



Monthly Report Team Pakistan

March 2022



Authored by: Anna Magdalena Comploi, Fatima Orujova, Kirsten O'Connell, Nicola Costantin and Marlene Pereira



Table of Contents

1. AIM OF THE REPORT
 2. OVERVIEW OF THE COUNTRY
 3. OVERVIEW OF THE COUNTRY'S MINORITY GROUPS & RELIGIONS
 4. LEGAL FRAMEWORK
 - 4.1. MINORITIES AND FREEDOM OF RELIGION
 - 4.2. BLASPHEMY LAWS
 - 4.3. CHILDREN'S RIGHTS
 5. HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN MARCH
 - 5.1. VIOLATIONS OF RIGHTS OF WOMEN AND LGBTQI2A+
 - 5.1.1. Violence against women
 - 5.1.2. Violence against LGBTQI2A+
 - 5.1.3. Aurat March - International Women's Day
 - 5.2. BLASPHEMY ALLEGATIONS
 6. POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS
 - 6.1. WOMEN' RIGHTS
 - 6.2. CHILDREN'S RIGHTS
 - 6.3. LGBTQ'S RIGHTS
 7. CONCLUSION
- BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Aim of the report

The core purpose of this monthly report is to provide an overview of the most important human rights abuses concerning minority and marginalised groups in Pakistan during the month of March 2022. At the same time, the report also attempts to draw attention to encouraging developments in the human rights field within Pakistani society. By shedding light on these events, this report attempts to sensitise readers about the ongoing human rights violations and give a voice to minorities and marginalised groups.

It will begin with an overview of Pakistan, touching on its history, geography and political structure. The second section will briefly examine the country's minority groups and religions and provide an analysis of how these groups are legitimised within the country. The third part will zoom in on the significant human rights violations that occurred in the month of March 2022. Precisely, the report will cover specific categories, namely violations of Women's Rights and LGBTQI2A rights and blasphemy allegations. The report will also highlight positive political and/or juridical developments for each category, trying to deliver the most accurate report possible. Nonetheless, the report might fail to provide a specific fact or progress due to many daily events.



Overview of the Country

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan achieved independence as a dominion within the Commonwealth in August 1947, after a long and complicated British action that partitioned the Indian subcontinent into India and Pakistan (Minority Rights Group, 2020). The partition was chosen primarily on the geographical distribution of Hindus and Muslims (Ahmed & Gulrajani, 2020). Nevertheless, the British planned the territorial division in a way that ensured the wealth and resources of British India were granted to India, immediately creating tensions between the two countries (Ziring, 2022). The less developed areas of Sindh, Balochistan, and the North-West Frontier Province came to Pakistan intact, while the more developed provinces of Punjab and Bengal were divided with India (Minority Rights Group, 2020). The same happened in the Kashmir region, which provoked a war between the two neighbouring States in the period immediately following their independence and which is ongoing today (Farrell, 2003). Moreover, the partition and its aftermath caused the flight of millions of refugees along religious lines, accompanied by terrible massacres (Ziring, 2022). The exodus of such a vast number of desperate people in each direction required an urgent response, which neither country was prepared to manage (Minority Rights Group, 2020). This political division has created national and international tensions, producing or accentuating human rights violations.

Geographically, the State of Pakistan is bordered by India to the East, Afghanistan to the Northwest and Iran to the West, while China frames the country in the Northeast. The country touches the Arabian Sea in the South, giving Pakistan an important strategic natural element. The State is the fifth most populous country in the world, counting more than 220 million people as of 2021 (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2021). Its capital is the city of Islamabad, whereas the largest port, city and business centre is in Karachi. The second-largest city is Lahore, and other major cities are Faisalabad, Rawalpindi, Multan, Gujranwala, Hyderabad, Peshawar and Quetta. Pakistan's main religion is Islam, as the country's name evokes, which amounts to 98 percent of the total population. The spoken languages are Urdu, English, Punjabi, Dari, Balochi and Pashto (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2021).

Today, the President of Pakistan is Mr Arif-ur-Rehman Alvi, and the Prime Minister of Pakistan is Mr. Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, the younger brother of the former three-time prime minister Nawaz Sharif. He became the 23rd Prime Minister of Pakistan and was elected by the National Assembly, after the opposition won the no-confidence vote on 11 April 2022. In the past, he has served three times as



the Chief Minister of Punjab in his political career, in 1997, 2008 and 2013, making him the longest-serving Chief Minister of Punjab (Vajiram and Ravi IAS Preparation Institute, 2022). Pakistan is based upon a democratic parliamentary federal republic.

It is important to note the Pakistani nuclear power plant. Pakistan is pursuing what it calls a “full-spectrum deterrence posture,” allegedly as a reaction to India's perceived “Cold Start” doctrine (Kristensen & Korda, 2021). The US Defence Intelligence Agency projected in 1999 that Pakistan would have 60 to 80 warheads by 2020 (US Defence Intelligence Agency, 1999). However, due to the rise of international and regional clashes, Pakistan has fielded and developed several new weapon systems since then (Kristensen & Korda, 2021).



