



Parliamentary Question

The Bishop of Leeds
Pakistan: Females

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) forced conversion, and (2) forced marriage, of girls from minority communities in Pakistan

Answered by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, The UK strongly condemns the forced marriage and forced conversion of women and girls in Pakistan. We regularly raise our concerns about Freedom of Religion or Belief, women and girls' rights and gender equality at a senior level with the Government of Pakistan. During his visit to Pakistan on 23 and 24 June, Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, Minister of State for South Asia and the Minister responsible for human rights, met Prime Minister Khan, as well as other senior government ministers including Foreign Minister Qureshi, and Human Rights Minister Mazari. During these meetings, Lord Ahmad highlighted the need to address persecution, promote respect for all religions and increase tolerance for religious minorities. He met interfaith leaders to understand the situation of minorities in Pakistan, particularly the issue of forced conversion and marriage of young girls. In addition to our diplomatic engagement, the FCDO funds programmes in Pakistan that directly address early and forced marriages, gender-based violence and modern slavery.

NEWS LETTER

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All-Party Parliamentary Group for
the Pakistani Minorities

Governor Punjab with APPG members

The APPG members held a meeting with the Punjab Governor on 30 November, during his visit to the UK. The issues discussed included: APPG Inquiry report on forced conversions and forced marriages of young minority girls in Pakistan, return of all nationalized Christian schools and colleges back to the Church, the provision of clean drinking water in Bahar Colony Lahore, non-implementation of the 5% minority jobs quota in Punjab, education issues including extension of 2% further education quota to the medical and engineering colleges. The Punjab Governor y Mohammad Sarwar was a British Parliamentarian, and has many friends in the Parliament. The Governor was accompanied by the Pakistani High Commissioner to the UK, HE Moazzam Ahmad Khan. He also awarded Punjab Government awards to the APPG members.



Unfortunately, the social discrimination in Pakistan, keeps raising its ugly head. One particular nasty and shameful method of humiliating the minority members is to advertise the sweepers jobs for the religious minorities members only. This practice is against the constitutional and the international treaties signed by the country, guaranteeing equality for all. The APPG wrote a letter to KPK Chief Minister protesting against the latest outrageous and offensive advert in the province. Previously similar letters have been written to the Sindh Chief Minister as well.

For any further information you may contact us for your suggestions or comments.

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