Minority matters

[Waqar Gillani](http://tns.thenews.com.pk/writers/waqar-gillani/) January 14, 2018

Pakistan finds itself under the spotlight after the US places it on a special watch list

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On January 4, the US put Pakistan on a watch list of countries where religious freedom is under threat. The move came only days after asking Pakistan to do more or risk suspension of aid.

Religious minorities face social and legal discrimination and persecution. In December last year, a church was attacked in Quetta, killing at least nine people and injuring many. The National Commission for Human Rights recently released a report about basic human rights violations of the Kalash community in northern Pakistan.

The US state department annually designates governments that have engaged in or tolerated systematic, ongoing, and egregious violations of religious freedom as “Countries of Particular Concern (CPC)”.

According to the US State Department, protection of religious freedom is vital to peace, stability, and prosperity. These designations are aimed at improving respect for religious freedom in these countries.

**According to a report of United States Commission on International Religious Freedom in 2017, Pakistani government continued to perpetrate and tolerate systematic, ongoing, and egregious religious freedom violations.**

Pakistan has been added to a “special watch list” of governments or entities that don’t meet the requirements for the CPC designation yet but still “engage in or tolerated” severe religious freedom violations. This indicates that if the situation of religious freedom is not improved in Pakistan, the country can be added to the CPC list.

Saroop Ijaz, a lawyer and representative of Human Rights Watch (HRW) in Pakistan, says Pakistan has been placed on a “special watch list” under the International Religious Freedoms Act (IRFA) by the US. This means that the US views lack of religious freedom to be of concern.

“This exercise can eventually result in two outcomes: the first is trying to put pressure on the country to rectify the situation by “naming and shaming” and, secondly, by imposing economic sanctions,” he says, adding, “Given the recent statements from the US administration on other issues, the persuasive value of both these options is considerably diminished.”

“Pakistan still needs to address the freedom of religious belief for the sake of millions of its citizens and for it to realise the objective of being a modern, progressive and inclusive country,” he suggests. “The situation of religious freedoms in Pakistan is extremely worrying. After the Army Public School Peshawar tragedy there was a feeling that we have turned a corner and a broad-based consensus against religious intolerance had been reached. However, sadly, some of the momentum has been lost,” he observes.

According to a report of United States Commission on International Religious Freedom in 2017, Pakistani government continued to perpetrate and tolerate systematic, ongoing, and egregious religious freedom violations.

Constitutional provisions and legislations, such as the country’s blasphemy laws, continue to result in prosecutions and imprisonments, the report highlights.

**At least 40 people have been sentenced to death or are serving life sentences for blasphemy, including two Christians who received death sentences in June 2016. During the year, an Ahmadi and a Shia Muslim were convicted and imprisoned for five years, and four Ahmadis were charged under anti-Ahmadiyya provisions.**

**“Religious minority communities, including Christians, Hindus, Ahmadis, and Shia Muslims, also experience religiously motivated and sectarian violence from both terrorist organisations and individuals within society; the government’s longstanding failure to prevent or prosecute such violence has created a deep-rooted climate of impunity that has emboldened extremist actors. Provincial textbooks with discriminatory content against minorities remain a significant concern,” reads the summery of the report.**

There have been reports of forced conversions and marriage of Hindu and Christian girls from Tharparkar and elsewhere.

http://tns.thenews.com.pk/minority-matters/#.WlxO9byWbcs

**The Ulema Council rejected the inclusion of the name of Pakistan in the watch list**

**In Pakistan everyone has religious freedom; the constitution has determined the rights of the Qadianis: Tahir Ashrafi.**

**Paksitan Ulema Council will take part in the next election will nominate candidates from all over the country: Press Conference.**