Overview of the country's minority groups & religions

Pakistan is characterised by many cultures, languages and ethnicities (Minority Rights Group, 2020). In a recent statistic, 96.28 percent of the population is Muslim (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2021). However, the Muslims are not a monolithic group; a vast majority of this population professes Sunni Islam and has links with the Hanafi school of thought (Minority Rights Group, 2020). Non-Muslims constitute 3.72 percent of the total population: 1.59 percent of Christian, 1.6 percent of Hindus and 0.22 percent of Ahmadi (Minority Rights Group, 2020). As the report will demonstrate, the proportion of religious minorities in the country has a huge impact due to the widespread religious persecution, such as forced religious conversion (Boone, 2017; Singh, 2022). Indeed, religious minorities have tremendously suffered during the rise of nationalism and due to the preservation of the Islamic character in all sectors of the society perpetrated by the government, like the infamous case of Pooja Kumari (The Tribune, 2022). Pooja was an 18-year-old Hindu girl whom a man had allegedly killed. This man wanted to marry her after converting her to Islam, however, the poor girl showed resistance, enraging the man who fired a shot at her, leaving the girl dead on the spot. (The Tribune, 2022).



Legal Framework

4.1. Minorities and Freedom of Religion

Although Islam is the official religion enclosed in the Constitution in Article 2, Pakistan is characterised by many cultures, languages and ethnicities (Minority Rights Group, 2020). Article 20 of the Pakistani Constitution proclaims the freedom of religion and presents every citizen with the right to practise and promote their religions. Nevertheless, there is no specific definition of the term “minority” in the 1973 Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, creating a substantial lacuna, especially in the field of human rights (Human rights Watch, 2020). In 2022, for instance, the government passed a new National Security Policy for the year 2022-2026, labelling “minorities” as “sub-national narratives” and characterising them as dangerous (National Security of Pakistan, 2022).

4.2. Blasphemy Laws

Pakistan’s laws on offences related to religion are often referred to as blasphemy laws (Commission of Jurists, 2015). Sections 295 to 298 C of the Pakistani Penal Code lay down crimes deemed to be offences against religion.¹ They include misusing religious epithets, defiling the Quran, outraging religious sentiment, using derogatory remarks against Prophet Muhammad, uttering words to wound religious feelings, et cetera.² The sentences for these offences range from fines to life imprisonment and the death sentence (Commission of Jurists, 2015). For the majority of these offences, bail cannot be claimed as a matter of right but only at the discretion of the court, allowing the police to start investigations and arrest alleged suspects without a warrant (Commission of Jurists, 2015). The Anti-Terrorism Act of 1997 includes Section 295-A of the Pakistani Penal Code, enabling special anti-terrorism courts to try blasphemy offences³.

Pakistan’s blasphemy laws were initially codified under British rule in 1860, but subsequently expanded in 1927 (BBC News, 2019). They were further expanded between 1980 and 1986, in times of Islamization (BBC News, 2019). Under British rule, blasphemy laws criminalised disturbing religious

1. Pakistan Penal Code, Section 295-298 C.
2. Pakistan Penal Code, Section 295-298 C.
3. Anti-Terrorism Act 1997 (XXVII of 1997).



assemblies, trespassing on burial grounds, insulting religious beliefs and destroying a place or object of worship and carried a maximum sentence of ten years (BBC News, 2019). In the 1980s, these laws were expanded to criminalise remarks against Islamic religious figures, carrying a sentence of up to three years (BBC News, 2019). In 1982, another amendment was implemented that prescribed life imprisonment for desecration of the Quran and the death penalty or life imprisonment for blasphemy against the Prophet Muhammad (BBC News, 2019).

Blasphemy laws have often been misused to oppress minorities and marginalised groups and are therefore frequently denounced by civil society activists and human rights activists (Commission of Jurists, 2015). According to a Report by the UN Special Rapporteur, these laws run counter to the Constitution of Pakistan, as well as the rights under international human rights law, such as non-discrimination and freedom of expression⁴. According to the International Commission of Jurists, many blasphemy allegations are raised out of personal vendetta or political motives (Commission of Jurists, 2015).

4.3. Children's Rights

Article 25 (1) of the Constitution of Pakistan states, "all citizens are equal before law and entitled to equal protection of law".⁵ Article 6 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child recognises "that every child has the inherent right to life" and as a State party, Pakistan is obliged to ensure the "maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child."⁶ Article 37 (a) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states "No child shall be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment"⁷.

4. For further information, see Special Rapporteur on freedom of expression and opinion, 'International Community must pay attention to the persecution of Ahmadi Muslims Worldwide' (Report), <https://www.ohchr.org/en/taxonomy/term/12847?page=11>.

5. Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 10 April 1973, Article 21 (1)

6. Convention on the Rights of the Child (adopted 20 November 1989, entered into force 2 September 1990) 1577 UNTS 3 (CRC) Article 6

7. Convention on the Rights of the Child (adopted 20 November 1989, entered into force 2 September 1990) 1577 UNTS 3 (CRC) Article 37 (a)



Human Rights Abuses in March

5.1. Violations of Rights of Women and LGBTQI2A+

The month of March in 2022 was marked by a number of issues and developments regarding women and the LGBTQI2A+ community. These include violence against women and LGBTQI2A+ individuals, honour killings, blasphemy killings, and some steps and actions taken by Pakistani authorities in regard to these issues.

5.1.1. Violence against women

One of the reported cases of violence against women in March was the incident in which a woman was tortured to death by her husband due to a domestic issue in Lahore (Geo News, 2022). Another case of gender-based violence that particularly sparked local and international outrage, was the killing of an 18-year-old girl Hindu girl, Pooja Oad in Pakistan's south-eastern Sindh province (ABP News, 2022; Janjua, 2022). On March 21st, 2022, Oad was shot dead by Wahid Bux Lashari because she dismissed his demand for her to marry him and convert to Islam (Janjua, 2022; Sharma, 2022). As Lashari had often harassed Oad, her family reported him to local police officers, who, however, did not handle the issue (Janjua, 2022).



Pooja Oad. Source: Vice News/Pooja's family. No Year

This incident, and in general, the increase in forced conversion cases in Pakistan have triggered fears among minority communities in the country (Janjua, 2022). It has been found that every year more than a thousand women forcefully enter into a marriage or get converted to Islam (Janjua, 2022). According to minority communities and local human rights activists in the country, the absence of legislation protecting minorities and women's rights exacerbates the current situation in the country (Janjua, 2022). While an anti-forced conversion bill was introduced in 2019, it was not enacted due to the opposition of Islamist groups (OpIndia, 2022). Moreover, in October 2021, a parliamentary committee dismissed a bill criminalising forced conversions since the Ministry of Religious Affairs rejected the

proposal (Janjua, 2022). Furthermore, in 2016, the Sindh province outlawed forced conversion, but the province governor declined the ratification of the legislation (Janjua, 2022). Additionally, in 2019, the Sindh government made a step to criminalise forced marriages and conversions for the second time, and yet, the law was not enacted due to the influence of some religious groups (ABP News, 2022).

As mentioned previously, the number of honour killings was also high during March 2022. One of these incidents was the murder of a female dancer committed by a gunman in the name of honour on March 1st, 2022 (Akhauri, 2022). Another case of honour killing was one in which a woman was murdered by her husband in Khurianwala on March 3rd, 2022 (Express Tribune, 2022a). It has been reported that the murderer, who was later arrested by the police, committed the crime as he was doubtful "about the character of his wife" (Express Tribune, 2022a). Moreover, in Islamabad, on March 9th, 2022, a woman and her two family members were killed by her husband in the name of honour (Friday Times, 2022a). The murderer had suspected that his wife had a relationship with her co-worker at the hospital where she used to work (Friday Times, 2022a). Right after murdering his wife and her family members, he also killed the man whom he suspected to have had a relationship with his wife (Friday Times, 2022a).

5.1.2. Violence against LGBTQI2A+

The month of March 2022 was also noted by several cases of violence against LGBTQI2A+, specifically, transgender people in Pakistan. For instance, on March 15th, 2022, five trans women were shot by armed men who forcibly broke into their house in Mansehra, a city in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, due to jealousy (The Print, 2022). It was reported that four of the victims were in particularly critical condition (The Friday Times, 2022b). Moreover, on March 17th, 2022, a transgender person was shot dead in Mardan, a city in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Express Tribune, 2022b). It was reported by the local police that the incident took place over a local dispute (Express Tribune, 2022b). Besides, a transgender person was shot dead due to an argument in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Dawn, 2022a). This was the third case in which transgender people were targeted in in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa within a week's period.

Another such case was the incident on March 25th, 2022 in Mardan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. During the incident, one of the transgender people was shot dead and another one got injured by unknown motorcyclists who opened fire on the victims' car (Dawn, 2022b). The victim that survived stated that they did not know the perpetrators and had not had disputes with them before (Dawn, 2022b). Local



police reported that the attackers escaped the crime scene after the incident and that they have started conducting investigations to arrest them (Dawn, 2022b).

1.1.3. Aurat March – International Women's Day

Furthermore, on March 8th 2022, women's marches called Aurat Marches, were organised in different cities in Pakistan, including Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi (Al Jazeera, 2022; Asian News International, 2022). The marches were organised and attended by women's rights activists, minority rights activists and transgender rights activists (Al Jazeera, 2022). For instance, in Lahore, there were around 2,000 Pakistani women that voiced slogans like "End the patriarchy" and "Give respect to women" (Al Jazeera, 2022). Moreover, transgender participants of the marches specifically demanded their right to freedom of movement, education, expression and to live their lives without being dictated by others (Dawn, 2022c).

