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### Religious Extremism and Sectarianism in Pakistan: An Appraisal

#### Abstract

*Pakistan, which was created on the basis of religion have had to face sectarian violence and religious intolerance from the very beginning. This article offers an in-depth analysis of sectarianism and religious intolerance and their direct role in the current chaotic state of Pakistan. This article revolves around the two main research questions including the role of religion in the state of Pakistan as well as the evidences depicting sectarian violence in Pakistan. The main objective is to analyze the future situation of the rampant sectarian condition in the society and to study the role of Pakistan's government so far. Qualitative methodology using primary as well as secondary sources are used to gather the data. Post-dictatorship era, after 2007, is being analyzed in this article, keeping in view the history of sectarian violence, future and stability of the state. Last comments lead to the recommendations and ways to tackle the sectarian divide and religious extremism. The researchers conclude that religion is core at the Pakistan's nationalism however, religious extremism weakens national and social cohesion and also divides loyalties. There is a need for strict blasphemy laws, banning hate speeches which incites the violence and most importantly, eradicating poverty and unemployment, so no foreign elements can bribe anyone for sectarian terror within the state.*

#### Introduction

Pakistan was a country that was created on the basis of religion, its main goal was to provide a homeland for Muslims where they will live in freedom and harmony and it was established that it will be governed according to the principles set by Islam. The leadership at that time did not consider the possibility that Islam would be exploited and will be followed in its purest and sincerest form that will grant equal rights to all irrespective of their cast, creed and establish such norms and rules that would establish a society in Pakistan that would be the reminiscent of Medina at the time of the Holy Prophet (SAW) and after him his rightly guided Caliphs. However, this was further from the case. The issue of sectarian violence has been dominant since the time of the rightly guided caliphs of Islam, when they choose sides between the companions of the Prophet whereas respect should've been granted to all. Divisions existed even before the concept of Pakistan. There were also various elements within Pakistani politics that tried their best that the influence of religion be not ignored such as the *Jamaat-i-Islami* and *Jamiat e Ulema e Islam* being the most prominent one. The important question in this regard was that if Pakistan's politics were to be governed by religion, would it be Sunni or Shia Islam, with in Sunni there are Hanfi, Maliki, Shafi'i, Hanbali and further Bareli, Deobandi, Wahabi as well as Shia sects known as Twelvers, Ismailis, and Zaydis. Furthermore, it was also thought that if Islam is going to be state religion, what will be the part played by non-Muslim minorities and in that case particularly how will the question of Ahmadis be answered? Hence in order to establish a role within society various societal elements worked in order to avoid suppression of their beliefs and to become the dominating group as well as a desire of the suppression of competition conflicts and clashes have emerged from time to time that have resulted in the loss of not only infrastructure and economic resources but also precious lives.

The sectarian rifts within our society has been also the root cause of exploitation by foreign elements that have incited separatist movements as well as the phenomenon of terrorism. This sectarian scenario as well as religious intolerance has been the root cause of the destruction of Pakistan's image globally and has resulted in defoliating of relations with countries. The non-Muslim minorities are even at more risk as every year they are either killed on the basis of supposed blasphemy charges or either forcefully converted and their women raped. The Non-Muslim minorities are often given low income jobs with only a few being able to obtain well respected jobs and establishing any sort of sympathy for such is frowned upon and discouraged. There religious places and homes are often destroyed, and no concrete action has been taken against the accused. Hence the country that was built upon the religion of equality and freedom has been reduced to nothing more than ideological blocks and the spirit of Islam merely forgotten and even though Pakistan is a signatory to a number of conventions such as International Covenant

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on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and it also adheres to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)<sup>3</sup> yet discrimination against various sects as well as other religious groups is rampant.

