

PART 5: SECTARIANISM

NAP POINT 5: Strict action against the literature, newspapers and magazines promoting hatred, decapitation, extremism and intolerance.

NAP POINT 9: End of religious extremism and protection of minorities will be ensured.

NAP POINT 18: Action against elements spreading sectarianism.

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Part 5: Sectarianism

5.1 Introduction

The fifth theme studies sectarianism and the state's attempts to curb it. It is an amalgamation of several points in the National Action Plan, specifically #5, #8 and #18, and also covers minorities' rights.

There is some overlap with Part 3: Proscribed Organizations, and Part 4: Counter-terrorism. Minority rights and government action is also covered in this section.

5.2 Minorities in Pakistan

Between 2012 and 2016 Christians faced a range of atrocities including sexual assault, harassment and forced conversions in some parts of the country. Dozens of Christians were charged under the blasphemy laws. In the 60+ attacks perpetrated against the Christian community, several churches were targeted.

The Ahmedis constantly face humiliation, threats to life and property and this is aggravated by the fact that the Second Amendment to the 1973 Constitution declared Ahmedis, non-Muslims. Ahmedi places of worship face constant threat of attacks. A mob of approximately 1000 people besieged an Ahmedi place of worship on Eid Mila-ul-Nabi but the mob was dispersed by the police and no casualties were reported.¹

Hindus remain a target of abduction, forced marriages, and the kidnapping and rape of Hindu girls. The curriculum taught in schools paints them as the enemy, tying them closely with the state's antagonistic narrative as regards India.

The minority that faces the worst of attacks is the Shia community. In the last three years, even though minority casualties have reduced by more than half, incidences of violence against Shias have risen.

During 2016, religious minorities, particularly Christians, Hindus and Shias continued to face issues with regard to targeted killings, blasphemy laws and forced marriages. Of the issues that received the most coverage was a Christian teen Nabeel who was charged under the blasphemy law for allegedly sharing a derogatory photograph of Khana-e-Kaba on Facebook.²

According to the CRSS Annual Security Report for 2016, the total number of casualties from violence

¹ Gabol, I. (2016, December 16). Mob 'besieging' Ahmadi place of worship in Chakwal dispersed by police. Retrieved March 04, 2016, from <<https://www.dawn.com/news/1302057/mob-besieging-ahmadi-place-of-worship-in-chakwal-dispersed-by-police>>.

² AFP. (2016, September 20). Christian teen charged with blasphemy. Retrieved March 04, 2016, from <<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1185112/christian-teen-charged-blasphemy>>.

Nafees, M., Gul, I., & Salahuddin, Z. (2017, March 26). CRSS Annual Security Report - 2015. Retrieved March 22, 2016, from <<http://crss.pk/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/CRSS-Annual-Security-Report-2016-Final.pdf>>.

in 2016 stood at 4,327 out of which 2,613 individuals died and 1,714 were injured.³ Of these, 670 casualties (247 dead, 423 injured) were a result of sectarian violence.

With regard to religious and sectarian violence, at least 241 individuals were killed in 2016.³ Pakistan braced for violent attacks in the wake of Mumtaz Qadri's execution, but no deaths were reported. The attack on Gulshan-e-Iqbal Park⁴ took place on the Chehlum of Mumtaz Qadri and even though the incident is often perceived as an attack on the Christian community, there were only 14 Christians out of the 72 lives that were lost in the attack.²

The Gulshan-e-Iqbal Park attack in Lahore was the deadliest of its kind, ostensibly targeting Christian families.⁴ Another major attack was in November when at least 52 persons were killed and 102 injured in a suicide attack at the shrine of Shah Noorani in Balochistan.⁵ The third largest attack occurred in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) when a suicide bomber killed 36 people and wounded at least 37.⁶

5.2.1 Population of Different Sects of Islam in Pakistan

Sunnis and Shias are considered the two main sects within Islam. Ismalis are a sub-category of Shia Islam and Barelvi, Deboni and Ahle-Hadith are sub categories of Sunni Islam.⁷

Sect	Population
Barelvi	50%
Deobandi	20%
Shia	18%
Ahle Hadith	4%
Ismaili	2%
Others	2%

5.2.2 Laws Pertaining to Minorities

The following are some of the laws pertaining to minorities in Pakistan:

- Christian Marriage Act 1832
- Hindu Widows Re-Marriage Act 1856
- Sindh Hindu Heirs Relief Act 1866

⁴ Gabil, I & AFP. (2016, March 29). At least 72 killed in suicide blast as terror revisits Lahore. Dawn. Retrieved March 17, 2017, from <<https://www.dawn.com/news/1248259>>.