While the organisers of the marches were asked by city governors to cancel the rallies, attendees of the marches were able to participate and voice their slogans (Asian News International, 2022). Noteworthy, in Lahore, the High Court dismissed the requests of city authorities and issued final approval to hold the marches (Al Jazeera, 2022).



Aurat March participants demonstrate placards in Lahore. Source: Arif Ali/AFP via Getty Images, March 8th, 2022.

Moreover, on March 8th, 2022, there were also “hijab marches” held by Pakistani women that were mainly members of conservative Islamic groups in Islamabad, Lahore, Karachi, and so on (Al Jazeera, 2022). These marches mainly endorsed and called for a stronger safeguard of Islamic values (Al Jazeera, 2022).

Additionally, in March 2022, the Pakistani Minister of Religious Affairs, Noor-ul-Haq Qadri made a request to replace “International Women’s Day” with “Hijab Day” in Pakistan to protect Islamic principles in the country (O’Donnell, 2022). Whilst the request received lots of objections and disapproving comments by local people as well as human rights activists, it was also endorsed by many locals and religious groups (O’Donnell, 2022). However, political parties in the parliament have not yet expressed their opinions on this request (O’Donnell, 2022).

5.2. Blasphemy allegations

On March 29th, 2022, a Pakistani schoolteacher was killed on her way to work (Al Jazeera, 2022). The 21-year-old victim, Safoora Bibi, was killed by a colleague and two students over differences of opinion on religious issues (Al Jazeera, 2022). The perpetrators ambushed Bibi near the entrance of the all-girls Islamic seminary, Jamia Islamia Falahul Binaat, in the northwestern Pakistani town of Dera Ismail Khan (Al Jazeera, 2022). Police found the victim outside the school with multiple stab wounds and a slit throat (Al Jazeera, 2022). The teacher and the student suspected Bibi of having committed blasphemy, a highly sensitive charge in Pakistan (Al Jazeera, 2022). The students and teacher were arrested and confessed to the crime (Al Jazeera, 2022).

The teacher confessed that they had planned the crime because her relative dreamt that the victim had committed blasphemy (Al Jazeera, 2022). According to a police officer, the police were investigating whether the killing was carried out due to a personal feud with the victim (Buneri, 2022). The person who had dreamt of the blasphemy was also arrested and a record containing the details of her dreams was registered. According to the Print, the relative



had dreamt that Bibi had committed blasphemy against the Prophet and was consequently directed to slaughter Bibi (Tanjea, 2022). Researcher and journalist Rabia Mehmood declared that while Pakistani women have previously endorsed religiously motivated lynch mobs, it is unusual for women to murder someone over blasphemy allegations (Tanjea, 2022).

On March 31st, 2022, Nasir Hussain, an anti-terrorism court judge handed down life imprisonment alongside other sentences to 14 suspects for lynching a man accused of blasphemy in 2012 (Dawn, 2022d). In 2012, several shopkeepers and locals started a furious mob against a man who destroyed a copy of the Holy Quran, lynching the beggar and consequently targeting police officials, burning their vehicles and targeting the police station. The police initially arrested 132 people, but 119 of them were acquitted (Dawn, 2022d).

Theocratic influence has been on the rise in Pakistan, with clerics and bodies such as the Islamic council (the one that works with parliament) taking an increasing role in shaping both discourse and political action/inaction (Ur-Rehman & Masood, 2022). This has been reflected, for example, in the number of accusations of blasphemy, which had increased by 1300 per cent between 1987 and 2021 (Ur-Rehman & Masood, 2022). This has also been reflected in extra-judicial killings in cases of suspected blasphemy or apostasy (Ur-Rehman & Masood, 2022).

Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan, which has been described as a radical religious party, has also grown in influence, contesting elections and continuing to unsettle the government. Islamist parties have been emboldened by the rise of the Taliban in neighbouring Afghanistan. (Ur-Rehman & Masood, 2022). Police and law enforcement are neither trained nor equipped to deal with vigilante mobs and often remain overwhelmed (Ur-Rehman & Masood, 2022).

5.3. Children's Rights

On March 10, 2022, it was reported that a seven-day old baby girl called Jannat was shot five times by her father Shahzaib Khan because he wanted a son. The suspect refused to return home after discovering his wife had given birth to a girl and refused to accept his daughter



(Elliott-Gibbs, 2022). Faisal Edhi, who leads the largest social welfare charity in Karachi, Pakistan, reported that over 500 bodies of infants were found dumped in the last two years, and most of them were girls (Grealish, 2022).

On March 11, it was reported a 22-day old baby girl called Zamil was murdered by her mother in Karachi, Pakistan, because her crying interrupted the sleep of her mother. The mother initially said after she gained consciousness, that she found her daughter's throat slit after claiming a man entered her house and knocked her unconscious. However, the police said the body of Zamil was found on a bed in a room while the mother told them she had placed her in a cot when the perpetrator arrived (TNI, 2022).

