
Authorities Stop Ahmadis From Offering Eid Prayers

RAWALPINDI, Pakistan – Ahmadi Muslims in Rawalpindi had nowhere to offer their Eid prayers when local authorities, acting on false information and baseless accusations, forcefully barred them from congregating at their local Mosque (Ewan e Tawheed) as they had been doing so for many years.

According to Saleemud Din, spokesperson of the Ahmadiyya Community in Pakistan, local authorities gave false hopes to Ahmadi's by confirming that they could congregate and gather for Eid prayers. However, local Ahmadi's were left feeling disheartened and marginalised when they were informed by the authorities that they were barred from offering Eid prayers at the facility.

For decades, Ahmadi's have been the target of many discriminatory acts that have barred them from performing religious duties as proscribed by the Qur'an (the Muslim Holy Book). They have also been deprived of fundamental rights guaranteed by the Pakistani constitution and international covenants to which Pakistan is a signatory.

This exemplifies how local Pakistani authorities continue to give in to the demands of miscreants who preach hatred against Ahmadi's because they consider them as non-Muslims. In a similar occurrence last month, local authorities destroyed an Ahmadi Mosque in Kharian, District Gujrat, in the Province of Punjab.

"The government and local administration have violated Article 20 of constitution of Pakistan after stopping Ahmadi's from congregating for Eid prayers. Article 20 ensures every citizen of the right to freely perform their religious duties," said Mr. Saleemud Din.

This shameful incident is not only a denial of religious freedom but also deprives Ahmadi Muslims of an annual ritual where worship goes hand in hand with social activity. Eid is a religious event, marking the end of Ramadan, that brings people closer together and the authorities have deprived Ahmadi Muslims of their right to peacefully gather for worship and celebration on this annual event.

World Media Forum urges the government of Pakistan to uphold and work towards promoting the fundamental right to freedom of religion by repealing laws that foster hatred and violence towards all religious groups.

Written by: Khalid Akram, Associate, WMFI Research & Correspondence (August 17, 2012)