⁵ Al Jazeera News and Agencies. (2016, November 13). Attack on Shah Noorani shrine in Pakistan kills dozens. Al Jazeera. Retrieved March 26, 2017, from <<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/11/dozens-casualties-attack-pakistan-shrine-16112141000715.html>>.

⁶ Firdous, I & News Desk. (2016, September 16). At least 28 killed in suicide blast at Mohmand Agency mosque. The Express Tribune. Retrieved March 17, 2017, from <<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1182675/huge-explosion-mosque-mohmand-agency/>>.

⁷ Oxford Islamic Studies.(n.d.). Pakistan, Islam in. Retrieved March 24, 2016, from <http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t125/e1809?_hi=1>.

- Christian Marriage Act 1872
- Hindu Disposition of Property Act 1916
- Hindu Inheritance (Removal of Disabilities) Act 1928
- Hindu Law of Inheritance (Amendment) Act 1929
- Hindu Gains of Learning Act 1930
- Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act 1936
- Hindu Women's Rights to Property Act 1937
- Hindu Marriage Disabilities Removal Act 1946
- Hindu Married Women's Right to Separate Residence and Maintenance Act 1946
- Protection of Communal Properties of Minorities Ordinance 2001
- Protection of Communal Properties of Minorities Communities Rules 2003

2016 saw the Sindh Assembly pass a landmark bill that codified the marriage laws for the vast number of Hindus that live in Sindh.⁸ Since Pakistan's independence, the Hindus living in the country have been considered a vulnerable community and one of the reasons for that was the fact that they could not get their marriages recognized and registered. Consequently they could not get official documents issued impacting, amongst other things, every day activities like opening a bank account. Under the Hindu Marriages Act, the Hindus have been given a legal framework within which to register their marriages and provide legal proof when required.

5.2.3 Violence against Minorities

Religious minorities in Pakistan have suffered a great deal of violence and discrimination and the state response has been historically weak. Data collected by the Center for Research and Security Studies (CRSS) shows that sectarian violence claimed about 1,340 lives (and left some 1,940 injured) during the last three years. The province of Sindh had the highest number of sectarian fatalities (569), followed by Balochistan (359), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (215), the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) (109), and Punjab (79). The capital of the country, Islamabad, also suffered nine fatalities. Balochistan faced the highest number of injured people in sectarian violence (608).^{3,9}

Non-Muslims constitute about three percent of Pakistan's estimated population of 200 million. Some 20 percent of the rest are Shia Muslims. Prominent among the non-Muslim minority groups are Christians (2.5 million), Hindus (1 million), and Ahmedis (3 million), thus accounting for about 3.7% of Pakistan's population.¹⁰

A downward trend, as observed in all other forms of violence,³ is evident in sectarian violence as well. A more than 50% drop in fatalities in sectarian violence is visible in 2016 as compared to the percentage in 2013.

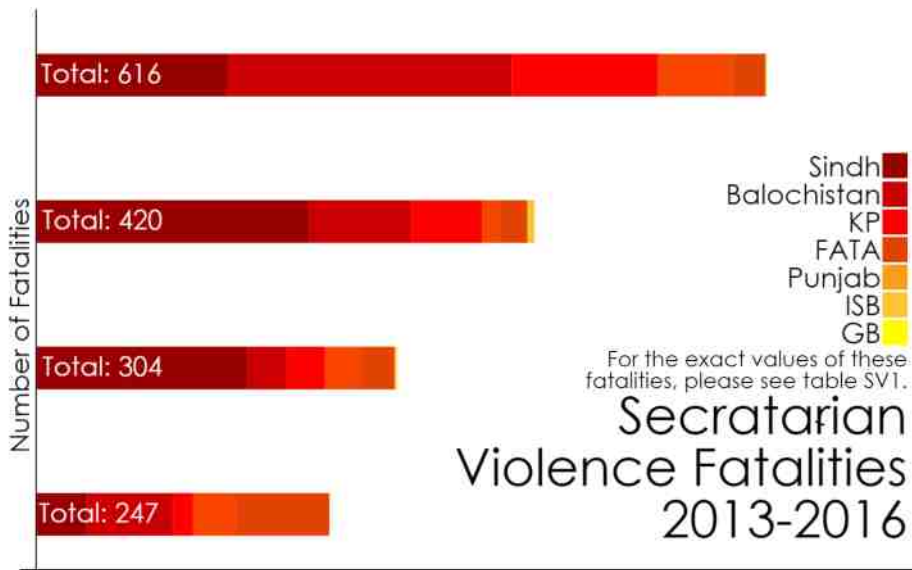
⁸ Reuters. (2016, February 15). Sindh Assembly approves Hindu Marriage Bill. Dawn. Retrieved March 04, 2016, from <<https://www.dawn.com/news/1239719>>.