On 20 March, it was reported that that five men gang raped a six year old girl in Faisalabad. The culprits reportedly lured the minor girl and subjected her to sexual assault (Desk, 2022). On March 21, a fifteen-year-old Christian girl named Merab was kidnapped in Karachi and a 15 year old Christian girl named Persicla was kidnapped in front of her parents' house in Faisalabad (AN, 2022). On March 22, it was reported, Pooja Oad a Hindu girl was shot dead in the middle of a street in Sindh Pakistan after she put up resistance from her attackers. She was being abducted but it failed because Pooja fought back (Staff, 2022). Human rights activists say hundreds of Christian and Hindu girls are abducted and forced to convert to Islam every year (TTOI, 2021). A thirteen-year-old girl was kidnapped by the accused Moaz Dasti, a resident of Dhok Mohri Bara Kahu on March 18 from her home. According to the first information report (FIR), the suspect abducted the girl with a malafide intention (Tribune, 2022).



Positive developments

Despite all the human rights violations and criminal atrocities towards the minorities occurring every day in Pakistan, there are some glimpses of hope for a better future. With every story and publication that makes it through the media, more and more people are aware of the scale of the problem and try to fight it step by step. Below are some examples of human rights developments in the last months.

6.1. Women' rights

International Women's Day is celebrated on March 8, and to celebrate it, Pakistan launched the National Policy Gender Framework. This framework aims to bring more gender equality and fair opportunities for women to prosper and progress. It is a big goal and has a long way to go, considering Pakistan is ranked as the fourth lowest country regarding gender equality according to The Global Gender Gap Report 2021. Prime Minister Imran Khan emphasised the empowerment of women, saying "all women have rights and we will enforce them" (Dawn, 2022).

Furthermore, a great development in women's rights protection has started with the implementation of the Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace (Amendment) Bill, 2022. Pakistan's parliament approved this document, which significantly strengthens protection for women against violence and harassment in a workplace environment. This law extends the definition of harassment to "discrimination on the basis of gender, which may or may not be sexual in nature", and extends protection to students and domestic workers (Human Rights Watch, 2022).

Regarding justice, a remarkable and historical act took place at the beginning of the year with the appointment of Justice Ayesha Mali as the first female judge on Pakistan's Supreme Court. This is a great indicator of change towards gender equality. "As the first woman judge appointed to the apex court in the country's judicial history, this is an important step towards



improving gender diversity in the judiciary, where women reportedly account for only 17 percent of judges overall and just under 4.4 percent in the high courts," said the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (NPR, 2022).

6.2. Children's rights

The executive director of UNICEF, in a recent meeting with Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Quresh, congratulated Pakistan's efforts on the noticeable progress to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The government's commitment to promote and protect children's rights was appreciated especially, among the government's efforts in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences and repercussions for this minority. Pakistan is assuming a more active role in the attempt to implement UNICEF measures, and also playing an important role internationally, in fighting this cause according to the UNICEF officer (Daily Times, 2022).

Children's rights protection has been, in fact, the "topic of the day". In the first meeting of the National Committee for Children this month, the issue was being addressed and several initiatives were discussed to promote and implement a strategic vision to strengthen the mechanism for the protection and promotion of children's rights. The committee understood the importance and urgency of action and emphasised the necessity of combined efforts by all stakeholders. This initiative shows a break in the "old Pakistan" and hopefully brings light to institutional changes considering the improved interest in human rights. (The News, 2022)

6.3. LGBTQ's rights

In the month of March, several shocking and extreme violent atrocities were committed against LGBTQ's minority. As a result, a wave of indignation, revolt and insurrection took place in the streets among protests, rallies and vigils. These public protests were a way to pay tribute and respect to the murdered trans women and highlight the discrimination and the rise of



attacks in the community. According to The Guardian, many Pakistanis are keen to support the minority. Attending Thursday's rally in Islamabad, Professor Farzana Bari, who said that she wanted to show solidarity with the khwaja sira community. "The community is organized now and a leadership is emerging and they raise [their] voice for their community's rights and against violence. But we, women and men, have to stand by them as allies." (The Guardian, 2022).

On the other hand, activist Sarah Gill became Pakistan's First Transgender Doctor. Despite all the challenges and discrimination that she confessed to have been a target of. Nevertheless, she overcame every barrier and achieved what is yet to be very uncommon, a significant role in Pakistani society (The Logical Indian, 2022).



Conclusion

Considering all that happened in March 2022, including the exposed events and human rights atrocities, it is clear Pakistan still registers a high number of violations against minorities, and what is more surprising is the fact that these numbers are rising. Blasphemy allegations and extra judicial killings over suspected blasphemy continue to rise, with a 1300 percent increase in the last decades.