Lahore (Correspondent) Pakistan Ulema Council completely rejects the inclusion of Pakistan in the watch list in the name of religious freedom. All sects and religions have complete religious freedom in Pakistan. The constitution of Pakistan has determined the rights of the Muslims and the Qadianis. The government should reveal the individuals responsible for the conspiracy for the removal of laws with relevance to Qadianis. The report of Raja Zafar Ul Haq should be made public. On 26th March 3rd International Message of Islam Conference will be held in Islamabad, in which the judge of judges from Palestine and the important leaders from the Islamic World will participate. Pakistan Ulema Council will take part in the next elections. There will be candidates throughout the country including Islamabad. These thoughts were expressed Central Chairman of Pakistan Ulema Council and the President of the Federal Mosques of Pakistan Hafiz Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi in the Central Mosque Maaz Bin Jamal while doing Press Conference with the responsibles of Pakistan Ulema Council Maulana Abdul Hamid Sabri, Maulana Tahir Aqeel Aiwan, Maulana Hafeez Ur Rehman, Maulana Shehzad Ahmed, Maulana Umer Shareef, Maulana Naib Khan, Maulana Inayat Ullah Shah, Maulana Noman Hashir. He was of the view that all the sects of the Muslims and the leaders of non-Muslim religions have condemned the inclusion of Pakistan and Saudia Arabia on the watch list from America on a combined level. The real purpose of this is to allow the admission of the Qadianis in the Holy kabba which is not acceptable at any cost. They were of the view that the criticism on the institutions should be of such nature, which can be taken care of afterwards. The criticism on judiciary and military has become a fashion; this should come to an end. While condemning the terrible and devastating incident in Kasur, he said that the criminals should be arrested in the next 24 hours, and there should be a case been run under speedy trial in the 15 days.

**Daily Ausaf, Lahore, Thursday, 11th January, 2018.**

**The help of the Clerics is the responsibility of the Government**

Noshera (Representative Duniya) The Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhuan Pervaiz Khattak said that the Provincial Government is not only determined for the revival of the Islamic Teachings and the Islamic traditions, but will also show practical efforts with relevance to it. As compared to other fields, the clerics serving in the field of religion are the ones who are more deserving of our services. There service should also be the responsibility of the government. These thoughts were expressed by him In the ending Quran ceremony arranged by Jamaat Ishat Tauheed and Sunnat in Manki Sharif. The Chief Minister also formally inaugurated the Madrassa Ayesha being built with the estimate of 5 Million Rupees. The Chief Minister said that the Provincial Government has included Khatm e Nabuat in the syllabus, so that the belief of khatm e Nabuat becomes strong in our younger generation. With the consultation with the Clerics the mistakes have also been removed from the educational curriculum, and the government will welcome further recommendations with relevance to it.