⁹ Nafees, M., Gul, I., & Salahuddin, Z. (2016, February 26). CRSS Annual Security Report - 2015. Retrieved February 26, 2016, from <<http://crss.pk/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/CRSS-Annual-Security-Report-2015.pdf>>.

¹⁰ Europe External Policy Advisors.(n.d.). Status of Religious Minorities In Pakistan. Retrieved February 17, 2016, from <http://www.eepa.be/wcm/dmdocuments/EP_Hearing_Pakistan/Fact_Sheet_Minorities_in_Pakistan.pdf>.

Table 5.1: Fatalities from sectarian violence by region – 2015 vs. 2016 ³				
Region	2015		2016	
	Fatalities	Injuries	Fatalities	Injuries
Punjab	27	99	27	99
Balochistan	33	31	33	31
Sindh	178	131	178	131
FATA	31	76	31	76
KP	33	63	33	63
Islamabad	2	1	2	1
Total	304	401	247	423

Graph 5.1 – Sectarian Violence Fatalities – 2013-2016

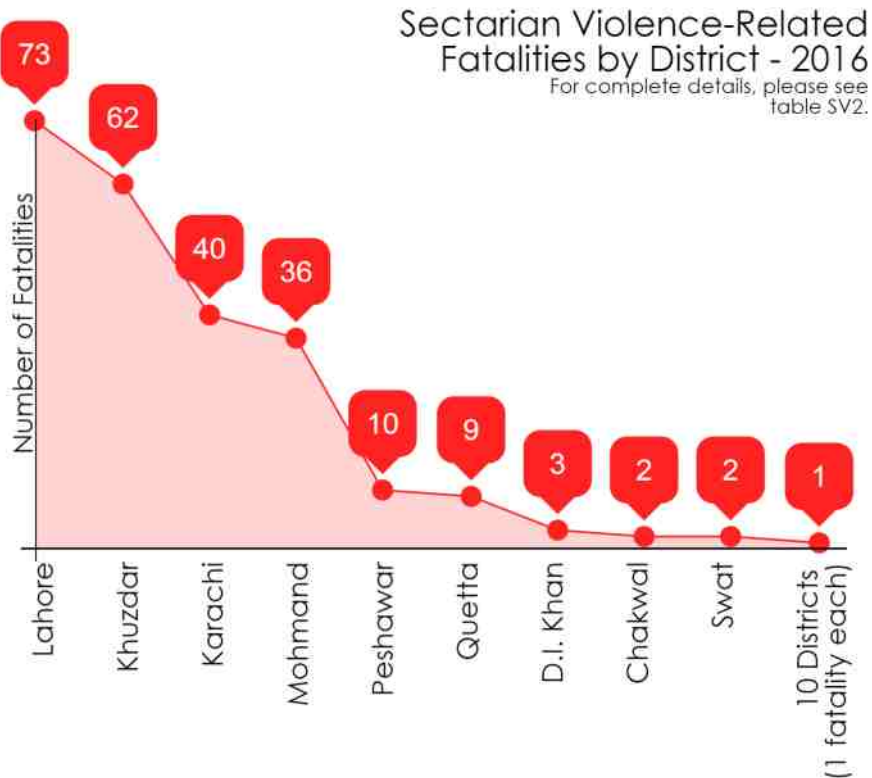


The Center for Research and Security Studies, Pakistan Annual Security Report - 2017

The year 2016 also saw a reduction in sectarian violence. There were 241 fatalities, compared to 304 in 2015 and most of these fatalities resulted from suicide attacks. Overall there was a reduction in sectarian violence in Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, but in Punjab, FATA and Balochistan, there was a significant increase.¹¹ Lahore had the highest number of fatalities due to sectarian violence at 74, followed by Khuzdar at 62, which was affected by the attack on Sufi pilgrims at the Shah Noorani shrine.