### **Historical Background**

Along with the administrative problems faced by Pakistan since its inception, the nature of nascent state was another challenge. Pakistan's genesis rooted in religion basically "To Provide a Homeland to the Muslims where they can fulfil their religious obligations without any restriction" but in the words of Quaid-e-Azam on 11 August 1947, Pakistan was to always remain a "Secular State". Though irrelevant, issue of fundamentalism and sectarianism was still present and had begun to develop its roots not only in the society but also in politics as well as various groups began to emerge that were aimed towards protecting a particular group such as *Idara-e-Tahafuz-e-Haqq-e-Shia*, established in 1953<sup>4</sup>. As well various elements in the politics sought for the inclusion of certain provisions as well into the constitution which at that time was the Objective Resolution in 1959. However, there was violence against the people of other religions residing in Pakistan at the time of post partition and it is estimated that a total of 2 million Hindus and Sikhs were massacred, villages burnt to the ground and entire families destroyed. It is believed that it was a result of the revenge that was taken by Pakistanis as a result of how Muslims were killed by Hindus in India respectively. Even till today Hindus and Sikhs majorly live under conditions of extreme poverty. However, minor confrontations existed between various religious sects from time to time, a rather prominent event in this scenario was the anti Ahmadiya uprising in 1953 at Lahore<sup>5</sup>. This event led to the first military rule in the country. In the 1950s an organization known as the Tanzim-e-Ahle-Sunnat declared a country wide war against Shias and used to call upon people to attack and mock Shias. There were various incidents that were procured by the TAS such as in Muharam 1955, 25 incidents took place in Punjab, in 1956 there was an attempt to attack Azadari in Shahr Sultan and in 1958 a notable Shia orator by the name Agha Mohsin was target killed in Bhakkar.

**Ayub Khan Era:** After the first martial law had been imposed that was limited to only one city namely Lahore. However, a country wide martial law was later imposed by Ayyub Khan from 1958 to 1969 and he, to some extent, marginalized religious political parties as well as the role of religion in politics but it was to no avail as during his reign, Pakistan saw one of the most violent sectarian conflicts to emerge namely the attack on Muharam procession in a town near Khairpur Sindh. In this incident on June 6, 1963 118 Shias were reportedly massacred by a group of Deobandi Muslims in Thehri, Sindh. In this incident the Taziya along with the Imambargah was burnt and many were burnt alive and slaughtered with machetes. There was anti Shia propaganda seen in books as well as magazines and was demanded by the TAS that Azadari be confined to only those areas where Shias live in communities and hence under enormous pressure the Shias were forced to limit the Muharram processions<sup>6</sup>.

**The Period of Islamization:** One of the periods that fuelled major sectarian rifts and conflicts throughout the country out of which impacts the country has not been able to recover up to this date was the period of Islamization from 1979. In this timeline a number of violent sectarian group emerged such as the Tehrek e Nifaz e Fiqah e Jafria in 1979, the Sipah e Sahaba Pakistan in 1985, the Popular Islamic Army in 1987, Sunni Tehreek in 1992 and Sipah e Muhammad in 1994<sup>7</sup> respectively. During this time period the constitution of Pakistan of 1973 had been formed and entered into force, that had two articles that were entirely focal, the first of them being that Only a Muslim could assume the office of Prime Minister and President and Ahmadi or any other group that does not believe in the finality of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) were declared as non-Muslim minorities. It is believed that the process of Islamization was inspired by the Iranian revolution that took place in Iran that brought Ayatollah Khomeini in power. Zia-ul-Haq, the then military general and head of the Pakistani state, who was a Sunni by belief believed that this would lead to evoking the Shia sect in Pakistan, seeking their religious rights as well as power and will be supported by Iran and hence he brought forward the concept of Islamization. There were increased number of clashes between not only the dominant sects of Shia and Sunnis but also between the various sects of Sunnis as well particularly on the matter regarding fiqh. These religio-political conditions gave rise to the popular Shia organization known as the *Therek e Nifaz e Fiqah Jafria*<sup>8</sup>. This was seen alarming for the Sunni, that perceived

<sup>3</sup> Rehman, I. A. (n.d.). DISCRIMINATION AGAINST RELIGIOUS MINORITIES IN PAKISTAN: AN ANALYSIS OF FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL LAWS. Retrieved from <https://appgfreedomofreligionorbelief.org/media/RESEARCH-DOCUMENT-1-discrimination-against-religious-minorities.-Analysis.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Mahsood, A. K., & Muhammad, K. (2017). History of sectarianism in Pakistan: Implications for lasting peace. *Journal of Political Sciences & Public Affairs*, 5(4), 2.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 1

