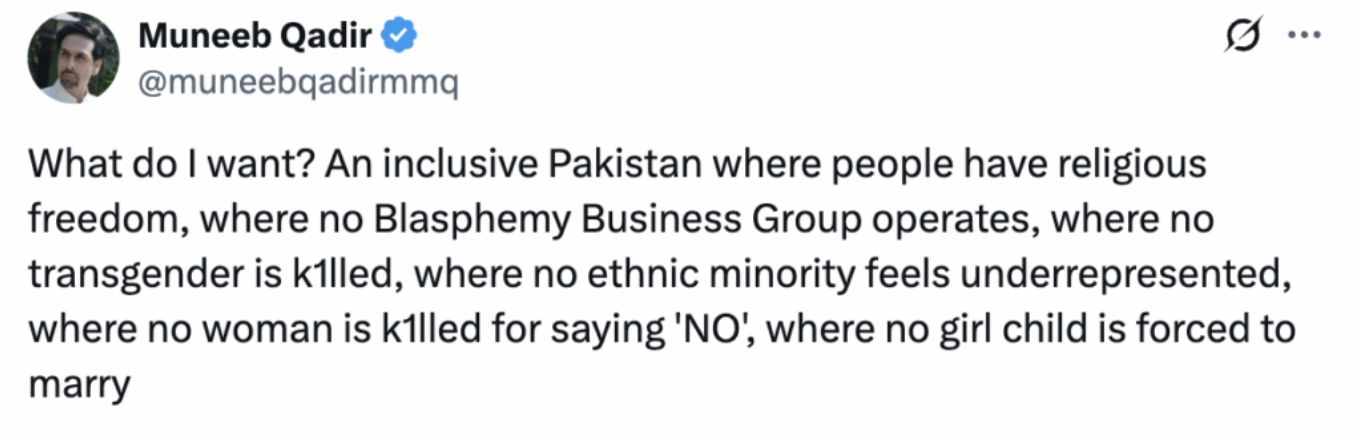
> Religious minorities are not safe in Pakistan. pic.twitter.com/9E0CdK9V5X
>
> — Faraz Pervaiz (@FarazPervaiz3) June 21, 2025

The Cycle of Impunity

Impunity remains the central enabler of this crisis. “Perpetrators are seldom brought to justice, even after international outcry,” notes Amnesty International. Arrests, when they occur, rarely lead to convictions. This failure emboldens extremists and erodes public faith in the justice system, deepening Pakistan’s social fractures.

What Needs to Change?

The consensus among international experts is clear: repeal blasphemy laws, prosecute perpetrators, and ensure equality before the law. But structural change is unlikely without sustained international pressure. Western governments must go beyond symbolic condemnations, linking aid and trade agreements to verifiable reforms.



Civil society initiatives—interfaith dialogues, legal aid networks, and grassroots activism—offer hope, but they need robust international support and protection.

The Moral Imperative

Pakistan's persecution of religious minorities is not just a domestic crisis; it is a moral test for the international community. The UN, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and countless activists have documented this pattern of abuse for decades. Yet, as of 2025, the cycle of violence remains unbroken.

If Western governments and global institutions fail to act decisively, the message to Pakistan's minorities is chillingly clear: they are on their own.

The words of the UN panel should haunt policymakers: "Pakistan must break the pattern of impunity." Until it does, millions of its citizens will remain trapped in a system that punishes difference and rewards hate—an affront not just to Pakistan's constitution but to the very idea of human dignity.

References and Further Reading

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   - URL: https://www.dawn.com/news/1923351/sindh-human-rights-commission-says-blasphemy-laws-must-not-be-used-to-settle-scores
3. **Dawn Newspaper Article, July 24, 2025**
   - Coverage of Islamabad High Court's suspension of previous order for a blasphemy law commission—contextual reporting on blasphemy law misuse, mob violence, and legal challenges.

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   - URL: https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2025/country-chapters/pakistan
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   - Official correspondence from UK Minister Hamish Falconer and FCDO to Lord Alton, referencing forced marriage, religious persecution, and human rights advocacy.
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   - Analysis of systemic persecution of Ahmadis and demands for reform of blasphemy laws.
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