



Home Office

# Country Policy and Information Note

## Pakistan: Ahmadis

Version 4.0

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# Preface

## Purpose

This note provides country of origin information (COI) and analysis of COI for use by Home Office decision makers handling particular types of protection and human rights claims (as set out in [the basis of claim](#) section). It is not intended to be an exhaustive survey of a particular subject or theme.

It is split into two main sections: (1) analysis of COI; and (2) COI. These are explained in more detail below.

## Assessment

This section analyses the evidence relevant to this note – i.e. the COI section; refugee/human rights laws and policies; and applicable caselaw – by describing this and its inter-relationships, and provides an assessment on whether, **in general**:

- A person is reasonably likely to face a real risk of persecution or serious harm
- A person is able to obtain protection from the state (or quasi state bodies)
- A person is reasonably able to relocate within a country or territory
- Claims are likely to justify granting asylum, humanitarian protection or other form of leave, and
- If a claim is refused, it is likely or unlikely to be certifiable as ‘clearly unfounded’ under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.

Decision makers **must**, however, still consider all claims on an individual basis, taking into account each case’s specific facts.

## Country of origin information

The country information in this note has been carefully selected in accordance with the general principles of COI research as set out in the [Common EU \[European Union\] Guidelines for Processing Country of Origin Information \(COI\)](#), dated April 2008, and the Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation’s (ACCORD), [Researching Country Origin Information – Training Manual, 2013](#). Namely, taking into account the COI’s relevance, reliability, accuracy, balance, currency, transparency and traceability.

The structure and content of the country information section follows a [terms of reference](#) which sets out the general and specific topics relevant to this note.

All information included in the note was published or made publicly available on or before the ‘cut-off’ date in the country information section. Any event taking place or report/article published after this date is not included.

All information is publicly accessible or can be made publicly available, and is from generally reliable sources. Sources and the information they provide are carefully considered before inclusion.

Factors relevant to the assessment of the reliability of sources and information include:

- the motivation, purpose, knowledge and experience of the source
- how the information was obtained, including specific methodologies used
- the currency and detail of information, and
- whether the COI is consistent with and/or corroborated by other sources.

Multiple sourcing is used to ensure that the information is accurate, balanced and corroborated, so that a comprehensive and up-to-date picture at the time of publication is provided of the issues relevant to this note.

Information is compared and contrasted, whenever possible, to provide a range of views and opinions. The inclusion of a source, however, is not an endorsement of it or any view(s) expressed.

Each piece of information is referenced in a brief footnote; full details of all sources cited and consulted in compiling the note are listed alphabetically in the [bibliography](#).

## Feedback

Our goal is to continuously improve our material. Therefore, if you would like to comment on this note, please email [the Country Policy and Information Team](#).

## Independent Advisory Group on Country Information

The [Independent Advisory Group on Country Information](#) (IAGCI) was set up in March 2009 by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration to support him in reviewing the efficiency, effectiveness and consistency of approach of COI produced by the Home Office.

The IAGCI welcomes feedback on the Home Office's COI material. It is not the function of the IAGCI to endorse any Home Office material, procedures or policy. The IAGCI may be contacted at:

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Information about the IAGCI's work and a list of the documents which have been reviewed by the IAGCI can be found on the Independent Chief Inspector's pages of the [gov.uk website](#).

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# Assessment

Updated: 20 March 2019

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Basis of claim

- 1.1.1 Fear of persecution or serious harm by state or non-state actors due to the person's religion, i.e. the person is an Ahmadi.

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## 2. Consideration of issues

### 2.1 Credibility

- 2.1.1 The first question the decision maker must consider is whether the person genuinely is an Ahmadi. [Country information](#) in this Note is consistent with the country guidance case [MN and others \(Ahmadis – country conditions - risk\) Pakistan CG \[2012\] UKUT 389 \(IAC\)](#) (14 November 2012), heard on 26, 27, 29 March, 28, 31 May and 20 June 2012. In this case the Upper Tribunal held that:

- decision makers must reach their conclusions based on all the evidence as a whole giving such weight to aspects of that evidence as appropriate. This is likely to include enquiring whether the claimant was registered with an Ahmadi community in Pakistan and worshipped and engaged there on a regular basis (paragraph 122) (see Ahmadi community in Pakistan – [Registration](#));
- post-arrival activity will also be relevant. Evidence likely to be relevant includes confirmation from the UK Ahmadi headquarters [Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK] regarding the activities relied on in Pakistan and confirmation from the local community in the UK where the claimant is worshipping (paragraph 122) (see [Verification process](#)); and,
- a sur place claim by an Ahmadi based on post-arrival conversion or revival in belief and practice will require careful evidential analysis. This will probably include consideration of evidence of the head of the claimant's local United Kingdom Ahmadi Community and from the UK headquarters [Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK – AMA UK], the latter particularly in cases where there has been a conversion. Any adverse findings in the claimant's account as a whole may be relevant to the assessment of likely behaviour on return (paragraph 126) (see [Verification process](#) and [Ahmadi converts](#)).

- 2.1.2 In the reported case of [AB \(Ahmadiyya Association UK: letters\) Pakistan \[2013\] UKUT 511 \(IAC\)](#) (18 September 2013), heard on 30 July 2013, the Upper Tribunal concluded that in deciding a claim for international protection based on a person's Ahmadi faith where credibility is an issue, the more specific information a letter from the Ahmadiyya Association UK contains, as to the person's activities in the United Kingdom, the more likely the letter is to be given weight (paragraph 44).

- 2.1.3 The Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK has a verification procedure to establish whether a person is Ahmadi, and to validate incidents that may have occurred to them in Pakistan (see [Verification process](#)).
- 2.1.4 For further guidance on assessing credibility, see the asylum policy guidance on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).
- 2.1.5 Decision makers must also check if there has been a previous application for a UK visa or another form of leave. Asylum applications matched to visas should be investigated prior to the asylum interview (see the asylum policy guidance on [Visa Matches, Asylum Claims from UK Visa Applicants](#)).
- 2.1.6 Decision makers should also consider the need to conduct language analysis testing (see the asylum policy guidance on [Language Analysis](#)).

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## 2.2 Exclusion

- 2.2.1 Decision makers must consider whether one (or more) of the exclusion clauses is applicable. Each case must be considered on its individual facts and merits.
- 2.2.2 For further guidance on the exclusion clauses and restricted leave, see the [Asylum Instruction on Exclusion: Article 1F of the Refugee Convention](#) and the [Asylum Instruction on Restricted Leave](#).

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## 2.3 Convention reason

- 2.3.1 Actual or imputed religion.
- 2.3.2 Establishing a convention reason alone is not sufficient to be recognised as a refugee. The question to be addressed in each case is whether the particular person will face a real risk of persecution on account of their actual or imputed convention reason.
- 2.3.3 For further guidance on Convention reasons and particular social groups, see the [Asylum Instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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## 2.4 Assessment of risk

### a. Treatment by the state

- 2.4.1 In [MN and others](#), the Upper Tribunal held that:
- The background to the risk faced by Ahmadis is legislation that restricts the way in which they are able openly to practise their faith. The legislation not only prohibits preaching and other forms of proselytising but also in practice restricts other elements of manifesting one's religious beliefs, such as holding open discourse about religion with non-Ahmadis, although not amounting to proselytising. The prohibitions include openly referring to one's place of worship as a mosque and to one's religious leader as an Imam. In addition, Ahmadis are not permitted to refer to the call to prayer as azan nor to call themselves Muslims or refer to their faith as Islam. Sanctions include a fine and imprisonment and if blasphemy is found, there is a risk of the death penalty which to date has not been

carried out although there is a risk of lengthy incarceration if the penalty is imposed (paragraph 119i). (See [Legal rights, Ahmadi community in Pakistan](#) and [Proselytising](#), and also the Country Policy and Information Note [Pakistan: Prison conditions](#)).

- It is, and has long been, possible in general for Ahmadis to practise their faith on a restricted basis either in private or in community with other Ahmadis, without infringing domestic Pakistan law (paragraph 119ii). (See [Legal rights](#) and [Ahmadi community in Pakistan](#)).
- 2.4.2 The situation for Ahmadis in Pakistan has not changed significantly since [MN and others](#) was heard and, in general, this caselaw still applies, (modified by the Court of Appeal judgement [WA \(Pakistan\) 6 March 2019](#) – see below).
- 2.4.3 In assessing the evidence before them, the Upper Tribunal in [MN and others](#) held that ‘Ahmadis are an oppressed religious minority in Pakistan. The relevant provisions of the Pakistan Penal Code [...] restrict the ways in which Ahmadis are able to express and practise their beliefs. If defied, the provisions expose Ahmadis to the risk of prosecution coupled with a risk of detention pending trial’ (paragraph 101).
- 2.4.4 Ahmadis continue to face a high level of official discrimination and remain the subject of legislation that denies them basic rights, including the right to be recognised as Muslims. Ahmadis may be punished for preaching or ‘insulting the religious feelings’ of other Muslims, leaving them open to official punishment for ‘blasphemy’. In 2017, 3 Ahmadis were sentenced to death for blasphemy and at least 9 Ahmadis were imprisoned for their faith (see [Legal rights](#) and [State treatment and attitudes](#)).
- 2.4.5 Anti-Ahmadi rhetoric by public officials has been reported in 2016 and 2017, and the government failed to restrict advertisements or speeches inciting anti-Ahmadi violence in television and print media. There are reports of police entering Ahmadi places of worship to remove signs of the Islamic faith, demolishing or sealing mosques, or giving them to non-Ahmadi imams and their communities. A group of Ahmadis, who were arrested in 2016 for publishing banned Ahmadi magazines, claimed that police had tortured them (see [State treatment and attitudes](#) and Societal treatment and attitudes – [Anti-Ahmadi violence](#)).
- 2.4.6 In [MN and others](#) the Upper Tribunal held that:
- if an Ahmadi is able to demonstrate that it is of particular importance to his religious identity to practise and manifest his faith openly in Pakistan in defiance of the restrictions in the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) under sections 298B and 298C, by engaging in behaviour described in [paragraph 2.3.1 above], he or she is likely to be in need of protection, in the light of the serious nature of the sanctions that potentially apply as well as the risk of prosecution under section 295C for blasphemy (paragraph 120i). (See [Legal rights](#) and Ahmadiyya community in Pakistan – [Culture and activities](#) and [Proselytising](#));
  - an Ahmadi for whom it is of particular importance to their religious identity to practise and manifest their faith openly in Pakistan should not be



expected to avoid engaging in such behaviour to avoid a risk of prosecution (paragraph 120ii) (see Ahmadiyya community in Pakistan – [Culture and activities](#) and [Proselytising](#));

2.4.7 In [WA \(Pakistan\) 6 March 2019](#), heard 30 and 31 January 2019, the Court of Appeal, referring to MN and others, found (paragraph 60):

‘i) Is the Claimant genuinely an Ahmadi? In answering that question the guidance set out in paragraph 5 of the headnote [paragraph 122 of main body] in MN is well expressed.

2.4.8 However, WA goes on to consider the rest of the headnote, paragraph 6 [123 of main body] in particular, and stated:

‘ii) The next step involves an inquiry into the Claimant’s behaviour if he or she is returned to Pakistan. Will he or she actually behave in such a way as to attract persecution? In answering that question, the decision-maker will again consider all the evidence and will, where appropriate, expressly consider whether the behaviour claimed by the asylum-seeker is genuinely an expression of their religious belief and is an authentic account of the way they will behave if returned.

‘iii) If the decision-maker’s conclusion is that the Claimant, if returned to Pakistan, will avoid behaviour which would attract persecution, then the decision-maker must ask the question why that would be so. Many possibilities arise. The individual may genuinely wish to live quietly, and would do so whether or not repression existed in relation to the expression of his or her Ahmadi faith. The individual may have mixed motives for such behaviour. If such a quiet expression or manifestation of genuine Ahmadi belief is merely the result of established cultural norms or social pressures, then it is unlikely there will be a basis for asylum. However, if a material reason (and not necessarily the only reason) for such behaviour will be to avoid persecution, then it is likely that the Claimant will have a valid claim for asylum. There is no requirement that public expression of Ahmadi religious faith, of a kind which is likely to attract persecution, should be of “particular importance” to the Claimant. Such a requirement is inconsistent with the test as laid down in HJ (Iran)’ (paragraph 60).

2.4.9 WA concluded ‘To that extent, the guidance given in the body of MN (Ahmadis) Pakistan CG and in the headnote is misleading and should not be followed’ (paragraph 61).

2.4.10 Decision makers should therefore, when considering a claim from an Ahmadi who says he or she will chose to live quietly on return to Pakistan, ask why would that person chose to do that? If it is because they fear that any outward indication of their faith would cause them to come to the adverse attention of the authorities then it is likely they would qualify for asylum.

2.4.11 The Upper Tribunal also found, from the evidence before them, that:

‘The ability of Ahmadis to defend any prosecution that may ensue after faith-based FIRs have been issued under the PPC, is hampered by the risk of unfair treatment by the police and the trial courts. These problems relate not only to the substance of any prosecution but also the ability of Ahmadis to readily obtain bail prior to or after proceedings have been brought. [...] On

the other hand Ahmadis can be reasonably confident that on appeal to higher courts unfair or unreasonable decisions are likely to be overturned' (paragraph 102). (See State treatment and attitudes – [Police and judiciary](#)).

- 2.4.12 Religious practice for the Ahmadiyya community is centred around strong oral and written traditions, with a distinctive emphasis on performance of religious practices. As the law prohibits Ahmadis from propagating, openly expressing and manifesting the Islamic nature of their faith, Ahmadis who discuss Ahmadiyyat with non-Ahmadis face the risk of being reported to the authorities. The distinguishing attire worn by Ahmadi women may be seen as a form of proselytising, which may result in discrimination and legal repercussions (see [Legal rights](#), Ahmadiyya community in Pakistan – [Culture and activities](#) and [Proselytising](#), and Societal treatment and attitudes – [Women](#)).
- 2.4.13 Ahmadis who openly practise their faith (beyond the restricted basis permitted by domestic law) are liable to prosecution under the anti-Ahmadi and blasphemy laws and are likely to be in need of protection. Anti-terror legislation has also been used to target Ahmadis. Each case must, however, be considered on its facts with the onus on the person to demonstrate that they would be at real risk from the state authorities on return.
- 2.4.14 For further guidance on assessing risk, see the [Asylum Instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#) and, in regard to women, [Gender issues in the asylum claim](#).

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#### b. Societal treatment

- 2.4.15 In [MN and others](#) the Upper Tribunal held that there is clear evidence that anti-Ahmadi legislation is used by non-state actors to threaten and harass Ahmadis. This includes the filing of First Information Reports (FIRs) (the first step in any criminal proceedings) which can result in detentions whilst prosecutions are being pursued. Ahmadis are also subject to attacks by non-state actors from sectors of the majority Sunni Muslim population (paragraph 119i). (See also [Legal rights](#), [Societal treatment and attitudes](#) and [State treatment and attitudes](#)).
- 2.4.16 The Upper Tribunal found, from the evidence it was provided, that:  
'[Ahmadis] face hostility from sectors of the majority of society which is made up of Sunni Muslims. Disagreement with and disapproval of the beliefs of Ahmadis has intensified with the increased Islamisation of Pakistan as well as the growth of fundamentalism. In addition to vulnerability to terrorist threats from the Taliban, they face vehement opposition from the Khatme-e-Nabuwat whose tactics not only include taking out FIRs against Ahmadis but also intimidation. Their influence is pervasive in Pakistani institutions' (paragraph 101). (See also [Societal treatment and attitudes](#)).
- 2.4.17 For more information on First Information Reports (FIRs), see the Country Policy and Information Note, [Pakistan: background information, including actors of protection, and internal relocation](#).
- 2.4.18 Several targeted attacks against Ahmadis were reported in 2017. An Ahmadi lawyer was killed by terrorists in March 2017. Another example is the April

2017 lynching of a university student, accused of promoting the Ahmadi faith, and thus of blasphemy. Two Ahmadis were killed and another injured in a mob attack on an Ahmadi house of worship in Chakwal, Punjab, in December 2016 (see Societal treatment and attitudes – [Anti-Ahmadi violence](#)).

- 2.4.19 Societal discrimination and hate speech/propaganda against the Ahmadi community is widespread. Hate speech is often uncritically published by the media. As well as targeted attacks and blasphemy allegations, Ahmadi property and places of worship have been destroyed or desecrated (see Societal treatment and attitudes – [Discrimination and harassment](#) and [Anti-Ahmadi violence](#)).
- 2.4.20 Ahmadis are subject to exclusion from non-Ahmadi shops and businesses. Ahmadis are routinely harassed and discriminated against in schools and educational institutions, and in their places of employment. Some Ahmadis are reluctant to reveal their faith on account of this (see [Ahmadi community in Pakistan](#), Societal treatment and attitudes – [Discrimination and harassment](#) and [Discrimination in education and employment](#)).
- 2.4.21 Due to their distinctive dress, Ahmadi women may be at greater risk of discrimination and harassment than men (see Ahmadi community in Pakistan – [Ahmadi dress and identifying behaviours](#) and Societal treatment and attitudes – [Women](#)).
- 2.4.22 The Upper Tribunal held, in [MN and others](#), that there is no basis for considering that Ahmadi women as a whole are at a particular or additional risk; the decision that they should not attend mosques in Pakistan was made by the Ahmadi Community following attacks on the mosques in Lahore in 2010. There is no evidence that women in particular were the target of those attacks (paragraph 121) (see Societal treatment and attitudes – [Women](#)).
- 2.4.23 A person who converts to another faith or who is seen to renounce Islam in any other way can be targeted for blasphemy, which carries the death sentence. Pakistani society in general is extremely hostile to converts, with reports of converts being harassed, attacked and tortured (see [Blasphemy laws](#) and [Ahmadi converts](#)).
- 2.4.24 Societal treatment and attitudes towards Ahmadis are may reach the threshold of persecution and/or serious harm, depending on its nature and repetition. Decision makers must consider whether there are particular factors relevant to the specific person which might make the treatment serious by its nature and repetition.
- 2.4.25 For further guidance on assessing risk, see the [Asylum Instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#) and, in regard to women, [Gender issues in the asylum claim](#).

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## 2.5 Protection

- 2.5.1 Where the person's fear is of persecution and/or serious harm by the state, they will not be able to avail themselves of the protection of the authorities.

- 2.5.2 Where the person's fear is of persecution and/or serious harm by non-state actors, decision makers must assess whether the state can provide effective protection.
- 2.5.3 Inconsistent safeguarding of, and official discrimination against Ahmadis persists. Whilst the authorities took steps to protect some individuals from unfounded accusations of blasphemy, lower courts continue to fail to adhere to basic evidentiary standards in blasphemy cases (see State treatment and attitudes – [Targeting on religious grounds](#)).
- 2.5.4 There are reports that the police are, at times, ineffective or unwilling to protect the Ahmadi community from violence, or investigate crimes committed against them. The perpetrators of violence against religious and sectarian minorities are rarely apprehended and sentenced. There is a pattern of appeasement amongst the police of, and in some cases collusion with, religious extremists pursuing hate campaigns against the community (see State treatment and attitudes – [Police and judiciary](#)).
- 2.5.5 Ahmadis may be reluctant to report incidents to the police for fear of facing arrest and prosecution under the anti-Ahmadi or blasphemy laws. Additionally, Ahmadis consider the incidents as part of daily life and do not regularly report them to their community leaders. There are reports that some judges, under pressure from extremist clerics or lawyers, feel forced to withdraw any favourable decisions towards Ahmadis, or delay or abandon trials for fear of reprisals (see also [Legal rights](#), [Societal treatment and attitudes](#), and State treatment and attitudes – [Police and judiciary](#)).
- 2.5.6 As a result, the state appears both unwilling and unable to offer effective protection and the person will not be able to avail themselves of the protection of the authorities.
- 2.5.7 For further guidance on assessing the availability of state protection, see the asylum policy guidance on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#) and, in regard to women, [Gender issues in the asylum claim](#).