<sup>6</sup> Abbas, H. (2010). Shiism and Sectarian Conflict in Pakistan. Occasional Paper Series, CTC West Point, USA.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 3

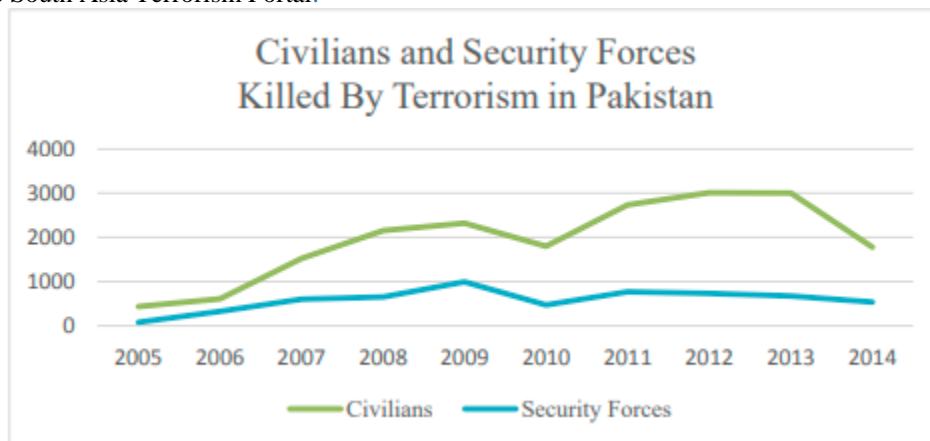
<sup>8</sup> Zaman, M. Q. (1998). Sectarianism in Pakistan: The radicalization of Shi'i and Sunni identities. *Modern Asian Studies*, 32(3), 689-716.

threat from the movement as well as the Iranian revolution and presumed that Pakistan might have a similar situation as well imposition of Shi'ism in Islam, giving rise to the popular Sunni movement of Sipah e Sahaba.

In 1988 *Tehrek e Nifaz e Fiqah e Jafria* leader Arif Hussain Al-Hussaini was assassinated leading to heightened conflicts. Correspondingly, in 1987, Allama Ehsan Elahi Zaheer and Molana Habib ur Rehman were murdered at Lahore during a meeting near Minar e Pakistan. There is increased violence in the year 1990 when SSP leader Mulana Haq Nawaz Jhangvi was murdered<sup>9</sup>. According to South Asian Terrorism Portal a total number of 1,470 sectarian based incidents occurred, killing up to 859 people died from 1989 to 1990. Hence it is established that Islamization along with the Iranian revolution served as an impetus for the growth of sectarian groups that led to a rise in incidents incited by sectarian politics. As for minorities, they were given the right to vote and representation but it was strictly limited to within their own community i.e. they did not have the right to vote for Muslim candidates and vice versa<sup>10</sup>.

**Post 9-11:** After the attack of 9-11, there was a decline in sectarian based violence in Pakistan as Gen. Pervaiz Musharraf's crackdown was against various Sectarian and Fundamentalist groups in Pakistan. Musharraf put an end to many notorious sectarian parties such as the SMP, the LEJ in 2001 and the TJP and the Sipah e Sahaba in 2002. In Musharraf's tenure there was lower risk of sectarian violence as the direction was shifted more towards the war on terror. According to South Asian Terrorism portal a total of 808, sectarian incidents took place resulting in the death of 1,472 individuals<sup>11</sup>. In the case of non-Muslim minorities, the narrative of Zia that had confined them to vote along religious lines was evoked in Musharraf's era. However, as Musharraf sought to dissolve the national assembly as of June 26, 2002 that would've evidently abolished the reserved seats of Hindus, Christians and Sikhs.

