

Desecration of Yet Another Ahmadi Mosque in Pakistan

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The International Movement for a Just World (JUST) is shocked and saddened by the news of the desecration of yet another Ahmadi mosque in the Milpur Khas District of Pakistan on 4th May 2023.

It is alleged that about 150 people demolished four minarets of the mosque and attempted to damage its Mihrab. This is the third act of vandalism against an Ahmadi mosque in recent weeks. Over the years there have been other acts of violence against Ahmadi graveyards and properties.

The Supreme Court of Pakistan had in a landmark decision in 2014 decried the desecration of any place of worship. It called for the protection of all places of worship in accordance with Article 20 of the Constitution of Pakistan.

This concept of the protection of all places of worship is also a cardinal principle in the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights of the United Nations. All member states of the UN directly or indirectly subscribe to the ICCPR. It is part and parcel of accepted international law.

Indeed, all the world's major religions exhort their followers to respect places of worship. In Islam for instance this respect is integral to religious freedom. The Noble Quran reminds us that " if God had not enabled people to defend themselves against one another (all) monasteries and churches and synagogues and mosques — in (all of) which God's name is abundantly exalted — would surely have been destroyed (ere now)" (Surah 22, Al-Hajj; Ayat 40)

It is because of these principles and values that JUST conducted a global campaign from 2003 to 2006 urging governments and people everywhere to protect all places of worship.

Leading personalities and organisations from all religious communities endorsed the campaign which elicited thousands of signatures.

JUST is of course aware that some Muslims are opposed to Ahmadis and certain aspects of their teachings which are incongruent with fundamental Islamic beliefs. But that does not give them a right to vandalise places of worship used by the Ahmadis. Disputes of this sort should be resolved through peaceful means.

The Pakistani government should act firmly and decisively against vandalism and violence directed against a community and its place of worship. Other Muslim governments should also take a stand against violence of this sort. Governments in the West which enjoy close ties with the Pakistani government should speak out against violence and vandalism that undermines religious harmony.

Silence on a matter like this is not an option.

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Featured image: The Kalra Kalan mosque before and after the minarets were destroyed. All images and video courtesy of the International Human Rights Committee. ([Source](#))

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