Pakistan is ranked 153rd out of 156 nations on the Global Gender Gap 2021 Index by the World Economic Forum (The News, 2021). It means, Pakistan is one of the most dangerous countries for women in regards to domestic violence. March was the month of women celebrating Women's International Day, and although some progress has been made, such as the implementation of the National Policy Gender Framework, the number of victims of gender-based violence was still high. The murder of Pooja Oad, shocked the country and brought the topic once again to public discussion. The women's rights violations at the hands of family members, whether it is forced marriages, honour killings, or any other type of violence, needs to be addressed with urgency.

Moreover, Pakistan ranks 154th on the children's rights index (The Express Tribune, 2019). Regardless of that, the Pakistani government is making a tremendous effort to promote and amend the current situation regarding children's rights in the country. UNICEF executive director complemented Pakistan efforts in this direction. However, there is still a long way to go to protect the rights of children in Pakistan.

Pakistan legislation regarding LGBTQ, actually takes into consideration the minority's rights. However, the community still faces public judgment and discrimination. According to recent studies, "90 percent of Pakistan's population believed homosexuality is morally wrong, while only one percent said it is morally acceptable" (The Diplomat, 2021). The five trans women shot on March 15th, or other tragic incidents that happened on March 17th and 21st, are examples of how critical the situation towards LGBTQ rights is at the moment. Nevertheless, we can see



that many people stand by the victims, and expressed their discontent through several protests and demonstrations on the streets, to fight discrimination and gender inequality. When we talk about women's rights, LGBTQ's rights or children's rights, we need to urgently talk about the promotion and awareness of justice and fairness in Pakistan. It is the only way to start a cultural revolution, with the dissemination of human rights that can lead to a brighter future for all Pakistani society.



Bibliography

ABP News. (2022, March 22). Pakistan: 18-Yr-Old Hindu Girl Shot Dead After Failed Abduction Attempt.

ABP News. Retrieved April 8, 2022, from <http://ra.rferl.org/a/pakistani-schoolteacher-blasphemy-vigilantes/31779969.html>

Akhauri, T. (2022, March 1). Pakistan: Female Dancer Shot Dead, Police To Probe Honour Killing Angle.

SheThePeople. Retrieved April 8, 2022, <https://www.shethepeople.tv/news/pakistani-female-dancer-shot-dead-honour-killing/>

Al Jazeera. (2022, March 8). Women rally in Pakistan despite attempts to shut down protest. Al Jazeera.

Retrieved March 8, 2022, from <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/3/8/women-rally-in-pakistan-despite-attempts-to-shut-down-protest>

Al Jazeera. (2022, March 30). Pakistani teacher killed for alleged blasphemy: Police. Religion News | Al Jazeera. Retrieved April 11, 2022, from <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/3/30/pakistan-school-teacher-killed-for-alleged-blasphemy-police>

Asian News International. (2022, March 9). Women's day: Pakistan rights group protests against forceful

conversions of religious minority girls. Asian News International. Retrieved March 8, 2022, from <https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/womens-day-pakistan-rights-group-protests-against-forceful-conversions-of-religious-minority-girls20220309122907/>

AsiaNews.it. (2022, March 21). Three Christian girls kidnapped in Karachi over the past three weeks. Asia News. Retrieved April 10, 2022, from <https://www.asianews.it/news-en/Three-Christian-girls-kidnapped-in-Karachi-over-the-past-three-weeks-55402.html>



Baloch, S. M., & Ellis-Petersen, H. (2022, April 3). Pakistan's PM calls for early election after vote of no confidence thrown out. *The Guardian*. Retrieved April 10, 2022, from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/apr/03/pakistan-imran-khan-parliament-vote-no-confidence-early-elections>.

BBC News. (2019, May 8). What are Pakistan's blasphemy laws? Retrieved April 11, 2022, from <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-48204815>

Boone, J. (2017). Pakistan supreme court to decide fate of Hindu woman in Muslim marriage row. *The Guardian*. Retrieved April 10, 2022, from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/mar/25/pakistani-hindu-court-forced-conversion>.

Buneri. (2022, March 31). Female Pakistani Schoolteacher The Latest Victim Of Blasphemy Vigilantes. *Gandhara*. Retrieved April 11, 2022, from <https://gandhara.rferl.org/a/pakistani-schoolteacher-blasphemy-vigilantes/31779969.html>.

Commission of Jurists. (2015, November). On Trial: The Implementation of Pakistan's Blasphemy Laws. <https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/565da4824.pdf>

Correspondent, O. (2022, March 11). 22-day-old girl found with throat slit at house in Liaquatabad. *The News International*. Retrieved April 10, 2022, from <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/940356-22-day-old-girl-found-with-throat-slit-at-house-in-liaquatabad>

Daily Times. (2022). UNICEF executive director acknowledges Pakistan's efforts towards child rights, SDGs. *Daily Times*. Retrieved April 11, 2022, from <https://dailytimes.com.pk/889337/unicef-executive-director-acknowledges-pakistans-efforts-towards-child-rights-sdgs/amp/>

