

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

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Responses to Information Requests

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) respond to focused Requests for Information that are submitted to the Research Directorate of the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) during the course of the refugee protection determination process. The database contains a seven-year archive of English and French RIRs. Earlier RIRs may be found on the UNHCR's [Refworld](#) website.



14 January 2013

PAK104259.E

Pakistan: Situation of Christians in Pakistan, including social and government attitudes, treatment and rights (2010-2012)
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

1. Overview

Islam is the official religion of Pakistan (BCPA [2012], para. 2; GHRD and HRFP [2012], 3; US 30 July 2012, 2), and sources indicate that 97 percent of the population is Muslim (BCPA [2012], para. 2; Freedom House Oct. 2010, 70). Sources report various estimates of the number of Christians in Pakistan, including: 1.27 million (Plus News Pakistan 5 Sept. 2012), two million (*Dawn* 15 Apr. 2010), and three million (AFP 30 Aug. 2012). Sources indicate that the majority of Christian Pakistanis live in the province of Punjab (*Dawn* 15 Apr. 2010; US 20 Mar. 2012; BCPA 14 Dec. 2012). According to an article by a Karachi-based researcher published in the Karachi-based English language news source *Dawn*, half of the Christian population is concentrated in seven districts of Punjab -- namely, Lahore, Faisalabad, Sialkot, Kasur, Sheikhpura, Gujranwala, and Toba Tek Singh -- and reside mostly in rural areas (15 Apr. 2010). Corroborating information for this statement could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

The *Constitution of Pakistan* accords citizens the right to "profess, practice and propagate" their religion, "[s]ubject to law, public order and morality" (Pakistan 1973, Art. 20). However, the US Department of State's *International Religious Freedom Report for 2011* notes that other laws, as well as government practices, restrict freedom of religion, particularly for religious minorities (US 30 July 2012, 1). Similarly, Freedom House reports that religious freedom is subject to "numerous legal restrictions" (2012). Other sources describe the religious climate in Pakistan as one of "intolerance" (US 20 Mar. 2012, 2; Freedom House Oct. 2010, 71; CSW Apr. 2012, para. 32). Sources also note a growing religious "extremism" (GHRD and HRFP [2012], 6; Freedom House Oct. 2010, 71; US 20 Mar. 2012, 1), which, according to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), threatens freedom of religion and expression as well as other human rights (ibid.).

1.1 Societal Attitudes Towards Christians

In correspondence sent to the Research Directorate, the British Pakistani Christian Association (BCPA), a London-based NGO focusing on human rights abuses in Pakistan against Christians and other religious minorities ([2012], para. 1), indicated that Christians generally have good relations with other religious minorities and some "more liberal Muslims" (14 Dec. 2012). The BCPA noted, however, that because of the strong influence of Islamism over Pakistani society, overall attitudes are overwhelmingly negative (14 Dec. 2012).

The BCPA indicated that Christians are considered to be "inferior" and are largely politically powerless and impoverished (14 Dec. 2012). Quoted in an Agence France-Presse (AFP) article, the Minister for National Harmony stated that Christians are among "the poorest and most marginalised people" in the country and suggested that discrimination against Christians is motivated not only by religion but also by caste (30 Aug. 2012). Other sources similarly report that anti-Christian sentiment is motivated by caste prejudice (*The Georgia Straight* 11 Sept. 2012; *The Guardian* 8 Jan. 2011; BCPA 14 Dec. 2012). An article published by the Vancouver-based weekly newspaper the *Georgia Straight* explains that the "poorest and most despised section of the population converted to Christianity" and, as a result, "everybody knows that most Christians are really 'untouchables'" (11 Sept. 2012).

In correspondence sent to the Research Directorate, a representative of the Evangelical Asian Church, a faith-based charitable organization based in Toronto (Donnelly et al. 2012, 5), stated that many Pakistanis consider local Christians to be "Western" agents and believe that they act on behalf of "the West" to promote a "foreign agenda" (14 Dec. 2012; Evangelical Asian Church 4 Jan. 2013). The representative also suggested that Muslims in Pakistan believe that there are close ties between Christian Pakistanis and "the West" and that attacks on Christians "will be painful to [the] West" (ibid.). In a similar vein, the Centre for Legal Aid, Assistance and Settlement (CLAAS), a Christian legal aid organization working in Pakistan, reported that Christians were put in a "very critical situation" after a church in Florida burned a copy of the Qur'an, and that Christian properties had been targeted and pastors had received death threats from "religious extremists" (Barnabas Fund 10 May 2011).

