



HRFP Fact Finding Report of Burnt Christian Couple over desecration charge!

The ruthless pattern of brutal violence continues to happen against the weakened minority group. The incident at the town of district Kasur in Eastern Pakistan astonished the whole world and further damaged the reputation of the country regarding safe existence of the religious minorities in Pakistan. In the afternoon of 4th November, 2014 a



report of barbaric killing of Christian husband and wife on the account of blasphemy allegation was received through phone call on REAT Help Line (0800-09494) at HRFP Office Faisalabad. After listening about this unfortunate happening, the team of Human Rights Focus Pakistan (HRFP) with GHRD & CRM decided to visit Chak 59 (place of burnt couple at brick kiln factory) and Clarkabad village (home town of burnt couple) of Tehsil Kot Radha Kishan in District Kasur. The following objectives were formulated for the visit.

1. To visit the area and observe the environment feasibility particularly for the safety of Christian minority at Chak 59, Clarkabad and around in tehsil Kot Radha Kishan.
2. To collect information of the case from the family, local administration/authorities, local residential both from Christian and Muslim community and gather the ground realities of this incident.
3. To highlight the concerns of the Christian community with the local administration, Provincial and Federal Government.

HRFP fact-finding team visited a village Chak 59 , a village Clarkabad and authorities. At their house, HRFP team met with the family of burnt couple Shama & Sajjad Masih (S/O Nazar Masih & Inayat bibi):

a) Interview with Iqbal Masih:

HRFP team met with Iqbal Masih (Elder Brother of Sajjad Masih), he shared that Sajjad Masih and Shama Sajjad were working as laborers at Brick kiln, situated in Chak 59.

He shared with HRFP team that Shama and Sajjad were having four children named Zeeshan Sajjad (adopted son) aged 6, Salman Sajjad(son) aged 4, Soniya Sajjad(daughter) aged 2 and Poonam Sajjad (daughter) aged 1. Iqbal further shared we are five brothers named Iqbal Masih, Shahbaz Masih, Saleem Imitiaz , Nawaz Masih and Sajjad Masih. On asking about the actual happening of the incident, he shared that on 22nd October, 2014, the place where the



workers made bricks got affected by the water. In the brick kiln, every worker is allotted some space to make bricks. One of the brick kiln worker named Mohammad Irfan, on getting his land affected occupied the space of Sajjad and Shama without informing them. When Sajjad and Shama saw him, they insisted Irfan to leave their space. Other workers also came and said Irfan to leave the space of Sajjad & Shama and wait until your land gets free from water. On leaving the land, Mohammad Irfan openly said to him that “You Choora (Term use to insult the Christians)...I will take revenge from you”. On the same day, the mother of Mohammad Irfan came to the house of Sajjad and said to him that his son will shoot Sajjad and family. Iqbal Masih said, after above mentioned incident Irfan become rival of Sajjad.



b) Interview with Javed Shahbaz:

HRFP team met with Javed Shahbaz (Cousin of Sajjad Masih) to take further information, he shared that no blasphemy took place. He said that on 27th October, 2014 the father of Sajjad Masih named Nazar Masih died due to health issues. After the funeral ceremony of Sajjad’s father, on 1st November, 2014 Shama at her home gathered the clothes and burnt them inside the house. While the clothes were burning, Mohammad Irfan came to there and on seeing the burnt clothes, he spread a rumor in the area that Sajjad and Shama have burnt some pages of Holy Quran.

On the same day, Mohammad Irfan went to the owner of Brick Kiln Muhammad Yousuf Gujjar, informed him about this incident and urged him to take action against Sajjad & Shama. Yousuf Gujjar doesn’t pay heed to him and said in a lenient way that I will look into the matter. When Mohammad Irfan noticed that Yousuf Gujjar is reluctant to take action against Sajjad & Shama, he went to his community of Chak 59 and other nearer villages and report this fabricated blasphemy incident to them. This time, Mohammad Irfan came to Yousuf Gujjar with the community members who were very aggressive to give strict punishment to the Christian Couple at every cost. When the community members reported the same incident, Yousuf Gujjar called Sajjad and Shama and confined them in one of the rooms of brick kiln. The couple pleaded to Yousuf Gujjar that they have not desecrated the pages of Holy Quran and please let them go. Actually the couple has also taken a loan worth 65,000 Pak Rupees from the owner, so the owner said to them; I will not let you go until pay back and the couple was locked in the room on 1st November, 2014.