Dawn. (2022). Pakistan launches National Gender Policy Framework on International Women's Day. *Dawn*. Retrieved April 11, 2022, from <https://www.dawn.com/news/amp/1678933>

Dawn. (2022a, March 19). Transgender person shot dead in Peshawar. *Dawn*. Retrieved April 8, 2022, from



<https://www.dawn.com/news/1680679/transgender-person-shot-dead-in-peshawar>

Dawn. (2022b, March 27). Transgender person shot dead, another injured in Mardan attack. Dawn. Retrieved

April 8, 2022, from <https://www.dawn.com/news/1682004/transgender-person-shot-dead-another-injured-in-mardan-attack>

Dawn. (2022c, March 9). Women, transpersons make their voices heard in Lahore. Dawn. Retrieved April 8,

2022, from <https://www.dawn.com/news/1678976/women-transpersons-make-their-voices-heard-in-lahore>

Dawn. (2022d, April 1). 14 punished for lynching blasphemy suspect in Bahawalpur. Retrieved April 11, 2022, from <https://www.dawn.com/news/1682778>

Desk, W. (2022, March 20). Five men 'gang-rape' six-year-old girl in Faisalabad. Daily Pakistan Global. Retrieved April 10, 2022, from <https://en.dailypakistan.com.pk/20-Mar-2022/five-men-gang-rape-six-year-old-girl-in-faisalabad>

Elliott-Gibbs, S. (2022, March 10). Evil dad who really wanted a baby boy "shoots dead his seven-day-old girl." Mirror. Retrieved April 10, 2022, from <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/evil-dad-who-really-wanted-26435519>

Express Tribune. (2022a, March 3). Man allegedly hacks wife to death. Express Tribune. Retrieved April 8,

2022, from <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2346133/man-allegedly-hacks-wife-to-death>

Express Tribune. (2022b, March 17). Transgender shot dead over 'local dispute' in Mardan. Express Tribune.

Retrieved April 8, 2022, from <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2348441/transgender-shot-dead-over-local-dispute-in-mardan>



Farrell, B. (2003). The Role of International Law in the Kashmir Conflict. Penn State International Law Review.

Friday Times. (2022a, March 9). Islamabad Man Kills Wife And Her 2 Family Members In The Name Of

'Honour'. Friday Times. Retrieved April 8, 2022, <https://www.thefridaytimes.com/2022/03/09/islamabad-man-kills-wife-and-her-2-family-members-in-the-name-of-honour/>

Friday Times. (2022b, March 14). 5 Trans Women Shot Inside Home In Mansehra. The Friday Times.

Retrieved March 16, 2022, from <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/3/8/women-rally-in-pakistan-despite-attempts-to-shut-down-protest>

Human Rights Watch. (2020). Pakistan: Ahmadis Kept Off Minorities Commission. Human Rights Watch. Retrieved April 10, 2022, from

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/05/08/pakistan-ahmadis-kept-minorities-commission>.

Geo News. (2022, March 3). Lahore man murders wife, sends body via rickshaw to in-laws' house. Geo News.

Retrieved April 8, 2022, from <https://www.geo.tv/latest/402619-lahore-man-murders-wife-sends-body-via-rickshaw-to-in-laws-house>

Grealish, S. (2022, March 10). Monster dad 'shoots dead his seven-day-old girl because he wanted his first-born to be a boy'. The Irish Sun. Retrieved April 10, 2022, from <https://www.thesun.ie/news/8486420/monster-dad-shoots-dead-day-old-girl/>

Ijaz, S. (2022). Pakistan's New Law Aims to Protect Women in Workplace. Human Rights Watch. Retrieved April 11, 2022, from <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/01/20/pakistans-new-law-aims-protect-women-workplace>

Janjua, H. (2022, March 31). Pakistan: Hindu girl's killing reignites forced conversion fears. Al



Jazeera.

Retrieved April 8, 2022, from <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/3/31/pakistan-hindu-girls-killing-reignites-forced-conversion-fears>

Kristensen, H. M. & Korda, M. (2021). Pakistani nuclear weapons, 2021. Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists. ISSN: (Print) (Online) Journal homepage: <https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rbul20>.

Minority Rights Group. (2020). Pakistan - World Directory of Minorities & Indigenous Peoples. Retrieved April 10, 2022, from <https://minorityrights.org/country/pakistan/>.

National Security Policy of Pakistan, 2022 - 2026. 2022. Retrieved March, 15 2022, from: <https://dnd.com.pk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/National-Security-Policy-2022-2026.pdf>.

O'Donnell, L. (2022, March 8). Pakistan Broaches 'Hijab Day' for International Women's Day.