2. Treatment of Christians, Including Acts of Violence

Sources report that Christians are treated as second-class citizens in Pakistan (Evangelical Asian Church 14 Dec. 2012; JI 2011, 31). According to the Evangelical Asian Church, Christians experience both legal and social discrimination (14 Dec. 2012). Shirkat Gah, a women's organization based in Lahore, similarly states that Christians face social discrimination and "stigma based on stereotypes" (2012, 6). For its part, the Jinnah Institute (JI), a non-profit, nonpartisan public policy organization that promotes the "values of equitable democratic and social entitlements, pluralism, rule of law and transparent governance" (n.d.), states in a 2011 report on religious minorities that Christians experience discrimination "in all aspects of life" (2011, 31). It asserts, further, that the situation of Christians has become "increasingly difficult" in recent years (JI 2011, 31).

Sources indicate that a large number of anti-Christian incidents occur in Punjab Province, where the majority of Christians reside (US 20 Mar. 2012, 7; BPCA 14 Dec. 2012). Citing information from a representative of a Lahore-based legal aid NGO, JI similarly reports that the most serious cases of "persecution" of Christians take place in Punjab (2011, 31). The BPCA also stated that there is not a significant difference in the "levels of animosity against Christians" between urban and rural areas, but noted that it is often difficult to obtain information about incidents from rural areas (14 Dec. 2012).

2.1 Discrimination

2.1.1 Employment

Various sources report that Christians are subject to employment discrimination and work primarily in menial occupations (US 30 July 2012, 21; BPCA [2012], para. 8; GHRD and HRFP [2012], 12). The BPCA explained that Christians are often "herded into low menial tasks" partly due to the high rates of illiteracy and poverty among Christians, and also because of societal attitudes that consider Christians to be "unclean" (14 Dec. 2012). Sources indicate that Christians typically work as street sweepers and sewer cleaners (BPCA [2012], para. 6; *The Guardian* 5 Sept. 2012). According to the Christian news source Compass Direct News, 90 percent of sewer workers are Christian (9 July 2011). Further, some job advertisements for cleaning jobs specify that the jobs are for Christians only (USIP 25 May 2012; Compass Direct News 9 July 2011; BPCA 14 Dec. 2012). Sources also indicate that Christian cleaners are indefinitely employed as "temporary" workers with contracts that expire and are renewed every 88 days (*ibid.*; Compass Direct News 9 July 2011). Because they are not considered permanent workers, they have no access to benefits, pensions, sick leave, and vacation time, even if they hold the same job over a period of decades (*ibid.*; BPCA 14 Dec. 2012). According to the BPCA, Christian girls often work as maids or nurses and are at risk of sexual assault in these jobs (14 Dec. 2012).

In contrast, JI states that it is a stereotype that many Christians do menial work, and that they are "robustly represented in a variety of positions ... in teaching, social work, the arts and institution building" (2011, 30). Nevertheless, JI acknowledges that, based on information collected in interviews with Christians in professional and menial occupations in urban areas, well-educated young Christians are unable to find employment (JI 2011, 51). Government sources indicate that five percent of government jobs are reserved for religious minorities (*Daily Times* 10 Aug. 2012; Pakistan 6 Aug. 2012, para. 63). However, other sources report that this policy has not been effectively implemented (GHRD and HRFP [2012], 3; US 20 Mar. 2012).

The *International Religious Freedom Report for 2011* states that Christians and Hindus are disproportionately victims of illegal bonded labour in the agricultural and brick-making industries (US 30 July 2012, 10). JI reports on 350 to 400 brick kiln workers in Pakpattan who were not paid for five years and were fired when they attempted to take legal action to claim their wages; kiln owners in Pakpattan subsequently refused to hire Christians for almost two years (2011, 51-52). The same report also states that brick kiln workers report being subject to physical abuse, forced into marriage by the kiln owner and denied pregnancy and maternity leave (JI 2011, 53). It is also reported that children are forced into bonded labour at kilns (*ibid.*). Similarly, the BPCA indicated that multiple generations of Christian families are often kept in bonded labour at brick-making kilns (14 Dec. 2012). One Free World International (OFWI), a Toronto-based human rights NGO, reports in a 2012 publication on its fact-finding mission to a labour camp south of Lahore, in which 660 Christian and other minority families were forced into indentured servitude after being promised work and lodging in factories in exchange for a loan from "wealthy businessmen with government connections" (Mar. 2012, 10). The report indicates that six such camps exist in which individuals live and work under armed guard and are subject to physical abuse, torture, and child labour (OFWI Mar. 2012, 10).