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## 2.6 Internal relocation

- 2.6.1 Where the person's fear is of persecution and/or serious harm by the state, they will not be able to relocate to escape that risk.
- 2.6.2 In [MN and others](#) the Upper Tribunal held that, in light of the nationwide effect in Pakistan of the anti-Ahmadi legislation, the option of internal relocation, previously considered to be available in Rabwah, is not in general reasonably open to a person who genuinely wishes to practise and manifest their faith openly in Pakistan contrary to the restrictions of the Pakistan Penal Code (paragraph 124) (see [Legal rights](#), [Ahmadi community in Pakistan](#), [State treatment and attitudes](#) and [Societal treatment and attitudes](#)).
- 2.6.3 Whilst some Ahmadis see Rabwah as a secure place, which allows a greater level of freedom than other areas, daily life and routines are compromised due to the underlying sense of threat. Ahmadis living in Rabwah may also face threats from opponents who target the area because of the large number of Ahmadis in the city. Anti-Ahmadi laws are equally applicable in

Rabwah as they are in elsewhere in Pakistan (see Ahmadi community in Pakistan – [Life in Rabwah](#) and [Legal rights](#)).

- 2.6.4 Where the person's fear is of ill-treatment at the hands of non-state actors, they may be able to avoid this by moving elsewhere in Pakistan. Internal relocation will only be possible if the risk is not present there and if it would not be unreasonable to expect them to do so. In such cases decision makers need to consider the relevance and reasonableness of internal relocation on a case-by-case basis, taking full account of the individual circumstances of the particular person. Where the risk stems from non-state actors threatening to bring about legal action under anti-Ahmadi legislation, it is unlikely that internal relocation will be possible.
- 2.6.5 For further guidance on internal relocation and the factors to be considered, see the asylum policy guidance on [Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#) and, in regard to women, [Gender issues in the asylum claim](#).

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## 2.7 Certification

- 2.7.1 Where a claim is refused, it is unlikely to be certifiable as 'clearly unfounded' under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.
- 2.7.2 For further guidance on certification, see [Certification of Protection and Human Rights claims under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 \(clearly unfounded claims\)](#).

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# Country information

Updated: 12 June 2018

## 3. Ahmadi faith

### 3.1 Background

3.1.1 The official website of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, Al Islam, provided a detailed overview of the Ahmadi religion<sup>1</sup>. Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) noted in its Country Information Report Pakistan, September 2017:

'Ahmadiyya is a religious movement based on Islam and founded in the Punjab region in the late 1800s by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. Ahmadis consider themselves to be Muslims, and follow the teachings of the Quran. The Ahmadiyya believe that Ghulam Ahmad was the Mahdi (a prophet who, according to the hadith, would appear at the time of the second coming of Jesus Christ, and fill the world with justice and equity prior to the Day of Judgement). Sunni and Shi'a Muslims believe that the Prophet Muhammad was the last of the prophets, and many consider Ahmadis to be heretics.'<sup>2</sup>

3.1.2 Al Islam provided information on Islamic beliefs and teachings, and the differences between Ahmadis and other Muslim sects:

'Ahmadi Muslims strictly follow the orthodox religion of Islam and have not added or taken out anything as far as the fundamental beliefs and acts of worship are concerned. The most important distinction between Ahmadis and other Muslims is Ahmadi's acceptance of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (peace be on him) as the Promised Messiah, and his Divine mission to revive faith in Allah, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and the Holy Qur'an.'<sup>3</sup>

3.1.3 In a note to the Country Policy and Information Team (CPIT), dated 8 June 2018, the International Human Rights Committee (IHRC) – a UK-based independent organisation dedicated to defending, promoting and protecting human rights, focusing specifically on the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community – stated:

'The IHRC interviewed the senior leadership of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community (AMC) on this issue. The IHRC was told that there is a theological difference of interpretation between Ahmadis and other Muslims on the issue of the 'Second Coming of the Messiah' which has led to the current day issues. Prior to 1974 Ahmadis were considered as part of the mainstream Islamic faith but this changed with the anti-Ahmadi laws in 1974 and Ordinance XX 1984 in Pakistan.'<sup>4</sup>

3.1.4 The headquarters for the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is based in the UK<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Al Islam, 'Ahmadiyya Muslim Community', undated, [url](#).

<sup>2</sup> DFAT, 'Country Information Report Pakistan', (paragraph 3.75), September 2017, [url](#).

<sup>3</sup> Al Islam, 'Pathway to Paradise', (Chapter 1: Islamic Beliefs and Teachings), 1996, [url](#).

<sup>4</sup> IHRC, 'Note to CPIT', (paragraph 1), 8 June 2018, [Annex D](#).

<sup>5</sup> Al Islam, 'Ahmadiyya Muslim Community', undated, [url](#).



- 3.1.5 The Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam provided information on its group<sup>6</sup>, and also a comparative study of the beliefs between the two sections of the Ahmadiyya movement (the Lahore group and Qadiani branch)<sup>7</sup>.
- 3.1.6 The Pakistan Constitution was amended in 1974 and declared Ahmadis as non-Muslim<sup>8</sup>.

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## 4. Demography

### 4.1 Population

- 4.1.1 There are no reliable statistics on the number of Ahmadis in Pakistan. According to data provided by the National Database Registration Authority (NADRA), cited by The Express Tribune in March 2018, there were just over 167,000 Ahmadis registered in Pakistan<sup>9</sup>. Taking account of the Ahmadi boycott of the official census<sup>10</sup>, other estimates vary from between 400,000<sup>11</sup> to 600,000<sup>12</sup>, and 2 to 5 million<sup>13 14</sup>. The large discrepancy in numbers was attributed to the fact that most Ahmadis tend not to register (on the electoral roll) as they are officially regarded as non-Muslims<sup>15</sup>. Further, according to the IHRC, registering on the electoral roll may also compromise an Ahmadi's security as they are recorded on a separate electoral list<sup>16</sup>. (See also [Electoral list](#)).
- 4.1.2 A report published in October 2014 by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Interior stated that the Ahmadiyya community can be roughly divided into two groups<sup>17</sup>, both with their headquarters in the UK<sup>18</sup>. The Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat has an estimated 600,000 adherents in Pakistan, although the group's own estimate puts the number at around 2 to 5 million. The much smaller Lahore branch, the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at-i-Islam Lahore, was estimated to have about 30,000 adherents worldwide, of whom 5,000 to 10,000 were living in Pakistan<sup>19</sup>.
- 4.1.3 In a meeting with the UK Home Office in March 2015, an official from the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK (AMA UK) stated that the main population centres for Ahmadis in Pakistan, aside from Rabwah, were Sialkot, Quetta, Multan, Rawalpindi, Karachi, Lahore and Faisalabad<sup>20</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> The Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, 'Ahmadiyyat', undated, [url](#).

<sup>7</sup> The Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, 'A Comparative Study of the Beliefs', undated, [url](#).

<sup>8</sup> Constitution of Pakistan, '(Second Amendment) Act, 1974', 17 September 1974, [url](#).

<sup>9</sup> The Express Tribune, 'Declaring faith compulsory', 9 March 2018, [url](#).

<sup>10</sup> USSD, 'International Religious Freedom Report 2017', (Section I), 29 May 2018, [url](#).

<sup>11</sup> 400,000 was cited by the AMA UK, 26 March 2015, obtained from official census 2011, [Annex A](#).

<sup>12</sup> USSD, 'International Religious Freedom Report 2017', (Section I), 29 May 2018, [url](#).

<sup>13</sup> USCIRF, 'Annual Report 2017', (page 61), 26 April 2017, [url](#).

<sup>14</sup> Austria, 'Pakistan: Challenges & Perspectives', (pages 88-89), October 2014, [url](#).

<sup>15</sup> Austria, 'Pakistan: Challenges & Perspectives', (pages 88-89), October 2014, [url](#).

<sup>16</sup> IHRC, 'Note to CPIT', (paragraph 2), 8 June 2018, [Annex D](#).

<sup>17</sup> Austria, 'Pakistan: Challenges & Perspectives', (pages 88-89), October 2014, [url](#).

<sup>18</sup> BBC News, 'Who are the Ahmadi', 28 May 2010, [url](#).

<sup>19</sup> Austria, 'Pakistan: Challenges & Perspectives', (pages 88-89), October 2014, [url](#).

<sup>20</sup> Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK, 26 March 2015, [Annex A](#).

Other areas with Ahmadi populations included Peshawar, Khewra, Sargodha, Bhalwal, Shahpur and Gujranwala<sup>21</sup>.

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## 5. Legal rights

### 5.1 'Anti-Ahmadi' laws

5.1.1 In 1984, Ordinance XX was promulgated 'to amend the law to prohibit the Qadiani group, Lahori group and Ahmadis from indulging in anti-Islamic activities.'<sup>22</sup> The Pakistan Penal Code was amended under the ordinance to include Articles 298b and 298c, commonly referred to as the 'anti-Ahmadi laws', under which Ahmadis are prevented by law from:

- calling themselves Muslims, either directly or indirectly;
- referring to their faith as Islam;
- preaching or propagating their religious beliefs;
- inviting others to accept Ahmadiyya teachings by words, either written or spoken, or by visible representations;
- insulting the religious feelings of Muslims;
- calling their places of worship 'mosques' or 'masjid';
- worshipping in non-Ahmadi mosques or public prayer rooms;
- performing the Muslim call to prayer;
- using the traditional Islamic greeting in public;
- publicly quoting from the Qur'an; or
- displaying the basic affirmation of the Muslim faith.

The punishment for violation of these provisions is imprisonment for up to three years and a fine<sup>23</sup>.

5.1.2 In a note to the Country Policy and Information Team (CPIT), dated 25 April 2018, the International Human Rights Committee (IHRC) stated:

'The law clearly states that Ahmadi Muslims cannot preach or propagate their faith. This is beyond doubt and dispute. This makes the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community unique in Pakistan as being the only religious community in Pakistan to be targeted by the state simply on grounds of faith. This legislation not only prohibits preaching and other forms of proselytizing but also in practice restricts other elements of manifesting religious belief, such as holding open discourse about religion with non-Ahmadis, even where these do not amount to proselytizing. The prohibitions include referring openly to one's place of worship as a mosque and to one's religious leader as an Imam. Ahmadis are not allowed to refer to the call to prayer as "azan", or to call themselves Muslims, or to refer to their faith as Islam. Sanctions

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<sup>21</sup> Austria, 'Pakistan: Challenges & Perspectives', (page 89), October 2014, [url](#).

<sup>22</sup> Ordinance No. XX of 1984, 26 April 1984, [url](#).

<sup>23</sup> Pakistan Penal Code, 6 October 1860, [url](#).



include a fine and imprisonment and, if blasphemy is found, there is the possibility of the death penalty. If the death penalty is imposed there is a risk of lengthy incarceration. This legislation is used by non-state actors to threaten and harass Ahmadis.<sup>24</sup> (See also [Blasphemy laws](#) and [Proselytising](#)).

- 5.1.3 The US Department of State noted in its International Religious Freedom Report for 2017 (USSD IRF 2017) that:

‘According to Ahmadiyya Muslim Community leaders, authorities continued to target and harass Ahmadi Muslims for blasphemy, violations of “anti-Ahmadi laws,” and other crimes. Ahmadiyya leaders stated the ambiguous wording of the legal provision forbidding Ahmadis from directly or indirectly identifying themselves as Muslims enabled officials to bring charges against members of the community for using the standard Islamic greeting or for naming their children Muhammad.’<sup>25</sup>

- 5.1.4 The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in Pakistan told the IHRC that Ahmadis, who use the name Muhammad or Islam, could be in direct violation of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC)<sup>26</sup>.

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## 5.2 Blasphemy laws

- 5.2.1 Section 295 of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) prescribes the Blasphemy laws. Section 295c notes that: ‘Whoever by words, either spoken or written, or by visible representation or by any imputation, innuendo, or insinuation, directly or indirectly, defiles the sacred name of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) shall be punished with death, or imprisonment for life, and shall also be liable to fine.’<sup>27</sup>

- 5.2.2 A report published by the International Committee of Jurists (ICJ), published in November 2015, noted that ‘The vague wording of section 295-C has particularly affected members of the Ahmadiyya community. In some cases, judges have interpreted the expression of religious beliefs by Ahmadis, as understood by the court, as a form of blasphemy.’ The report further noted that ‘[...] the vague wording of the charge, has also led to the violation of a range of fair trial rights, including the right to the presumption of innocence.’<sup>28</sup>

- 5.2.3 According to the USSD IRF Report 2017, blasphemy laws were reportedly used by individuals to initiate complaints against neighbours, peers, or business associates to resolve personal disputes or to intimidate vulnerable people<sup>29</sup>. A report on the findings of a fact-finding mission, on the situation of Ahmadis in Pakistan, undertaken in April 2017 by the International Human Rights Committee (IHRC) and the Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC), also noted that blasphemy laws were often misused to settle

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<sup>24</sup> IHRC, ‘Note to CPIT’, (paragraph 2.2), 25 April 2018, [Annex C](#).

<sup>25</sup> USSD, ‘International Religious Freedom Report 2017’, (Section II), 29 May 2018, [url](#).

<sup>26</sup> IHRC, ‘Note to CPIT’, (paragraph 4), 8 June 2018, [Annex D](#).

<sup>27</sup> Pakistan Penal Code, 6 October 1860, [url](#).

<sup>28</sup> ICJ, ‘On Trial’, (pages 29-30), November 2015, [url](#).

<sup>29</sup> USSD, ‘International Religious Freedom Report 2017’, (Section II), 29 May 2018, [url](#).

personal scores and that ‘... religious clerics used the Blasphemy Laws to encourage their supporters to take the law into their own hands and endorse the murder of minorities in the name of religion.’<sup>30</sup> The USSD IRF Report 2017 added ‘While the law requires a senior police official to investigate any blasphemy charge before a complaint can be filed, human rights activists said police did not uniformly follow this procedure.’<sup>31</sup> The IHRC/AHRC report noted ‘Ahmadis cannot defend themselves against charges of blasphemy without committing blasphemy and placing themselves in acute legal, physical and social jeopardy.’<sup>32</sup>

- 5.2.4 The IHRC/AHRC report stated ‘Representatives of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community explained that the Blasphemy laws severely restricted the ability of Ahmadis to practice their faith whether collectively or individually. The laws create a situation whereby even performing out every day religious practices carries the risk of prosecution.’<sup>33</sup>
- 5.2.5 Amnesty International noted in a November 2017 submission that ‘Mob violence and vigilante justice are common in blasphemy cases. Ahmadis ... have been attacked and killed following a mere allegation of blasphemy.’<sup>34</sup>
- 5.2.6 For a tabulated summary of the blasphemy laws and the penalties for breaching them, see page 67 of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) [Country of Origin Information Report: Pakistan Country Overview](#)<sup>35</sup>.

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### 5.3 Anti-terror legislation

- 5.3.1 According to the USSD IRF Report 2017 ‘A 2015 constitutional amendment allows military courts to try civilians for terrorism, sectarian violence, and other charges; this authority was renewed in January for an additional two years. The government may also use special civilian terrorism courts to try cases involving violent crimes, terrorist activities, and acts or speech deemed by the government to foment religious hatred, including blasphemy.’<sup>36</sup>
- 5.3.2 The IHRC/AHRC report stated that anti-terror legislation was being used to ban and seize Ahmadi publications by declaring Ahmadi literature to be hate material under the National Action Plan (2014). The report noted that the legislation was aimed at stopping sectarian hatred against religious minorities but it was ‘... increasingly used by the State to ban Ahmadi literature and by extremist clerics to target Ahmadis.’ According to the report ‘This has profound implications and is more far reaching than the Blasphemy Laws as any Ahmadi can now be arrested without notice and without any recourse to bail. The penalty is a mandatory five-year sentence of imprisonment.’<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> IHRC/AHRC, ‘Fact-Finding Report’, (page 22), 2017, [url](#).

<sup>31</sup> USSD, ‘International Religious Freedom Report 2017’, (Section II), 29 May 2018, [url](#).

<sup>32</sup> IHRC/AHRC, ‘Fact-Finding Report’, (page 22), 2017, [url](#).

<sup>33</sup> IHRC/AHRC, ‘Fact-Finding Report’, (page 22), 2017, [url](#).

<sup>34</sup> AI, ‘Pakistan: Widespread Human Rights Violations Continue’, (page 8), November 2017, [url](#).

<sup>35</sup> EASO, ‘Pakistan Country Overview’, (page 67), August 2015, [url](#).

<sup>36</sup> USSD, ‘International Religious Freedom Report 2017’, (Section II), 29 May 2018, [url](#).

<sup>37</sup> IHRC/AHRC, ‘Fact-Finding Report’, (page 24), 2017, [url](#).

### 5.3.3 Reuters reported on 16 November 2017 that:

‘In the past four years, the Punjab government has also targeted Ahmadis under the country’s anti-terrorism laws, filing at least eight cases against Ahmadis on charges of producing hate literature, including the sect’s own holy texts. The offices of an Ahmadi magazine in Rabwah were raided in December 2016 by police, who arrested seven people and confiscated papers and hard drives. [...] Community leaders say the use of anti-terrorism laws marks a new phase in the targeting of Ahmadis.’<sup>38</sup> (For more information on the office raid in Rabwah, see State treatment and attitudes – [Discrimination and harassment](#)).

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## 5.4 Declaration of religious identity

### 5.4.1 Reporting on 9 March 2018, The Express Tribune noted:

‘The Islamabad High Court declared [...] that a faith affidavit must be submitted to apply for all government, semi-government institutions, including judiciary, armed forces and civil services.

‘The court also stated that an affidavit is required in order to get Computerised National Identity Cards, passport, birth certificate, entry in voters list.

‘IHC’s Justice Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui has directed the parliament to make necessary legislation and also introduce requisite amendments in the existing laws to ensure that all the terms specifically used for “Islam” and “Muslims” are not used by the persons belonging to any of the minorities for hiding their real identity or for any other purpose.’<sup>39</sup>

### 5.4.2 Reuters reported on 9 March 2018 that:

‘A Pakistani court ruled on Friday that all citizens must declare their religion when applying for identity documents... The ruling will pile further pressure on the Ahmadi community, who are not allowed to call themselves Muslim or use Islamic symbols in their religious practices, a crime punishable under Pakistan’s blasphemy laws. The Islamabad High Court ruled that citizens who disguised their religious affiliation were guilty of betraying the state and ordered that anyone applying for government jobs should declare their faith.’<sup>40</sup>

See also [Passports and identity cards](#) and [Electoral list](#).

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## 5.5 Passports and identity cards

### 5.5.1 A person’s religious affiliation must be declared when applying for a passport and/or national identity card (CNIC)<sup>41</sup> <sup>42</sup>. When applying for a passport or

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<sup>38</sup> Reuters, 16 November 2017, [url](#).

<sup>39</sup> The Express Tribune, ‘Declaring faith compulsory’, 9 March 2018, [url](#).

<sup>40</sup> Reuters, 9 March 2018, [url](#).

<sup>41</sup> USSD, ‘International Religious Freedom Report 2017’, (Section II), 29 May 2018, [url](#).

<sup>42</sup> British High Commission, Islamabad, letter dated 4 June 2018, [Annex E](#).

CNIC, those wishing to be listed as Muslims must sign a declaration denouncing the Ahmadiyya Muslim prophet. This effectively prevents Ahmadi Muslims from obtaining legal documents and puts pressure on them to deny their beliefs in order to enjoy citizenship rights, including the right to vote<sup>43</sup> (See [Electoral list](#)). However, the USCIRF 2013 report noted that individuals who refused to sign the declaration when applying for a passport still received one<sup>44</sup>, although in a note dated 8 June 2018, the IHRC informed CPIT that the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in Pakistan confirmed this was not the case. The IHRC noted that an Ahmadi cannot legally obtain a passport without signing the declaration and, if they sign it, they are effectively declaring themselves Muslim, which is in breach of the PPC<sup>45</sup>.

