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PAKISTAN: ANOTHER AHMADI DELIBERATELY KILLED BY ISLAMISTS

A violent mob attacked two members of the Ahmadiyya community in Shab Qadar, prompting Amnesty International to renew calls on the government of Pakistan to condemn such attacks and take immediate measures to prevent them.

On 9 April 1995, Dr Rashid Ahmad and his son-in law, Riaz Khan, were attacked as they were about to attend a court hearing in Shab Qadar in the North West Frontier Province; Riaz Khan was stoned to death and his dead body stripped and dragged through the town on a rope. Dr Rashid Ahmad was taken to a hospital in Peshawar with serious injuries. A third Ahmadi, Advocate Bashir Ahmad, escaped unhurt.

The three men -- senior members of the Ahmadiyya community from Peshawar -- had come from the provincial capital to help another Ahmadi, Daulat Khan, who had been harassed following his conversion to the sect several months ago; local Muslim clergy reportedly called for the death of the convert.

Daulat Khan was arrested on 5 April; when members of the Ahmadiyya community approached the police they were told that he had been arrested "for his own safety." Later police registered a case against him under sections 107 (abetment) and 151 (disturbing public tranquillity by joining an unlawful assembly) of the Pakistan Penal code.

The three men attacked had gone to Shab Qadar in order to file a bail application on Daulat Khan's behalf; when they entered the court premises, a violent mob attacked the three men with sticks and stones. To Amnesty International's knowledge, no one has been criminally charged for the killing and Daulat Khan is still in custody.

During the past year, at least seven Ahmadis have been attacked and killed with impunity by religious extremists. Though most of these deliberate and arbitrary killings have taken place in broad daylight and before many eye-witnesses, in none of the cases reported to Amnesty International have those responsible for the killings been arrested and charged.

Amnesty International believes that the failure to criminally prosecute those responsible for attacks on members of religious minorities appears to indicate the acquiescence or connivance of the authorities with the perpetrators.

"We once again urge the government of Pakistan to unequivocally and publicly condemn such attacks and to take all possible measures to protect the lives and security of members of Pakistan's religious minorities who appear to be at risk," said Amnesty International.

ENDS/

