Rising Islamophobia

BY [EDITORIAL](https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/author/editorial/) ,

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THE NATION

* **Irrational hostility and hatred towards Muslims**

Events of this past one week offer a glimpse into the rising trend of Islamophobia across the world. In New Zealand, Brenton Tarrant, a White Supremacist who killed 51 people at two mosques last year, was convicted of murder and terrorism and sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole. In Sweden, a copy of the Holy Quran was burned during an illegal protest held by far-right anti-Islam activists in a largely migrant neighborhood, resulting in reactionary violent protest erupting in the area later. Both incidents stem from a profound level of bigotry and religious hatred. While the events of Christchurch were significantly more horrific and deadlier, the motivation to burn the Quran or go on a killing spree at a Mosque during Friday prayers was the same: to inflict maximum physical and emotional pain on Muslims.

Freedom of speech is considered a core democratic value but it too should have certain limitations. When the right to free speech is misused to provide legal cover to acts of hatred and unnecessarily aggressive hateful rhetoric towards another religious group, especially one that is a minority in a particular country, it should be condemned. The perception that Islam is a violent religion is an unfortunate outcome of a relatively small subsection of followers who are radicalized extremists carrying out heinous acts of terrorism across the world. Their acts make peace-loving Muslims easy targets for racial and religious persecution.

Various Middle Eastern conflicts, most recently the Syrian War, have forced thousands of Muslim refugees to flee and find safety in European countries that opened up their borders and accepted them on humanitarian grounds. This resulted in an inevitable clash of civilizations and the economic impact of this change in Europe’s demographic has created another set of problems. Islamic fundamentalism creates cultural differences that are simply irreconcilable with Europe’s largely liberal tilt. The job market, especially during recessions, shrinks and when those jobs go to immigrant Muslims, it creates a particularly potent sense of hostility in natives against the former. Countries where law enforcement and justice systems are mature and effective can guarantee to an extent that perpetrators of hate speech and violence against Muslims receive appropriate punishment. The real challenge however is to stop such incidents from occurring on a regular basis, and for that to happen right-wing extremist thinking and xenophobia must be challenged by the state.

<https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2020/09/01/rising-islamophobia-2/>

**Trolls flood social media in Pakistan amid virus lockdown**

By KATHY GANNON

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AP NEWS

ISLAMABAD (AP) — It was a music video meant to depict a young bride’s joy: Actress Saba Qamar, in a flowing white wedding gown with a golden hem, was twirled by the singer playing her groom in front of the mosaics of a 17th-century mosque in Pakistan’s eastern city of Lahore.

As soon as the video emerged earlier this month, it went viral — but for the wrong reasons. It infuriated religious radicals who inundated social media with claims that Qamar’s dancing sullied the historic Wazir Khan Mosque.

The uproar was the latest example of how trolling has surged online in Pakistan since a lockdown, imposed in March over coronavirus concerns, confined tens of millions to their homes, leading to a 50% increase in internet use in this conservative Muslim nation of over 220 million people.

Minority rights activists and social media trackers say they’ve seen a sharp rise in online sectarian attacks, hate speech and cries of “Blasphemy!”

“It is unprecedented,” Shahzad Ahmad of Bytes for all, an Islamabad-based social media rights group, told The Associated Press.

Toxic trending on Twitter has also taken aim at minorities, blaming the ethnic Hazaras for allegedly bringing the Coronavirus to Pakistan from neighboring Iran. Like most Iranians, Hazaras are Shiites, and traditionally make pilgrimages to holy sites in Iran, which has the deadliest virus outbreak in the region. Some Pakistani pilgrims returning home were among the first reported cases of COVID-19 in Pakistan.

After #Shiavirus began trending on Twitter in April, Hazaras say they were denied jobs, service at stores — even treatment in medical facilities.

**Claire Thomas, deputy head of the Britain-based Minority Rights Group International, said minority Ahmadis and Hindus have also been targeted.**

**Sunni militant groups often target Ahmadis, also known as Qadianis, named after the birthplace in northern India of their sect’s founder. The militants consider them heretics because they believe a prophet after Muhammad arrived more than 100 years ago by the name of Ahmad.**

**In 1974, Pakistan declared Ahmadis non-Muslims — and any Ahmadi claiming to be Muslim can land in jail. In a single day this month, #AhmadisAreNotMuslims registered 45,700 tweets; #QadianisAreInfidel 50,600 tweets; #QadianisAreTheWorstInfidelsInTheWorld 32,600 tweets while #Expose\_Qadyani\_ProMinisters had 50,600 tweets.**

**“Since the lockdown began ... there have been over half a dozen concerted hashtag campaigns against the community, either describing the community as worthy of death, or non-Muslim or traitors to Pakistan,” said Saleem Uddin, an Ahmadi community leader.**

Extremists recently also attacked the construction site for a Hindu temple in Islamabad and warned Muslim faithful online that it would be blasphemy to support the temple.