- 5.5.2 According to a NADRA official, consulted by the British High Commission (BHC) in June 2018, no mention of the person's religion is made on Machine Readable Passports. If a person has a valid passport and visa there are no travel restrictions against any minorities<sup>46</sup>. In contrast, the IHRC stated in its note to CPIT, dated 8 June 2018, that information gathered during its fact-finding missions and interviews with the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in Pakistan, had identified numerous instances when Ahmadi travellers faced great harassment and difficulties at Pakistan airports. Lahore airport was reportedly notorious in this respect<sup>47</sup>. Ahmadi were restricted from participating in the Hajj due to the passport application requirements to record one's religious affiliation<sup>48</sup>.
- 5.5.3 In a meeting with Home Office officials, held in March 2015, the UK-based Ahmadi member stated that all Pakistan nationals should have a CNIC. However, the official from the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association (AMA) UK had spoken to a person from Pakistan, living in the UK, who claimed he had not been issued with a CNIC. The Ahmadi member did not think this would be the case [it should be noted that a CNIC is required to obtain a passport in Pakistan<sup>49</sup>]; however, he said that some people living in rural areas, who were uneducated, may not have identity cards. A CNIC does not cite the person's religious affiliation<sup>50</sup>.
- 5.5.4 Although a CNIC does not identify a person as being Ahmadi, i.e. it is not written on the card, the person applying for a CNIC must declare their faith and these records are held by the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA)<sup>51</sup> <sup>52</sup>. The official at the AMA UK pointed out that a CNIC has the person's address on it. Therefore, a Rabwah address would naturally identify a person as being Ahmadi. The Ahmadi member believed that people in NADRA have been known to 'leak' information identifying Ahmadi; he gave an example of someone who knew a person was Ahmadi,

<sup>43</sup> USSD, 'International Religious Freedom Report 2017', (Section II), 29 May 2018, [url](#).

<sup>44</sup> USCIRF, 'Annual Report 2013', (page 127), April 2013, [url](#).

<sup>45</sup> IHRC, 'Note to CPIT', (paragraph 5), 8 June 2018, [Annex D](#).

<sup>46</sup> British High Commission, Islamabad, letter dated 4 June 2018, [Annex E](#).

<sup>47</sup> IHRC, 'Note to CPIT', (paragraph 12), 8 June 2018, [Annex D](#).

<sup>48</sup> USSD, 'International Religious Freedom Report 2017', (Section II), 29 May 2018, [url](#).

<sup>49</sup> Directorate General of Immigration & Passports, 'Ordinary passport', undated, [url](#).

<sup>50</sup> Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK, 26 March 2015, [Annex A](#).

<sup>51</sup> Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK, 26 March 2015, [Annex A](#).

<sup>52</sup> British High Commission, Islamabad, letter dated 4 June 2018, [Annex E](#).

and knew their address, because a person at NADRA had reportedly provided them with this information<sup>53</sup>.

5.5.5 The Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) reported that, in correspondence with its Research Directorate in December 2015:

‘... an associate professor of Anthropology at Harvard University who has conducted research on South Asia and produced publications on Pakistan, stated that Ahmadis are required to “identify themselves as Ahmadis” on national ID cards, and because the card is “required for almost every contractual transaction their identity becomes known and this enables discrimination”. The same source further explained that if an Ahmadi does not declare their religious affiliation as Ahmadi and instead identifies as Muslim, “they could be liable to prosecution for “posing” or “passing”...as Muslims”.’<sup>54</sup> (See [‘Anti-Ahmadi’ laws](#)).

5.5.6 Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW) noted in its submission to the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for International Religious or Belief, 10-11 November 2015, that CNIC cards contain ‘an electronic chip with date of birth, home address, fingerprints and religion and has to be used in the purchase and renting of housing; hiring and leasing cars; purchase and leasing mobile phones and is shown on demand by the police.’<sup>55</sup>

5.5.7 The official from the AMA UK said that a CNIC is required to open a bank account, and that the account holder must declare their religious affiliation<sup>56</sup>. If you declare you are a Sunni Muslim, you are liable to a 2.5% tax (zakat)<sup>57</sup><sup>58</sup>; therefore, according to the AMA UK, an Ahmadi would declare themselves as Ahmadi, i.e. non-Muslim, according to Pakistan law, to avoid this tax. A CNIC is also required to access health services and to rent or buy a property, but a person does not always have to declare their religion for such purposes<sup>59</sup>.

5.5.8 According to a NADRA official, consulted by the BHC in June 2018:

‘All ID card fields can be modified upon request to NADRA when accompanied by documentary proof supporting the change request. In the case of religion, the support documentary proof required is a certificate from a governing body or authority of that congregation under an affidavit and stamped by a notary public. For Ahmadis in particular this would be the Central Council in Rabwah and the applicant would be required to submit documentation supporting their change of faith.’<sup>60</sup>

5.5.9 In correspondence with CPIT, the BHC stated:

‘It should be noted that in November 2017, following controversy surrounding the Election Amendment Act 2017, Justice Siddiqui of the Islamabad High

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<sup>53</sup> Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK, 26 March 2015, [Annex A](#).

<sup>54</sup> IRB, ‘Pakistan: Situation of Ahmadis’, 13 January 2016, [url](#).

<sup>55</sup> CSW, ‘House of Lords Hearing’, (page 1), 10-11 November 2015, [url](#).

<sup>56</sup> Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK, 26 March 2015, [Annex A](#).

<sup>57</sup> USSD, ‘International Religious Freedom Report 2017’, (Section II), 29 May 2018, [url](#).

<sup>58</sup> Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK, 26 March 2015, [Annex A](#).

<sup>59</sup> Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK, 26 March 2015, [Annex A](#).

<sup>60</sup> British High Commission, Islamabad, letter dated 4 June 2018, [Annex E](#).



Court issued a restraining order against modification of the religion field of CNIC holders who are Muslim. This decision has been challenged as a contravention to Article 20 of the Constitution. It is so far unclear if NADRA has instituted any policy change following the IHC order as they have not yet received any cases that would trigger it.<sup>61</sup>

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## 5.6 Electoral list

- 5.6.1 Identity cards are required to vote<sup>62</sup>. The IRB Research Directorate reported that ‘According to sources, Ahmadis are “marginalized” or “excluded” from the electoral system.’ The report also cited an associate professor of Anthropology at Harvard University who explained that ‘in order to register as a voter, “one has to sign a declaration about the finality of the Prophet Muhammad. If one refuses to sign the declaration then one is removed from the joint electoral list and added to a supplementary list, which is titled the Ahmadi voter list”...’ The IRB added that the newspaper Dawn noted in March 2013 that ‘Pakistan’s Election Commission’s Additional Director General [stated] that although the legislation should be amended, inclusion on the supplementary electorate list does not affect an individual’s right to vote...’<sup>63</sup>
- 5.6.2 According to the USSD IRF Report 2017 ‘Since voters who registered as Ahmadis were kept on a separate voter list, they said they were more exposed to threats and physical intimidation, and many Ahmadis did not try to participate in the political process. On December 16 [2017], media reported police in Sialkot, Punjab, had arrested six Ahmadis for listing themselves as Muslims on their identity cards and for registering to vote as Muslims during a local 2015 election.’<sup>64</sup>
- 5.6.3 In its fact-finding report, the IHRC/AHRC noted:  
‘Ahmadis are effectively denied the right to vote and they are disfranchised unless they declare themselves as non-Muslims. [...] Ahmadis can be permitted to vote only under a separate register and by self-identifying as a non-Muslim minority, denying their faith. While Ahmadis are registered on a separate electoral register, all other communities – whether Muslim, Sikh, Hindu or Christian – are listed on a unified joint register. [...] the separate Ahmadiyya electoral register is publicly available, making it much easier for extremists to target Ahmadis.’<sup>65</sup>
- 5.6.4 Proposed amendments to the Election Act 2017 would have seen changes removing a requirement for Ahmadi voters to declare they are not Muslim, as well as to the clauses relating to the finality of prophethood<sup>[66]</sup> (Khatm-e-Nabuwat). The wording in Form A, which is submitted by election candidates to affirm their belief in the finality of Prophet Muhammad, had

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<sup>61</sup> British High Commission, Islamabad, letter dated 4 June 2018, [Annex E](#).

<sup>62</sup> USSD, ‘International Religious Freedom Report 2017’, (Section II), 29 May 2018, [url](#).

<sup>63</sup> IRB, ‘Pakistan: Situation of Ahmadis’, 13 January 2016, [url](#).

<sup>64</sup> USSD, ‘International Religious Freedom Report 2017’, (Section II), 29 May 2018, [url](#).

<sup>65</sup> IHRC/AHRC, ‘Fact-Finding Report’, (page 23), 2017, [url](#).

<sup>66</sup> Finality of the prophethood is the traditional Muslim belief that Mohammad is the last prophet.

been changed from 'I solemnly swear' to 'I believe', thus making it a declaration form instead of an affidavit, which puts a candidate under oath. After objections by conservative Islamists, parliamentary leaders restored the original wording, and a separate voter list for Ahmadi's remained<sup>67 68</sup>.

- 5.6.5 DFAT noted 'In the lead-up to the 2013 elections many Ahmadis refused to register as non-Muslims on this list, and were therefore unable to vote.'<sup>69</sup>

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## 6. Ahmadiyya community in Pakistan

### 6.1 Registration

- 6.1.1 The official from the AMA UK understood that there was no central register of Ahmadis in Pakistan. However, local Ahmadi branches in Pakistan maintained a members' list, usually containing personal bio-data and financial information, which was divided into: men aged 40 and above; men aged 15-40; and a women's' section. The manner each list was maintained was specific to local branches. A UK-based member of the Ahmadi community (Ahmadi member) confirmed that his local branch in Rawalpindi kept a list of members, adding that some branches issued membership cards. When moving location and registering with a new branch, the Ahmadi member stated that the usual procedure was for the person's old branch to confirm any previous membership<sup>70</sup>.

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### 6.2 The city of Rabwah

- 6.2.1 The Ahmadi headquarters in Pakistan is based in Rabwah (official name Chenab Nagar)<sup>71</sup>. According to sources consulted by the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) of Canada's Research Directorate, the Ahmadi population in Rabwah was approximately 60,000-70,000, accounting for 90-95% of the city's population<sup>72</sup>. Rabwah, which covers around 24 square kilometres (km) of land, is situated approximately 7km from Chiniot, and around halfway between Faisalabad and Sargodha<sup>73</sup>.

- 6.2.2 A study published by the Pakistan Association of Anthropology (PAA) in 2015 noted that Rabwah was originally divided into nine boroughs (mahallahs) and as the city expanded the boroughs were split into sub-divisions, and new boroughs were established, including Factory Area, Tahir Abad, Nasir Abad, Rehman Colony, Muslim Colony, and Buyutul Hamd. The original boroughs were:

- Darul Sadar (The Main/Central House)
- Darul Rehmat (The House of Mercy)
- Darul Futuh (The House of Triumphs)

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<sup>67</sup> Dawn, 'NA passes bill to restore Khatm-i-Naboowat declaration', 5 October 2017, [url](#).

<sup>68</sup> Reuters, 16 November 2017, [url](#).

<sup>69</sup> DFAT, 'Country Information Report Pakistan', (paragraph 3.79), September 2017, [url](#).

<sup>70</sup> Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK, 26 March 2015, [Annex A](#).

<sup>71</sup> IRB, 'Pakistan: Religious and ethnic groups in Rabwah', 11 January 2017, [url](#).

<sup>72</sup> IRB, 'Pakistan: Religious and ethnic groups in Rabwah', 11 January 2017, [url](#).

<sup>73</sup> Bajwa. L.S., and Khan. S.E., 'Exploring Rabwah' (page 1616), March/April 2015, [url](#).

- Darul Barakat (The House of Blessings)
- Darul Aloom (The House of Learning)
- Darul Nasar (The House of Divine Help)
- Darul Shukar (The House of Gratitude)
- Darul Yuman (The House at the Right)
- Babul Abwab (Door of the Doors)<sup>74</sup>.

6.2.3 According to the PAA study, school enrolment rates in Rabwah were nearly 100 per cent and literacy rates were high. The study recorded that:

‘There are numerous Government and Private Primary and Secondary Schools as well as Colleges, e.g. Jamia Nusrat Girls College and School, Talim-ul-Islam College and School, Government Degree College, Nusrat Jehan Academy and Inter College. There are also separate schools that come under Nazarat Taleem, the [Ahmadi] community’s Directorate of Education:

- Buyut-ul-Hamd Primary School
- Bayoutul Hamd Girls High School
- Maryam Girls High School
- Maryam Siddiqua Girls High School
- Tahir Primary School
- Nasir High School.<sup>75</sup>

See also [Education](#).

6.2.4 The same study indicated that ‘Rabwah also has its own hospitals that are run on community’s expenses, providing free treatment to their missionaries and dedicated (waqf) persons, as well as to non-community members coming there for treatment. These include Fazle Omar Hospital Complex, Begum Zubaida Bani Gynecology and Obstetrics Wing, Tahir Heart Institute, Blood & Eye Donor Center and Tahir Homeopathic Research and Training Institute.<sup>76</sup>

6.2.5 On 27 December 2017, The New York Times published an article on Rabwah. Describing the city, the report noted ‘The roads are paved and lined with greenery. An Olympic-size swimming pool, state-of-the-art library, free eye and blood banks and a world-class cardiology hospital have been set up. Much of the community is affluent, and the literacy rate is over 85 percent. The city is small enough that people, even those who can afford cars, cycle everywhere.’<sup>77</sup>

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### 6.3 Life in Rabwah

6.3.1 The IRB cited Simon Ross Valentine, a freelance British lecturer and researcher of Islam and comparative religions, as stating in 2014, ‘Ahmadis in Rabwah “enjoy considerable freedom and prosperity”.’ The IRB report

<sup>74</sup> Bajwa. L.S., and Khan. S.E., ‘Exploring Rabwah’ (page 1616), March/April 2015, [url](#).

<sup>75</sup> Bajwa. L.S., and Khan. S.E., ‘Exploring Rabwah’ (page 1616), March/April 2015, [url](#).

<sup>76</sup> Bajwa. L.S., and Khan. S.E., ‘Exploring Rabwah’ (page 1616), March/April 2015, [url](#).

<sup>77</sup> New York Times, ‘Shunned by Pakistan’s Muslims’, 27 December 2017, [url](#).



further noted ‘However, sources report that Ahmadis are not permitted to hold religious conferences in Rabwah [...] and that peaceful gatherings by the religious group are not permitted by authorities’.<sup>78</sup>

- 6.3.2 In summarising its findings, the PAA study revealed that ‘Rabwah holds a special place in the life of all Ahmadis...’. The report added ‘Ahmadis scattered all over Pakistan relate with Rabwah as a secure place, as something, perhaps the only thing proudly their own, and as a place where their identity is not a taboo, and where it need not to be hidden. Conversations with members reveal that compared with other cities of Pakistan, Rabwah allows a great level of freedom to the Ahmadis to organize themselves, and carry out their religious activities peacefully.’<sup>79</sup>
- 6.3.3 Summarising some of the findings of a fact-finding mission undertaken between 8 and 13 December 2014, co-ordinated and facilitated by the Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) and the International Human Rights Committee (IHRC), EASO noted in its report on Pakistan that:
- ‘Due to their numerical dominance the Ahmadi population may feel relatively safe in Rabwah. However, there are threats as well, since opponents know that there is a concentration of Ahmadis in Rabwah and target the city. Every year several anti-Ahmadiyya meetings are held in Rabwah whereby opponents from other parts of the country are transported into the city. Using loudspeakers these opponents shout anti-Ahmadiyya slogans while the Ahmadis barricade themselves indoors.’<sup>80</sup>
- 6.3.4 The PAA study also found that in Rabwah:
- ‘Interactions with the community members and participation in their activities also simultaneously inform that Rabwah, despite being a city that is predominantly Ahmadi, remains a sensitive place, where individuals are beleaguered by an undying sense of threat, which effectively compromises their daily life and routine activities.
- ‘Community meetings at local mosques take place under armed security men... while a congregation larger than 30 people is not allowed within the city. The meeting points and timings of ijlaas [sessions] are not pre-announced, and the decades old tradition of national-level events once held in Rabwah have come to a complete halt since the attack on Ahmadiyya mosques in Lahore in 2010. Naturally, the activities of the mosques are also constrained, where the Jumma [Friday] prayers are only attended by men unlike previously where women in large numbers used to come for the Jummah.’<sup>81</sup>
- 6.3.5 Reuters reported on 16 November 2017 ‘Many Ahmadis in Pakistan say they only truly feel safe in Rabwah [...] Most of the town’s infrastructure is maintained on contributions made by the community, including free hostels and food for visitors and a community organized garbage clean-up.’<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> IRB, ‘Pakistan: Religious and ethnic groups in Rabwah’, 11 January 2017, [url](#).

<sup>79</sup> Bajwa. L.S., and Khan. S.E., ‘Exploring Rabwah’ (page 1617), March/April 2015, [url](#).

<sup>80</sup> EASO, ‘Pakistan Country Overview’, (page 84), August 2015, [url](#).

<sup>81</sup> Bajwa. L.S., and Khan. S.E., ‘Exploring Rabwah’ (page 1617), March/April 2015, [url](#).

<sup>82</sup> Reuters, 16 November 2017, [url](#).

6.3.6 In December 2017, The New York Times described ‘Rabwah – where portraits of the Ahmadi sect’s turbaned founder, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, are ubiquitous – has a veneer of calm, even affluence, that is at odds with the growing hatred against the sect elsewhere in the country.’ However, the report also noted ‘The legal changes [[‘Anti-Ahmadi’ laws](#)] have left the sect particularly vulnerable, and attacks on Ahmadi businesses, places of worship and graveyards are common.’ The report added that Rabwah’s largest mosque, Masjid-e-Aqsa, which can hold 20,000 people, was abandoned for smaller neighbourhood mosques following the twin attacks on Ahmadi mosques in Lahore in 2010, which killed 93 people<sup>83</sup>.

6.3.7 Describing everyday activities, The New York Times noted:

‘In a bustling bazaar on the busy Aqsa Road, women in thick button-down loose robe abayas distinctive to the Ahmadis could be seen smelling oranges at fruit stalls, haggling with jewelry store owners and hailing yellow taxis. In neighboring towns like Faisalabad and Chiniot, shop signs warn Ahmadis not to enter: “First enter Islam, then enter this shop!” [See Societal treatment and attitudes – [Discrimination and harassment](#)] But here in the bazaar, almost every second store had the word Ahmadi in its name: Ahmadi Tailors. Ahmadi General Store. Ahmadi Hardware.

‘After nightfall, children played cricket in well-kept parks while their fathers gathered around coal heaters. Others could be seen walking back from school, bowed under the weight of colorful knapsacks. Rabwah’s few, overcrowded schools must run on two shifts – morning and evening – to make sure everyone gets an education.’<sup>84</sup> (See also [Education](#)).

6.3.8 Despite daily life continuing for Ahmadis in Rabwah, The New York Times added that ‘... hard-liner Muslims come to Rabwah, too. When the annual processions to mark Eid Milad-un-Nabi, birthday celebrations for the Prophet Muhammad, roll through the city, the authorities warn Ahmadis to shut their businesses and lock themselves inside their homes, as procession leaders hurl “unrepeatable” expletives against Ahmadi leaders and declare them “worthy of being murdered”.’<sup>85</sup>

6.3.9 Reuters also reported on anti-Ahmadi sentiment:

‘... on the edge of Rabwah lies a small settlement and a mosque run by a right-wing Islamist organization that openly professes hatred for Ahmadis.

‘The organization, Khatm-e-Nubuwwat (Finality of the Prophet), built the mosque on land the Punjab government ordered confiscated from Ahmadis in 1975 for low-income housing.

‘Khatm-e-Nubuwwat has been at the forefront of initiating blasphemy allegations against Ahmadis. Every year for 36 years, the group has held an anti-Ahmadi rally at the mosque.

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<sup>83</sup> New York Times, ‘Shunned by Pakistan’s Muslims’, 27 December 2017, [url](#).

<sup>84</sup> New York Times, ‘Shunned by Pakistan’s Muslims’, 27 December 2017, [url](#).

<sup>85</sup> New York Times, ‘Shunned by Pakistan’s Muslims’, 27 December 2017, [url](#).

“Qadianis are the enemies of the prophet,” said Aziz ur Rehman, an organizer of the Rabwah conference, adding: “A country that was made in the name of the prophet cannot accept Qadianis”.<sup>86</sup>

See Societal treatment and attitudes – [Discrimination and harassment](#), [Anti-Ahmadi violence](#) and State treatment and attitudes – [Police and judiciary](#).