After locking them, Mohammad Irfan and owner Yousuf Gujjar spread a rumor in the town, that Sajjad Masih and Shama Sajjad willfully desecrated the Holy pages of Quran. The news circulated in surrounding 5 villages where the local clerics used loudspeakers and incited the local community to take action against the Christian couple. On 4th November, 2014 around 7:30 am in the morning a mob of hundreds people from the 5 surrounding villages came to Brick kiln of Yousuf Gujjar at Chak 59 for “teaching a lesson” to the Christian couple.

Shahbaz informed that I was told by one of the eye-witness, that the mob crashed roof of the room where the Christian couple was confined and then dragged them pitilessly. The mob undresses both husband and wife, ties them with a tractor and gave them severe pain. Their bodies were badly injured with uneven land and stones on the road. They were also beaten by bricks and then finally their bodies were thrown into the furnace of brick kiln.

Shahbaz explained when Sajjad and Shama were thrown into the fire of brick kiln, at that moment two times the wounded body of Shama came out of the brick kiln. When the mob saw that the body of Shama is not getting fire, they covered her body with a cotton blanket and then again put it in the fire of brick kiln. Shahbaz explained this story in a sentimental manner; he further shared that 5 police constable reached at brick kiln while the aggressive mob was torturing them. The mob of hundred in numbers made the police constables powerless, who threw the living bodies of Sajjad and Shama into the fire of brick kiln.

The Police Van reached at that time when the mob escaped from the location of incident. The Police just found 8 to 10 bones as a proof of two victims and they sealed the brick kiln.

c) **Interview with Naseem Bibi:**

HRFP team interviewed Naseem Bibi (Wife of Shahbaz Masih) and she shared that after the murder of Sajjad & Shama, the plight of their children is unexplainable. She said the children are in state of trauma, because they know that their parents are being killed inhumanly. Naseem Bibi said that owner Yousuf Gujjar and Mohammad Irfan both are the main culprits who incited the mob to behave like animals. She shared that Yousuf Gujjar in greed of his loan amount confined Sajjad and Shama in the brick kiln. She also shared that Shama was pregnant for the last 4 months.



d) **Visit of Brick Kiln of Muhammad Yousuf Gujjar:**

After listening the story from family members, HRFP team then visited Chak 59, the brick kiln of Yousuf Gujjar where the Christian couple was put into the confinement. On reaching Chak 59, the team observed that area residential were standing in different groups undertaking discussions at various main corners of the village. HRFP talked and interviewed some brick kiln workers and asked about the happening:

e) **Interview with Kausar Bibi (Brick Kiln Worker):**

HRFP team met with Kausar Bibi a fellow worker of Shama Sajjad at brick kiln. She shared the torture which I saw on Shama was inhuman. She said I tried several times to convinced the local cleric to forgive Shama as she is a women and also pregnant but the mob having bricks, sticks and iron rod in their hands and was continuously thrashing her. She shared; the mob tore the clothes of Shama.

f) **Interview with Tahir Majeed:**

The team of HRFP met with another local resident named Muhammad Tahir Majeed of Chak 59 who was present during the time of horrible incident. Tahir said, I was well-acquainted with character of Sajjad Masih.