**Major Events Caused the Upheaval** Sectarianism and religious intolerance are the way that utilize religious means to obtain political and economic gains by mobilizing one sectarian group against the other sectarian group. From 2007 onwards there has been a sharp resurgence of sectarian violence in state of Pakistan. According to the **South Asia Terrorism Portal**, there were 631 sectarian incidents in Pakistan between 2007 and 2011 that led to the deaths of over 1,649 people.<sup>12</sup> Pakistan had the fourth highest number of terrorist attacks by the year 2014 as statistics showed by the South Asia Terrorism Portal.



Since 2007 the Tehreek e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) doing suicide bombs against the civilians and state security to impose the Islamic laws. The religious parties that cause sectarianism in the state are mainly divided into two main groups Shia and Sunni rest of the groups are Barelvi and Deobandi. The religious parties of Shia group are Sipah e Mohammadi Pakistan (SMP), Tehreek e Jafria Pakistan (TJP) and religious parties of Sunni group are Sunni Tehreek (ST), Lashkar e Jhangvi (LJ), Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat (ASWJ). These groups with the help of militant groups are also targeting minorities like Hindus, Christians and Ahmadi's. Pakistani minorities have seen a spike in forceful conversion and accusations of blasphemy in remote areas of Sindh and Punjab. This is not only against basic human rights but it is also making Pakistan's image bad in front of the world. Due to these acts Pakistan was

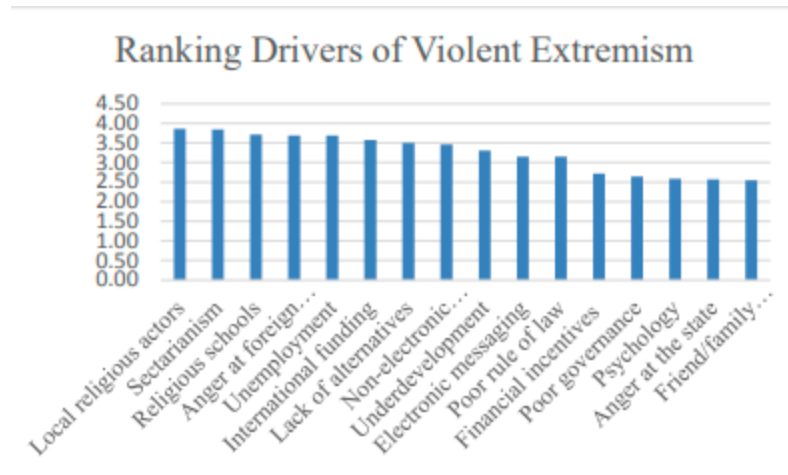
<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 3

<sup>10</sup> Aqeel, A. (2017, November 24). What makes Pakistan's small religious minorities so significant? Retrieved November 28, 2020, from <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/11/what-makes-pakistans-small-religious-minorities-so-significant/>

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 5

<sup>12</sup> Yusuf, H. (2012). Sectarian violence: Pakistan's greatest security threat. *NOREF Report*, 9.

on Grey List of FATF. Post martial law time period was thought to be fruitful for Pakistan but there is an ongoing state of religious chaos in the state in this democratic period. Although many efforts were made to overcome this but in vain. There are many drivers of religious extremism in the state. Among them role of local religious leaders is on top.