In an ominous video on social media, a man introduces a young boy as his son. The child then speaks into the camera, delivering a message to Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan that he “will kill each and every Hindu” if the temple is built. The video got nearly 100,000 clicks.

Particularly worrisome is the unprecedented number of claims of blasphemy that Ahmad, from the rights group, says have driven some of those accused into hiding. The onslaught has continued even after the pandemic lockdown was lifted in early August.

Under Pakistani law, the charge of blasphemy, or insulting Islam, carries the death penalty. But even mere allegations of blasphemy can cause mobs to riot. Any attempt to amend the law to make it more difficult to bring charges, has brought angry radicals out on the street.

Last month, a gunman shot and killed Tahir Naseem, a Pakistani-American, in a courtroom in the northwestern city of Peshawar. Arrested two years ago, Naseem was on trial for blasphemy for allegedly declaring himself Islam’s prophet. Rights activists said he was mentally challenged.

The U.S. State Department said Naseem had been “lured to Pakistan” from his home in Illinois and entrapped by the blasphemy law.

Within days of the fatal shooting, religious radicals demonstrated across Pakistan in support of the killer, praising his actions. Selfies surfaced online of police guards smiling as they transported Naseem’s killer to his arraignment hearing — smiles meant to show support for the killer.

Qamar, the actress who danced in the promo video with popular singer Bilal Saeed in the Lahore mosque, apologized online.

“If we have unknowingly hurt anyone’s sentiments we apologize to you all with all our heart. Love & Peace,” she tweeted.

But the trolls were unmoved and last week, Qamar and Saeed appeared in court, charged with blasphemy. The two have not responded to AP requests for comment.

The same radical religious party that assailed them over the dancing — Tehreek-e-Labbaik, which won three seats in the 2018 local elections in Sindh province — also claimed a young entrepreneur’s soccer ball design, was “satanic.”

The list goes on: a university professor whose views are seen as too liberal; a poet who defended him; a lawmaker who said no religion was superior to another.

Sunni Muslim cleric Muhammad Ali Mirza was targeted after one of his sermons went viral condemning vigilantes and clerics who incite them to kill anyone suspected of blasphemy.

This unleashed a vitriolic attack and eventually blasphemy charges were brought against Mirza. The court rejected them.

Haroon Baloch, also of the Bytes for all rights group, said he’s been using sensitive software that tracks not only hashtags involving a specific name or an extraordinarily heavy use of a particular word, but that also identifies some of the underlying emotions behind the postings.

Such tracking can offer early warnings of “an escalation from online threats to physical threats,” he said.

Facebook said it has increased its “content review team, including in Pakistan, and we now find and take action on more than 95% of hate speech before anyone reports it to us.”

“We’re also in close contact with partners on the ground to identify and remove misinformation that has the potential to incite physical harm offline,” the company told the AP.

Twitter said it does “not tolerate the abuse or harassment of people on the basis of religion.”

Journalist Marvi Sirmed was targeted after tweeting about forced disappearances of activists in southwestern Baluchistan province, many believed to be in the custody of Pakistani security agencies. Her Urdu-language “tongue-in-cheek” tweet mentioned Jesus, setting off a flood of threats.

Amnesty International on Tuesday cited Sirmed’s case and that of Qamar and Saeed, noting that “Pakistani authorities need no more evidence to see how dangerous the blasphemy laws are” and urging for their repeal.

Hassan Javid, a history professor in Lahore, blamed the government for its silence and for allowing rampant abuse on social media.

“Levying allegations of this kind — to intimidate, control, and endanger the accused — has become a national pastime in Pakistan, abetted by a state that continues to watch on in deliberate silence,” he said.