The BPCA also indicates that Christians employed in various sectors are often pressured to convert to Islam ([2012], para. 8). JI, in its report on religious minorities, cites the testimony of a framer in Karachi who was first pressured by his employers to convert, and later threatened with physical violence (2011, 51). Several sources report that a man was burned alive and his wife was raped by policemen in front of their children because the couple had refused their employer's attempts to convert them to Islam (*AsiaNews* 22 Mar. 2010; *BosNewsLife* 23 Mar. 2010; BPCA [2012], para. 13). The authorities reportedly opened investigations into the violence against the couple, who worked as a driver and a maid for a Muslim businessman in Rawalpindi (*AsiaNews* 22 Mar. 2010; *BosNewsLife* 23 Mar. 2010). Information about the outcome of the investigation could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response. For more information on religious conversion, see Response to Information Request PAK104258 of 14 January 2013.

2.1.2 Education

According to the representative of the Evangelical Asian Church, Christians are denied equal opportunity in education (14 Dec. 2012). As an example, the representative explained that Muslims receive 20 extra marks in school for learning the Qur'an, which places religious minorities at a disadvantage when applying for higher education (Evangelical Asian Church 14 Dec. 2012). JI also suggests that Christian students face religious discrimination when applying to university (2011, 51). The BPCA stated that most Christian children must work instead of going to school, thus continuing the cycle of illiteracy and poverty, but that the children who do go to school face discrimination and are often pressured to convert to Islam (14 Dec. 2012). Additionally, textbooks used in schools reportedly contain offensive or erroneous information about Christianity, or fail to mention religious minorities entirely (BPCA 14 Dec. 2012; US 20 Mar. 2012, 12).

2.1.3 Religious Expression

According to the Evangelical Asian Church, Christians are generally allowed to practice their religion in Pakistan and are allowed to build churches (14 Dec. 2012). However, a joint report by the minority rights NGOs Global Human Rights Defence (GHRD) and Human Rights Focus Pakistan (HRFP), which are based in the Hague and Faisalabad, respectively, indicates that religious minorities in the Pakistan-administered province of Kashmir practice their religion "in secret in private homes" (GHRD and HRFP [2012], 12). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

For its part, the BPCA stated that there are "widespread problems" preventing Christians from practicing freely (14 Dec. 2012). It explained, for example, that girls attending prayer meetings face sexual harassment and abuse (BPCA 14 Dec. 2012) by Muslim youths gathered outside churches (ibid. [2012], para. 19). The BPCA also stated that Christians must "self-monitor" because they risk being attacked or pressured if they "impinge too much onto Muslim sensitivities," for example by playing loud music during church services or by holding services during Muslim prayer times (14 Dec. 2012).

2.2 Violence

In its human rights report of 2012, Freedom House states that "recent waves of attacks on Christians have been attributed to the spread of Sunni extremist ideology" in Pakistan (2012). The USCIRF states that Christians were targeted in 2011 by attacks by "armed extremists," some of whom have ties to the Pakistani Taliban (US 20 Mar. 2012, 3). The BPCA indicated that the Taliban "and other Pashtun Islamicists" attack Christians in Karachi on a regular basis and that the militant group Lashkar e-Taiba, which has been designated a terrorist organization by the governments of Canada (Canada 20 Nov. 2012) and the US (US 28 Sept. 2012), is reportedly growing in influence in Lahore (BPCA 14 Dec. 2012). Sources indicate that the individuals who assassinated the Christian minister of minority affairs in 2011 left leaflets attributing the attack to the Pakistani Taliban in retaliation for "blasphemy" allegedly committed by the Minister (*The Guardian* 2 Mar. 2011; *The Express Tribune* 24 Aug. 2011). Additionally, the *Guardian* reports that, according to Christian aid workers in Pakistan, militant groups such as Lashkar-e-Taiba and Sipah e-Sahaba have orchestrated violent acts against Christians, including a 2009 attack in [the Christian community of] Gojra in which eight people died (8 Jan. 2011).