**Asif Ali Zardari Era:**

In **2009** the Mufti Sarfraz Ahmed Naeemi a senior Sunni cleric and spoke always against the terrorist groups and their terrorism was killed on June 12 in Lahore and the assassination was admitted by the Tehreek e Taliban Pakistan. In the same year the federal minister for religious affairs Hamid Saeed Kazmi; a Sunni scholar was attacked by gunmen; his guard and driver died and he survived. In year **2009**, Army took the control of district Swat in KPK after a peace agreement with TTP. This was done to prevent the influence of TTP in the area. National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) was established to counter terrorism but could not performed well. In **2010** the two bomb blast attacks on Data Darbar in Lahore killed approximately 42 people and it was the major incident at any shrine since 2001. The attack on Abdullah Shah Ghazi shrine in Karachi killed eight people and one of the Sunni leader Muhammad Ameen on which Sunni Wahdat Council called the strike in a response. In the month of March, the religious leader of Majlis e Tahaffuz e Khatm e Nabooat Mufti Saeed Jalalpuri was shot by a gunman in which his son died. In **2011** Mastung bus shooting incident was against the Shia pilgrims that were on the way to Taftan, Iran. The attackers lined up the passengers and identified the Shia and killed them almost 26 people were killed in this massacre. On **January 4** Salman Taseer was killed by one of his bodyguards Mumtaz Qadri as he was supporting the amendments in the blasphemy laws especially after the Asia Bibi case. On **March 2, 2011** the Pakistan Minister for Minorities Shahbaz Bhatti was killed by a Tehreek e Taliban Punjab in Islamabad. He was the only Christian member of cabinet. He has received threats since 2009 when he spoke in favour of Christian woman Asia Bibi who was sentenced to death in case of blasphemy. Malala Yousafzai was targeted by Taliban gunmen on **October 2012**, on the accusation of promoting secularism. This shooting spiked anger in Pakistan against these extremists. In **2012** Kohistan Shia massacre took place on Babusar top when four buses were on the way to Gilgit. About 2 Shia were killed after lined up and identified as Shia. The attackers wore the army uniform and later Tehreek e Taliban Pakistan claimed they were done this cold blooded murder. On 16 November, 2013 during Ashura procession in Raja Bazar Rawalpindi about 8 people were died while 30 became wounded when a gunman opened fire on Shia Muslims attending the rituals. Later on DG ISPR Major Gen Asif Ghafoor revealed that this was a pre-planned attack by TTP. Instead of making policies by the government the burden of countering these extremist acts and terrorism laid on the shoulders of military. Pakistan Army has conducted seven grand military operations like Al Mizan (2002-2006), Rah e Rast (2002-2009), Rah e Nijat (2009-2010), Rah e Shahdat (2013), Zarb e Azab (2014) targeted at anti-state extremist including TTP and Tehrik e Nifaz e Shariat e Muhammad (TNSM).

**Nawaz Sharif Era:**

In **2013** the 86 people were killed in the bombing in the All Saint Church located in Peshawar. Another incident that happened in the same year was the protestors setting a fire in the houses of Joseph Colony after the blasphemy by Sawan Masih. Quetta market bombing took place in Hazara town in which almost 91 people were killed and 180 to

190 were injured. Pakistan faced strong domestic and international reaction as Hazara community denied to bury the dead bodies and gave an ultimatum of 488 hours to the government for conducting an operation against the culprits. The Lashkar e Jhangvi confessed the attack on Hazara community after that all political parties of Pakistan gave condolences for the Hazara community. On **3 November, 2014** a blast was carried out by Jammāt ul Ahrar on Wagha Border crossing near Lahore at the end of the daily flag lowering ceremony resulted in the death of almost 60 people. In **2014** Pak Iran border pilgrims were killed in a bombing. Approximately 25 pilgrims were killed when they came after the visit from their holy places in Pakistan. A Sunni militant group Jaeshul Islam accepted the responsibility of this attack and they have been targeted the Shia pilgrims in Mastung from eight years. After this incident with the help and orders of Governor Baluchistan Muhammad Khan Achakzai and Chief Minister of Baluchistan DR. Abdul Malik Baloch has directed the law enforcement agencies to bring peace in the province.