<https://apnews.com/1daafaf0f6775813361081d3cb1f8257>

اسرائیل میں قادیانی: عمران ریاض کے وڈیو پر تبصرہ

[26/08/2020](https://www.humsub.com.pk/340335/columbus-khan-20/)

[محمد کولمبس خان](https://www.humsub.com.pk/author/columbus-khan/)

ہم سب

**آپ کا اسرائیل میں قادیانیوں پر پروگرام ایک محب وطن پاکستان کی حیثیت سے کوئی بھی سنے تو اس کے جذبات کا انگیخت ہونا اس کے ایمان کا تقاضا ہے۔ اور اس حد تک تو بات جائز اور درست ہے لیکن اس خبر کی تصدیق آپ نے جن ذرائع سے کی ہے راقم ایک سابق فوجی کی حیثیت سے پہلے کر چکا ہے اورثابت ہوا ہے کہ یہ تدریجی جھوٹ یک طرفہ مشہور کیا جا رہا ہے۔ آپ چونکہ میدان تحقیق کے شہسوار بننے جا رہے ہیں اس لئے آپ کی خدمت میں اصل حقیقت پیش کی جاتی ہے کہ اگر آپ کا ضمیر ہے تواپنی اصلاح کریں گے اور ایمان کو ضائع کرکے جھوٹ کی سزا جو آخرت میں ملنی ہوتی ہے اس سے بھی بچ جائیں گے۔**

اصل حقیقت یہ ہے کہ

1**۔ احمدیوں کی ایک معقول تعداد جو فلسطینی عربوں پر مشتمل ہے اسی نوے سال قبل احمدی ہونے سے پہلے کے اسی مقام پر آبادہے اور اب بھی ہے۔ پھر 1948 میں اسرائیل کے قیام کے وقت سے وہ اس علاقہ میں باقی فلسطینی مسلمانوں کی طرح علاقہ کے اسرائیلی حدود میں آنے کی وجہ سے آباد رہے۔ یاد رہے کہ جب یہودی فلسطین میں آباد ہونا شروع ہوئے تو مکرم چوہدری ظفراللہ خاں صاحب نے انگریز حکمرانوں پر زور دیا کہ یہود کے ہاتھ زمینیں فروخت کرنے پر پابندی لگائی جائے۔ انگریز نے مثال طلب کی جس پر انہیں پنجاب کے حق شفع کا حوالہ دیا گیا۔ لیکن اس پر عمل درآمد نہ ہوا۔ اس وقت مسلمان لیڈر خواب غفلت کے مزے لے رہے تھے۔**

**2۔ اسرائیل کا قیام جب 1948 میں عمل میں آیا تو چوہدری ظفراللہ خاں پاکستانی وزیر خارجہ تھے جنہوں نے اسرائیل کے قیام کی ڈٹ کر مخالفت کی حتیٰ کہ اگر اقوام متحدہ کی آخری بحث کے روز ووٹنگ ہو جاتی جو امریکہ کے زور پر خلاف معمول thanks giving day کی بدولت ملتوی کر دی گئی تو اسرائیل کے حق میں اکثریت نہ ہو سکتی۔ یونائیٹڈ نینشز کا ریکارڈ دستیاب ہے۔ پانچ مئی 1948 کو شاہ فیصل نے محترم چوہدری صاحب کو ان کی مساعی پر بڑا تحسین آمیز خط لکھا۔ انٹرنیٹ پر موجود ہے۔ اور آپ چاہیں تو سعودی حکومت سے اس کی تصدیق کروا سکتے ہیں۔**

**3۔ چوہدری ظفراللہ خاں کی اس معاملہ میں پہلی تقریر کے بعد عرب دنیا نے یہ ذمہ داری پاکستان کے سپرد کردی جس کو بآحسن نباہا گیا اور پاک عرب تعلقات کی بنیادیں مضبوط ہوئیں۔ آپ دیگرعرب ممالک کے اس وقت کے سربراہان کے پاکستان کے لئے تحسین امیز بیانات کو تاریخ سے نکال نہیں سکتے۔**

**4۔ اسرائیل کے قیام پر اب عربوں کی اور مسلمانوں کی مجموعی قوت اس کو روک نہیں سکی تھی۔ اس لئے جنگ بھڑک اٹھی جو اب تک جاری ہے۔ اور اس کی وارننگ اسی روز محترم چوہدی صاحب نے بڑی طاقتوں کو دی۔**

”This is a solemn moment، solemn in the history of the world، in the history of this great۔ let us hope، at least۔ great Organization۔ The United Nations is today on trial۔ The world is watching and will see how it acquits itself۔ again، perhaps، not so much from the point of view of whether partition is approved or not approved، but from the point of view of whether any room is to be left for the exercise of honest judgment and conscience in decisions taken upon important questions۔“

-Sir Zafarullah Khan ’s Address to UN Security Council on the issue of Palestine (October 7, 1947)