**Daily Duniya, Faisalabad, Thursday, 11th January, 2018.**

**The belief of Khatm e Nabuat was touched to make way for the Qadianis**

**The Jews are trying to take control of Bait Ul Maqdas, Trumps efforts will go in vain.**

**America, India are attacking Pakistan from the route of Afghanistan, Safeguard Pakistan Council.**

Faisalabad (Special Reporter) Central Leaders of the Pakistan Safeguard Council the belief of khatm e Nabuat was touched upon to make way for the Qadianis. The belief of khatm e Nabuat is dearer to us than our lives and property. The Jews are trying to take control of Bait Ul Maqdas. Won’t let the evil conspiracy of Trump succeed. America, India are attacking Pakistan jointly from the route of Afghanistan. The unity of Pakistan Safeguard Council is the biggest union of Pakistan, the basic purpose of which is to end the problems of Pakistan. Safeguard of Ummat Conference will start at 10 A.M in the morning at Dhobi Ghat Ground under the Presidency of Maulana Sami Ul Haq, Chairman of Pakistan Safeguard Council. This Conference will be of historical nature, and with the participation of national political and religious leaders the world will get a strong message. In the Conference the political and the religious leaders will announce the joint strategy for the struggle for independence of Palestine and Kashmir. These thoughts were expressed by the Central Leader of Pakistan Safeguard Council Muhammed Yaqoob Sheikh, and the Secretary General of Milli Muslim League Sheikh Fayyaz Ahmed while addressing the Joint Press Conference at a local hotel in Iqbal Stadium. On this occasion Maulana Shabbir Usmani Jamiat Ulema e Islam (C), Maqbool Ahmed Co-Ordinator of Safeguard Pakistan council, Maulana Abdul Waheed Shah, Maulana Umer Qasmi Ansar, Allama Saqib Majeed, Jamaat ul Dawa, Maulana Abdul Razzaq Abid leader of Jamiat Ahl e Hadis, Qari Abdul Shakoor Milli Yakjehti Council, Uncle Abdul Rasheed, Hafiz Khalid Mehmood and others were also present. Muhammed Yaqoob Sheikh said that under the supervision of the Safeguard Pakistan Council the preparations for the Safeguard Ummat conference, preparations are under way. Thousands of people will attend the conference in Dhobi Ghat. He was of the view that the Safeguard Pakistan Council is the union of patriotic parties of the country. The basic purpose of this is the safeguard of the ideological and the Geographical Boundaries of the country. The Safeguard Pakistan Council is at the forefront to fight all the conspiracies being done against Pakistan. There will be Safeguard Ummat Conference after Liaquat Bagh Rawalpindi and Peshawar on 12th January. Regarding the safeguard of the belief of Khatm e Nabuat, Bait Ul Maqdas, and with relevance to Kashmir the leaders of the Safeguard Pakistan Council will decide the next course of action. He was of the view that the problem of Khatm e Nabuat is the biggest problem of Pakistan. Pakistan was found in the name Kalima Tayyaba, the forces in favor of liberalism are the ones doing disturbance in the belief of Khatm e Nabuat. Muslim League-N did amendment in the belief of khatm e Nabuat in order to support the Qadianis. He was of the view that America has made an attempt to destroy the peace of the world by declaring the occupied Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. The whole Muslim Ummah would have to unite and form a policy for the safeguard of Jerusalem. The Background desires of the American President behind the accusations made on Pakistan are very dangerous. The enemy countries want to take the Atomic power back from Pakistan. There are efforts going on to lay the hands on the honor and integrity of Pakistan, But India and America will not succeed in their evil desires. The ones keeping a bad eye on Pakistan will fail in their desires. He also said that America and India cannot bear seeing Pakistan as a big force of this region. The Safeguard Pakistan Council is raising the flag of unity against the American accusations and their threats in every corner of the country. We have to make the efforts of the conspiracies of the enemies become unsuccessful.

**Daily Duniya, Faisalabad, Thursday, 11th January, 2018.**

**We cannot accept the inclusion of Pakistan in the watch list: Shabbir Usmani**

**Conspiracies are being hatched to remove the law of blasphemy but we will not permit anyone to do so.**

Chenab Nagar (Special Correspondent) Vice president of Worldwide Khatm e Nabuwat Movement, Shabbir Usmani said that the time has come to provide harsh lesson to Trump. He doesn’t know that the citizens of Pakistan are brave. Pakistan is protecting minorities. Usmani warned Qadianis to refrain themselves from confidential activities. We will not permit anyone to destabilize the country but will sacrifice everything for it. Due to non-observance of objective resolution, constitution is being affected. Worldwide powers are fully active to remove law of blasphemy and Qadianiat prevention act. We want to clarify everyone that we will not permit anyone to remove Islamic sections. Affection with Holy Prophet (PBUH) is a base of faith and equivalent to affection with His (PBUH) entire life. His (PBUH) way of spending a life is exemplary for all the ages. We can only be successful by consulting the teachings of Holy Prophet (PBUH).

**(Daily Ausaf, Lahore, 10th January, 2018)**

**It is time to teach Trump a lesson: Maulana Ghulam Mustafa**

**American President is oblivious that Pakistanis are a brave and dignified nation**

Chiniot (District Reporter): Central in charge Muslim Colony, Majlis Tahafuz Khatme Nabuwat, Maulana Ghulam Mustafa in his address to the Ulemas and the media asserted that the time has come to teach Trump a lesson. He is oblivious that Pakistanis are a brave and dignified nation. Pakistan has been put under the watch list pertaining to minority rights, which is an endeavor not acceptable. Qadianis ought to stop their secret activities behind the veil. We would not let anything harm Pakistan’s integrity and would sacrifice everything for its cause. The constitution is being neglected as the foreign powers are striving to annul Qadiani act and the Blasphemy law. We would not let any Islamic clause within the constitution be amended. The love for the Holy Prophetsaw is the part of faith and to love Khatme Nabuwat is to express your love [and a tribute] to the life and attributes of the Prophetsaw. He is the role model for the humanity till the Day of Judgement. Only by means of treading on the path of his role, we could hope for success.