**16 December, 2014** was one of the darkest day in the history of Pakistan. TTP militants attacked Army Public School Peshawar in response to the Operation Zarb e Azab resulted in the killing of 145 people, most of them were children. In wake of this National Action Plan (NAP) was made to counter terrorism and extremism but could not work effectively. In **2015** Lahore church bombing 15 people were killed as a result of two explosions. A Punjab Police spokesperson told Al Jazeera that a Christ Church and a Roman Catholic church in Youhanabad, Lahore were gone through suicide bomb attack during Sunday's procession in the churches<sup>13</sup>. The responsibility was claimed by Jamat ul Ahraar a group of Tehreek e Taliban Pakistan. After the incident Christians were gathered on the roads and blocked the different roads across the country most commonly in Faisalabad, Karachi. In **2016** an attack on the shrine of Shah Noorani was targeted by a bomb blast in Baluchistan. Around 50 people were killed in this blast. Another major incident faced by Baluchistan was suicide bombing in Quetta hospital that killed 70 people in which a majority was lawyers. In Dera Ismail Khan two Shia teachers and lawyers were killed by unidentified militants, the Shia religious scholar and rights activist Syed Khurram Zaki and a journalist Rao Khalid was killed as a result of sectarianism. In the month of October, the trustee of Imambargah and senior office-bearer of private schools of association Mansoor Zaidi was shot dead in front of his home in Gulshan e Jauhar Karachi in an expected sectarianism attack. Islamic State group ISIS also played its role in destabilizing state of Pakistan. Many students became members of this group and took training. On **September 1, 2016** Pakistan Army said that it had arrested almost 300 ISIS members. They were making efforts to establish itself in Pakistan. On **December 2017** double suicide bombing at a Church in Quetta that killed 9 were carried out by the members of ISIS. On **February 16, 2017** ISIS took responsibility for a suicide bombing at Sufi Shrine of Lal Shabbaz Qalander in Sehwan Sharif, Sindh which killed almost 90 people. Which resulted in the closure of border with Afghanistan. In **2017** the Jammiat Ulema e Islam F leader Attaullah Shah killed in Dera Ismail Khan, at least 88 people were killed in a suicide bomb attack in the crowded Sufi shrine of Laal Shehbaz Qalander in Sindh. In Parachinar; Kurram Agency of FATA at least 24 people were killed in Imambargah attack in the month of June back to back explosions in the Turi Baar killed 67 persons. **Mashal Khan** was a student of mass communication in Abdul Wali Khan University. According to reports he had been accused of anti-Islamism views after the heated report on the topic of religion before the day of his death. It was a rumour that circulated in the university that he had posted material on social media that is related to blasphemy and a mob of students killed him thereafter there was no evidence found against Mashal Khan.

**Imran Khan Era:** Asia Bibi freed by the court against blasphemy charges after eight years of imprisonment on **November 2018**, promoting violent protests by religious party Tehreek e Labaik Pakistan (TLP). Asia Bibi appealed against her sentence to death in the Supreme Court of Pakistan and in 2018 after reviewing all the evidences Chief Justice free from the charges of blasphemy. In result a huge crowd of Tehreek Labaik Pakistan came to Islamabad against the decision of the Supreme Court. In **2020** France did a blasphemy act and the French government named it as a freedom of speech. In Pakistan the people demanded to ban the French products, expel the French ambassador from the country. Anger has grown across Muslim nations against French President Emmanuel Macron who has pledged to defend the freedom of expression and said France “will not renounce the caricatures,” which Muslims deem blasphemous.<sup>14</sup> A bank manager killed by a security guard being accused of blasphemy allegations. The sectarianism and religious intolerance are not the teachings of Islam. Being a Muslim we have to respect other humans their beliefs and ideas. The Khutba-Huja-Tul-Wida Holy Prophet (SAW) declared that honour of human life is sacred for the virtuous society. But the parties that are formed on the name of religion not follow the actual

<sup>13</sup> Al Jazeera. (2015, March 15). Worshippers killed in Pakistan church bombings. Retrieved November 08, 2020, from <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/3/15/worshippers-killed-in-pakistan-church-bombings>

<sup>14</sup> Gul, A. (2020, October 30). Anti-France Rally in Pakistan Turns Violent. Retrieved November 08, 2020, from <https://www.voanews.com/south-central-asia/anti-france-rally-pakistan-turns-violent>

principles of Islam and the concept of sectarianism is dividing the society. The religious intolerance weakening the national security of the state. Regional Stability is also at risk due to sectarian violence in Pakistan. Afghan Taliban and Pakistani Lashkar-e- Jhangvi are collaborating with each other to target Shia Hazars, this could serve as militant cooperation.