**5۔ ہندوستان اور پاکستان کے درمیان بھی جنگیں رہی ہیں۔ اس کے باوجود امن کے دنوں میں دونوں ملکوں کے مذہبی وفود آتے جاتے رہتے ہیں ان کا کسی کی حب الوطنی کے ساتھ تعلق نہیں ہوتا۔ بھارت کے احمدی اس ملک کے شہری ہیں جو کسی ملک کے خلاف نہیں اور اپنے ملک کے حقوق ادا کرنے کا اسلام انہیں حکم دیتا ہے جس پر وہ عمل پیرا ہیں۔ ہمارے جنرلز بھی بیرون ممالک بھارتی جنرلز سے ملتے جلتے ہیں۔ ایک جگہ سے اسلحہ خریدتے اور بعد میں ایک دوسرے کے خلاف استعمال کرتے ہیں۔ لہذا کسی کی حب الوطنی کو فرضی باتوں سے نہیں جانچنا چاہیے**

**6۔ اسرائیل میں احمدی ایک دیگر مذہبی تنظیموں کی طرح رجسٹرڈ تنظیم ہے اور جماعت احمدیہ کے ممبران سے چندہ کی آمدنی سے تنظیمی اخراجات پورے کیے جاتے ہیں اور کسی بھی خارجی مدد کا سہارا نہیں لیا جاتا۔ بالکل ایک ہی طریقہ دو صد ممالک میں جماعت کا رائج ہے۔ اور یاد رہے کہ جو چندہ لیا جاتا ہے اس کے ایک ایک پیسے کا حساب رکھا جاتا ہے اور اس کو ہر سال شوریٰ میں پیش کیا جاتا ہے۔**

**7۔ محترم مرزا مبارک احمد جو بیرونی ممالک کی تنظیموں کے نگران تھے ان کا نام بھی استعمال کر کے محض اس اظہار پر کہ ہمارا مشن اسرائیل میں ہے طومار باندھا گیا ہے۔ انہیں تویہ بات چھپانے کی حاجت ہی نہیں تھی کہ اسرائیل میں جماعتی تنظیم موجود ہے۔ اس بات سے یہ اخذ کر لینا کہ اسرائیلی حکومت سے جماعت کے خفیہ تعلقات ہیں۔ ایک  بد ظنی ہے اور بد ظنی سے گریز کرنا چاہیے**

**8۔ اسلامی جمہوریہ پاکستان کے علاوہ ساری دنیا میں احمدیوں کے مسلمان ہونے پر کسی کو کوئی اعتراض نہیں اور وہ جملہ عبادات آزادی سے بجا لا سکتے ہیں اور یہی بات اسرائیل میں بھی ہے۔ لہذا جب تک کوئی حکومت اسلامی عبادات کی بجا آوری میں زبردستی روک نہ بنے احمدی اپنے اس ملک کی حکومت کے پر امن شہریوں کی طرح رہتے ہیں۔**

**8۔ پاکستان کی شاہ رگ کشمیر کے جہاد 1948 میں احمدیوں کی شمولیت اور میرے گاؤں کے لگ بھگ تیس اس وقت کے جوانوں کی رضاکارانہ حاضری احمدیوں کی حب الوطنی کا کافی ثبوت ہے۔ آج وہی لوگ کشمیر کے معاملہ میں بڑھ بڑھ کے باتیں کر رہے ہیں جو کشمیر جہاد کو جہاد ماننے کے منکر تھے۔**

**9۔ قیام پاکستان کے بعد سے اب تک کسی مقام پر احمدی سپاہیوں یا جرنیلوں نے کبھی پیٹھ نہیں دکھائی وہ چونڈہ میں بھی کامیاب ہوئے اور کشمیر کے محاذ پر بھی جس روز تک رہے کامیاب رہے۔ اب ان کا نام بھی تاریخ میں بیان کرنا منع کر دیا گیا ہے**۔

**10۔ سات ستمبر 2020 کو چھیالیس سال بیت جائیں گے جب ایک جھوٹے بہانے کی بنیاد پر تحریک چلائی گئی اور پھر احمدیوں کو ان لوگوں نے ناٹ مسلم قرار دیا۔ انہی حکمرانوں کو پھر اپنا مسلمان ہونا عدالت میں ثابت کرنے کے لئے یہ ماننا پڑا کہ یہ معاملہ بندے اور خدا کے درمیان ہے اور کسی دوسرے کو فیصلہ کرنے کا اختیار نہیں۔ ضیاالحق صاحب کا وائیٹ پیپر اس پر شاہد ہے۔ فاعتبروا یا اولی الابصار۔**