The BPCA also notes that "a significant portion of Islamic clerics" incite violence and discrimination against Christians ([2012], para. 18). Additionally, it indicated that it is common in both urban and rural areas to use mosque loudspeakers to mobilize hundreds or thousands of militants to take action against religious minorities (BPCA 14 Dec. 2012). Other sources similarly report that mosques have called for violence against Christians (*Daily Times* 20 July 2010; HRCP 4 Aug. 2009; Human Rights First 2012, para. 13; *The Guardian* 8 Jan. 2011). The BPCA explained that if a member of a minority group commits an offence, the whole minority community in the area is considered to be culpable and deserving of punishment (14 Dec. 2012).

2.2.1 Accusations of Blasphemy

Sources indicate that Christians are disproportionately accused of blasphemy (Freedom House Oct. 2010, 70; CSW Apr. 2012, para. 37). An accused blasphemer can face life in prison or the death sentence if convicted (Pakistan 1860, Art. 295), but is also vulnerable to extrajudicial violence (Al Jazeera 28 Aug. 2012; US 20 Mar. 2012, 1). Christians accused of blasphemy have been subject to various forms of extrajudicial violence, including:

- mob attacks (BPCA [2012], para. 4b; US 20 Mar. 2012, 1; Human Rights First 2012, para. 8, 20);
- killings (*The Express Tribune* 8 Sept. 2012; Human Rights First 2012, para. 12); and
- torching of homes and/or settlements (ibid., para. 22).

For detailed information about allegations of blasphemy against Christians and violence against Christians specifically motivated by blasphemy accusations, see Response to Information Request PAK104260 of 10 January 2013.

2.2.2 Sexual Violence

OFWI reports that it routinely hears of cases of Christian girls who are raped or gang-raped because of their religion (Mar 2012, 8). According to the BPCA, it is estimated that two Christian women or girls a day are kidnapped and raped or gang-raped, "sometimes for months on end" (14 Dec. 2012). Fides News Agency, the news agency of the Vatican (n.d.), indicates that many girls do not report the violence and that the cases that are reported represent a fraction of the total number of incidents of violence against Christian girls (13 Apr. 2011).

OFWI adds that with "some exceptions, Pakistani police generally do not pursue these cases and even where they do, proving rape has been virtually impossible in Pakistani courts" (May 2012, 8). Similarly, the USCIRF reports on multiple incidents of Christian women being raped, "with law enforcement either hesitant to act or societal actors pressuring victims to recant their allegations" (20 Mar. 2012, 7). Fides News Agency reported in 2011 on two cases of abduction and rape of teenage girls, in which the police refused to open investigations (13 Apr. 2011).

The BPCA indicates that Christian girls and women are kidnapped and raped, often before being forcibly converted to Islam and "married" to one of their rapists or to another Muslim man ([2012], para. 14). Other sources similarly state that minority girls are targeted for forced conversion and marriage to Muslim men (Shirkat Gah 2012, 6; GHRD and HRFP [2012], 9; Fides News Agency 13 Apr. 2011). According to JI, Christian and Hindu women of lower castes are at particular risk "due to perceptions that they are 'sexually available' by men of Muslim dominated communities" (2011, 55). For more information on the abduction and forced conversion of Christian and other minority women, see Response to Information Request PAK104258 of 14 January 2013.

Sources report that, in January 2010, a 12-year-old Christian girl who worked as a maid in Lahore was tortured to death by her employers (US 8 Apr. 2011, 57; *Daily Times* 26 Jan. 2010). The alleged perpetrators, including a prominent lawyer who was also accused of

raping the girl (BPCA [2012], para. 16; *The Nation* 23 Nov. 2010), were acquitted in November 2010 (ibid.; US 8 Apr. 2011, 58). The BPCA reports that the preliminary court hearings were mobbed by Muslim lawyers who rioted and obstructed the hearing ([2012], para. 16). The US Department of State's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2010* states that a mob of 300 lawyers threatened violence against the prosecuting lawyers (8 Apr. 2011, 58).