**Challenge of Sectarianism and Religious Intolerance in Pakistan: Future Prospects:**

With all the above cited events as well as the background of Pakistan with these evils named ‘sectarianism’ and ‘religious extremism’ we can profoundly calculate that these evils are eroding the true essence of creation of Pakistan which was very well quoted by Quaid-e-Azam in his address to the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan on 11 August 1947. However, as discussed earlier, religious extremism and sectarianism were found long ago, immediately after partition but in recent years these evils are getting a stronger grip in the country, with people declaring each other *kaafir* and killing in broad day light claiming the place in *Jannat* is something very serious for the state which was supposed to be a safe place for everyone no matter what religion and what ethnicity one belongs to. The current state of conflict within the state is a grave matter of concern for country in long run, for the stability of the country and for the image of the state in the international arena is being damaged solemnly. In 2020, over the past few months, Pakistan has seen an unprecedented rise in attacks and arrests of its Shia population who make up between 15% and 20% of the Sunni-majority country, the first largest Shia community outside Iran. The increase of 15% to 20% in massacre of Shia minority is as much alarming as an ongoing pandemic. Now, blasphemy is a capital offence in Pakistan and even unproven allegations can lead to mob violence and lynching against the accused and the one who are murdering the Shia’s, calling them heretics, are doing it under the umbrella of Blasphemy, which apparently gives them a permission to kill whoever they want, however this is not what the blasphemy laws in the constitution of the country, nor in the Islamic laws states on dealing with the accused’s. Just in some months, 50 people who have been charged in the blasphemy crackdown, five have been killed since September and many more Shia families and well-known figures have gone into hiding. The fact that the target killing of Shia Muslims is happening-it wouldn’t be wrong to interpret it as a genocide. Pakistani governments condemn and criticizes human rights violations across the border as well in Indian occupied Kashmir, but are seemingly unaware of what is happening inside the country. Pakistan’s official twitter account was critiqued by the verified account of UN Affiliated NGO ‘UN Watch’ and stated that “Pakistan’s presence in the Human Rights Council is a disgrace” and provided pictures of written statement submitted by the United Nations Watch to the secretary general of the UN, with claims and facts of Pakistani government and state of human rights in the country, respectively.

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

Pakistan has had become the ‘battle field’ for religious based conflicts for sometimes. The sectarianism and religious violence contributed in the extremist’s activities being carried out in the state. Followings are the recommendations in order to end the religious conflicts in the state.<sup>15</sup> The unemployed and illiterate people are unaware of the religious cards being played by the extremist groups. They should be provided job opportunities. The sectarian speeches and the hatred literature by the leaders or members of the religious parties should not be allowed in the state. Most of the sectarian based religious parties are allegedly sponsored by the foreign aid. The chaos and instability created by the sectarian organizations can only be eliminated by the proper laws and regulations made by the Government of Pakistan. The laws should be made in order to address the issue of religious violence in the state. The Madrassahs have also contributed in creating intolerance and hatred against other sects and minorities by targeting the young minds often ‘brainwashing’ them. The Madrassah should provide the modern education to the students with Islamic and Quranic studies. The ‘Bait ul Islam’ Madrassah located in Talagang, Punjab is one of those religious institutes providing both Islamic and modern education to the students. The students of that Madrassah had also qualified for the finals of TEKNOFEST (a technological competition held in Turkey). The true teachings of Islam and tolerance should be provided by the Ulema of the respective sect without creating the hatred against the other sect and minority. In the concluding note, it can be said that Pakistan has witnessed the spike in the rate of religious conflicts and violence in the current tenure. Pakistan is still facing the problem of religious intolerance and the problem needs to be addressed seriously. The sectarianism can be eliminated from Pakistan by taking proper measures. The government should respond to the hatred activities carried out by those parties and make effective policies to discourage them. The government must try to fulfill the justified demands of the religious conflicts. Although the state cannot wage the war against them but can ban the sectarian speeches, literatures and foreign aids provided to those groups. The positivity and neutrality should be persuaded by the Ulemas. The state only prospers when its people are united.

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<sup>15</sup>Ullah, Farman. (2009). Sectarianism in Pakistan: Causes & Remedies. Pakistan. 42-83.