**11۔ محترم ضیا الحق صاحب نے اردن میں فلسطینیوں کو تہ تیغ کیا اور اردن کے شاہ سے ملک کا سب سے بڑا اعزاز وصول کیا۔ آج فلسطینیوں کے سامنے اس کا نام لے کر دیکھیں۔ آگے میرے نہیں ایک ضیا الحق کے فین کے الفاظ ہیں۔ ۔ ۔ ۔ اس جنگ میں مجموعی طور پر جنرل ضیاء کی آمد سے پہلے اور بعد میں کل ملا کر آزاد ذرائع کے مطابق 1000 سے 2000 فلسطینی باغی مارے گئے جبکہ فلسطینی ذرائع کے مطابق 4000 سے 5000 لوگ ہلاک ہوئے۔ ۔ ۔ یاسر عرفات نے کہا لگ بھگ 10000 لوگ مارے گئے ہیں۔ ۔ ۔**

**12۔ مراکش کی آزادی کے لئے جو کوششیں چوہدری ظفراللہ خان صاحب نے کیں۔ اس کے شکریہ کے طور پر نومولود بچوں کا نام ظفراللہ لا تعداد ماؤں نے رکھا۔ مراکش کے شاہ انہیں اپنے والد کی طرح عزت کرتے اور گھر میں عورتوں کو ان سے پردہ نہ کرواتے۔**

13۔ محترم شاہ فیصل سعودی عرب نے انہیں حج پر آنے پر شاہی مہمان بننے کی درخواست کی۔ جس پر انہوں نے حج کیا۔

شاید آپ کو معلوم نہ ہو، محترم ظفراللہ خان کے انتقال پر روز نامہ ڈان نے اپنے اداریے میں لکھا تھا

“He earned the abiding respect and admiration of the Arab and other Muslim nations as a defender of their interests.”

— *Dawn editorial, 3 September 1985*

14۔ ایک یہودی مصنف اسرائیل ٹی نعمانی صاحب نے کتاب لکھی۔ اس کے صفحہ نمبر 75 پر درج ہے :

Two other small non-Arab Muslim groups, the Circassians, who came in the nineteenth century from Russia and now number about 2,000 souls, and the Ahmadi sect of some 600 people from Pakistan, can also serve in the Army.

اس میں اسرائیل کے جمہوری طرز حکومت کی رواداری بیان کرنا مصنف کو مقصود تھا۔ جس میں چھ سو افراد پر مشتمل احمدی فرقہ پاکستان میں سے ان کا آرمی میں شامل ہونا ممکن لکھا گیا ہے۔ اس امکان کو محترم شورش کاشمیری صاحب نے شمولیت قرار دے دیا اور تب سے اب تک ہر دوسرے تیسرے سال اس بات کو تھوڑے سے اضافہ کے ساتھ اور اب تو جعلی فوٹو لگا کر اور مصدقہ بنانے کی کوشش کی جارہی ہے۔

15۔ حالیہ کچھ عرصہ سے پاکستانی احمدی خواتین کی شمولیت اور ان کی جعلی فوٹو لگا کر جھوٹ کو سچ ظاہر کیا جا رہا ہے۔ اوپر سے اس جھوٹ کو تحقیق یا انگریزی لفظ میں ریسرچ کہہ کر لوگوں کو گمراہ کیا جا رہا ہے۔ احمدیوں کا ایک اشتہار سچائی پر مبنی بھی پاکستانی اخبارات میں چھاپنا منع ہے۔ احمدیوں میں تو صبر موجود ہے اور عمران ریاض صاحب جھوٹ کی بنسری بجا رہے ہیں۔

15۔ مصنف اسرائیل ٹی نعمانی صاحب نے احمدیوں کی اسرائیلی فوج میں ممکنہ شمولیت کے لئے پاکستانی کا لفظ کیوں استعمال کیا ہے؟

اس کا دراصل پس منظر یہ ہے کہ شرق الاوسط میں ایک اور بہت پرانا فرقہ بھی احمدی مسلمان کہلاتا ہے جو پاکستانی فرقہ احمدیہ سے مختلف ہے۔ اس لئے مصنف نے ان سے تخصیص کے لئے اسرائیلی احمدی شہریوں کے لئے پاکستانی احمدی مسلک سے تعلق کی وجہ سے پاکستانی کا لفظ استعمال کیا تھا۔ اس کے علاوہ اور کوئی توجیہ ممکن نہیں۔ اس ایک 1972 کے امکان پر مبنی بات پر بھی ایک ریسرچر کے طور پر تحقیق کرنا آپ کا فرض تھا۔