**Daily Khabrain Lahore, 10th January, 2018**

**We will never allow the Islamic articles to be erased, Shabbir Ahmad Usmani**

**It’s time to give Trump a lesson, constitution is undermined by inapplicability of national action plan, vice president International Khatm e Nabuat Movement.**

Chenab Nagar (writer) central vice president of International Khatm e Nabuat Movement Maulana Qari Shabbir Ahmad Usmani said that its time to give Trump a lesson, he doesn’t know that Pakistani nation is of integrity and courage.

To put Pakistan on a watch list regarding minority rights is not acceptable at all, Pakistan is securing minorities. We will never allow Pakistan's writ to be compromised, but will sacrifice our body, soul and money. Under Constitution word lawlessness is being practiced by not applying national action plan. And to eradicate Blasphemy law and anti-Qadiyaniat laws international forces are in full action. In this matter our narrative is that we will never allow Islamic articles of law to be erased at any cost.

He said that love of the Prophet is the core of faith. To love Khatm e Nabuat is to love Prophet's characteristics and his whole life. He said that Prophet's way of life is guideline for humanity till judgment day, and success can only be reached by the guidance of Prophet's role model.

**(Daily Pakistan, Lahore (15), 10 Jan, 2018)**

**Secondary differences and strained relationships are harmful for nation’s integrity. Shehbaz Sharif**

**Religious foundations and abode ought to preach love; address at the Ulemas convention. Would stand united to defend the country: Proclamation**

**Qadianis are non-Muslims: Rana Sanaullah, Zaeem Qadri, Ameenul Hasanaat, Peer Aijaz Hashmi and various other participated, Miftah Ismail meets the chief minister.**

Lahore (Special Correspondent): The chief minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed his views stating that Pakistan is inflicted by an era of crisis and cannot bear a discord at the moment. Secondary differences, divisions and strained relationships can prove fatal for the Nation’s integrity and harmony. The current situation of the country demands accord and harmony. The scholars and saints ought to play key role in the process. The time calls for religious foundations and abodes to preach and practice patience, tolerance, sacrifice, socio-economic justice, the equal division of resources and love. He expressed these views on the second day of Ulemas convention held at the chief minister’s house. He added that Sufis had done a great service by spreading the peaceful message of Islam. Khatme Nabuwat is an integral part of our faith. There is no second opinion. Those who do not consider it a part of their belief, have no place in Islam. To not interfere with [the affairs] of other religions and reside within the limits of your own is a golden principle that promotes tolerance and forbearance. To issue Fatwa against each other would do no good to Pakistan. The “sit-ins” which started in 2012 had economically hit Pakistan very hard. Hence, he added, I request you to promote unity rather than discord.It is unfortunate that President Trump used such demeaning words for Pakistan, whereas, Pakistan has sacrificed a lot in its war against terrorism. In an announcement it was said that the role of the great religious scholars, saints and spiritual leaders to bring stability and promote peace holds a historical importance. The critical situation of the country demands that the aforementioned parties should continue to play key roles to promote unity, stability, mutual understanding among different sect and general peace. If the need arises, we would form an insurmountable wall and stand united with the whole nation. Provincial Law Minister Rana Sanaullah while conversing with the attendees of the convention stated that he firmly believes in the finality of the Prophetsaw. Qadianis are non-Muslims. Auqaf Zaeem Hussain Qadri, a provincial minister, stated that Sufis and the religious elders played a vital role in the formation of Pakistan. Minister for religious affairs, a sufi saint, Sahibzada Ameen ul Hasanaat Shah Ameer us Salikeen Bhera, renowned country’s officials, Peer Aijaz Hashmi, saint of Kalis Sharif, Peer Shamim Ahmad Sabir Sabri, Dewan Maud Masood, Ghulam Mueen ud Din Korija and more than 150 saints and Sufis partook in the conference. Chief Coordinator Jamat Ahle Sunnah Pakistan Peer Riaz Hussain Shah led an emotional prayers in the end. Advisor to Prime Minister on Finance, Miftah Ismail met the Chief Minister. The Chief Minister stated that we are striving for an autonomous and a happy Pakistan and we would utilize every means at our disposal to make it happen. Miftah Ismail added that due to Chief Minister’s efforts Punjab has become a trading and economic hub. Moreover, the Minister invited the citizen who asked for justice during a convention held at Kot Momin (Sargodha) to meet RPO and DPO. Minister of Overseas Pakistani, Abdul Rehman Kanju also met the Chief Minister.

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