

*Excerpt from: Fact-Report by  
Save & Serve for Christ Ministries Pakistan (SSCMP)p.11-21*

## **The Text of Pakistan's Controversial Blasphemy Laws**

### **Offenses relating to religion: Pakistan Penal code**

**Section 295 PPC. Injuring or defiling of place of worship, with intent to insult the religion of any class:** Whoever, destroys, damages or defiles any place of worship, or any object held sacred by any class of persons with the intention of thereby insulting the religion of any class or persons or with the knowledge that any class of persons is likely to consider such destruction, damage or defilement as an insult to their religion shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to two years, or with fine, or with both.

**Section 295-A, PPC. Deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs:** Whoever, with deliberate and malicious intention of outraging the religious feelings, of any class of the citizens of Pakistan, by words, either spoken or written or by visible representations insults or attempts to insult the religion or religious beliefs of that class, shall be punished imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend Ten years, or with fine, or with both.

**Section 295 – B, PPC. Defiling, etc, of copy of Holy Quran;** Whoever willfully defiles damages or desecrates a copy of the Holy Quran or of an extract there from or uses it in any derogatory manner or for any unlawful purpose shall be punished with imprisonment for life.

**Section 295-C, PPC. Use of derogatory remark etc., in respect of the Holy Prophet:** Whoever, by words, either spoken, or written or by visible representation or by any imputation, innuendo, 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 be also liable to fine.

**Section 296 PPC. Disturbing religious assembly:** Whoever voluntarily causes disturbance to any assembly lawfully engaged in the performance of religious worship, or religious ceremonies, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to one year, or with fine, or with both.

**Section 297 PPC. Trespassing on burial place, etc:** Whoever, with the intention of wounding the feelings of any person, or of insulting the religion of any person, or with

the knowledge that the feelings of any person is likely to be insulted thereby: commits any trespass in any place of worship or on any place of sepulture, or any place set apart for the performance of funeral rites or as a depository for the remains of the dead, or offers any indignity to any human corpse, or causes, disturbance to any person assembled for the performance of funeral ceremonies, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to one year, or with fine or with both.

**Section – 298 A, PPC Uttering words, etc, with deliberate intent to wound religious feelings:** 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 any wife (Ummul Mumineen), or members of the family (Ahle-bait), of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), or any of the righteous Caliphs (Khulafa-e-Raashideen) or companions (Sahaaba) of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three years, or with fine, or with both.

**Section 298-B PPC. Misuse of epithets, descriptions and titles, etc. reserved for certain holy personages or places:** (1) Any person of the Qadiani group or the Lahori group (who call themselves 'Ahmadis' or by any other name) who by words, either spoken or written, or by visible representation: (a) refers to, or addresses, any person, other than a Caliph or companion of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) as 'Ameer-ul-Mumineen', 'Khilafat-ul-Mumineen', 'Khilafat-ul-Muslimeen', 'Sahaabi', or 'Razi Allah Anho'; (b) refers to, or addresses, any person, other than a wife of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), as Ummul- Mumineen; (c) refers to, or addresses, any person, other than a member of the family of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), as Ahle-bait; (d) refers to, or names, or calls, his place of worship as Masjid; shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three years, and shall also be liable to a fine. (2) Any person of the Qadiani group or the Lahori group (who call themselves 'Ahmadis' or by any other name) who by words, either spoken or written, or by visible representation, refers to the mode or the form of call to prayers followed by his faith as 'Azan' or recites Azan as used by the 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.

**Section 298-C PPC. 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 a 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.

### **Personal stories of the Impact of Blasphemy Laws:**

The impact of the laws of blasphemy has to be seen in the background of the following cases and massacres depicting the failure of the State to examine the inquiry reports.



### **Violent attack on Shanti Nagar**

In February 05, 1997, three Christian villages of Shanti Nagar were attacked and thousands of buildings and homes were destroyed and looted by religious extremists from neighboring villages; an estimated 20,000. The riots were incited by broadcasts from local mosques where religious leaders in the broadcasts claimed that torn and burnt pages of the Quran and pieces of paper carrying derogatory remarks.

### **Massacre of desecration of Churches and demolition of Christian schools in Sangla Hill**

In 2005, Yousaf Masih, a Christian was blamed for committing blasphemy by Mohammad Saleem alias Kalu Suneiera, in Sangla Hill in 2005. Thousands of enraged extremists attacked and assaulted the Christians and desecrated churches belong to Roman Catholic, Salvation Army and United Presbyterian as well as destroyed the Christian educational intuitions in Sangla Hill. Mohammad Saleem alias Kalu Suneiera, simply withdrawn the blasphemy charges from Yousaf Masih and signed a document declaring the Yousaf Masih's innocence. Finally the detained 85 criminal attackers were released.