16۔ عزیزم عمران ریاض! لنڈن پوسٹ کے شاہد قریشی کا مضمون میں نے تب ہی پڑھ لیا تھا۔ اس میں سوائے اس حوالہ کے جو من وعن میں نے اوپر لکھا ہے اور کچھ بھی نہیں مگر بد ظنی سے لتھڑی باتیں۔ یہ محض ایک آن لائن بلاگ ہے اور لفظ ”لنڈن پوسٹ“ سے سنجیدگی کا مرتبہ تو نہیں مل سکتا۔ یہ بات بھی سو فیصد جھوٹ ہے کہ برصغیر سے احمدی اسرائیل جا کر آباد ہوئے**۔ اگر آپ کو علم نہیں تو عرض ہے کہ قیام پاکستان تک بر صغیر کے شہریوں کو برٹش سبجیکٹ کی حیثیت حاصل ہوتی تھی اور اسی وجہ سے بعض افریقی ممالک سے برصغیر کے لوگ برطانیہ آباد ہوئے ہیں۔ اور کوئی ایک پاکستانی نژاد احمدی جس نے اسرائیل کی شہریت اختیار کی ہو، آپ ثابت نہیں کر سکتے۔ میں فرانس میں ان عرب نژاد اسرائیلی احمدیوں کو ملا ہوں۔ وہ سارے کے سارے خالص عرب ہیں اور فلسطینی ہیں۔**

17۔ بھارت کے احمدیوں کے متعلق جو بات فرمائی ہے یہ بھی درست نہیں۔ دوسری طرف بھارتی دیوبند کے علماء کی پریس کانفرنس اب بھی یو ٹیوب پر ہے جس میں وہ کشمیر میں ہونے والے بھارتی ظلم کی نہایت کھل کر تائید کر رہے ہیں۔ اور یہ مفروضہ کہ کل تک جو پاکستانی تھے وہ آج اسرائیل کی فوج میں پاکستان کے خلاف سپورٹ دے رہے ہیں سو فی صد جھوٹ ہے۔ محترم کیا ہو گیا ہے آپ کے فہم کو؟ ایک طرف  پاکستان کی آئی ایس آئی کی صلاحیت بیان کرتے ہیں اور پھر یہ مفروضہ کہ ان کو اس کا علم نہیں کہ پاکستانی احمدی دھڑا دھڑ اسرائیل کے شہری بن رہے ہیں۔

18۔ آپ نے ایک احمدی کی طرف منسوب بات منسوب کی ہے جو اس نے اپنے ہوٹل میں مانچسٹر میں کی تھی اور یہ کہا یہ بے نظیر کا دور تھا۔ کراچی میں امن کے سلسلہ میں۔ لیکن آپ کو جھوٹ بیان کرتے وقت یہ خیال نہیں رہا کہ یہ کتاب تو 1972 میں چھپی تھی اور بے نظیر عرصہ دراز بعد برسراقتدار آئی تھیں۔

19۔ عمران ریاض صاحب نے دفاعی تجزیہ نگاری میں بھی درک پایا ہے۔ اسرائیل اور پاکستان کا دفاعی موازنہ کر کے اور پھر مسلمانوں اور یہودیوں کی بڑی جنگ کے ذکر سے خوف تخلیق کر کے اپنے بیان میں ثقاہت پیدا کرنے کی کوشش کی ہے جو پاکستان جیسے ترقی پذیر ملک کے عوام کے لئے قیمتی معلومات کہی جا سکتی ہیں۔ لیکن حضرت نے روس اور چائنا کو نظر انداز کر دیا ہے۔ ان ممالک کے پاس جو اسلحہ ہے اس سے کوہ ارض کو کئی بار تباہ کیا جا سکتا ہے۔

مزید سنسنی پیدا کرنے کے لئے اسرائیلی موشے دایان کا بھی ذکر کیا ہے جو اسرائیل کے قیام سے پہلے بھی دہشت گرد کارروائیوں میں ملوث تھا اور برطانوی جیل میں بھی رہا۔ اس کے اقوال بیان کر کے یہ ثابت کرنا کہ نعوذباللہ پاکستانی احمدیوں کے بچے اسرائیلی فوج میں شامل ہوتے ہیں انتہائی گمراہ کن مفروضہ ہے۔

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[**PERSPECTIVES**](https://dailytimes.com.pk/perspectives/)

**Books don’t ruin us, but bad books do**

[Kashif Mirza](https://dailytimes.com.pk/writer/kashif-mirza/)

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Sixteen European countries and Israel have laws against Holocaust denial, the denial of the systematic genocidal killing of approximately six million Jews in Europe by Nazi Germany in the 1930s and 1940s. Many countries also have broader laws that criminalize genocide denial. Of the countries that ban Holocaust denial, some, such as Austria, Germany, Hungary, and Romania, were among the perpetrators of the Holocaust and many of these also ban other elements associated with Nazium such as the display of Nazi symbols. Laws against Holocaust denial have been proposed in many other countries in addition to those nations that have criminalized such acts including the US and the UK.