¹¹ Nafees, M., Gul, I., & Salahuddin, Z. (2017, March 26). CRSS Annual Security Report - 2015. Retrieved March 22, 2016, from <<http://crss.pk/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/CRSS-Annual-Security-Report-2016-Final.pdf>>.

Graph 5.2 Sectarian Violence in Pakistan by District - 2016



Annual Security Report, 2016 - The Center for Research and Security Studies, 2017

The year 2016 also saw a significant drop in fatalities of Shia Muslims (from 192 in 2015 to 25 in 2016). This is an interesting statistic considering that in 2016, Shia Muslims were the most affected by fatalities from sectarian violence than any other group. In 2016 Shia Muslim fatalities ranked number 4 in terms of fatalities.³

The highest number of fatalities of a specific group were Sufis at the Shah Noorani shrine attack (62), followed by Christians at 59 and Sunni Muslims at 48.³

Major causes for sectarian violence include incitement by religious leaders, particularly through the misuse of loudspeakers during sermons, institutionalized discrimination, biased curriculum, and the abuse of controversial laws.

The blasphemy laws in particular can be systematically abused to target minorities and incite religious hatred but there has been some progress towards starting a dialogue as regards reform. A step in that direction was the courts upholding the death sentence for Mumtaz Qadri, the man who killed

Punjab's sitting Governor Salman Taseer on what he viewed as blasphemous conduct.¹² In May 2015, a draft bill was introduced calling for severe penalties for misuse of the blasphemy laws.¹³ In a statement by the Supreme Court in October 2015, Justice Asif Saeed Khosa remarked that criticism of blasphemy laws was not blasphemy in itself, thus opening the doors for a public debate on the issue.¹⁴ At the end of the 13-month audit period, a boy in Khanqah cut off his own hand after he was marked a blasphemer by the local cleric. The cleric has since been arrested and charges have been filed against him.¹⁵

5.2.4 Supreme Court Judgment

In June 2014, the Supreme Court of Pakistan highlighted the state's failure to protect religious minorities and their places of worship. The Court found a "lack of awareness about minority rights" among law-enforcement agencies and observed that assaults against religious minorities could be credited to the failure by the state to take satisfactory preventive measures.¹⁶

These preventative measures include designing school curriculums to promote religious tolerance and cohesion, constituting a national council for the protection of minorities to frame policy recommendations for safeguarding and protecting the rights of religious minorities, constituting a special police force to protect places of worship of religious minorities and ensuring that action, including registration of criminal cases, is promptly taken to bring to justice perpetrators who abuse the rights of religious minorities.¹⁷

5.3 Government Progress against Spreading Hatred/Sectarianism

Latest figures reported in media show that 15,259 clerics, religious teachers and prayer leaders were arrested for "delivering hate speeches and possessing hate/anti-state material" and that most of these arrests were made based on intelligence reports. Additionally, 14,869 cases were filed against individuals preaching hate, while approximately 6,000 cases were registered against vendors selling hate material.¹⁸

However, the National Security Advisor, Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Naseer Khan Janjua told CRSS that 1,365 cases had been registered and 2,058 individuals arrested for hate speech and spreading hateful material.¹⁹

¹² Malik, M. Z. (2015, March 09). Death sentence upheld for killer of Pakistani governor over blasphemous law. Retrieved March.

¹³ Lodge, C. (2015, June 01). World. Retrieved February 24, 2016, from

<<http://www.christiantoday.com/article/pakistan.new.legislation.could.stop.misuse.of.blasphemy.laws/55131.htm>>.

¹⁴ Haider, I. (2015, October 05). Criticising blasphemy law does not amount to blasphemy: Justice Khosa. Retrieved March 26, 2016, from <<http://www.dawn.com/news/1211047>>.