A 12-year-old Christian girl from Punjab was kidnapped and raped over a period of eight months in 2011 while being held captive (AHRC 10 Oct. 2011; CSW 7 Nov. 2011; ANI 13 Oct. 2011). The police reportedly advised the girl's family to return her to her rapists, members of Lashkar e-Taiba, because the girl had already been forced into marriage with one of the members (ibid.; AHRC 10 Oct. 2011).

In 2012, a 13-year-old girl was reportedly abducted and gang-raped by three men in Narowal district, Punjab (*The Express Tribune* 4 June 2012; *Compass Direct News* 21 May 2012). After the girl's family filed criminal charges, the alleged perpetrators attacked their home and beat a number of family members, causing one woman to have a miscarriage, to pressure them into dropping the charges (ibid.; *The Express Tribune* 4 June 2012). The police reportedly declared the innocence of one of the accused, the son of a retired police inspector, and alleged that the girl had followed the men of her own accord (ibid.; *Compass Direct News* 12 June 2012).

In August 2012, a young Christian girl from Sahiwal, Punjab, was gang raped and murdered, reportedly by a group of five Muslim men (*Pakistan Christian Post* 25 Nov. 2012; ANS 26 Aug. 2012; CLAAS 29 Aug. 2012). The *Pakistan Christian Post* reported in November 2012 that the girl's father had received death threats to withdraw the case against the accused perpetrators (25 Nov. 2012).

2.2.3 Other Incidents

The BPCA stated that, in rural Punjab, "rich landlords and Muslim businessmen" target Christian communities and institutions, including hospitals and orphanages, to take ownership of their land by "brute force" (14 Dec. 2012). Similarly, JI reports that in rural Punjab, a large percentage of anti-Christian incidents are associated with "land-grabbing" by Muslims (2011, 31). JI explains that

after some of the more serious mob attacks such as Gojra, Christian residents often did not return to their homes. Personal property and land was in most cases taken by local Muslim residents (2011, 31).

According to a Pakistani professor of Sharia and Law, the case of Rimsha Masih, a young Christian girl falsely accused of blasphemy by a local Muslim cleric (*The Economist* 8 Sept. 2012; BPCA 14 Dec. 2012), was intended to clear the girl's neighbourhood of Christians to make room for a religious seminary (CRSS 7 Sept. 2012). The *Economist* similarly reports that the incident appears to have been intended to permanently drive out several hundred Christian families (8 Sept. 2012). Sources report that, after the girl's arrest, Christians fled the area out of fear of being attacked (Al Jazeera 28 Aug. 2012; *The Economist* 8 Sept. 2012). Al Jazeera also indicates that Muslim community leaders had reportedly pressured landlords to evict Christian tenants (28 Aug. 2012). The *Guardian* adds that 900 Christians were evicted from the neighbourhood, which had been the site of religious tension for several months prior to the incident (19 Aug. 2012).

In 2011, children practicing Christmas carols in a church were beaten and church property was damaged (BPCA [2012], para. 19; US 20 Mar. 2012, 6). The USCIRF reports that local police did not file a case for the incident, which took place in Sindh Province, and that the Christian community apologized to the attackers (ibid.).

Sources report that a Christian street sweeper was stabbed in the chest and killed by a local shopkeeper for not immediately obeying a demand to clean in front of the shop (BPCA 14 Dec. 2012; *Compass Direct News* 9 July 2011). According to *Compass Direct News*, the incident took place in the Pir Maki area of Lahore in May 2011 (9 July 2011).

In March 2011, in Hurr Camp, a Christian settlement in Hyderabad, a group of Muslims reportedly disrupted a church gathering, which led to clashes in which two Christian men were shot dead and two more were seriously injured (Franciscans International 10 May 2011; UN 30 May 2011). Three of the six perpetrators were reportedly arrested (ibid.; Franciscans International 10 May 2011). Further information on the outcome of the investigations could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

In August 2012, a Christian boy from Faisalabad was killed and his body was mutilated (*AsiaNews* 23 Aug. 2012; *The Express Tribune* 22 Aug. 2012; *The Telegraph* 23 Aug. 2012). Sources report that some of his internal and external organs had been removed (ibid.; *AsiaNews* 23 Aug. 2012).