Part of the power of a work of fiction is to challenge prevailing norms and tastes – so it’s no surprise that some of the most enduring titles in the Western canon have regularly come up against censorship. But the most widely banned book in the world may surprise you. Books are essentially a gateway to another world through written words. Some books challenge the perception of everything while others can inspire a whole generation. Without books, much of today’s entertainment would not be the same, that is why banning books especially for young readers is essentially if it’s based on a big lie. Unbanning certain written works can cause more harm than good to children and young adults.

When someone reads a book which is not based on facts, the reader is not only going on a journey with the characters based on a lie, but also with the author. Major books have been subjected to a variety of complaints whether we’re talking about Salman Rushdie’s The Satanic Verses, which was banned or burned in 11 different countries and led to a fatwa against its author, or Malala’s highly controversial book ‘I am Malala’ which was also banned and burned too in Pakistan due to anti-Islam, against the two-nation theory, for blasphemous content, immoral and anti-Pakistan contents. Vladimir Nabakov’s Lolita, whose depiction of pedophilia caused banning in France, England, Argentina, and New Zealand. And then there’s the case of Fifty Shades of Grey by E.L. James, banned in many libraries for being “poorly written,” or the complicated history of The Adventure Of Huckleberry Berry Finn by Mark Twain, which was challenged by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in the 1950s for its blunt depiction of racism and became part of a 1998 lawsuit in Phoenix, Arizona.

Now Pakistan’s largest province bans 100 textbooks for ‘blasphemous’ content. Books printed by Oxford University Press and Cambridge University Press are among 100 that have been banned by an education board in Pakistan for containing content deemed anti-pakistan. Some of the banned books are accused of portraying Pakistan as an inferior country to India.

*The law was already there but for the last four years no one was doing anything*

Resulting now Punjab Textbook and Curriculum Board Managing Director Rai Manzoor Hussain who had banned 100 books taught in private schools has been removed from his post. A notification issued by the Punjab government says that he has been posted to the Services and General Administrative department. The MD had banned 100 textbooks the board found to be against the two-nation theory or deemed unethical, illegal, for blasphemous, immoral and anti-Pakistan content. Moreover, around 10,000 books by 31 publishers were seized, including those by Oxford, Cambridge, Link International Pakistan and Paragon Books. The textbook board had later constituted 30 committees for inspection of these books for further investigation. The District Education Authorities (DEAs) across Punjab will visit private schools to check if these books were still being taught. FIRs must be registered against the publishers for violations under the provisions of the Punjab Curriculum and Textbook Board Act 2015.

On the critical review of the books revealed that ban on such books was fair enough and placed due to the distorted facts about Pakistan and its creation, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Allama Muhammad Iqbal were being taught to the children, while many books also contained blasphemous content. It was sad that nobody checked these books earlier and had no idea what was being taught to our kids. The banned books had distorted facts about Pakistan and its creation, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Allama Muhammad Iqbal while these books also carried blasphemous content. In these books Pakistan was portrayed as an inferior country to India while Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK) was also shown as part of India’ in maps in some of these books. Some books had not even printed the correct date of the birth of Pakistan’s founder ‘Quaid-e-Azam’ Muhammad Ali Jinnah and national poet Allama Muhammad Iqbal, and some had the content against the two-nation theory. Instead of including sayings of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Allama Muhammad Iqbal, one of the books carried sayings of Mahatma Gandhi. Another reason for a ban on these books was the use of the picture of pigs to explain Maths concepts. One of the books by Cambridge tried to promote crime and violence among the students on the basis of unemployment in the country. While some others contained objectionable wrong verses and it’s wrong interpretation, with other “blasphemous material” against some holy religious personalities. Similarly, there were 36 districts of Punjab, but some of these books were still mentioning 35 districts of the province.