6.3.10 Mehreen Zahra-Malik, reporting for The New York Times, interviewed one woman, who described how her husband was murdered. When asked if she felt safe in Rabwah, she replied ‘The day I arrived here with my children, a strange peace came over me and I thanked Allah that we have this place, [...] At least we have Rabwah.’<sup>87</sup>

6.3.11 The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in Pakistan told the IHRC, as cited in a note to CPIT, dated 8 June 2018, that:

‘... Rabwah is no safer than any other place in Pakistan and potentially a risky place to live, if one goes by the expressed wishes and intentions of anti-Ahmadi sentiment in Rabwah from mainstream Muslims. It should also be highlighted that anti-Ahmadi laws are equally applicable in Rabwah. As a result of government policy, for years a large number of Ahmadis from Rabwah faced prosecution in courts. These included the high echelon of Ahmadi leadership. Twice, on orders of the political leadership, the entire Ahmadi population of Rabwah was booked in fabricated criminal cases.’<sup>88</sup>

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## 6.4 Culture and activities

6.4.1 The PAA study on Ahmadis in Rabwah reported that:

‘The Ahmadiyya is a religious community centered around very strong oral and written traditions, with a distinctive emphasis on performance of religious practices. The community life is organized and structured around tanzeems, or bodies along age and gender - namely Ansaar-Ullah (men of age above 40), Khudaam-ul-Ahmadiyyat (men above age 18), Ittefal-ul-Ahmadiyyat (boys below 18) Lajna Ima-Ullah (women above age 18) and Nasirat-ul-Ahmadiyyat (girls below 18).’<sup>89</sup>

6.4.2 The PAA study described how local branches organised their activities for members, and the general practices members undertake:

‘Each body organizes members around both religious and secular activities like sports, speech competitions, and educational endeavors. Every member is intimately linked to the body and is gathered on several occasions on [a] weekly, monthly and yearly basis. Records of private religious activities is also maintained on [a] monthly basis through these bodies, where members are asked about the number of prayers offered, text or books of Mirza Ghulam Ahmed being read, letter writing to the Khalifa, Friday sermon being watched etc. The purpose of this, as shared by the respondents [to the study], is to enhance the levels of prayer and devotion amongst members

<sup>86</sup> Reuters, 16 November 2017, [url](#).

<sup>87</sup> New York Times, ‘Shunned by Pakistan’s Muslims’, 27 December 2017, [url](#).

<sup>88</sup> IHRC, ‘Note to CPIT’, (paragraph 6), 8 June 2018, [Annex D](#).

<sup>89</sup> Bajwa. L.S., and Khan. S.E., ‘Exploring Rabwah’ (page 1616), March/April 2015, [url](#).

and urge them to keep raising their efforts. The community is very closely linked, where individuals enter Ahmadiyyat by undertaking an oath of allegiance, the bayah [bai'at<sup>90</sup>], to the supreme head of the community that binds them to the shared norms and values of the movement. Moreover, the existing members revise this oath on yearly basis in order to remind themselves of the duties and obligations that they have upon them as followers of Mirza Ghulam Ahmed.

'Letter writing to the Khalifa is a very consistent and prominent feature of the Ahmadi lifestyle, where each member the researcher spoke to maintains a personal and regular correspondence with the Khalifa, especially on important life occasions like birth of a child, death of loved one, illness in the family, academic achievements, building a house, undertaking any new project, and also seeking advice on marriage and career choices.'<sup>91</sup>

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## 6.5 Proselytising

6.5.1 Article 298c of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) prohibits an Ahmadi from preaching and propagating their religious beliefs<sup>92</sup>. The IHRC/AHRC 2017 fact finding report noted that:

'Under this article an Ahmadi becomes liable to be imprisoned for up to three years or face a fine if he or she "preaches or propagates his faith, or invites others to accept his faith, by words, either spoken or written, or by visible representations, or in any manner whatsoever. Further, Article 298C forbids Ahmadis from "posing as Muslims" directly or indirectly "or from outraging the feelings of Muslims". The loose wording of the law means it is regularly abused to harass and discriminate against Ahmadis.'<sup>93</sup>

6.5.2 In April 2018, the International Human Rights Committee (IHRC) provided a note to the Country Policy and Information Team (CPIT), which stated that the legislation in the PPC '... not only prohibits preaching and other forms of proselytizing but also in practice restricts other elements of manifesting religious belief, such as holding open discourse about religion with non-Ahmadis, even where these do not amount to proselytizing.'<sup>94</sup> (see ['Anti-Ahmadi' laws](#)).

6.5.3 The IHRC described the importance of Tabligh, i.e., 'the possibilities for Ahmadis to profess their faith and the possibilities to express it publicly, through evangelism or otherwise'. The IHRC noted that, according to the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, the definition of Tabligh was 'preaching, conveying the message of Ahmadiyyat to non-Ahmadis (i.e. those who are not Ahmadis)'.<sup>95</sup>

6.5.4 The IHRC added, in its note to CPIT, dated 8 June 2018, that:

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<sup>90</sup> Al Islam, 'Conditions of Initiation (Bai'at)', undated, [url](#).

<sup>91</sup> Bajwa. L.S., and Khan. S.E., 'Exploring Rabwah' (page 1616), March/April 2015, [url](#).

<sup>92</sup> Pakistan Penal Code, 6 October 1860, [url](#).

<sup>93</sup> IHRC/AHRC, 'Fact-Finding Report', (page 47), 2017, [url](#).

<sup>94</sup> IHRC, 'Note to CPIT', (paragraph 1.2), 25 April 2018, [Annex C](#).

<sup>95</sup> IHRC, 'Note to CPIT', (paragraph 1.1), 25 April 2018, [Annex C](#).

'It should be noted that the law disallows Tabligh even for self-defence. The vernacular press repeatedly accuses Ahmadis of being "the worst enemies of Islam and Pakistan". If Ahmadis say that it is not true, and explain their position, they are accused of preaching or propagating. This is leading to a growing resentment of Ahmadis and anti-Ahmadi sentiments taking root in the minds of the younger generation as they do not know any other narrative.'<sup>96</sup>

6.5.5 The IHRC noted that in terms of an Ahmadis religious knowledge for undertaking Tabligh, this question was raised with the Imam of Ahmadiyya London Mosque, Mr Ataul Mujeeb Rashed, who said to the IHRC that:

"... it cannot be denied that one who is well versed and has educated himself with all the intellectual and philosophical arguments used by the community, such as a Minister of Religion who has been through a seven years' full-time course at a theosophical academy, would be a well-rounded and knowledgeable member who can teach the faith to others effectively. This does not mean that a less well-educated person could not discuss religious matters with his contacts. Therefore it is plausible that an Ahmadi can engage in preaching activities with non-Ahmadis despite limited English. Even the mere fact that he/she might offer an invitation to a non-Ahmadi to an Ahmadi Muslim community function is a form of Tabligh since he is seeking to promote his faith. Even when he offers hospitality to another this is laying the foundations for Tabligh and is indeed regarded as a form of Tabligh by our community and by those who oppose our faith community".<sup>97</sup>

6.5.6 The IHRC continued:

'In short, Tabligh does not mean per se that one must proselytize openly and in public. It takes many forms and has many meanings such as one's behaviour, hospitality, giving literature, doing charitable work, meeting people and engaging with them on faith to more direct means such as holding Tabligh Stalls, leafleting, engaging directly with people, and holding events. All these fall under the ambit of Tabligh. It is all about promoting the Ahmadi faith and will depend entirely on the circumstances and environment in which Ahmadis are present.

'In the UK, Ahmadis undertake this in many forms, such as leafleting, coffee mornings, charitable work, inviting non-Ahmadis to Ahmadi mosques or homes of Ahmadis to events. It has to be borne in mind that this is not totally possible in Pakistan as it is illegal for Ahmadis to undertake or participate in such activities.

'Those who take the risk to take part in such activities would do so discreetly and commonly through charitable work subtly once they have got to know people and then possibly by inviting them to their homes.'<sup>98</sup> (see [Verification process](#)).

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<sup>96</sup> IHRC, 'Note to CPIT', (paragraph 7), 8 June 2018, [Annex D](#).

<sup>97</sup> IHRC, 'Note to CPIT', (paragraph 1.7), 25 April 2018, [Annex C](#).

<sup>98</sup> IHRC, 'Note to CPIT', (paragraph 1.7), 25 April 2018, [Annex C](#).



6.5.7 The IHRC added:

‘Having spoken to the Ahmadi Community in Pakistan and the United Kingdom, it is clear that Ahmadis feel that their very essence has been sapped and outlawed by the fact that they are not allowed to express any aspect of their faith which has any connection with Islam or from referring to their faith as “Islam”. Article 298c forbids Ahmadis from “posing as Muslims” directly or indirectly “or from outraging the feelings of Muslims”. The loose wording means abuse of the law to harass Ahmadis is rife.’<sup>99</sup>

6.5.8 The IHRC/AHRC fact-finding report cited the effects of anti-Ahmadi legislation:

‘Ahmadi Muslims cannot openly profess their faith publicly through evangelism or otherwise. The definition of proselytizing is being stretched for Ahmadi Muslims and is now limited to activities such (but not exclusively) as serving humanity through medical camps which may lead to discussions about Ahmadiyyat although not publicly; Ahmadis discussing Ahmadiyyat with non-Ahmadis once they have become familiar with them although they run the risk of being reported; for women the attire generally worn by Ahmadi ladies can be a means and way of proselytizing – again this attracts the risk of being discriminated against particularly socially where they are easy targets. The Mission heard that performing the aforementioned activities is still not an easy task as it means there is risk to the relevant Ahmadi and can have negative repercussions.’<sup>100</sup>

6.5.9 The IHRC note to CPIT stated:

‘Having spoken to and interview[ed] hundreds of members of the Ahmadiyya faith in Pakistan and asylum seekers in the United Kingdom, it has become evident that Ahmadis resort to covert means of propagating their faith in Pakistan and in most cases only do so when a relationship has been established with an individual and they feel it is safe to broach the subject. Any actions including charitable works that may show the Ahmadi faith in a positive light may be seized upon by opponents of the community as attempts to propagate the faith. Since the law forbids Ahmadis from propagating their faith Ahmadis thus resort to more subtle means of impressing others in the hope of leading by example whereby good works and behaviour may attract others towards the faith.’<sup>101</sup>

6.5.10 The IHRC continued:

‘Whilst the Ahmadi community in Pakistan undertakes, from time to time, humanitarian and charitable works either directly or indirectly through NGOs [non-governmental organisations], they also take the opportunities they present to engage in dialogue with any who may display an interest in the faith. Accordingly, medical camps where free medicines and treatment are distributed to the wider community and community services such as road cleaning and repairs etc. present gentle means of reaching out, if and when the occasion becomes propitious.

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<sup>99</sup> IHRC, ‘Note to CPIT’, (paragraphs 1.8-1.9), 25 April 2018, [Annex C](#).

<sup>100</sup> IHRC/AHRC, ‘Fact-Finding Report’, (page 47), 2017, [url](#).

<sup>101</sup> IHRC, (paragraph 1.5), 25 April 2018, [Annex C](#).

‘Further all these things come under the ambit of Tabligh or an Ahmadi propagating his/her faith. The Ahmadiyya Muslim community explained that whilst propagation of faith was important to them this took many forms from direct to indirect Tabligh. In fact, the Ahmadiyya Muslim community mentioned that being identified as an Ahmadi in Pakistan is Tabligh itself. Further, the very essence of Tabligh is dependent on the circumstances. In some circumstances it would be direct and open, whilst in others it would be indirect or discrete.’<sup>102</sup>

(see also [Culture and activities](#) and [Ahmadi dress and identifying behaviours](#)).

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## 6.6 Ahmadi dress and identifying behaviours

6.6.1 DFAT reported ‘Unlike some other minority groups in Pakistan, Ahmadi are not readily identifiable by their appearance, language or names... Pakistan’s Ahmadi community is relatively well educated and prosperous.’<sup>103</sup>

6.6.2 The PAA study illustrated traditional Ahmadi attire, stating that it was:

‘... an important source and strengthener of the Ahmadi identity where men and women both maintain a consistent image of the Ahmadi appearance. Men, young and old have beards covering most part of their face, and are seen wearing a Jinnah cap in public spaces. Shalwar Kameez is more readily observed on Fridays while a mix of western suits and formal wear is observed throughout the weekdays. Women wear coats, or burqaas that are not quite ankle length but stay somewhere between the knee and the ankle. The faces are partially covered, with a black niqaab hanging loosely under the nose. An important identity marker is the Ahmadi ring, with an ayah inscribed on a stone that translates as “Is Allah not sufficient for His servant” – and is worn by men and women alike.’<sup>104</sup>

6.6.3 Both the AMA UK and the UK-based Ahmadi member said that Ahmadi beards are generally trimmed, or in the shorter, ‘French’ style, adding that some Islamic sects have no moustache and a beard the length of a ‘fist’. People also recognise an Ahmadiyya signet ring [inscribed with a Quranic verse<sup>105</sup>], worn by some men. The Ahmadi member and AMA UK stated that the style in which Ahmadi women wear their clothes would identify them easily. The way the dress is sewn is unique to the Ahmadi community, as is the way the hijab is worn. Ahmadi women do not cover their face with a veil<sup>106</sup>. The IHRC/AHRC fact-finding report noted that Ahmadi women were easy to recognise as their distinct style of dress distinguishes them from other Muslim women<sup>107</sup>.

6.6.4 In describing how a person might be identified as Ahmadi, both the Ahmadi member and AMA UK confirmed that although certain names are common,

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<sup>102</sup> IHRC, (paragraph 1.6), 25 April 2018, [Annex C](#).

<sup>103</sup> DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (paragraph 3.77), September 2017, [url](#).

<sup>104</sup> Bajwa. L.S., and Khan. S.E., ‘Exploring Rabwah’ (page 1617), March/April 2015, [url](#).

<sup>105</sup> IHRC/AHRC, ‘Fact-Finding Report’, (page 25), 2017, [url](#).

<sup>106</sup> Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK, 26 March 2015, [Annex A](#).

<sup>107</sup> IHRC/AHRC, ‘Fact-Finding Report’, (page 43), 2017, [url](#).

not all names can identify a person as Ahmadi. The Ahmadi member explained that the local Mullah would know if a person was Ahmadi, particularly since members of the Ahmadiyya community would not attend the local mosque and therefore be easily singled out as Ahmadi. The Ahmadi member added that where there is an Ahmadi mosque, people go there to pray. However, where there is no mosque, Ahmadis go to peoples' (usually the Ahmadi community leader) houses<sup>108</sup>.

- 6.6.5 The Ahmadi member also explained that at his house in Pakistan he watched MTA (Ahmadiyya TV channel). A satellite dish is needed to watch this channel – most TV channels are supplied by cable – therefore houses that have satellite dishes are often assumed to be Ahmadi<sup>109</sup>.

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## 7. Ahmadi converts

- 7.1.1 A person who converts to another faith or who is seen to renounce Islam in any other way can be targeted for blasphemy, which carries the death penalty<sup>110</sup>; Pakistani society in general is extremely hostile to converts with reports of converts being harassed, attacked and 'tortured'<sup>111</sup>.
- 7.1.2 In a note to CPIT, dated 25 April 2018, the IHRC stated 'The situation for converts [to the Ahmadi faith] is extremely more difficult and dangerous. If the conversion is declared in public then such a person has to face severe consequences and he/she would be legally declared non-Muslim and liable to be killed under the [Blasphemy laws](#).'<sup>112</sup> The IHRC noted that if a conversion to the Ahmadi faith remains secret then '... such a person may escape legal punishment but still faces social excommunication, mental torture and prejudicial and discriminatory treatment.'<sup>113</sup>
- 7.1.3 According to 2017 census data, provided by the National Database Registration Authority (NADRA), 10,205 people had changed their religious status from Muslim to Ahmadi<sup>114</sup>. It was reported in February 2018 that the Islamabad High Court ordered Pakistan's national citizen database (NADRA) to provide detailed information on the estimated 10,000 Pakistani citizens who had reportedly changed their religion to Ahmadiyya. The court directed NADRA to provide the converts age and parent's names, and also ordered the Federal Investigation Agency to submit the international travel history of those who had changed their religion to Ahmadi<sup>115 116</sup>. In February 2018, the same the same court barred NADRA from making any changes in the religion column on national identity cards of the Muslim citizens<sup>117</sup>.

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<sup>108</sup> Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK, 26 March 2015, [Annex A](#).

<sup>109</sup> Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK, 26 March 2015, [Annex A](#).

<sup>110</sup> CSW, 'House of Lords Hearing', (pages 2-3), 10-11 November 2015, [url](#).

<sup>111</sup> IRB, 'Pakistan: Religious conversion', 14 January 2013, [url](#).

<sup>112</sup> IHRC, 'Note to CPIT', (paragraph 3.1), 25 April 2018, [Annex C](#).

<sup>113</sup> IHRC, 'Note to CPIT', (paragraph 3.2), 25 April 2018, [Annex C](#).

<sup>114</sup> The Express Tribune, 'Declaring faith compulsory', 9 March 2018, [url](#).

<sup>115</sup> Rabwah Times, 'Pakistani court orders list of people who left Islam', 27 February 2018, [url](#).

<sup>116</sup> The Express Tribune, 'IHC seeks Ahmadis' population figures since 1947', 7 March 2018, [url](#).

<sup>117</sup> Rabwah Times, 'Pakistani court orders list of people who left Islam', 27 February 2018, [url](#).



- 7.1.4 In its note to CPIT, the IHRC said ‘The Ahmadiyya Community in Pakistan confirmed to the IHRC that they do get converts but the exact figures were not confirmed. This was corroborated by speaking to some converts in Pakistan. It is fair to say that they do not advertise their conversion to the Ahmadi faith [to avoid discrimination and harassment].’<sup>118</sup>
- 7.1.5 Although section 298c of the Pakistan Penal Code (see [‘Anti-Ahmadi’ laws](#)) bans Ahmadis from seeking converts<sup>119</sup>, religious conversion is not in itself illegal<sup>120 121</sup> but, according to DFAT, may be seen as blasphemous and ‘... can result in either prosecution under blasphemy laws (see [Blasphemy laws](#)) or familial or communal violence (or both).’<sup>122</sup> The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) reported in its 2017 Annual Report that, according to an ‘anti-Ahmadi’ resolution passed by the Azad Kashmir (AJK) Assembly, ‘Muslims who joined the Ahmadiyya sect were to be designated apostates (murtad) and subjected to effective penal action.’<sup>123</sup>
- 7.1.6 Despite laws prohibiting Ahmadis from calling themselves Muslim (see [‘Anti-Ahmadi’ laws](#)), Ahmadis self-identify as Muslim<sup>124</sup>.
- 7.1.7 The official website of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, Al Islam, provided information on the process for joining the community<sup>125</sup>, and the ‘Conditions of Initiation (Bai’at)’<sup>126</sup>.
- 7.1.8 In November 2009, the IRB Research Directorate outlined the treatment of converts to the Ahmadi faith in Pakistan. Ahmadiyya leaders in Canada reported to the IRB that non-Ahmadi Muslims who convert to the Ahmadi religion face physical torture, eviction from their families, social segregation or even death at the hands of their families or religious leaders. The report noted:

‘In correspondence with the Research Directorate, the National General Secretary of Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama’at Canada stated that a non-Ahmadi Muslim who converts to the Ahmadi faith “will face extreme persecution which could be ... physical torture, expulsion from family, social boycott, murder or a combination of all” ... The Eastern Canada Regional Amir of Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama’at Canada stated that violence against converts can come from both their immediate family and religious leaders ... The Eastern Canada Regional Amir further stated that there is a fatwa [religious ruling] which states that non-Ahmadi Muslims who convert to the Ahmadi faith should be killed within three days of their conversion ... Further information on the fatwa could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.’<sup>127</sup>

<sup>118</sup> IHRC, ‘Note to CPIT’, (paragraph 3.3), 25 April 2018, [Annex C](#).

<sup>119</sup> Pakistan Penal Code, 6 October 1860, [url](#).

<sup>120</sup> DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (paragraph 3.91), September 2017, [url](#).

<sup>121</sup> The Express Tribune, ‘Pakistani man wins right to change religion’, 27 March 2017, [url](#).

<sup>122</sup> DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (paragraph 3.91), September 2017, [url](#).

<sup>123</sup> HRCP, ‘State of Human Rights in 2017’, (page 86), March 2018, [url](#).

<sup>124</sup> DFAT, ‘Country Information Report Pakistan’, (paragraph 3.78), September 2017, [url](#).

<sup>125</sup> Al Islam, ‘Declaration of Initiation’, undated, [url](#).

<sup>126</sup> Al Islam, ‘Conditions of Initiation (Bai’at)’, undated, [url](#).

<sup>127</sup> IRB, ‘Pakistan: The situation of non-Ahmadi Muslims who convert’, 23 November 2009, [url](#).