He said, Sajjad was a simple man, gave respect and regard to everyone to whom he met. On asking about the authenticity of the blasphemy allegation, Tahir favored Sajjad and Shama & expressed that a complete injustice has been done against the Christian couple. He said, the Government should take strict action against the owner of Brick Kiln as he is the main culprit in this case.

g) Investigation Proceeding with DPO (District Police Officer)-Kot Radha Kishan:

On 5th November, 2014 HRF team met with DPO (District Police Officer) Jawad Qamar and questioned the inability of the Police of Kot Radha Kishan regarding the incident. Jawad Qamar gave lame excuses and shifted the Police responsibilities towards huge number of crowds and late information received by the Police.is incident.

h) Findings resulted from the Fact-finding Mission Trip:

1. Sajjad Masih and Shama Masih were husband and wife and resident of Village Clarakabad, District Kasur.
2. The couple works at Chak No. 59 in the brick kiln of Yousuf Gujjar few kilometers from the village Clarakabad.
3. The Christian couple was having four children named Zeeshan Sajjad (adopted son) aged 6, Salman Sajjad(son) aged 4, Soniya Sajjad(daughter) aged 2 and Poonam Sajjad (daughter) aged 1.
4. The co-worker Mohammad Irfan warned Sajjad Masih to take revenge for not obeying his order to leave the dry piece of land for him to make bricks there.
5. Mohammad Irfan spread a rumor at Chak 59 & surrounding villages that Sajjad and Shama have desecrated Quranic verses.
6. Mohammad Irfan incited the local community of Chak 59 & surrounding villages to take violent action against Sajjad and Shama.
7. The owner Yousuf Gujjar confined Sajjad and Shama upon the pressure of Mohammad Irfan and some community members.
8. Sajjad and Shama has taken credit from the owner Yousuf Gujjar few years back.
9. The owner Yousuf Gujjar on listening about the desecration of Quranic Verses confined the Christian couple in the room of his mansion.
10. Mohammad Irfan and owner Yousuf Gujjar spread the rumor at Chak 59, Chak 60 and Chak 65 that Christian couple has willfully desecrated Holy Verses of Quran.
11. The local Mosque clerics of Chak 59, Chak 60, Chak 65, Moza Rossa and Bheel's Mosque made announcements through loud speakers about the blasphemy allegation and forced the Muslim community to take action against the Christian husband and wife.



12. On 2nd and 3rd November, 2014 the announcements on the speakers were continuously broadcasted against the Christian couple. On 4th November, 2014 the mob from 3 villages gathered at the brick kiln of Yousuf Gujjar to attack the couple.

13. The mob on finding the confined couple from one of the mansion's room, they broke the ceiling, jumped inside and tortured them. They took them out of the room, tore their clothes, beaten with iron rods, tie their bodies with rope, attached with tractor and gave them miserable pain. After that, they throw their bodies into the furnace of brick kiln.

14. The initial respondents of Police reached the brick-kiln before this incident but they take no action in front of a huge mob. The Police vans reached the brick kiln after half an hour of this deadly incident.

15. The Police filed FIR (First Information Report) against 53 known and other unknown person.

16. Majority of the local residents and brick kiln workers firmly stated that Sajjad Masih and Shama were innocent and they have not committed any blasphemous act.

17. The family of Sajjad Masih and other Christian community are still insecure at Chak 59, Clarkabad and around, Tehsil Kot Radha Kishan, District Kasur.

h) Recommendations:

1. The Government of Pakistan should take strict action against the Owner of Brick Kiln Muhammad Yousuf Gujjar, Mohammad Irfan and all suspected person who are involved in the deadly killing of Sajjad and Shama to ensure the justice.

2. The Government of Pakistan should ban the misuse of speakers at religious places that is done to incite the religious sentiments of one religion against other religions. The Government should ban the utterance of hatred speech against any other religion.

3. The Government of Pakistan should ensure the implementation of Article 36 of Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan regarding the protection of religious minorities.

4. The Government of Pakistan should initiate peace and interfaith harmony initiatives between the Muslim and minority community.

5. The Government of Pakistan should ensure the protection of Victims children and the whole family of Shama and Sajjad.

6. The Government of Pakistan should prohibit the increasing trend of Street Trials undertaken to violate the rule of law and harm the religious minorities.

7. The Government should ensure the safe conditions of blasphemy victims who are facing penalties in different prisons of Pakistan.



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