Taking immediate notice of the matter, at least 100 books have been banned immediately till correction with publishers directed to stop publishing and selling them books was a very wise step. A bill was passed by the Punjab Assembly that gave the government sweeping powers to ban and confiscate any text that it deemed offensive to Islam and Pakistan. The MD had taken a very wise step which was required under the Punjab Curriculum and Textbook Board Act, 2015, which was passed during the tenure of the previous provincial government. According to Section 10 of the Act, the author is required to seek approval from the Board prior to publishing his/her book. The Act further gives the Board power to ban a publication which contains anything repugnant to the injunctions of Islam, or contrary to the integrity, defence or security of Pakistan or any part of Pakistan, public order or morality. Content related to Islam in an Islamiyat, History, Pakistan Studies, Urdu or Literature book will need a go-ahead from the religious Muttahida Ulema Board, as well as the Punjab Curriculum and Textbook Board, before it can be included in a private school’s curriculum. The law was already there but for the last four years no one was doing anything.

The parameters in the law are very clear about what can and cannot be published. Government can even register a police complaint against a person who does not comply. Under the Act, a person can be imprisoned for up to two years, if he or she fails to abide by the prohibition. What the MD has done is completely fair and 100 percent genuine. But Mr Hussain had faced severe criticism from international media supported by International publishers for banning the books. Books by 31 publishers had been banned for printing illegal material and these publishers were very influential and were upset too over it. These publishers had played a role in getting Mr Hussain transferred and would now get their favourite posted. Pakistan’s constitution guarantees an individual the right to a fair trial and due process. Yet, the government didn’t invite the managing director for a chance to be heard before removal.

In these circumstances District Education Authorities (DEAs) across the province must visit private schools to check if the banned books are still being taught. First Investigation Report (FIR) must be registered against publishers for violations under provisions of Punjab Curriculum and Textbook Board Act 2015. The step taken by the Punjab government is likely to be implemented by other provinces in the country in the coming days as Pakistan looks forward to challenging the curriculum structure of big names like Oxford and Cambridge. Critical review of at least 10,000 books is in process, which would increase the number of banned books a lot higher in the coming days.

The PTCB should have had a mechanism of scrutiny of books in place before letting them be published as 30 committees, along with DEA visits to over 103,800 private schools in Punjab province and over 207000 private schools in the country, would be a very time consuming task. The government mustn’t tolerate this type of material being taught to Pakistani children and must ban such books. We will also do full support and cooperation with government to complete inspection of these books within, and will not allow these books and material against Islam and Pakistan to be taught.

Last month, the Punjab provincial government, in light of the Punjab Assembly resolution, banned two books by British-American author Lesley Hazleton for allegedly containing blasphemous content. The Punjab government’s decision to ban more than 100 schoolbooks for containing ‘objectionable’ content – anti-Pakistan and anti-Islam – is being criticised by so called liberal thinkers, scholars and a small number of netizens. A few weeks ago, a great example was also set by the different governments in different countries when an online mobile game was being banned, some of the reasons given behind the prohibition was that the youth waste time on these games. The issue is not as black and white as one would think. There are very legitimate reasons for banning such books. Yet more flimsy grounds for banning; these grounds come dangerously close to misguided history and blasphemous content.

The more problematic is that the influential publishers have given the impression to the public at large by the removal of the MD PTCB that they actually can challenge the writ of the government at any time. The government should reconsider its recent decision of removal of the MD on the banning of such highly objectionable books, which is a very serious matter and one which can impact our generation and also on our national image.

In the first place, it is always unwise to start willy-nilly banning things, whether these are books, websites or movies – unless there is an obvious violation of laws such as those on hate speech. We must also remember that it is always beneficial for children and young people to obtain a variety of opinions on key topics based on only the truth, not on distorted facts or based on a lie. This should be the prime purpose of education. Teaching people how to think is a skill that will help them throughout life. So will learning about leaders of other nations. It would be a shame if we started books based on a lie or propaganda or on narrow-minded visions of what education is or ought to be. What is written in books for children is not always open to interpretation.

A wide range of material based on propaganda or lie is not beneficial for learners of all age groups. The true purpose of developing the mind and helping children turn into adults able to form sensible opinions and thinking of their own. We also need to understand that what we are teaching our children is how they will eventually view the world. Do we want to teach them which is not true about our religion, nation, country, culture, values and heroes as limited as their own vision or do we want to teach them the truth and the reality that there is diversity – of people, cultures, faiths and politics?

So the question is if these all banned books are against the Islamic and National ideology and it deemed offensive to Islam and Pakistan then why such books till date not banned in other parts of the country? Why did publishers not blacklist such ban books? Stern action must be taken against all the culprits involved in this process including writers, publishers and corrupt officials who allowed and facilitated the accused publishers for publications of such banned books. Learning about the other does not take away from a person; it only makes you stronger and more assured of yourself, but if it is based on only the truth. Books don’t ruin us, but bad books do.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/658826/books-dont-ruin-us-but-bad-books-do/>