#### 7.1.9 The IRB response also noted:

'The General Secretary of Ahmadiyya Anjuman Lahore provided the following information on the consequences of both public conversion and private conversion:

"[I]f the conversion is declared in public then such a person has to face severe consequences and he would be legally declared non-Muslim and liable to be killed...

"If the case is not declared and such conversion remains secret then ... such a person escapes legal punishment but still faces mental torture and prejudicial treatment". ...

'In a telephone interview with the Research Directorate, the Eastern Canada Regional Amir corroborated that some people do not advertise their conversion to the Ahmadi faith...'<sup>128</sup>

#### 7.1.10 The IHRC stated in its April 2018 note to CPIT:

'Those who have converted face social boycotts in their society, marital problems with pressure from the side of the family on the partner who has not converted to the Ahmadi faith. This issue is further compounded if there are children.

'It is also common for converts to not reveal to their family or friends that they have converted to the Ahmadi faith.

'In one case in the UK, a lady [...] explained that her first husband left Ahmadiyyat due to pressure from his family. He told this lady to also leave so that they could remain married. When she did not, clerics, particularly from Khatme Nabuwat started to cause problems for her which eventually led her to leave Pakistan.'<sup>129</sup>

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## 8. State treatment and attitudes

### 8.1 Discrimination and harassment

#### 8.1.1 DFAT noted that Ahmadis faced high levels of official discrimination, adding:

'Ahmadis are also not able to practise their religion freely. Credible sources told DFAT of cases where authorities, including police, have entered Ahmadi places of worship to dismantle minarets (symbols of Islamic mosques) and to remove Arabic inscriptions of Islamic texts from the walls. [...] There are also credible reports of Ahmadi places of worship being given over to non-Ahmadi imams and their communities, and of authorities closing down Ahmadi publications.'<sup>130</sup>

#### 8.1.2 The USSD IRF Report 2017 noted:

'According to Ahmadiyya community members, authorities continued to seal or demolish Ahmadi mosques, barred construction of new mosques, and

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<sup>128</sup> IRB, 'Pakistan: The situation of non-Ahmadi Muslims who convert', 23 November 2009, [url](#).

<sup>129</sup> IHRC, 'Note to CPIT', (paragraphs 3.4-3.6), 25 April 2018, [Annex C](#).

<sup>130</sup> DFAT, 'Country Information Report Pakistan', (paragraph 3.80), September 2017, [url](#).

took no action to prevent attacks on mosques or punish assailants who demolished, damaged, forcibly occupied, or set Ahmadi mosques on fire. In May [2017] the Lahore High Court granted bail to 37 individuals accused of participating in a December 2016 attack on an Ahmadiyya mosque in Chakwal. During the incident, one of the attackers was killed, and one of the Ahmadiyya worshippers died of a heart attack. At year's end, 60 of the 67 attackers had been granted bail, one Ahmadi remained imprisoned on murder charges, and the mosque remained sealed.<sup>131</sup>

- 8.1.3 The IHRC noted in its June 2018 note to CPIT that there were 'Restrictions on construction, repairs and upgrading of Ahmadiyya mosques, and the consequential difficulties in worship and religious assemblies.'<sup>132</sup>
- 8.1.4 According to the USSD IRF Report 2017 'Following an attack on an Ahmadiyya procession in central Punjab in late 2016, Ahmadiyya leaders reported the community undertook no processions in 2017, on the grounds the government's policies created conditions where Ahmadis could not safely hold processions or publicly congregate.'<sup>133</sup>
- 8.1.5 The IHRC/AHRC report stated 'The Mission was informed that the Ahmadi Community's books and literature are banned. This has been further compounded by the use of anti-terror legislation against Ahmadis. Public meetings of Ahmadis are banned and there is no right for freedom of assembly. In short, there is a constant fear of prosecution against Ahmadis, and fear of lynch mob violence.'<sup>134</sup>
- 8.1.6 DFAT noted 'On 5 December 2016, officers from the Counter Terrorism Department of the Punjab Police raided the Ahmadi headquarters in Rabwah, arresting four Ahmadis on suspicion of publishing banned magazines. One security guard was reportedly beaten in the attack.'<sup>135</sup>
- 8.1.7 Also describing the raid on the Ahmadi headquarters in Rabwah on 5 December 2016, the USSD IRF Report 2016 stated:  
  
'Police arrested four individuals, and charged a total of nine Ahmadis with offenses related to publishing an Ahmadi magazine that the Punjab government banned in 2014. The Ahmadi representatives said a court order allowed them to keep publishing. Ahmadi representatives stated those arrested were tortured while in police custody. The charges carry a maximum penalty of seven years' jail time; the four arrested individuals remained in jail with their trial pending.'<sup>136</sup>
- 8.1.8 In its fact-finding report, the IHRC/AHRC stated:  
  
'Ahmadis detained in the raid on the headquarters in Rabwah reported to the Mission that they were slapped, punched, kicked and assaulted with the butts of police rifles. They were also verbally abused. They were subjected to threats that they would be extra judicially executed, and were even

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<sup>131</sup> USSD, 'International Religious Freedom Report 2017', (Section II), 29 May 2018, [url](#).

<sup>132</sup> IHRC, 'Note to CPIT', (paragraph 10a), 8 June 2018, [Annex D](#).

<sup>133</sup> USSD, 'International Religious Freedom Report 2017', (Section II), 29 May 2018, [url](#).

<sup>134</sup> IHRC/AHRC, 'Fact-Finding Report', (page 22), 2017, [url](#).

<sup>135</sup> DFAT, 'Country Information Report Pakistan', (paragraph 3.80), September 2017, [url](#).

<sup>136</sup> USSD, 'International Religious Freedom Report 2016', (Section II), 15 August 2017, [url](#).

subjected to “mock executions”. Ahmadi detainees interviewed by the Mission said “we were told we could be released if we renounced our faith”. Those detained had nothing to do with the banned magazine.<sup>137</sup>

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## 8.2 Anti-Ahmadi rhetoric

8.2.1 Anti-Ahmadi rhetoric by public officials was reported. The IHRC note to CPIT, dated 8 June 2018, stated ‘A recent trend has seen main stream politicians now try to encourage the religious parties in promoting hate against Ahmadis, in view of the forthcoming elections (e.g., Captain Safdar’s recent rhetoric against Ahmadis).’<sup>138</sup> Reuters reported in November 2017 ‘... speaking before Pakistan’s National Assembly, ... lawmaker Muhammad Safdar Awan [former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif’s son-in-law] called for Ahmadis to be barred from employment in the government, judiciary, and military. Sharif himself later distanced himself from Safdar’s statement.’<sup>139</sup>

8.2.2 The HRCP noted in its 2017 report ‘When a parliamentarian from the ruling party stood up in the National Assembly and called for discriminatory actions to be taken against the Ahmadis, he was neither challenged nor his statement condemned. Only after a question was raised in the British Parliament did the ruling party distance itself from the remarks.’<sup>140</sup>

8.2.3 The USSD IRF Report 2017 noted:

‘Some government officials made anti-Ahmadi statements and attended events that vilified the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. In January [2017] the annual Khatm-e-Nabuwat conference was held in Lahore under the leadership of, among others, Punjab Minister of Specialized Healthcare and Medical Education Khawaja Salman Rafique and Punjab Minister of Primary and Secondary Health Khawaja Imran Nazir. Speakers called on the government to “stop the support of the Qadianis [a pejorative term for Ahmadi Muslims].” Then Federal Minister of Finance Ishaq Dar also addressed the conference and promised there would be no changes to the blasphemy laws. In February at a conference of political parties organized under the auspices of the International Majlis Tahaffuz Khatm-e-Nabuwat, an organization which aims to safeguard the “finality of prophethood,” several political leaders made anti-Ahmadiyya statements, including Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam President Maulana Fazl-ur-Rehman and Raja Zafar ul Haq, the chairman of the governing Pakistani Muslim League (Nawaz) (PML-N) party. In a meeting with Muslim clerics in October, Punjab Law Minister Rana Sanaullah said Ahmadis were more dangerous to Islam than any other “non-Muslim” minority.’<sup>141</sup>

8.2.4 The IHRC reported that:

‘On 22nd January 2018 in a live Urdu current affairs show on Channel 24, the Chairman of the Pakistan Ulema Council [a body of Islamic scholars] Mr Tahir Ashrafi demanded a ban be imposed on all Qadiani (Qadiani is a

<sup>137</sup> IHRC/AHRC, ‘Fact-Finding Report’, (page 36), 2017, [url](#).

<sup>138</sup> IHRC, ‘Note to CPIT’, (paragraph 10e), 8 June 2018, [Annex D](#).

<sup>139</sup> Reuters, 16 November 2017, [url](#).

<sup>140</sup> HRCP, ‘State of Human Rights in 2017’, (page 88), March 2018, [url](#).

<sup>141</sup> USSD, ‘International Religious Freedom Report 2017’, (Section II), 29 May 2018, [url](#).

derogating term for Ahmadi Muslims) literature and the Holy Quran which is translated by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community should be confiscated.

'The Minister for Religious Affairs in the Punjab Government, Mr Zaeem Qadri in reply said that we have banned all their literature, raided and sealed their presses. He further remarked that "I'll personally strangle anyone who still distributes the Quran".'<sup>142</sup>

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### 8.3 Targeting on religious grounds

8.3.1 The USSD IRF Report 2017 noted 'According to Ahmadiyya community leaders, the targeting and harassment of Ahmadi Muslims for blasphemy and other purported violations of law persisted. [...] Members of religious minority communities stated the government was inconsistent in safeguarding minority rights, and official discrimination against Christians, Hindus, Sikhs, and Ahmadiyya Muslims persisted.'<sup>143</sup>

8.3.2 According to the US Commission for International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) Report 2017, Abdul Shakoor's store manager, Mazhar Sipra, a Shia Muslim, was also sentenced to 5 years imprisonment on terrorism charges. Both men were appealing their sentences<sup>144</sup>.

8.3.3 According to an annual report for 2017, on the persecution of Ahmadis in Pakistan, as at 31 December 2017, 77 Ahmadis were booked in 10 police cases [compared to 14 Ahmadis charged in 2016<sup>145</sup>], and 9 Ahmadis were imprisoned for their faith. The report noted:

'Ahmadis continue to be booked, arrested and sentenced to imprisonment terms, even death, for their faith, under Ahmadi-specific laws, blasphemy laws and other laws. PPC 295-A is often imposed, as it facilitates recourse to trial in a speedy anti-terrorism court. Bails are often denied, even in higher courts. Imprisonment sentences are doled out by the judges. This year three Ahmadis were sentenced to death; they were accused of tearing an anti-Ahmadiyya poster.'<sup>146</sup>

8.3.4 The USSD IRF Report 2017 stated:

'As of the end of the year, nine Ahmadis remained in prison on religion-related charges, including 80-year-old Abdul Shakoor, who was arrested by the Punjab Counter-Terrorism Division in December 2015 for selling Ahmadiyya religious books. In 2016 an ATC [Anti-Terrorism Court] sentenced Shakoor to five years' imprisonment for propagating the Ahmadiyya Muslim faith, and to an additional three years under the Anti-Terrorism Act for stirring up "religious hatred" and "sectarianism," with sentences to run concurrently.

'In August a court overturned the blasphemy conviction of Ahmadi Qamar Ahmad Tahir after he had spent 21 months in prison. The authorities

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<sup>142</sup> IHRC, 'Incident Report', 27 January 2018, [url](#).

<sup>143</sup> USSD, 'International Religious Freedom Report 2017', (Section II), 29 May 2018, [url](#).

<sup>144</sup> USCIRF, 'Annual Report 2017', (page 63), 26 April 2017, [url](#).

<sup>145</sup> USSD, 'International Religious Freedom Report 2016', (Section II), 15 August 2017, [url](#).

<sup>146</sup> Persecution of Ahmadis in Pakistan During the year 2017, (page 35), 31 December 2017, [url](#).



arrested Tahir in November 2015 for allegedly ordering the burning of a Quran at the factory where he worked as a security guard. A mob subsequently burned down the factory, an Ahmadiyya mosque, and several homes belonging to Ahmadis.<sup>147</sup>

8.3.5 The report on the persecution of Ahmadis in Pakistan during the year 2017 cited statistics of police cases registered against Ahmadis on religious grounds between April 1984 and 31 December 2017<sup>148</sup>:

Description of cases	Total number of cases
Number of Ahmadis booked for displaying Kalima, i.e. "There is none worthy of worship except Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah"	765
Number of Ahmadis booked for calling Azan, call to prayers	38
Number of Ahmadis booked for 'posing' as Muslims	447
Number of Ahmadis booked for using Islamic epithets	161
Number of Ahmadis booked for offering prayers	93
Number of Ahmadis booked for preaching	815
Number of Ahmadis booked for celebrating Ahmadiyya Centenary in 1989	27
Number of Ahmadis booked for celebrating 100 years' anniversary of the eclipses of sun & moon that occurred in 1894 as a sign for the Promised Mahdi, i.e. Founder of the Ahmadiyya Community	50
Number of Ahmadis booked for distributing a pamphlet 'Ek Harf-e-Nasihana' i.e. 'A Word of Advice' commenting upon anti-Ahmadiyya Ordinance XX	27
Number of Ahmadis booked for distributing "Mubahala" pamphlet, i.e. A challenge to the opponents for prayer duel	148
Number of Ahmadis booked for allegedly defiling the Holy Quran	46
Number of named Ahmadis booked in other cases on religious grounds	1164
Number of Ahmadis charged under the "Blasphemy Law", i.e. PPC 295-C	307
Former Supreme Head of the Community while living in London was charged in his absence in sixteen cases.	16
Present Supreme Head of the Community while living in London	2
The entire population of Rabwah i.e. Ahmadiyya headquarters in Pakistan was charged under section PPC 298-C on 15-12-1989, and again on June 8, 2008. (Population of Rabwah is approximately sixty thousand.)	
A case against the entire Ahmadi population of Ahmadis in Kotli, was registered for taking up repairs and improvement in their mosque in 2008	

8.3.6 The majority of cases registered against Ahmadis in 2017 remained consistent with 2015<sup>149</sup> and 2016<sup>150</sup> figures. Compared with 2016, in 2017,

<sup>147</sup> USSD, 'International Religious Freedom Report 2017', (Section II), 29 May 2018, [url](#).

<sup>148</sup> Persecution of Ahmadis in Pakistan During the year 2017, (page 131), 31 December 2017, [url](#).

<sup>149</sup> Persecution of Ahmadis in Pakistan During the year 2015, (page 134), 31 December 2015, [url](#).

<sup>150</sup> Persecution of Ahmadis in Pakistan During the year 2016, (page 128), 31 December 2016, [url](#).

there was a 1.1% increase in the number of Ahmadis booked for preaching (up from 806 to 815), and a 1.3% increase in Ahmadis charged under the blasphemy law section 295c of the Pakistan Penal Code (up from 303 to 307)<sup>151</sup>. Based on the sources provided above, between 2015 and 2017, 18 Ahmadis have been booked for preaching.

See '[Anti-Ahmadi laws](#)' and [Blasphemy laws](#).

- 8.3.7 According to representatives from the Ahmadiyya community, provincial authorities prevented Ahmadis from purchasing land near the community's headquarters in Rabwah<sup>152</sup>.

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## 8.4 Police and judiciary

- 8.4.1 The IHRC/AHRC 2017 report noted that, 'According to domestic and international human rights organizations, the government's general failure to investigate, arrest, or prosecute those responsible for religious freedom abuses have promoted an environment of impunity fostering intolerance and acts of violence... Ahmadis are also denied the basic right to a fair trial. The vast majority of the offences committed against Ahmadis go unpunished.'<sup>153</sup>

- 8.4.2 The IRB Research Directorate reported in January 2016 that, according to various sources (dated 2014 and 2015):

'... the police have "had a poor record" ... or have been "ineffective" in protecting the Ahmadi community from, or investigating, violence against Ahmadis... PBS [Public Broadcasting Service] reports that "few" of the perpetrators involved in violence against Ahmadis have been prosecuted... The Wall Street Journal reports that, in response to fires set in Gujranwala in July 2014, the police dispersed the crowd and put out the fire as "quickly as [they] could" and while no arrests had been made, an investigation had been started... Agence France Presse (AFP) reports that, in regards to the November 2015 factory arson, police were "unable to control the...mob" and a spokesperson for the local Ahmadi community was quoted as stating that three Ahmadis were arrested under blasphemy charges.'<sup>154</sup>

- 8.4.3 A January 2016 report by the Jinnah Institute stated 'The role of police, primarily in Punjab and Sindh, provinces with the highest population of Ahmadis in the country, ... shows a pattern of appeasement of, and in some cases collusion with, religious extremists pursuing hate campaigns against the community.' The report also cited that the police were often reluctant to register cases against alleged attackers of Ahmadis, or to follow up on cases that were registered, adding 'The police, often motivated by ingrained religious biases, are often bystanders when a case of violence against the Ahmadi community comes to light. Families of gunned down victims in Karachi, have reported the police's reluctance in registering cases against "unidentified" killers, and, in a few cases, the police was reported to have

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<sup>151</sup> Persecution of Ahmadis in Pakistan During the year 2017, (page 131), 31 December 2017, [url](#).

<sup>152</sup> USSD, 'International Religious Freedom Report 2017', (Section II), 29 May 2018, [url](#).

<sup>153</sup> IHRC/AHRC, 'Fact-Finding Report', (page 38), 2017, [url](#).

<sup>154</sup> IRB, 'Pakistan: Situation of Ahmadis', 13 January 2016, [url](#).

discouraged family members from registering complaints against militant groups like Lashkar-e-Jhangvi.’ There were also reports of police involvement in the removal of religious Ahmadi texts from the façade of Ahmadi homes<sup>155</sup>.

- 8.4.4 The official at the AMA UK stated that Ahmadis were hesitant to report incidents to the police due to fear of recriminations. He explained that there may be situations, for example, if you were badly injured, where you would have to make a report. However, even serious incidents, including deaths, may not be reported as the police did not always record a First Information Report (FIR) due to pressure placed on them by some clerics<sup>156</sup>.
- 8.4.5 The IHRC/AHRC fact-finding report stated ‘On 12 December 2016, a mob of over 1,000 persons attacked the Ahmadi mosque in Dulmial. Two died in the violence. The Ahmadis had alerted the police regarding the possibility of an attack and the police had promised to protect the mosque but did not do so. The mosque was occupied and is still under the authorities control as of this writing, and it has been defiled. The Ahmadi Community has been deprived of a place of worship as a result.’<sup>157</sup> (See also Societal treatment and attitudes – [Anti-Ahmadi violence](#)).
- 8.4.6 The AMA UK confirmed that people were more likely to report incidents to their local community/leaders but not in all cases; for example, if the incident was not considered serious enough. Some incidents occur frequently so the victim would not report it for fear of drawing attention to themselves. The AMA UK believed that the most serious incidents were reported to the community and unless there had been a change in leadership of the branch, the President of that branch would know about such occurrences, which may be corroborated by the branch’s security and surveillance department. However, according to the AMA UK, most Ahmadis consider such incidents as daily life and did not regularly report them. In regard to reporting incidents generally, the AMA UK likened it to having the ‘flu’; sometimes you go to the doctor, but sometimes you don’t<sup>158</sup>.
- 8.4.7 Dawn – a Pakistan national English-language news site – reported, on 18 December 2017, that, in reaction to an attack on a church in Quetta, the Sindh Government increased security to protect places of worship for religious minorities across the province. Although already protected to an extent, law enforcement agencies were asked by the Home Ministry to tighten security for non-Muslims’ worship places. A total of 2,310 policemen were deputed to guard all 1,253 places of worship belonging to religious minorities in Sindh, of which 21 belonged to the Ahmadi community<sup>159</sup>.
- 8.4.8 The AMA UK cited an example of a judge who, on appeal, overturned the conviction of a person who had killed an Ahmadi and stated that killing an Ahmadi wasn’t a crime<sup>160</sup>. In its submission to the APPG in November 2015,

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<sup>155</sup> Jinnah Institute, ‘State of Religious Freedom in Pakistan’, (pages 22, 28), January 2016, [url](#).

<sup>156</sup> Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK, 26 March 2015, [Annex A](#).

<sup>157</sup> IHRC/AHRC, ‘Fact-Finding Report’, (page 36), 2017, [url](#).