### **Aasia Bibi the first Christian woman sentenced for death penalty**

In June 2009, Aasia Bibi was falsely implicated in blasphemy accusations and was blamed for passing derogatory remarks against the Holy Prophet Mohammad. A case FIR of 295-C of the blasphemy registered against her at the Police Station Saddar Nankana. Ms. Aasia, a laborer was working in a fruit garden on daily wages. Her Muslim co-worker women had some personal disputes and obviously Aasia always faced discriminatory behavior because she was the only Christian among them.

### **Attack on Korian Village**

In July 30, 2009 ear about 47 houses of Christians were set ablaze after some personal disputes in Korian village, District Faisalabad. The local Muslim villagers alleged that Talib Masih's grand children ripped apart the papers of Holy Quran. The local Muslim



clerics accused the father and son of committing blasphemy and made inflammatory statements against the Holy Prophet. The prayer leader accused from the loud speaker of the mosque and incited Muslim residents of Korian and adjoining villages to attack the Christians of the village to avenge alleged blasphemy. A blasphemy case 295-C without proper investigation registered against Mukhtar Masih, Talib Masih, Imran Masih and 25 unknown persons. Later it was found that the motive



behind was to steal the land of designated, poor Christians.

### **Gojra Riots**

On August 1, 2009, in Gojra, violence erupted over the alleged desecration of the Holy



Quran in Korian. The Muslims community of Gojra and adjacent towns gathered at Malkanwala Chowk at 8:00am on August 1, 2009 to protest against a group of Christians. The typical patron of announcements from mosques urged the Muslims to kill blasphemer Christians. The mob became enraged and started looting. As a result, 67 houses were destroyed.

The government initiated the judicial inquiry into Gojra violence headed a Judge of the Lahore High Court. The inquiry report nominated 29 activists of the banned outfits but the government did not take any stern actions. The Lahore High Court accepted their bails. The government of Pakistan announced compensation for affected Christians as well as distributed Rs 500.000/- (5,950 US\$ Dollars) each among the families who lost their life in the incident.

### **Sajid and Rashid Emmanuel**

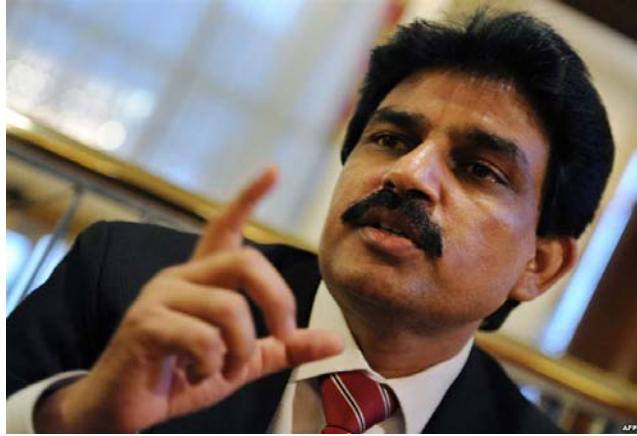


The two Christian brothers Rashid aged 32 & Sajid aged 25, resident of Daud Nagar, Street # 5, Waris Pura, Faisalabad, under section 295-C of the PPC (Pakistan Penal Code) on charges of distributing handwritten pamphlets containing disgraceful remarks against Prophet Muhammad. Khurram Shahzad was the complainant of the First Information Report. The Civil Lines police arrested Rashid Masih on the same day while Sajid Masih was voluntarily surrendered by Christian religious leaders. The police kept both

brothers in the police station for investigation. On July 19, 2010, the police without appropriate security produced Rashid and Sajid in district courts to obtain their remand and were about to leave the place when they were attacked by a group of extremists equipped with deadly weapons. The attackers opened fired blindly and resultantly both brothers' shot dead on the spot and also a police officer was injured. The police deceitfully complete investigations without the complainant and submit the report in the court. Presently the case is undergoing in the Anti Terrorism Court Faisalabad.

### **Assassination of Shahbaz Bhatti**

On March 02, 2011 Mr. Shahbaz Bhatti, (Federal Minister for Minorities Affairs) was killed in Islamabad while he just out from home to attend the cabinet meeting by the forward looking assailants from banned outfits organizations. He was killed because before his assassination; he had vowed to defend the innocent victims imprisoned under the false blasphemy accusations. He was under grave threats over his determination and



efforts to reform Pakistan's blasphemy laws. So that the misuse of this laws should be stopped. He was brutally killed in the daylight. To this date there has been no arrest. Despite world leaders condemning the assassination; there is concern that government officials are not considering the matter seriously.