¹⁵ Gillani, W., & Nordland, R. (2016, January 18). Boy's Response to Blasphemy Charge Unnerves Many in Pakistan. Retrieved January 19, 2016, from <<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/19/world/asia/boys-response-to-blasphemy-charge-unnerves-many-in-pakistan.html>>.

¹⁶ Omer, R. (2015, November 24). Minority matters. Retrieved May 06, 2016, from <<http://www.dawn.com/news/1221823>>.

¹⁷ US State Department. (2014, July 28). 2013 Report on International Religious Freedom - Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. Retrieved March 27, 2016, from <<http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2013/sca/222339.htm>>.

¹⁸ Gishkori, Z. (2016, August 01). Over 15,000 hate mongers arrested in 18 months. Retrieved March 04, 2016, from <<https://www.geo.tv/latest/110529-Over-15000-hate-mongers-arrested-in-18-months>>.

¹⁹ CRSS held exclusive interviews with the NSA in December 2016, January 2017 and February 2017. The NSA leads the National Security Decision, and is responsible for the security of Pakistan. The implementation of the NAP is one of his tasks.

In addition, 70 shops had been sealed. Regarding the misuse of loudspeakers to spread hatred or incite violence, 15,365 cases had been registered, with 15,898 arrested across Pakistan. 4,294 pieces of equipment had also been confiscated. He also said that there was zero tolerance for religious discrimination in Pakistan. This may be evidenced further by the fact that the five Muslims that incited a mob to lynch and burn alive a Christian couple, were arrested, tried, convicted and awarded the death penalty for their crimes.²⁰

The Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in his address to the Hindu community at a Diwali event in Karachi said, "I am the Prime Minister of all Pakistanis, whether they are Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Christian, Parsi, or any other religion. I will stand by victims of violence and ensure perpetrators are brought to justice, even where the perpetrators are Muslims."

In August 2016, the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Bill was passed with the objective of safeguarding the rights of individuals against various types of cyber-crimes, and prohibits the online criticism of religion.²²

Mr. Lal Chand, Member National Assembly, proposed and moved the National Commission for Minority Rights Act, 2015.²³ The proposed act lists the functions and powers of the Commission as follows:

- (1) The Commission shall perform all or any of the following functions, namely;
 - a) Evaluate the progress and development of minorities;
 - b) Monitor the working of the safeguards provided in the Constitution of Pakistan and laws enacted by Parliament;
 - c) Make recommendations for effective implementation of safeguards for the protection of the interests of minorities
 - d) Inquire and investigate into specific complaints regarding deprivation of rights and safeguards of the minorities and take up such matters with the appropriate authorities
 - e) Undertake studies into problems arising out of any discrimination against minorities and recommend measures for their removal
 - f) Conduct studies, research and analysis on the issues relating to socio-economic and educational development of minorities
 - g) Suggest appropriate measures with respect to any minority to be undertaken by the government
 - h) Make periodical or special reports to the government on any matter pertaining to minorities and in particular the difficulties confronted by them
 - i) Any other matter which may be referred to it by the government, and

²⁰ Agencies. (2016, November 13). Five sentenced to death in Pakistan for lynching and burning Christian couple in a kiln. The Independent. Retrieved March 8, 2017, from <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/pakistan-death-sentence-christian-couple-shahzad-masih-shama-bibi-kiln-lynch-a7435156.html>.

²¹ Omer, R. (2015, November 24). Minority matters. Retrieved May 11, 2016, from http://epaper.dawn.com/DetailImage.php?StoryImage=24_11_2015_008_003.

²² Khan, R. (2016, August 11). Cyber crime bill passed by NA: 13 reasons Pakistanis should be worried. Retrieved March 04, 2016, from <https://www.dawn.com/news/127666>.

²³ Session of the National Assembly. Retrieved May 06, 2016, from http://www.na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1450170084_274.pdf.