Foreign Affairs. Retrieved March 8, 2022, from <https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/03/08/pakistan-women-rights-gender-equality-aurat/>

OHCHR. (2021). International Community must pay attention to the persecution of Ahmadi Muslims worldwide. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/taxonomy/term/1284?page=11>

OpIndia. (2022, March 22). Pakistan: 18-year-old Hindu girl Pooja Oad shot dead in the middle of the road

for resisting an abduction attempt. OpIndia. Retrieved April 8, 2022, from <https://www.opindia.com/2022/03/pakistan-hindu-girl-pooja-oad-shot-dead-resisting-abduction/>

Pakistan Bureau Of Statistic. (2021). Brief on Census - 2017. Pakistan Bureau of Statistic. Retrieved April 10,

2022, from <https://www.pbs.gov.pk/content/brief-census-2017>.

Pakistan Penal Code, Section 295-298 C.



Rana, R. (2022). A Welcome Change! Activist Sarah Gill Becomes Pakistan's First Transgender Doctor The Logical Indian. Retrieved April 11, 2022, from <https://thelogicalindian.com/amp/lgbtq/pakistan-first-transgender-doctor-33433>

Sharma, N. (2022, March 22). Hindu woman killed in Pakistan after refusal to convert. People want justice

for Pooja'. The Print. Retrieved April 8, 2022, from <https://theprint.in/go-to-pakistan/hindu-woman-killed-in-pakistan-after-refusal-to-convert-people-want-justice-for-pooja/883333/>

Singh, A. (2022). The Pandemic of Forced Religious Conversions in Pakistan. The Geopolitics. Retrieved April 10, 2022, from <https://thegeopolitics.com/the-pandemic-of-forced-religious-conversions-in-pakistan/>.

Staff, O. (2022, March 22). Pakistan: 18-year-old Hindu girl Pooja Oad shot dead in the middle of the road for resisting an abduction attempt. OpIndia. Retrieved April 10, 2022, from <https://www.opindia.com/2022/03/pakistan-hindu-girl-pooja-oad-shot-dead-resisting-abduction/>

Taneja, N. (2022, March 30). In Pakistan, 3 women kill teacher after 13-yr-old dreams of her blasphemy. ThePrint. Retrieved April 11, 2022, from https://theprint.in/go-to-pakistan/in-pakistan-3-women-kill-teacher-after-13-yr-old-dreams-of-her-blasphemy/895058/#google_vignette

The Times of India. (2021, November 18). Pakistan: Nearly 1,000 Christian, Hindu women fall victim to forced conversion every year, say rights activists. Retrieved April 10, 2022, from <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/pakistan/pakistan-nearly-1000-christian-hindu-women-fall-victim-to-forced-conversion-every-year-say-rights-activists/articleshow/73996.cms>

Tribune.com.pk. (2022, March 22). 13-year-old girl allegedly abducted. Retrieved April 10, 2022, from <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2349051/13-year-old-girl-allegedly-abducted>

The Guardian. (2022). Pakistan's transgender women protest against rising tide of violence.



The Guardian. Retrieved April 11, 2022, from <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2022/apr/01/pakistan-transgender-women-protest-against-rising-tide-of-violence>

The Print. (2022, March 16). Five trans women shot inside home in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The Print.

Retrieved March 16, 2022, from <https://theprint.in/world/five-trans-women-shot-inside-home-in-pakistans-khyber-pakhtunkhwa/876338/>

The Tribune. (2022). Man who killed Hindu girl in Pakistan wanted to marry her after conversion. Tribuneindia News Service. Retrieved April 10, 2022, from <https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/nation/man-who-killed-hindu-girl-in-pakistan-wanted-to-marry-her-after-conversion-379739>.

Treisman, R. (2022). Meet Justice Ayesha Malik, Pakistan's first female Supreme Court judge. NPR. Retrieved April 11, 2022, from <https://www.npr.org/2022/01/25/1075556977/ayesha-malik-pakistan-supreme-court>

US Defense Intelligence Agency. (1999) The Decades Ahead: 1999-2020, A Primer on the Future Threat. In (2004) Rumsfeld's War: The Untold Story of America's Anti-Terrorist Commander. Washington, DC: Regnery. [Google Scholar].

Ur-Rehman, Z., & Masood, S. (2022, March 20). Religion-Fueled Mobs on the Rise Again in Pakistan. The New York Times. Retrieved April 11, 2022, from <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/20/world/asia/pakistan-blasphemy-religious-violence.html>

Yasin, A. (2022). 'Protection of children's rights requires concerted efforts' The News. Retrieved April 11, 2022, from

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/929848-protection-of-children-s-rights-requires-concerted-efforts>

Vajiram and Ravi IAS Preparation Institute. (2022). Mian Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif (born 1951) is a Pakistani politician serving as the 23rd and current prime minister of Pakistan, in



office since 11 April 2022. Retrieved April 19, 2022, from <https://vajiramias.com/current-affairs/shehbaz-sharif/6255133cb131ad16f00a8275/>

Ziring, L. (2022). Pakistan | History, Population, Religion, & Prime Minister. Encyclopedia Britannica.

Retrieved April 10, 2022, from <https://www.britannica.com/place/Pakistan>.





Monthly Report

Team Pakistan

March 2022

