



Christian Conference of Asia

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CCA General Secretary letter to Pakistan President

His Excellency Mr. Asif Ali Zardari
President of Pakistan

Your Excellency,

The Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) is deeply concerned by the act of terror committed against Christians and churches in Mujahid Colony area of Sargodha, in the Punjab province in Pakistan early in the morning on Saturday, 25 May 2024.

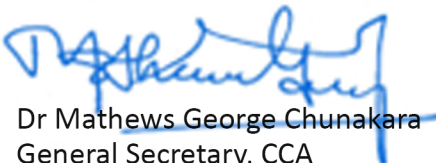
The CCA has followed with deep concern the recent situation wherein a mob led by an extremist Islamist group, the Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP), launched a violent attack on Christians on the pretext of allegations of Quran desecration.

It is unfortunate that violence has erupted against Christians once again, not long after an earlier incident of religious intolerance and violence, directed against Christians in Sargodha that led to the brutal lynching of Nazir Masih, a Christian labourer followed by destruction of churches, homes, and businesses owned by the local Christian community. Several churches, houses and Christian-owned houses were burnt. The incident began when rumours spread that Nazir Masih had desecrated the Quran. Angered by these allegations, a mob swiftly formed, driven by Islamist radicals within the community. Despite the lack of concrete evidence, the mob brutally beat Nazir Masih and finally lynched him to death. The violence escalated further as several churches were set ablaze, Christian-owned homes and businesses were looted and torched. Christian Families fled in terror, seeking refuge from the chaos. The attackers set fire to and ransacked properties belonging to Christians, causing widespread damage. This tragic event is not an isolated case but part of a disturbing pattern of persecution that Christians have had to endure for far too long in Pakistan.

It is a visible tragedy that Christians in Pakistan have, over the decades since Pakistan was formed as a nation, been reduced to the lowest rungs of the social ladder through the actions of extremist groups. Because of differing beliefs, they have been discriminated against in the workplace, threatened into forcible conversion, and often falsely accused of blasphemy. Their lives have been rendered miserable because of a feeble law enforcement system, which encourages fanatical mobs to weaponize the Pakistan's blasphemy law. That is the undeniable disgusting truth. The CCA has repeatedly expressed criticism of the abuse and weaponization of blasphemy laws in Pakistan to persecute and torment minority communities.

While strongly condemning the persecution against Christian minorities, the Christian conference of Asia supports the demand of the Churches in Pakistan to take necessary actions against all those who are orchestrating violence against Christians in Pakistan. We urge Your Excellency's government that all necessary measures be undertaken to provide safety and security to the Christian minority in Pakistan.

Respectfully yours,


Dr Mathews George Chunakara
General Secretary, CCA