- j) Review existing laws or those that may be enacted in future to ensure they are in the best interest of religious minorities and send its recommendations to Parliament.
- (2) The Government shall cause the recommendations referred to in clause (c) of sub-section (1) to be laid before Parliament along with a memorandum explaining the action taken or proposed to be taken on the recommendations and the reasons for the non-acceptance, if any, of such recommendations.
- (3) The Commission shall, while performing any of the functions mentioned in sub-clauses (a), (b) and (d) of sub-section (1), have all the powers of a civil court trying a suit and, in particular, in respect of the following matters, namely.
- a) Summoning and enforcing the attendance of any person from any part of Islamic Republic of Pakistan and examining him on oath;
 - b) Requiring the discovery and production of any document;
 - c) Receiving evidence of affidavits;
 - d) Requisitioning any public record or copy thereof from any court of office;
 - e) Issuing commissions for the examination of witness and documents; and any other matter which may be prescribed.

The National Commission for Minority Rights Act, 2015 was moved in 2015. Following the adoption of the bill against forced religious conversions,²⁴ in December 2016, there was another call to establish said commission. However, the status of this bill is still pending.²⁵

The Sindh Government announced on January 19, 2016, that it is planning to legislate a bill which will allow only government approved Friday sermons in all mosques in a bid to curb extremism and promote sectarian harmony in the province.

As has been mentioned before, there has been an on-going issue as regards forced conversions and marriages of Hindu women. In September 2016, the Sindh Assembly passed a law allowing Hindu couples in Sindh to register their marriages.⁸ This law would not only play an instrumental role in protecting women against forced marriages but would also help in matters of inheritance, adoption and the legality of heirs etc.

5.4 The Council of Islamic Ideology (CII)

The CII is mentioned here because it is in a unique position to alter the framework that drives radical ideology in Pakistan and work with the state to introduce / amend laws that can help create sustainable stability, and protect minority rights.

²⁴ Chaudhary, H. & Mugheri, I. (2016, November 24). Sindh Assembly adopts bill against forced religious conversions. Dawn. Retrieved, March 03, 2017, from <<https://www.dawn.com/news/1298369>>.

²⁵ Mansoor, H. (2016, December 11). Call for early establishment of minority rights commission. The Express Tribune. The Express Tribune. Retrieved, March 03, 2017, from <<https://www.dawn.com/news/1301664>>.

5.4.1 CII: A Brief History

The CII is a constitutional advisory body on Islamic injunctions. It was inaugurated as the Advisory Council of Islamic Ideology on August 1, 1962, under General Ayub Khan to serve as an advisory body. It has gone through some minor changes over the years, but its primary function stays the same. The CII also enjoys immense legislative and policy power, despite being comprised of no law-makers.

The 1973 Constitution, under Articles 228-31, gave the CII the task of identifying laws contrary to Islam and recommending amendments to bring those more in line with Islamic principles. The CII was also used by General Zia-ul-Haq to legitimize and pass controversial legislation like the Hudood Ordinance.

5.4.2 CII: Role and Functions

Aside from the above, the Council's current functions include recommending laws to the Parliament and provincial assemblies that conform to the Quran and Sunnah, making recommendations to bring current laws more in line with Islamic injunctions and advising the Parliament, provincial assemblies or other government functionaries on proposed laws and whether they are in accordance with Islamic injunctions or not.

5.4.3 Controversies

The CII is a controversial body by the very nature of its functions. Under the leadership of Dr. Khalid Masood (Chairman CII 2004 – 2010), the CII supported some progressive reforms, including women's rights. However, since then, the CII has been at the center of questionable recommendations and ideology. Most recently, it termed a piece of legislation banning child marriages as un-Islamic,²⁶ resulting in country-wide protests asking for the abolishment of the CII.²⁷

5.5 How Pakistan Institutionalized Discrimination Against Minorities by Zeeshan Salahuddin²⁸

A newspaper advertisement in Bannu, Khyber Pukhtunkhwa recently called for applications for the khakroab position. This is the official term for a sweeper, a member of the janitorial staff. Historically, because of institutional racism and religious persecution, this role has been almost exclusively reserved for Hindus, and especially Christians. The advertisement, in the column labeled "religion", listed Hindu, Balmiki (a sect of Hinduism), Christian and Shia.

The ensuing rage on Twitter and other social media was immediate. The resulting apology was swift, and predictably spun to feign sincerity and innocence. But even then, they only apologized for using

²⁶ Tharoor, I. (2016, January 15). Bill banning child marriage fails in Pakistan after it's deemed 'un-Islamic'. Retrieved January 18, 2016, from <<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/world-views/wp/2016/01/15/bill-banning-child-marriage-fails-in-pakistan-after-its-deemed-un-islamic/>>.