<sup>158</sup> Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK, 26 March 2015, [Annex A](#).

<sup>159</sup> Dawn, ‘Sindh increases security for places of worship’, 18 December 2017, [url](#).

<sup>160</sup> Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK, 26 March 2015, [Annex A](#).



the International Human Rights Committee stated that ‘Most judges are scared to take any decision favourable to Ahmadis. In some cases (at least 3 at High Court level) even after announcing the decisions in favour of Ahmadis, judges were forced to take them back under pressure from the clerics and lawyers representing the hardline religious groups.’<sup>161</sup> A report by the Austrian Federal Office for Asylum and Immigration – following a Fact Finding Mission (FFM) to Pakistan undertaken in July 2015 – noted, in relation to blasphemy charges, that ‘Lower courts and higher courts often interpret the anti-Ahmadi laws very extensively. [...] Nevertheless, ... according to representatives of the Ahmadiyya community, fair judges do exist in Pakistan, which has led to the acquittals of certain Ahmadis.’<sup>162</sup> (See [Blasphemy laws](#)).

#### 8.4.9 The USSD IRF Report 2017 noted:

‘Legal observers said authorities took steps to protect some individuals from unfounded accusations of blasphemy... [but] continued to raise concerns regarding the failure of lower courts to adhere to basic evidentiary standards in blasphemy cases, which led to some convicted persons spending years in jail before higher courts overturned their convictions and freed them for lack of evidence. Lower courts reportedly continued to conduct proceedings in an intimidating atmosphere, with members of groups labelled extremist by the government, such as the Khatm-e-Nabuwat (“Finality of the Prophethood”) group, often threatening the defendant’s attorneys, family members, and supporters. According to observers, the general refusal of lower courts to free defendants on bail or acquit them persisted due to fear of reprisal and vigilantism. Legal observers reported judges and magistrates often delayed or continued trials indefinitely in an effort to avoid confrontation with, or violence from, groups labeled by the government as extremist.’<sup>163</sup>

#### 8.4.10 The IHRC/AHRC fact-finding report stated ‘Judges have been physically attacked and threatened even during court hearings, particularly by members of their own profession who are supported by religious organisations such as Khatme Nabuwat. In this climate, understandably, they are afraid to hear cases for fear of reprisal.’<sup>164</sup>

#### 8.4.11 In its note to CPIT, dated 8 June 2018, the IHRC stated that:

‘... there is tangible evidence that the State is directly responsible in a number of cases in the persecution of Ahmadis. For example, the higher judiciary is supposed to be the last resort for a persecuted individual to escape societal or state tyranny; here, the judiciary itself, at times promotes tyranny. In a recent case where three innocent Ahmadis were sentenced to death over fabricated charge of “blasphemy”, the charge was not applied by the administration nor the police; it was applied on the orders of a High Court judge.’<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> IHRC, ‘Submission to APPG’, (paragraph 5), 9 November 2015, [url](#).

<sup>162</sup> Austria, ‘FFM Report’, (page 59), September 2015, [url](#).

<sup>163</sup> USSD, ‘International Religious Freedom Report 2017’, (Section II), 29 May 2018, [url](#).

<sup>164</sup> IHRC/AHRC, ‘Fact-Finding Report’, (page 48), 2017, [url](#).

<sup>165</sup> IHRC, ‘Note to CPIT’, (paragraph 8), 8 June 2018, [Annex D](#).

## 9. Societal treatment and attitudes

### 9.1 Discrimination and harassment

9.1.1 The IRB's Research Directorate reported in January 2016 that, according to various sources (dated 2014 and 2015):

'Ahmadis in Pakistan face discrimination ..., including "severe social discrimination"... According to the Associate Professor [of Anthropology at Harvard University], "[s]ocietal attitudes towards Ahmadis have become increasingly hostile during the past decade"... Al Jazeera reports that some anti-Ahmadi groups have organized rallies, where they called the act of killing Ahmadis a "religious obligation"... The Associate Professor said that "[s]ome clerics assert that killing Ahmadis earns a Muslim a place in heaven"... PBS [Public Broadcasting Service] reports that a mullah in Lahore distributed a document describing the killing of Ahmadis as a "pious act", and provided a list with the names, addresses and phone numbers of "hundreds" of Ahmadis ...'<sup>166</sup>

9.1.2 Explaining some attitudes in Pakistan, the official at the AMA UK stated that some clerics use phrases such as *wajabul qatal* (meaning literally 'must be killed') or 'if you kill an Ahmadi, it doesn't matter'<sup>167</sup>.

9.1.3 The USSD IRF Report 2017 stated 'The government failed to restrict advertisements or speeches inciting anti-Ahmadi violence in television and print media, despite a promise to do so in the 2014 NAP [National Action Plan]'.<sup>168</sup> Dawn News reported, in March 2017, that according to a representative from the Ahmadi community, at least 700 articles, inciting hatred against Ahmadis, were published in national daily newspapers in 2016<sup>169</sup>. The IHRC noted in June 2018 that there were 'No restrictions on the vernacular media in promotion of hate against Ahmadis', adding that mullahs had the freedom to foment hate against Ahmadis, through rallies, conferences and publications<sup>170</sup>.

9.1.4 The HRCP noted in its 2017 report:

'A relentless hate campaign against Ahmadis continued throughout the year, including banners on rickshaws, press statements by clerics, and speeches in seminars and conferences by bigots, branding them infidels and calling them *wajib ul qatal* (worthy of death)... Anti-Ahmadi rallies and conferences are organised all over Pakistan in September to commemorate the anti-Ahmadiyya 2nd Amendment to the Constitution. [...] While the Jama'at-i-Ahmadiyya is denied permission to hold public gatherings, seminars and even sports functions, extremists are free to organise as many gatherings as they want to vent their hatred against a peaceful minority.'<sup>171</sup>

9.1.5 The HRCP report further noted 'In a petition submitted to the Islamabad High Court, cleric Allah Wasaya of Tehreek-i-Khatam-e-Nabuwwat demanded that

<sup>166</sup> IRB, 'Pakistan: Situation of Ahmadis', 13 January 2016, [url](#).

<sup>167</sup> Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK, 26 March 2015, [Annex A](#).

<sup>168</sup> USSD, 'International Religious Freedom Report 2017', (Section II), 29 May 2018, [url](#).

<sup>169</sup> Dawn, 'Ahmadi lawyer killed in "LeJ attack"', 31 March 2017, [url](#).

<sup>170</sup> IHRC, 'Note to CPIT', (paragraphs 10b and 10d), 8 June 2018, [Annex D](#).

<sup>171</sup> HRCP, 'State of Human Rights in 2017', (page 87), March 2018, [url](#).

the court direct the Federal Government to maintain a separate database of individuals belonging to the Qadiani/Lahori group entering the civil service so that in future they may not be posted to offices involving sensitive matters.<sup>172</sup>

- 9.1.6 In November 2017, a hard-line cleric organised the three weeks of blockades and riots. Islamabad and parts of Punjab were effectively shut down as anti-blasphemy protesters blocked main arterial routes leading into the city. The protests centred on the oath taken by new politicians, which was changed slightly, and then changed back, in a way that protesters felt was too soft on Ahmadi and their belief in a later prophet after Muhammad. At least six people were killed and over 200 people injured in the protests when the army attempted to regain control of roads. The protests only ended when the Law Minister resigned and charges against participants in the banned protests were dropped<sup>173</sup> (see also Legal rights – [Electoral list](#)).
- 9.1.7 The UK-based Ahmadi member reported that some shops and restaurants display signs stating that Qadiani – a derogatory term for Ahmadi – will not be served<sup>174</sup>. The online magazine Tanqeed noted in January 2016 that ‘Whether it is buying clothes or groceries, Ahmadi customers are frequently rejected goods at all kinds of shops due to their faith.’<sup>175</sup> Reporting on the year 2017, the HRCP noted ‘Social boycotts of Ahmadis prevailed. Approximately 90 percent of shops in Nankana Sahib and several shops in Lahore and southern Punjab carried this warning: “Entrance of Qadianis (Ahmadis) is prohibited”.’<sup>176</sup> (For how an Ahmadi might be recognised as such, see [Ahmadi dress and identifying behaviours](#)).

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## 9.2 Women

- 9.2.1 In January 2016, the online magazine Tanqeed provided a brief insight into the life of one Ahmadi woman in its ‘Voices’ series of first-hand accounts by journalists, refugees, activists, marginalized community members and others documenting their adversity – and their resistance – in their own words. The report stated that, owing to their distinctive and recognisable style of dress: ‘practicing Ahmadi women cannot camouflage their religious identity once they step out of their homes... It is not unusual for an Ahmadi woman to get harassed and be called a “Mirzai” or “Mirzain” – derogatory terms for Ahmadis. “Mirzain” refers specifically to female Ahmadis. This situation often results in gendered discrimination...’<sup>177</sup> (See also [Ahmadi dress and identifying behaviours](#)).
- 9.2.2 According to the UK-based Ahmadi member, the situation for Ahmadi women was worse [than men], as their social activities and interaction was severely curtailed<sup>178</sup>. In its submission to the All Party Parliamentary Group

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<sup>172</sup> HRCP, ‘State of Human Rights in 2017’, (page 88), March 2018, [url](#).

<sup>173</sup> The Guardian, ‘Pakistani law minister quits’, 27 November 2017, [url](#).

<sup>174</sup> Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK, 26 March 2015, [Annex A](#).

<sup>175</sup> Tanqeed, ‘Being Female and Ahmadi: Voices’, January 2016, [url](#).

<sup>176</sup> HRCP, ‘State of Human Rights in 2017’, (page 86), March 2018, [url](#).

<sup>177</sup> Tanqeed, ‘Being Female and Ahmadi: Voices’, January 2016, [url](#).

<sup>178</sup> Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK, 26 March 2015, [Annex A](#).

for International Religious Freedom or Belief (APPG), the International Human Rights Committee (IHRC), an independent organisation dedicated to defending, promoting and protecting human rights, focusing specifically on the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, stated that the situation for Ahmadi women was particularly difficult as, owing to security concerns, they did not attend mosque for worship or take part in social or religious gatherings<sup>179</sup>.

- 9.2.3 The Jinnah Institute reported that, due to ‘hate campaigns’ Ahmadi women were denied service in shops and faced harassment, adding that these incidents were reported in all provincial capitals and other urban rural centres of the country<sup>180</sup>.
- 9.2.4 The IHRC/AHRC fact-finding report noted that women interviewed during the mission described being fearful for their safety, and that of their family and children, which often resulted in social alienation, forcing women to stay at home to avoid ridicule, harassment and abuse from the community. The report added:
- ‘The segregation that women encounter once people know they are Ahmadi is like a form of religious apartheid which impedes their ability to move independently in society, at work and during routine activities like shopping or going to the market. Ahmadi women face overt discrimination when shopping. Some shops display signs and banners that state we do not deal with Qadiyanis. Shopkeepers ban them from entering shops to buy goods or refuse to serve them. HA and her friends went shopping, and at the payment counter, after picking out some clothing, she was asked to disclose her faith because of her dress. The shopkeeper refused to take their payment. Once they left, 3 men on motorbikes attacked them, stole their jewellery at gunpoint and said: “because you’re Ahmadi we are allowed to shoot you”. According to DB, one shopkeeper told her, “You are Ahmadi, we will not give you anything, don’t come in my shop, get out of my shop”. Many women said local shopkeepers do not serve them, which means that have to travel between twenty minutes and up to two hours away from where they lived to acquire basic groceries and household items.’<sup>181</sup>
- 9.2.5 According to the IHRC, in its June 2018 note to CPIT ‘This systemic discrimination and harassment of women and children will have psychological damage long term and many Ahmadi suffer from clinical depression.’<sup>182</sup>

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### 9.3 Anti-Ahmadi violence

- 9.3.1 The Jinnah Institute reported in January 2016 that ‘The largest and most organized religious group involved in systematic victimization of the community is the Aalmi Majlis-e-Khatm-e-Nabuwat – The International Council for the Protection of the Finality of Prophethood.’ The report noted that extremist religious groups targeted Ahmadi through ‘systematic hate

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<sup>179</sup> IHRC, ‘Submission to APPG’, (paragraph 8), 9 November 2015, [url](#).

<sup>180</sup> Jinnah Institute, ‘State of Religious Freedom in Pakistan’, (page 29), January 2016, [url](#).

<sup>181</sup> IHRC/AHRC, ‘Fact-Finding Report’, (page 43), 2017, [url](#).

<sup>182</sup> IHRC, ‘Note to CPIT’, (paragraph 9), 8 June 2018, [Annex D](#).

campaigns ... direct threats, phone calls, intimidation, harassment of family members and invitation to convert to Islam.<sup>183</sup>

9.3.2 In its fact-finding report dated 2017, the IHRC/AHRC stated:

‘The Aalmi Majlise Tahaffuse Khatme Nabuwat (AMTKN) is responsible for much anti-Ahmadi propaganda [...] Clergy associated with AMTKN are often instigators of violence against members of the Ahmadi community. Other groups associated with anti-Ahmadi violence are Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, as well as other Deobandi groups (similar to Wahabis) like Ahle-Sunnat-wal-Jamaat (ASWJ). However anti-Ahmadi violence has also been committed by the less radical Barelvi sect, followed by about 78% of Pakistanis.’<sup>184</sup>

9.3.3 In 2016, 6 Ahmadis were killed, reportedly for their faith, with no arrests made<sup>185</sup>. According to the IHRC/AHRC fact-finding report, and the report on the persecution of Ahmadis in Pakistan during the year 2017, 4 Ahmadis were killed for their faith<sup>186 187</sup>. For example, in March 2017, an Ahmadi lawyer was killed in a targeted attack. The banned sectarian group, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), claimed responsibility<sup>188</sup>. In April 2017, 2 university students were attacked after being accused of blasphemy for allegedly promoting the Ahmadi faith on Facebook. Both students were beaten, and one died in the attack<sup>189</sup>.

9.3.4 The HRCP report for 2017 stated:

‘The persecution of Ahmadis was harsher in 2017 than the previous year, and the killings continued unchecked. A hate speech reared its head in Parliament. The Ahmadi places of worship were attacked. Their burials were denied in common cemeteries. Demands were made by clerics at the Faizabad sit-in to further strip Ahmadis of their rights as citizens. Ahmadis have faced the worst intolerance in Pakistan and their persecution apparently has the support of the administration [see [State treatment and attitudes](#)].

‘The mob violence against Ahmadis is usually instigated in rural Punjab by Barelvi clerics. In a conference in Nankana Sahib, Barelvi leaders called for the implementation of the death penalty for apostasy. Speakers vowed to persecute Ahmadis until their last breath.

‘Some sections of the media sanction discrimination against Ahmadis and glorify clerics who justify violence against them. The younger generation is influenced by the rhetoric, unaware of, or choosing to ignore, the fact that Ahmadis are entitled to full citizenship rights enshrined in the Constitution. Since the promulgation of the anti-Ahmadi Ordinance XX in 1984 by General Zia, 264 Ahmadis have been killed for their faith. Of these, 182 were murdered in the Punjab alone.’<sup>190</sup> (see also [Legal rights](#)).

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<sup>183</sup> Jinnah Institute, ‘State of Religious Freedom in Pakistan’, (pages 23, 29, 30), January 2016, [url](#).

<sup>184</sup> IHRC/AHRC, ‘Fact-Finding Report’, (page 31), 2017, [url](#).

<sup>185</sup> Persecution of Ahmadis in Pakistan During the year 2016, (page 2), 31 December 2016, [url](#).

<sup>186</sup> Persecution of Ahmadis in Pakistan During the year 2017, (page 7), 31 December 2017, [url](#).

<sup>187</sup> IHRC/AHRC, ‘Fact-Finding Report’, (page 34), 2017, [url](#).

<sup>188</sup> Dawn, ‘Ahmadi lawyer killed in “LeJ attack”’, 31 March 2017, [url](#).

<sup>189</sup> Dawn, ‘Mardan university student lynched by mob’, 13 April 2017, [url](#).

<sup>190</sup> HRCP, ‘State of Human Rights in 2017’, (page 85), March 2018, [url](#).



### 9.3.5 The USSD IRF Report 2016 noted:

'Ahmadi leaders reported the police ignored their request for police protection for their mosque in Chakwal on December 12, the date of a planned procession to honor the Prophet Muhammad's birthday. On December 12, a mob of more than 1,000 attacked the mosque, resulting in the death of one Ahmadi from a heart attack and in the death of one of the attackers. The police arrested several participants in the mob, as well as four members of the Ahmadi community for allegedly killing the attacker.'<sup>191</sup> (see also State treatment and attitudes – [Discrimination and harassment](#)).

### 9.3.6 In the DFAT report it was noted that 'The Ahmadi community has told DFAT of examples where mobs have set fire to Ahmadi places of worship, desecrated graves and disinterred their dead.'<sup>192</sup>

### 9.3.7 According to the HRCP report for 2017:

'In August, the local Ahmadiyya mosque in Muridke, District Sheikhpura, was set on fire by a youth. It was extinguished before it could spread. The Ahmadiyya mosque in Dulmial, vandalised in 2016, remains sealed despite an order from the National Commission for Human Rights, leaving local Ahmadis with no place of worship. Since the declaration of the Ahmadyia community being beyond the pale of Islam [1984], 27 of their worship places have been demolished, 33 sealed, 21 set on fire, 17 forcibly occupied, and authorities have barred the construction of 17 worship places.'<sup>193</sup>

### 9.3.8 The US State Department's (USSD) annual report on human rights practices in 2017 stated that, 'Multiple Ahmadiyya community members died in what appeared to be targeted killings. Unknown gunmen killed three Ahmadis in three separate attacks on March 30, April 7, and May 3 [2017].'<sup>194</sup>

See State treatment and attitudes – [Police and judiciary](#).

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## 10. Discrimination in education and employment

### 10.1 Education

#### 10.1.1 The IHRC/AHRC fact-finding report described the difficulties faced by Ahmadi students, stating they faced severe discrimination from both classmates and teachers. The report stated:

'They face extreme bullying, physical and mental abuse, segregation and threats which have a negative impact on the studies and psychological wellbeing of the affected children. Ahmadi teachers face discriminatory attitudes from other staff, parents and local clerics who call on the community to boycott Ahmadi teachers. In many instances children face widespread exclusion by teachers and their classmates, many are forced to move schools and abandon their studies.'<sup>195</sup>

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<sup>191</sup> USSD, 'International Religious Freedom Report 2016', (Section II), 15 August 2017, [url](#).

<sup>192</sup> DFAT, 'Country Information Report Pakistan', (paragraph 3.80), September 2017, [url](#).

<sup>193</sup> HRCP, 'State of Human Rights in 2017', (pages 85-86), March 2018, [url](#).

<sup>194</sup> USSD, 'Country Report on Human Rights Practices 2017', (Section 1g), 20 April 2018, [url](#).

<sup>195</sup> IHRC/AHRC, 'Fact-Finding Report', (page 45), 2017, [url](#).



### 10.1.2 The USSD IRF Report 2017 stated:

'Ahmadi representatives said the wording of the declaration students needed to sign on their applications for admission to university continued to prevent Ahmadis from declaring themselves as Muslims. Their refusal to sign the statement meant they were automatically disqualified from fulfilling the admissions requirements. The government maintained Ahmadis could qualify for admission as long as they did not claim to be Muslims. Ahmadiyya community leaders reported multiple Ahmadi students had been expelled from public universities after not disclosing their religious affiliation at initial admission.'<sup>196</sup>

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## 10.2 Employment

10.2.1 The IHRC/AHRC fact-finding report noted that some jobs require employees to declare their faith, which can result in discrimination against Ahmadis. The report noted that, as a result, many Ahmadis – citing women in particular – chose not to disclose their faith for fear of reprisals or losing their job<sup>197</sup>.

10.2.2 The New York Times reported in December 2017 that, in Rabwah, 'No Ahmadis are employed in government departments or the police, or represented in local government. The small city provides few job opportunities, and Ahmadis from Rabwah are turned away when they look for work in neighboring towns.'<sup>198</sup>

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## 11. Verification process

### 11.1 Verifying incidents against Ahmadis

11.1.1 When asked if an Ahmadi leader would attempt to corroborate incidents reported to them by members of their community, the official at the AMA UK said that local leaders would always look to verify incidents though, in some cases and due to limited resources, it would be taken as verbatim. The official also pointed out that in more rural and remote areas, it would be more difficult to confirm incidents<sup>199</sup>.