In September 2012, a "mob" of people protesting an [American-made] anti-Islam film burned down a church in Mardan [northwest Pakistan] and looted the surrounding areas (*Express Tribune* 23 Sept. 2012; *Dawn* 22 Sept. 2012). Sources report that a Christian school was also attacked and that the church's holy books were destroyed (ibid.; CLAAS 28 Sept. 2012). Police reportedly made 64 arrests following the attacks (*The Express Tribune* 23 Sept. 2012). Further information on the outcome of the investigations could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

3. State Response

The Government of Pakistan allocates four seats in the Senate and ten seats in the National Assembly to minorities (Pakistan 6 Aug. 2012, para. 63; US 20 Mar. 2012, 3). There are also reportedly seats reserved for minorities in the provincial assemblies (ibid.; Pakistan 6 Aug. 2012, para. 63). The USCIRF notes, however, that the number of seats does not reflect the size of the non-Muslim population (US 20 Mar. 2012, 3).

The federal Ministry of National Harmony was created in July 2011 to provide "oversight and coordination on issues relating to religious minorities" and also to liaise with district interfaith harmony committees (Pakistan 6 Aug. 2012, para. 65). The USCIRF reports, however, that the ministry is not represented in the federal cabinet (US 20 Mar. 2012, 3). In August 2012, the State Minister for Interfaith Harmony indicated that interfaith harmony committees were currently being established at the district level throughout the country (*Pakistan Today* 5 Aug. 2012; *Daily Times* 5 Aug. 2012). The State Minister also announced that the ministry had launched a national campaign to promote national unity and interfaith harmony and that ten religious holidays of minority religions were to be celebrated officially by Pakistan (ibid.; *Pakistan Today* 5 Aug. 2012).

According to Pakistani media sources, the Minister of Excise and Taxation of Sindh Province asserted in August 2012 that minority rights were being protected by the Pakistani government, under the leadership of the ruling Pakistan People's Party, in accordance with the Constitution and the party's manifesto (*The Daily Times* 10 Aug. 2012; *The Express Tribune* 9 Aug. 2012). The USCIRF reports that, in 2011, members of the Punjab provincial assembly tried to prevent a Christian member from conducting assembly business and that a cabinet minister threatened violence against another Christian member for advocating for the protection of minorities (US 20 Mar. 2012, 7). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

3.1 Police

Police officers are reported to have committed abuses against religious minorities (US 30 July 2012, 10; BPCA [2012], para. 13), including the following crimes against Christians:

- (US 30 July 2012, 10; BPCA [2012], para. 13; Compass Direct News 19 Jan. 2011), including gang rape (US 24 May 2012);
- murder (US 30 July 2012, 10; Compass Direct News 19 Jan. 2011; CLAAS 26 Jan. 2011);
- fabricating cases or laying false charges (BPCA [2012], para. 13; US 30 July 2012, 12; Compass Direct News 9 July 2011); and
- beatings and torture (BPCA [2012], para. 13; *ibid.* 14 Dec. 2012; *Pakistan Christian Post* 16 Oct. 2012).

Sources indicate that government officials do not adequately protect religious minorities from violence (US 20 Mar. 2012, 1; AI 2012; Human Rights First 2012, para. 19). The Evangelical Asian Church representative stated that it is difficult for the authorities to protect members of religious minorities, even if they want to, because of pressure from "extremists" (14 Dec. 2012).

3.2 Judiciary

The USCIRF reports on three individuals sentenced to life in prison in 2011 for the murder of a Christian who refused to convert to Islam, and three other individuals given life sentences for killing a Christian businessman in 2010 (US 20 Mar. 2012, 7). It also reports that, in September 2011, a man was sentenced to jail for 25 years for the rape of a Christian girl (US 20 Mar. 2012, 7).

However, the *Pakistan Christian Post*, citing the President of the Pakistan Christian Congress, states that "there is no value of Christian life in Pakistan and [the] assassination of Christians is ongoing in [the] hands of [the] Muslim public or Muslim civil servants, and justice is never ensured" (16 Oct. 2012).

For information on the state response to blasphemy-related violence against Christians, see Response to Information Request PAK104260 of 10 January 2013.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

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