²⁷ Correspondent. (2016, January 20). One for the women: Civil society demands Centre to abolish CII - The Express Tribune. Retrieved March 25, 2016, from <<http://tribune.com.pk/story/1030606/one-for-the-women-civil-society-demands-centre-to-abolish-cii/>>.

²⁸ Originally published in The Daily Times, March 24, 2017.

the word “Shia”. Congratulations Shias, you have been upgraded to first class citizens.

There are so many things wrong with this picture, that it is difficult to determine a starting point.

First, how did this advertisement ever get past the approval process? Second, how did the newspaper itself not object to such open discrimination, not just against Hindus and Christians, but also the fact that it tacitly labels Shias as non-Muslims? Third, and perhaps most importantly, why was there even a need to drag religion into a job posting? The answer to all three is simple. We have come to accept that such positions will only be applied for (and subsequently granted to) Christians and Hindus, as it is beneath our collective, imagined station. And this was no accident; it was deliberate, because it is considered common practice.

This is the state of affairs in contemporary Pakistan. A provincial government that touts itself on inclusion and tolerance, and wants to set the new standard for both politics and governance in Pakistan, allows this to fly under its nose. Even when the apology is issued, it completely ignores Christians and Hindus, because honestly, who cares, right?

During the coverage of the PSL recently, a comedian on television said the following verbatim to showcase his patriotism: “I am ready to do anything for Pakistan, I will even become a choora”. A choora is a derogatory term for a Christian khakrob, and this statement elicited thundering applause from the studio audience. What a great man, he is willing to sink all the way to the level of a choora to save Pakistan! No one questioned the logical inconsistency. No one questioned the deep-seated racism and hatred for minorities. No one questioned the comedian on this exceptionally insolent and crass claim.

The racism continued in various forms on the program. A short while later, the comedian asked a former cricketer, a question about Chris Gayle. He asked whether Gayle feels disgusted when he looks at his own black hands. Surely it must cause nausea when he is eating. Tactfully, the guest stayed quiet on the issue, and the show moved on as if nothing had happened. The comedian, however, looks quite pleased with himself, for he had cleverly snuck in both religious discrimination and racism into the affair, and no one had been the wiser.

All of this is normal, but it should not be. All of this is accepted, but it should not be. Within our so-called liberal bubbles, we feel secure that we clamored over social media. But the dirty secret of social media is that most of what is said on social media is not seen by most people. It is not sufficient to just tweet a picture of the newspaper. As citizens, we need to hold our leaders more accountable. Make calls to their office, write letters to their secretaries, send emails with demands for a better apology, and a promise to refrain from tinging a job posting in religious racism ever again.

Discrimination against minorities seems to be the true national sport of Pakistan. In our textbooks, in our daily social upbringing, we are lead to believe that non-Muslims are lesser beings, second-class citizens meant for janitorial jobs, indifferent attitudes, and universal disdain. This institutional racism has crept into every crevice, every pore, and every corner of Pakistani society. It is our responsibility, as conscientious citizens to keep to in check, to challenge it, and to demand a better environment for everyone as equal citizens, as afforded by Article 25 of the Constitution of Pakistan.

5.6 Interview with NSA, Lt. Gen. (retd.) Naseer Khan Janjua²⁹

Zeeshan Salahuddin: Can you give some examples of the divisive points [in Pakistani society]?

Lt. Gen. (retd.) Naseer Khan Janjua: There are a range of divisive issues. Hate speech is one of them, as well as religious persecution, re-emergence of proscribed organizations, madrassas, and sectarianism. These areas are divisive because they are highly sensitive. If we approach one of these areas from a divided perspective, or divided platforms, it will only create further cracks and divisions. Therefore it is of critical importance that we approach these areas by evolving consensus and bringing all relevant stakeholders on-board. Creating this united space is a steady, slow process, but it is crucial for Pakistan in the long run.

²⁹ Salahuddin, Z. (2017, Apr 07). Pakistan's National Security Adviser on Counterterrorism. Retrieved April 12, 2017, from <<http://thediplomat.com/2017/04/pakistans-national-security-adviser-on-counterterrorism/>>.