11.1.2 The Ahmadi member described his own situation in Pakistan. He pointed out that he'd received threats, but didn't go into details. He said his local president offered advice but didn't look into the incident. The Member pointed out that he had been told not to go to the police, adding that that it doesn't take much for the police to arrest people for blasphemy, e.g. for citing the Koran; using the Muslim greeting 'assalaamu alaikum', etc. The Member also said that there is no bail for offences under section 295c of the Pakistan Penal Code, not even from the high courts<sup>200</sup> (See [Blasphemy laws](#)).

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<sup>196</sup> USSD, 'International Religious Freedom Report 2017', (Section II), 29 May 2018, [url](#).

<sup>197</sup> IHRC/AHRC, 'Fact-Finding Report', (page 44), 2017, [url](#).

<sup>198</sup> The New York Times, 'Shunned by Pakistan's Muslims', 27 December 2017, [url](#).

<sup>199</sup> Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK, 26 March 2015, [Annex A](#).

<sup>200</sup> Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK, 26 March 2015, [Annex A](#).

## 11.2 The Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK verification procedure

- 11.2.1 The AMA UK described its verification procedure in regard to establishing whether a person is Ahmadi, and validating incidents that may have occurred to them in Pakistan<sup>201</sup>.
- 11.2.2 The AMA UK explained that, since the head of the Ahmadiyya Community lives in the UK and has a '£1m pricetag on his head', they take their security very seriously and always get confirmation that a person is an Ahmadi. When applying for membership to the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK, the person is asked to fill in a 'Membership Verification Form', which contains broad details such as: where the person is from; the president of their local Ahmadi branch; personal biodata; what position they held; and any activities they took part in. The person may also provide a statement of events or incidents that have happened to them in Pakistan, although the Association does not prompt this<sup>202</sup>.
- 11.2.3 The completed membership form and, if provided, statement of events, is forwarded first to Rabwah, then to the person's local branch in Pakistan. This process usually takes 6-8 weeks. If additional information such as a First Information Report (FIR) or media article describing the event has been submitted to the AMA UK, this will also be forwarded to Pakistan for verification. Upon receipt, the local Ahmadi branch in Pakistan will confirm if the person is Ahmadi, and will attempt to verify the events raised in the statement. The AMA UK stressed that if an event cannot be verified this does not mean that the incident did not occur. Once confirmation from Pakistan – written in Urdu – is received by the AMA UK, the information is translated into English and provided in a confirmation letter<sup>203</sup>.
- 11.2.4 In its note to CPIT, dated 25 April 2018, the IHRC reiterated its position in verifying incidents:
- '... the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in the UK [...] is extremely careful in verifying accounts and will only verify where the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is 100% sure to ensure its credibility that is paramount. As part of the verification procedure, the local Sadr would verify the applicants accounts through a number of sources, e.g. through the officials of the subsidiary organisations (Youth, Elders or Ladies) or through other officials. However, the fact that information is not verified does not mean it is not true. The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is a religious organisation, although well organised it cannot be compared to a professional or corporate entity hence there could be inadvertent mistakes from time to time but these could be easily cleared through an effective communication strategy and coordination with the Ahmadi Community.'<sup>204</sup> (See [Ahmadiyya community in Pakistan](#)).
- 11.2.5 In its note to CPIT, dated 8 June 2018, the IHRC stated:

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<sup>201</sup> Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK, 26 March 2015, [Annex A](#).

<sup>202</sup> Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK, 26 March 2015, [Annex A](#).

<sup>203</sup> Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK, 26 March 2015, [Annex A](#).

<sup>204</sup> IHRC, 'Note to CPIT', (paragraph 4.1), 25 April 2018, [Annex C](#).

‘With regards to the Annual Convention in the UK (Jalsa Salana) the AMC [Ahmadiyya Muslim Community] UK confirmed to the IHRC that the Annual Conference takes place at the same time each year. If a person has come to the Association in support of their asylum claim, the Association asks the person whether they obtained a visa specifically for the Conference. If yes, the Association would not issue a confirmation letter with regards their asylum application. A person requesting verification of specific events concerning their asylum application is asked to sign a declaration on oath confirming they did not come to the UK for the annual Ahmadi Convention. The reason is to maintain the reputation of the Association as an undertaking has been given that those who come for the Jalsa will return.’<sup>205</sup>

- 11.2.6 See [Annex B](#) for full details of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK verification procedure.

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<sup>205</sup> IHRC, ‘Note to CPIT’, (paragraph 11), 8 June 2018, [Annex D](#).

# Annex A

Transcript of CPIT meeting with officials from the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK,  
26 March 2015, updated 23 May 2018

## Demography

The UK Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK (the Association) stated that it was difficult to estimate the size of the Ahmadi population in Pakistan. They said that it used to be over 800,000. However, the unofficial census figure from 2011 (to be released) records a figure of around 400,000.

Aside from Rabwah, the main population centres for Ahmadis are Sialkot, Quetta, Multan, Rawalpindi, Karachi, Lahore and Faisalabad.

There is no central register of Ahmadis in Pakistan. Each local branch maintains a list of members. According to a member of the Ahmadiyya community (the Member), currently based in the UK, some branches issue membership cards.

The Association understood that each auxiliary organisation (local branch) maintains a list of members in Pakistan. There are three in all – one looks after elderly men (40+); one for men aged 15-40; one is a women's section. How each list was maintained would be specific to the local auxiliary, though would usually contain personal bio data and financial records. The auxiliaries would fall under the national association in Pakistan.

The Member confirmed that his local branch in Rawalpindi maintains a list of members. When he joined his branch in Rawalpindi, having moved from Quetta, he completed the relevant forms confirming his change of address and the Ahmadi branch in Quetta confirmed from their records that he had previously been a member there. This is the normal procedure but there could be exceptions.

The Association maintains a central database of UK members (approximately 29,000). This is irrespective of which local branch in Pakistan the member may have come from. The Association believed that a central register (in Rabwah) is going to be implemented in Pakistan in the future.

## Day-to-day life Pakistan

- CNIC cards

The Member stated that all Pakistanis should have a CNIC card. However, the Association had spoken to a person in the UK who claimed he had not been issued with one. The Member did not think this would be the case; however, he said that some people living in rural areas, who were uneducated, may not have CNIC cards.

- Does the card identify you as Ahmadi?

The Member confirmed that a CNIC does not identify a person as being Ahmadi, i.e. it is not written on the card. However, when applying for a CNIC the person has to divulge their faith and these records are held by NADRA (National Database and Registration Authority). The Association pointed out that a CNIC has the persons

address on it. Therefore, a Rabwah address would naturally identify a person as being Ahmadi. The Member believes that people in NADRA have been known to 'leak' information identifying Ahmadis; he gave an example of someone who knew a person was Ahmadi, and knew their address, because a person at NADRA had provided them with this information.

As with applying for a passport, a CNIC application requires the person to denounce Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Ahmadi prophet.

The Association said that a CNIC is required to open a bank account, and that the account holder must declare their religious affiliation. The Association added that, if you declare you are a Muslim, you are liable to a 2.5% tax (zakat); therefore an Ahmadi would declare themselves as such to avoid this.

A CNIC is required to access health services and to rent or buy a property, but a person does not always have to declare their religion for such purposes.

To access education, the Member stated that a person must complete an application form, which asks for your religion. Since there is not a 'tick' box for Ahmadi, and an Ahmadi cannot identify themselves as Muslim, the person would have to write Ahmadi on the application.

The Association mentioned that a small percentage of people tend to hire agents to come to the UK. They cannot/ do not apply for a visit visa, as they fear they are going to be refused. Therefore, they obtain a passport that declares them as Muslim.

- How do people know you to be Ahmadi?

The Member explained that the local Mullah would know. Members of a community, who do not attend the local Mosque, would be easily identified and singled out as Ahmadi.

Where there is an Ahmadi Mosque, people go there to pray. However, where there is no Mosque, Ahmadis go to people's (usually the Ahmadi community leader) houses.

The Member explained that at his house in Pakistan he watched MTA (Ahmadiyya TV channel). A satellite dish is needed to watch this channel (most TV channels are supplied by cable); therefore houses that have dishes are often assumed to be Ahmadi.

The situation for ladies is worse with their activities and social interaction severely curtailed.

- Would you be known by name alone?

The Member and Association confirmed that certain names are common, but probably not all names can identify a person as Ahmadi.

- Can an Ahmadi be recognised by sight, e.g. clothing, facial hair?

The Member and Association said that Ahmadi beards are generally trimmed, or in the shorter, 'French' style. Some Islamic sects have no moustache and a beard the length of a fist. People also recognise an Ahmadiyya signet ring, worn by some men.

- What about women?

The Member and Association stated that the style in which Ahmadi women wear their clothes would identify them easily. The way the dress is sewn is unique and unique to the Ahmadi community, as is the way the hijab is worn. Ahmadi women do not cover their face with a veil.

- How do Ahmadi children get distinguished at school?

The Member said that children identified as Ahmadi are subject to segregation, harassment, teasing, discrimination and sometimes extra punishment. The Member confirmed the Association's anecdotal hearing that Ahmadi children are not allowed to eat with other (Muslim) children in school canteens, or use the same cups/cutlery. The Member said that this also happens sometimes in restaurants, adding that some businesses display signs stating no Qadiyani (a derogatory term for Ahmadi) allowed.

- Are you treated differently in hospitals?

The Member said some hospitals treat you differently; not all hospitals ask a person to declare their religious affiliation.

- Does it differ on whether it's a government hospital or private?

The Member said that private hospitals tend to be better than government-run, but believed that was because they are more concerned about money.

- Asked about other things, e.g. going to the post office, bus station, trains, using couriers?

The Member stated that on such occasions a person doesn't tend to get asked their religious affiliation. However, some shops and restaurants display signs that Qadiyanis are not served.

- What about renting a property?

The Member said that although a person does not have to officially declare their religion when renting a property, some people don't like to rent houses to Ahmadis. The Member highlighted the example of being asked to leave a place once the landlord was made aware that he was an Ahmadi.

In a public-facing building (like a shop), word quickly gets round that the occupier is Ahmadi.

- Description of the Ahmadi ID Card.

The UK Ahmadiyya Association membership card has a picture on the left; bar code on the bottom right; membership number above the bar code; name above that;



picture of the Mosque underneath; bar strip across the top. The Member said that the Pakistani Ahmadi ID card is equivalent but without the barcode.

- Do Ahmadis inter-marry? (e.g. to Shia, Sunni)

The Association said that intermarriage with other sects was uncommon. In cases where this does occur, an Ahmadi man would need permission to marry outside the Ahmadi faith. There are very strict conditions on women marrying outside the faith and this would only happen, with permission, in extreme circumstances.

All Ahmadi marriages (even if inter-sect) must be performed by an Ahmadi cleric. If a non-Ahmadi cleric performed the marriage the parties would be ex-communicated.

### **Reporting incidents to the Police or Ahmadiyya community**

The Association pointed out that Ahmadis are hesitant to report things to the police due to fear of recriminations. There are situations (if you are badly injured, etc), where you have to. However, even in the case of serious incidents, including deaths, they may not always be reported as police do not always record a First Information Report due to pressure placed on them by some clerics

The Association confirmed that people are more likely to report incidents to their local community/leaders but not in all cases, e.g. if the incident is considered minor. Some things happen so often they would not report it for fear of drawing attention to themselves. The Association believed that the most serious incidents are reported to the community and unless there has been a change in leadership of the branch, the President of that branch would know about such incidents, which may be corroborated by the branch's security and surveillance department. However, it must be noted that most Ahmadis consider the incidents as daily life and do not regularly report them.

In regards to reporting incidents generally, the Association likened it to having the 'flu; sometimes you go to the doctor, but sometimes you don't.

- Would the leader always verify/check what a person was reporting to them, or would they take it on trust?

The Association said that local leaders would always look to verify incidents though. It was also pointed out that in more rural and remote areas, it is more difficult to check things.

The Member explained his own situation in Pakistan. He pointed out that he'd received threats, but didn't go into details. He said his local president offered advice but didn't look into the incident. The Member pointed out that he had been told not to go to the police, adding that that it doesn't take much for the police to arrest people for blasphemy, e.g. for citing the Koran; using 'assalaamu alaikum', etc. The Member also said that there is no bail for offences under 295c, not even from the high courts.

### **UK Ahmadiyya Association membership**

- How would the UK Ahmadiyya Association know that a person is an Ahmadi?

The Association said that they wouldn't know immediately, although they can usually tell by the person's demeanour. Generally, by asking one or two questions, they would usually be able to tell if a person is Ahmadi. The head of the Ahmadiyya Community lives in the UK. He has a '£1m pricetag on his head', so the Association take their security very seriously and always get confirmation that a person is an Ahmadi.

The person is asked to fill in a Membership Verification Form, which is forwarded first to Rabwah, then to the person's local branch in Pakistan. This process usually takes 6-8 weeks.

The form contains broad details:

where from; who is the president; personal/family details; position held and activities undertaken.

In the case of asylum, the person may also write a statement describing the events that had occurred in Pakistan although the Association does not prompt this.

- Have the Association had people come to them who they know or believe not to be Ahmadi?

The Association affirmed this and explained that the HO have accepted people as being Ahmadi when the Association has not confirmed this is the case. This happened more in the past but not recently.

Irrespective of the HO accepting a person as an Ahmadi, the Association would still verify this in the process described above, if a person was applying for membership.

- When would the Association issue a membership card? Is it on confirmation from Pakistan that the person is accepted as Ahmadi?

Each individual family member is verified prior to issuing a membership card. Only upon confirmation from Pakistan is membership issued.

- When a person approaches the Association for help on asylum, does the Association check method of entry to UK?

No. The Association's interest is simply whether the person is Ahmadi.

- What kind of information/advice do you give them?

The Association stressed that it was not in the business of instructing asylum applicants. When the person first comes in, they are asked to fill in a Membership Verification Form, and if they wish to write a statement explaining events that have occurred in Pakistan.

The Association does not provide accommodation. However, where a person is in desperate need of help, the Association may offer some charity. They may also refer the person to one or two solicitors who the Association trust to work diligently.

At no stage is the Association involved in a person's asylum application per se.

The Association do not attend a person's asylum interviews, appeal hearings, etc. They have, in the past, attended hearings – around 5 hearings in 12 years – but that was more to explain the verification procedure; not for the claim itself.

The Annual Conference (Jalsa Salana) takes place at the same time each year. If a person has come to the Association in support of their asylum claim, the Association asks the person whether they obtained a visa specifically for the Conference. If yes, the Association **would not** issue a confirmation letter with regards their asylum application. A person requesting verification of specific events concerning their asylum application is asked to sign a declaration on oath confirming they did not come to the UK for the annual Ahmadi Convention. The reason is to maintain the reputation of the Association as an undertaking has been given that those who come for the Jalsa will return.

### **Verification process for asylum applicants**

A completed Membership Verification Form and statement of events is sent to the Ahmadiyya community in Rabwah, who then forward this to the person's local branch. If a First Information Report (FIR) or media article describing the event has been submitted to the Association, this will also be forwarded to Pakistan [local Ahmadiyya branch] for verification. The branch then confirms that person is Ahmadi, and will attempt to verify the events raised in the statement. The Association stressed that if an event cannot be verified this does not mean that the incident did not occur.

- The confirmation letter

Once confirmation from Pakistan – written in Urdu – is received by the Association, the information is translated into English and sent to the applicant's solicitor, setting out that the person was an Ahmadi and the incidents, if any, that happened. The Association emphasised that it will only use information provided by Pakistan and at no point add further details.

The letter provided by the Association has a standard layout.

- Is this a standard layout?

Yes. Paragraph 3 in particular. However, wouldn't include the letter if the person was not active.

The Association explained that, since 1984, they have had approximately 5,800 membership applications from Ahmadi claiming asylum in the UK.

Explaining some attitudes in Pakistan, the Association stated that some clerics use phrases such as wajabul qatal (meaning literally must be killed) or 'if you kill an Ahmadi, it doesn't matter'.

The Association also pointed out an example of a judge (on appeal) who said that a person who killed an Ahmadi, who had already been convicted, overturned the conviction stating that killing an Ahmadi wasn't a crime.

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# Annex B

Verification Procedure of Ahmadi persons, including asylum applicants, by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK, updated 23 May 2018

## Asylum procedure

1. The procedure begins when the Association issues the applicant with a 'Particulars of the Ahmadi Applicant' form.
2. Thereafter, we expect the form (see 1. above) to be completed by the applicant and returned to us for processing. The form contains information such as name, address in Pakistan, marital status, spouse's name, name of parents, any positions they held in the community, reason and date for leaving Pakistan and present address.
3. In the case of positions held by that person, the applicant specifies the post held and the year(s) that that person held that post. This is normally completed on a separate form that forms an Annex to the Particulars of the Ahmadi Applicant form.
4. We ask the applicant, in the case of a male, to enclose a passport sized photograph and, where available, an official Home Office document/card quoting his UKBA File or Port Ref. A photograph may not be obtainable in the case of an applicant in DFT (Detained under Fast Track).
5. In some cases, we hold an interview with the applicant in order to gain further information.
6. On receipt of the form we process the information. A lot of the information is needed for our Headquarters situated in Rabwah (Chenab Nagar) District Chiniot Tehsil Lallian Pakistan to verify the details given by the applicant. This process can take from 6 to 8 weeks (times will vary depending upon the remoteness of the issuing branch, whether that person had to flee to another town for his own or family's safety, reports required from the auxiliary organisations, efficiency of its office bearers and resources then available at the Headquarters).
7. This is then carefully verified by local official Ahmadi community leadership in Pakistan under a prescribed procedure. The information is collated in Pakistan by the Nazir Umur 'Amma (Executive Director of Public and General Affairs) by obtaining a direct report from the President of the branch where the applicant resided, or in the case of residence in more than one place, from each of those Presidents, and supplemented by the leaders of the relevant auxiliary organisation of the Community and then relayed back to us by the Wakilu Tabshir (Executive Director of Foreign Missions) in our Headquarters through the Additional Wakilu Tabshir London, (the Executive In-charge of the UK Chapter of the Director of Foreign Missions).

8. These persons (set out in 7. above) represent the highest authorities within the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in Pakistan and the Additional Wakilut Tabshir London, the Executive In-charge of the UK Foreign Missions, enables this process to be completed.
9. To avoid any possibility of undue influence we do not confirm or verify specific financial donations made by applicants.
10. We issue letters confirming membership profile and any posts held as confirmed by our Headquarters in strict confidence and in the course of business and as a matter of policy and procedure.
11. Communication with the Home Office shall only be signed by the Secretary Umur 'Amma (Public or General Affairs) UK or by the National President or Vice President UK.
12. If a report has not been received from the Headquarters, a reminder letter shall be issued. Upon receipt, file the report and issue letter to the Solicitor.
13. Since we are a religious community with many activities taking place simultaneously, we do not have the resources to attend courts in support of applicants; nevertheless, our absence should not be taken adversely to undermine the confirmation issued on the authority of the report provided to us by our Headquarters.
14. All communications with the Headquarters must be sent through the Amir and through the Additional Wakilut Tabshir London. No one is authorised to communicate direct with the Headquarters.
15. In the case of applicants who have joined the Association by doing a ba'iat in the UK, the Association shall only confirm that the applicant joined the Association as a member two years after the ba'iat and may set out a report about the applicant's attachment to the Association after the second anniversary of that applicant's joining as a member.

### **Verification of specific event in asylum application**

1. The applicant should set out his full activities in an attachment at the time of first applying but as the standard application form does not have such a provision, the report that comes from our Headquarters does not always confirm all incidents or activities specific to an applicant, except their status as an Ahmadi Muslim and any other basic information held.
2. Most applicants approach our Secretary Umur 'Amma UK for verification of a special incident or particular activity and we forward the applicant's written request as received to our Headquarters. No one in the Association is allowed to intercede on behalf of an applicant or attempt to embellish an applicant's request for additional verification of any event specific to the applicant or the posts he/she held.

3. Upon receipt of any confirmation received from our Headquarters, we issue an additional letter. We never issue any letter confirming any matter till we have had official confirmation from our Headquarters and then merely report whatever the Headquarter has reported. The Association may elaborate or add words by way of explanation but these must be kept distinct from the underlying report received from the Headquarters.

