

Pakistan: Ahmadi worship place raided by security forces and attacked by zealots

Sunday 18 December 2016, by [HRCP](#) (Date first published: 14 December 2016).

Press release

HRCP demands probe into Rabwah raid, assault on Ahmadi worship place

Lahore, December 14: The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) has expressed grave concern over the deteriorating treatment of Ahmadi citizens both at the hands of those tasked with security as well as the zealots. It has demanded a thorough investigation into a raid in Rabwah and attack on an Ahmadi worship place in Chakwal.

In a statement issued on Wednesday, the Commission said: “HRCP must voice serious concern over the assault on an Ahmadi worship place by a mob in Chakwal and over the manner of an apparently unlawful raid by Punjab Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) on the offices of a publication for the Ahmadi community in Rabwah on December 5.

“The CTD raid on the offices of the Ahmadi publication in Rabwah appears to be a violation of a Lahore High Court (LHC) order directing that “no coercive measures shall be adopted against the petitioner”. As far as HRCP could gather, the matter is sub judice and no new order has been made.

“From reports received, it appears that the CTD did not have any warrants for the raid and certainly did not show, any despite repeated requests. They took away laptop and desktop computers, mobile phones, office papers and books, for which they gave no receipt. There was no reason to jostle and rough up four people who were arrested. It is for the CTD and the provincial authorities to explain why a raid against peaceful, unarmed citizens needed to be heavy-handed and why were those taken into custody were mistreated.

“The script for the attack on the Ahmadi worship place in Chakwal is unfortunately not very new. A huge mob surrounded the worship place with worshippers inside, who managed to leave the premises, which was then set on fire and furniture destroyed. One of the worshippers died of a heart attack.

“The police arrived and sealed the building, which has been a practice employed in the past as well. In short, the Ahmadi community has lost their place of worship.

“It is hugely distressing that police were not able to protect the worship place. We must stress that it is unacceptable for the police practice of dispersing the mob to be the end of action against the trouble-makers.

“Both incidents constitute a failure on the part of the authorities to ensure protection of citizens’ rights enshrined in the constitution and under international human rights law. It is doubly frustrating when such denial occurs at the hands of agents of the state. HRCP demands a full inquiry into the circumstance of the raid at Rabwah and ascertain whether the heavy-handed tactics employed were part of the directions from above or at the initiative of the raiding party itself.

“A separate probe must look closely into the mob attack on the Chakwal worship place and determine what prompted the assault and what could have led to a conclusion that would not have deprived the Ahmadis of one more place of worship.”

Zohra Yusuf

Chairperson
