

Sacred murder

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According to some reports, more than 4,000 cases of blasphemy have been reported after 1986. However, no data is available that can help find the names, nature of crime, and the locations of all these blasphemers. Too bad and disappointing for the would-be-ghazis as they have been deprived of an opportunity to track down these accused and carry out their holy duty!

The new faith and belief he derived from the speeches of two Maulanas had turned him against the oath he took before joining the Elite Force of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan that calls for protection of the country and its people one serves. The opponent of his belief was walking in front of him without knowing that his own protector was going to take his life for a cause that he considered supreme to the oath he once took. Driven by his most sacred belief, the security guard pulled up his gun and yelling Allah-o-Akbar emptied the burst of his gun twice with a feeling of bravery and satisfaction on accomplishing the task he had in his mind. The life that was the gift of the Creator was suddenly snatched by a person who believed to have been doing this job in the name of Allah the Creator. The Governor of Punjab, Salman Taseer, was now lying dead and peaceful in a pool of blood. Next day, the whole nation was divided on the question: "Shall the act be mourned or glorified?"

The lawyers, who claim to be the upholders of the rule of law, came out in big number to glorify the assassinator and used methods that were tantamount to an act of jeopardizing the very legal process they are supposed to be upholding. Ulema, the preacher of a religion that teaches peace and considers killing of a human being as a killing of humanity, became jubilant on the death of a person as important as the Governor of Punjab because they, on their own, had declared him guilty of committing blasphemy. They called it justice and their jubilation was emanating from their sense of satisfaction derived from the successful execution of their wajbul qatal fatwa [religious decree that declares a person liable for execution] they issued against the Governor a few days before his assassination.

Most of the political leaders, like always, turned into Political Followers of those who appeared to be a serious threat to their own lives should they dare to oppose them. It was the members of the civil society and some courageous media persons who took the risk of condemning this heinous crime as effectively as they could while the supporters of assassinator continued taking out large rallies hailing the crime and garlanding the perpetrator. A ghazi was born soon after he killed the person he was guarding. A new definition of ghazi was revealed to our Ulema and their followers the day this event had occurred. In the eyes of Ulema the only crime Salman Taseer committed was his criticism of the Blasphemy Law. Was he the only person who expressed such views on this law? Several people belonging to different schools of thoughts plus some religious Ulema and scholars had committed this crime for one simple reason; to save the innocent people from becoming victims of its misuse. However, the support showed by most of the Ulema on the recent misuse of blasphemy law against Salman Taseer has rendered the very question of its misuse irrelevant.

From now on, every person would be ready to take life of other person whose religious thoughts

would slightly differ from his. Even the life of the former SSP of Rawalpindi's Special Branch, Nasir Khan Durrani, may be in danger now that he has been quoted as the one who had described Ghazi Qadri and 11 other police personnel as a security risk. Those who are condemning this act of murder may not feel surprised if, one day, they are also accused of blasphemy and be put to death by another ghazi. The editors and journalists of the local newspapers differing with the supporters of Blasphemy Law may one fine morning find their names in the list of blasphemers having no choice other than to run away from the country before a ghazi reach them and have the honour of achieving medal of glorification by executing the holy example set by Ghazi Qadri. The editor of the Arab News shall not wonder either if a ghazi from Pakistan land in Saudi Arabia one day with a holy cause in his mind to bring an eternal silence to his mind and pen as a punishment for an act of blasphemy he has committed by calling Ghazi Qadri "heartless, grinning murderer [and] an ignorant instrument of evil".

According to some reports, more than 4,000 cases of blasphemy have been reported after 1986. However, no data is available that can help find the names, nature of crime, and the locations of all these blasphemers. Too bad and disappointing for the would-be-ghazis as they have been deprived of an opportunity to track down these accused and carry out their holy duty! It may be a conspiracy of the responsible authorities against the Blasphemy Law. Anyhow, the future-ghazis don't have to lose their hearts. After all search and digging of the different online sources, I have managed to trace the details of 93 victims of blasphemy cases. It means that the remaining 3,977 alleged blasphemers are either hiding somewhere within the country or they might have migrated to the land of infidels. Out of those traceable cases, 23 persons have already been sent to heavens (pardon me, it should be hell) before the court could have announced its verdict. No contempt of court notice was issued, no condemnation of extra judicial murder was made by the supporters of blasphemy law, and the executioners of these murders are now wondering as to why they were not lauded as Ghazi too. The way the supporters of blasphemy law hail the murder of Salman Taseer makes it very clear now that they must have been as jubilant as they are now when people like Hafiz-e-Quran Dr. Sajjad Farooq, Judge Arif Iqbal Hussain Bhatti, and Maulvi Sanaullah were extra judicially murdered on blasphemy charges.

Judicial Courts also acquitted several blasphemers by declaring the findings of blasphemy charges as baseless. Sixteen men and two women were released or acquitted by the courts from 1992 to 2010 as per the data available. Would all those judges who passed such verdicts be charged for blasphemy and a wajib-ul-qatal fatwa would be issued against them as well? This and many other questions remain unanswered while the society keeps drifting from one kind of extremism to another one with religious and political support. Will all the stake holders in the country ever come to a common consensus to denounce and condemn all those acts that harm others irrespectively who they are? Until we all come to such a common goal, there is no hope of seeing peace, sanity, and justice to prevail in this country.

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P.S.

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