## **AHMADIYYA MUSLIM ASSOCIATION UK**

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# Annex C:

Note to CPIT from the International Human Rights Committee (IHRC), 25 April 2018

## 1. Tabligh - Possibilities for Ahmadis to profess their faith and the possibilities to express it publicly, through evangelism or otherwise

- 1.1 The definition of Tabligh according to the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is 'preaching, conveying the message of Ahmadiyyat to non-Ahmadis (i.e. those who are not Ahmadis)'. This can have many connotations and take different forms which will be further elaborated below.
- 1.2 The first thing to point out is that the law in Pakistan (Anti-Ahmadi Ordinance and Blasphemy Laws) clearly states that Ahmadi Muslims cannot preach or propagate their faith. This is beyond doubt and dispute. This makes the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community unique in Pakistan as being the **only** religious community in Pakistan to be targeted by the state simply on grounds of faith. This legislation not only prohibits preaching and other forms of proselytizing but also in practice restricts other elements of manifesting religious belief, such as holding open discourse about religion with non-Ahmadis, even where these do not amount to proselytizing. The prohibitions include referring openly to one's place of worship as a mosque and to one's religious leader as an Imam. Ahmadis are not allowed to refer to the call to prayer as "azan", or to call themselves Muslims, or to refer to their faith as Islam. Sanctions include a fine and imprisonment and, if blasphemy is found, there is the possibility of the death penalty. If the death penalty is imposed there is a risk of lengthy incarceration. This legislation is used by non-state actors to threaten and harass Ahmadis.
- 1.3 Having spoken to the Ahmadi Community in Pakistan and the United Kingdom, it is clear that Ahmadis feel that their very essence has been sapped and outlawed by the fact that they are not allowed to express any aspect of their faith which has any connection with Islam or from referring to their faith as "Islam". Article 298 C forbids Ahmadis from "posing as Muslims" directly or indirectly "or from outraging the feelings of Muslims". The loose wording means abuse of the law to harass Ahmadis is rife.
- 1.4 The effect of this is that **"Ahmadi Muslims cannot openly profess their faith publicly through evangelism or otherwise. The definition of proselytizing is being stretched for Ahmadi Muslims and is now limited to activities such (but not exclusively) as serving humanity through medical camps which may lead to discussions about Ahmadiyyat although not publicly; Ahmadis discussing Ahmadiyyat with non-Ahmadis once they have become familiar with them although they run the risk of being**

**reported; for women the attire generally worn by Ahmadi ladies can be a means and way of proselytizing – again this attracts the risk of being discriminated against particularly socially where they are easy targets. Performing the aforementioned activities is still not an easy task as it means there is risk to the relevant Ahmadi and can have negative repercussions.” (IHRC and AHRC Fact Finding Report 2015)**

- 1.5 Having spoken to and interviewing hundreds of members of the Ahmadiyya faith in Pakistan and asylum seekers in the United Kingdom, it has become evident that Ahmadis resort to covert means of propagating their faith in Pakistan and in most cases only do so when a relationship has been established with an individual and they feel it is safe to broach the subject. Any actions including charitable works that may show the Ahmadi faith in a positive light may be seized upon by opponents of the community as attempts to propagate the faith. Since the law forbids Ahmadis from propagating their faith Ahmadis thus resort to more subtle means of impressing others in the hope of leading by example whereby good works and behaviour may attract others towards the faith.
- 1.6 Whilst the Ahmadi community in Pakistan undertakes, from time to time, humanitarian and charitable works either directly or indirectly through NGOs, they also take the opportunities they present to engage in dialogue with any who may display an interest in the faith. Accordingly, medical camps where free medicines and treatment are distributed to the wider community and community services such as road cleaning and repairs etc. present gentle means of reaching out, if and when the occasion becomes propitious. Further all these things come under the ambit of Tabligh or an Ahmadi propagating his/her faith. The Ahmadiyya Muslim community explained that whilst propagation of faith was important to them this took many forms from direct to indirect Tabligh. In fact, the Ahmadiyya Muslim community mentioned that being identified as an Ahmadi in Pakistan is Tabligh itself. Further, the very essence of Tabligh is dependent on the circumstances. In some circumstances it would be direct and open, whilst in others it would be indirect or discrete.
- 1.7 In terms of an Ahmadis religious knowledge for undertaking Tabligh, this question was raised with the Imam of Ahmadiyya London Mosque, Mr Ataul Mujeeb Rashed who said to us that:  
“it cannot be denied that one who is well versed and has educated himself with all the intellectual and philosophical arguments used by the community, such as a Minister of Religion who has been through a seven years’ full-time course at a theosophical academy, would be a well-rounded and knowledgeable member who can teach the faith to others effectively. This does not mean that a less well-educated person could not discuss religious matters with his contacts. Therefore, it is plausible that an Ahmadi can engage in preaching activities with non-Ahmadis despite limited English. Even the mere fact that he/she might

offer an invitation to a non-Ahmadi to an Ahmadi Muslim community function is a form of Tabligh since he is seeking to promote his faith. Even when he offers hospitality to another this is laying the foundations for Tabligh and is indeed regarded as a form of Tabligh by our community and by those who oppose our faith community.”

- 1.8 In short, Tabligh does not mean per se that one must proselytize openly and in public. It takes many forms and has many meanings such as one’s behavior, hospitality, giving literature, doing charitable work, meeting people and engaging with them on faith to more direct means such as holding Tabligh Stalls, leafleting, engaging directly with people, and holding events. All these fall under the ambit of Tabligh. It is all about promoting the Ahmadi faith and will depend entirely on the circumstances and environment in which Ahmadis are present.
- 1.9 In the UK, Ahmadis undertake this in many forms, such as leafleting, coffee mornings, charitable work, inviting non-Ahmadis to Ahmadi mosques or homes of Ahmadis to events. It has to be borne in mind that this is not totally possible in Pakistan as it is illegal for Ahmadis to undertake or participate in such activities.

Those who take the risk to take part in such activities would do so discreetly and commonly through charitable work subtly once they have got to know people and then possibly by inviting them to their homes.

## **2. Country Guidance of MN on Tabligh**

- 2.1 In this regard it is useful to note the UK Country Guidance from the [MN Case](#):

One modification over time by the UT, often not understood by the SSHD’s agents, is the abjuring of use of the term ‘preaching’, an inaccurate translation of the term ‘Tabligh’. Great caution was said by the Tribunal to be necessary in employing the terms ‘preaching’ and/or ‘proselytizing’: in MJ and ZM (Ahmadis- Risk) Pakistan CG [2008] UKAIT 00033, at [50], the AIT agreed that the term ‘preaching’ had caused confusion and was inappropriate, ‘propagation’ being a better term:

Mr. Cooray argued strongly, as he had done before the Tribunal in IA and others, that the use of the Western descriptions ‘preaching’ and ‘proselytising’ was linguistically too narrow to reflect the range of activities in which an Ahmadi could engage and that ‘propagation’ was a better description. We agree with that...

SSHD’s representative Mr Hall was recorded as conceding the point:

Mr Hall accepted that the phrase 'preaching' had caused misapprehension in the earlier evidence, not going to credibility. He agreed that the word 'preaching' should not be used and throughout his submissions referred to 'proselytising' instead...

- 2.2 The law clearly states that Ahmadi Muslims cannot preach or propagate their faith. This is beyond doubt and dispute. This makes the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community unique in Pakistan as being the **only** religious community in Pakistan to be targeted by the state simply on grounds of faith. This legislation not only prohibits preaching and other forms of proselytizing but also in practice restricts other elements of manifesting religious belief, such as holding open discourse about religion with non-Ahmadis, even where these do not amount to proselytizing. The prohibitions include referring openly to one's place of worship as a mosque and to one's religious leader as an Imam. Ahmadis are not allowed to refer to the call to prayer as 'azan', or to call themselves Muslims, or to refer to their faith as Islam. Sanctions include a fine and imprisonment and, if blasphemy is found, there is the possibility of the death penalty. If the death penalty is imposed there is a risk of lengthy incarceration. This legislation is used by non-state actors to threaten and harass Ahmadis.

### **3. Converts**

- 3.1 The situation for converts is extremely more difficult and dangerous. If the conversion is declared in public then such a person has to face severe consequences and he/she would be legally declared non-Muslim and liable to be killed under the Blasphemy laws.
- 3.2 If the case is not declared and such conversion remains secret then such a person may escape legal punishment but still faces social excommunication, mental torture and prejudicial and discriminatory treatment.
- 3.3 The Ahmadiyya Community in Pakistan confirmed to the IHRC that they do get converts but the exact figures were not confirmed. This was corroborated by speaking to some converts in Pakistan. It is fair to say that they do not advertise their conversion to the Ahmadi faith for a host of reasons mentioned above.
- 3.4 Those who have converted face social boycotts in their society, marital problems with pressure from the side of the family on the partner who has not converted to the Ahmadi faith. This issue is further compounded if there are children.
- 3.5 It is also common for converts to not reveal to their family or friends that they have converted to the Ahmadi faith.

- 3.6 In one case in the UK, a lady who claimed asylum successfully after 10 years in the UK explained that her first husband left Ahmadiyyat due to pressure from his family. He told this lady to also leave so that they could remain married. When she did not, clerics, particularly from Khatme Nabuwat started to cause problems for her which eventually led her to leave Pakistan.

#### **4. Observations**

- 4.1 From the information we have and according to reports we receive from other organisations and individuals, particularly those claiming asylum, the guidelines set out in [MN](#) are not being followed and cases are being pushed down the Tabligh (preaching route). All too often there is a general pattern of refusing cases due to adverse credibility when the circumstances are not fully appreciated, the situation of Ahmadi in Pakistan, [MN](#) not being followed and not fully considering the evidence of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK. From the information we have and the history of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in the UK, this Community is extremely careful in verifying accounts and will only verify where the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is 100% sure to ensure its credibility that is paramount. As part of the verification procedure, the local Sadr would verify the applicants' accounts through a number of sources, e.g. through the officials of the subsidiary organisations (Youth, Elders or Ladies) or through other officials. However, the fact that information is not verified does not mean it is not true. The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is a religious organisation, although well organised it cannot be compared to a professional or corporate entity hence there could be inadvertent mistakes from time to time but these could be easily cleared through an effective communication strategy and coordination with the Ahmadi Community.

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**IHRC**  
**25 April 2018**

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# Annex D:

## Note to CPIT from the International Human Rights Committee (IHRC), 8 June 2018

### 1. Difference between Ahmadis and Non-Ahmadis

The IHRC interviewed the senior leadership of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community (AMC) on this issue. The IHRC was told that there is a theological difference of interpretation between Ahmadis and other Muslims on the issue of the 'Second Coming of the Messiah', which has led to the current day issues. Prior to 1974 Ahmadis were considered as part of the mainstream Islamic faith but this changed with the anti-Ahmadi laws in 1974 and Ordinance XX 1984 in Pakistan.

2. With regards to Ahmadi numbers in Pakistan, the IHRC was told by the AMC in Pakistan that numbers were around the 400,000 mark. There seems to be a discrepancy in numbers but this is also due to the fact that not all Ahmadis register on the official register as they are officially regarded as non-Muslims when they identify as Muslims. It also compromises the security of the Ahmadis identified as such on a separate electoral list.

3. The IHRC notes that Article 298C is wide in scope and applicability and has far reaching consequences as seen below:

Art 298C. Person of Qadiani group etc., calling himself a Muslim or preaching or propagating his faith.

Any person of the Qadiani group or the Lahori group (who call themselves 'Ahmadis' or by any other name), who, directly or indirectly, poses himself as Muslim, or calls, or refers to, his faith as Islam, or preaches or propagates his faith, or invites others to accept his faith, by words, either spoken or written, or by visible representations, or in any manner whatsoever outrages the religious feelings of Muslims, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three years and shall also be liable to fine."

4. With regards to the US Department of State Report 2016 (USSD IRF 2016), the AMC in Pakistan informed the IHRC that it is important to note that use of name Muhammad or Islam could be in direct violation of the Pakistan Penal Code.

5. The USCIRF 2013 report noted that individuals who refused to sign the declaration when applying for a passport still received one. The IHRC has been informed by the AMC in Pakistan that this is not the case. The IHRC noted that an Ahmadi cannot legally obtain a passport without signing the declaration and, if they sign it, they are effectively declaring themselves Muslim, which is in breach of the PPC.

6. With regards to Rabwah, the AMC Pakistan stated that Rabwah is no safer than any other place in Pakistan and potentially a risky place to live, if one goes by the expressed wishes and intentions of anti-Ahmadi sentiment in Rabwah from mainstream Muslims. It should also be highlighted that anti-Ahmadi laws are equally applicable in Rabwah. As a result of government policy, for years a large number of Ahmadis from Rabwah faced prosecution in courts. These included the high echelon of Ahmadi leadership. Twice, on orders of the political leadership, the entire Ahmadi population of Rabwah was booked in fabricated criminal cases.



7. With regards to Tabligh it is noted that However, it should be noted that the law disallows Tabligh even for self-defence. The vernacular press repeatedly accuses Ahmadis of being ‘the worst enemies of Islam and Pakistan’. If Ahmadis say that it is not true, and explain their position, they are accused of preaching or propagating. This is leading to a growing resentment of Ahmadis and anti-Ahmadi sentiments taking root in the minds of the younger generation as they do not know any other narrative.

8. The IHRC notes that there is tangible evidence that the State is directly responsible in a number of cases in the persecution of Ahmadis. For example, the higher judiciary is supposed to be the last resort for a persecuted individual to escape societal or state tyranny; here, the judiciary itself, at times promotes tyranny. In a recent case where three innocent Ahmadis were sentenced to death over fabricated charge of ‘blasphemy’, the charge was not applied by the administration nor the police; it was applied on the orders of a High Court judge.

9. The IHRC/AHRC fact-finding report noted that women interviewed during the mission described being fearful for their safety, and that of their family and children, which often resulted in social alienation, forcing women to stay at home to avoid ridicule and abuse from the community. The report added:

‘The segregation that women encounter once people know they are Ahmadi is like a form of religious apartheid which impedes their ability to move independently in society, at work and during routine activities like shopping or going to the market. Ahmadi women face overt discrimination when shopping. Some shops display signs and banners that state we do not deal with Qadiyanis. Shopkeepers ban them from entering shops to buy goods or refuse to serve them. HA and her friends went shopping, and at the payment counter, after picking out some clothing, she was asked to disclose her faith because of her dress. The shopkeeper refused to take their payment. Once they left, 3 men on motorbikes attacked them, stole their jewellery at gunpoint and said: “because you’re Ahmadi we are allowed to shoot you”. According to DB, one shopkeeper told her, “You are Ahmadi, we will not give you anything, don’t come in my shop, get out of my shop”. Many women said local shopkeepers do not serve them, which means that have to travel between twenty minutes and up to two hours away from where they lived to acquire basic groceries and household items.’ This systemic discrimination and harassment of women and children will have psychological damage long term and many Ahmadis suffer from clinical depression.

10. Additional factors to be noted are:

- a. Restrictions on construction, repairs and upgrading of Ahmadiyya mosques, and the consequential difficulties in worship and religious assemblies.
- b. Freedom enjoyed by the mullah in fomenting hate against Ahmadis, through rallies, conferences, publications, etc.
- c. Banning of Ahmadiyya magazines for women, children, elders, youth etc.
- d. No restrictions on the vernacular media in promotion of hate against Ahmadis.
- e. A recent trend has seen main stream politicians now try to encourage the religious parties in promoting hate against Ahmadis, in view of the forthcoming elections (e.g., Captain Safdar’s recent rhetoric against Ahmadis).

The IHRC notes that the above attitude and permissive anti-Ahmadi hateful practices of the state have developed a potentially very dangerous situation for Ahmadis in Pakistan.

11. With regards to the Annual Convention in the UK (Jalsa Salana) the AMC UK confirmed to the IHRC that the Annual Conference takes place at the same time each year. If a person has come to the Association in support of their asylum claim, the Association asks the person whether they obtained a visa specifically for the Conference. If yes, the Association would not issue a confirmation letter with regards their asylum application. A person requesting verification of specific events concerning their asylum application is asked to sign a declaration on oath confirming they did not come to the UK for the annual Ahmadi Convention. The reason is to maintain the reputation of the Association as an undertaking has been given that those who come for the Jalsa will return.

12. With regards to Ahmadis departing from Pakistan, the IHRC notes that from its recent Fact Finding Missions and interviews with the AMC Pakistan, the AMC Pakistan disputes this and cites numerous instances when Ahmadi travellers faced great harassment and difficulties at Pakistan airports. Lahore airport is particularly notorious in this respect.

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IHRC

8 June 2018

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# Annex E:

Letter from the British High Commission, 4 June 2018

04 June 2018

The Home Office Country Policy and Information Team requested information about registering as an Ahmaddiya, identifying markers on passports, and the possibility of falsely claiming to be an Ahmaddiya on legal documentation:-

In relation to the first two questions only, the British High Commission consulted with an official working within the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) within the Government of Pakistan's Ministry of Interior. The process of registering for a CNIC and/or passport as a follower of the Ahmaddiya faith is summarised as follows:-

"The basic and overarching identity database is with NADRA which issues the CNIC as a citizen's basic identity document. This will include particulars about whichever religion, name, gender and anything else which a person identified with at the time the card was first issued (usually at 18 years or thereafter).

All ID card fields can be modified upon request to NADRA when accompanied by documentary proof supporting the change request. In the case of religion, the support documentary proof required is a certificate from a governing body or authority of that congregation under an affidavit and stamped by a notary public. For Ahmadi in particular this would be the Central Council in Rabwah and the applicant would be required to submit documentation supporting their change of faith. Once a modified CNIC has been issued, the applicant can then apply for a new passport against the new CNIC. Currently, the Passports in use are Machine Readable ones which do not make any mention of the passport holder's religion on the main page but that information is available via NADRA database. For travelling, with a valid passport and visa there are no travel restrictions against any minorities.

It should be noted that in November 2017, following controversy surrounding the Election Amendment Act 2017, Justice Siddiqui of the Islamabad High Court issued a restraining order against modification of the religion field of CNIC holders who are Muslim. This decision has been challenged as a contravention to Article 20 of the Constitution. It is so far unclear if NADRA has instituted any policy change following the IHC order as they have not yet received any cases that would trigger it."

This letter has been compiled by staff of the British High Commission in Islamabad entirely from information obtained from the sources indicated. The letter does not reflect the opinions of the author(s), nor any policy of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The author(s) have compiled this letter in response to a request from the Home Office and any further enquiries regarding its contents should be directed there.

The British High Commission has not researched the possibility of falsely claiming Ahmaddiya faith on legal documents, and although there are vulnerabilities in the process, the British High Commission is not aware of any specific cases.

This letter has been compiled by staff of the British High Commission in Islamabad entirely from information obtained from the sources indicated. The letter does not reflect the opinions of the author(s), nor any policy of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The author(s) have compiled this letter in response to a request from the Home Office and any further enquiries regarding its contents should be directed there.

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# Terms of Reference

A 'Terms of Reference' (ToR) is a broad outline of what the CPIN seeks to cover. They form the basis for the [country information section](#). The Home Office's Country Policy and Information Team uses some standardised ToRs, depending on the subject, and these are then adapted depending on the country concerned.

For this particular CPIN, the following topics were identified prior to drafting as relevant and on which research was undertaken:

- The Ahmadi faith
  - Background
- Demography
  - Population
- Legal rights
  - 'Anti-Ahmadi' laws
  - Blasphemy laws
  - Anti-terror legislation
  - Declaration of religious identity
  - Passports and identity cards
  - Electoral list
- Ahmadiyya community in Pakistan
  - Registration
  - The city of Rabwah
  - Culture and activities
  - Proselytising
  - Ahmadi dress and identifying behaviours
- Ahmadi converts
- State treatment and attitudes
  - Discrimination and harassment
  - Anti-Ahmadi rhetoric
  - Targeting on religious grounds
  - Police and judiciary
- Societal treatment and attitudes
  - Discrimination and harassment
  - Situation in Rabwah
  - Women
  - Anti-Ahmadi violence

- Verification of incidents
  - Verifying incidents against Ahmadis
  - The Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK verification procedure
- Discrimination in employment and education
  - Education
  - Employment

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# Version control

## Clearance

Below is information on when this note was cleared:

- version **4.0**
- valid from **26 March 2019**

## Changes from last version of this note

Updated assessment to take into account the Court of Appeal judgement, WA (Pakistan) 6 March 2019.

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