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Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

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Responses to Information Requests

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6 December 2006

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Pakistan/Canada/United States: Qadiani Ahmadiyya organizations located in Canada and in the United States; their mission and activities; their membership requirements, including whether an individual without status in the country where the organization is located can be a member; procedure for verifying membership
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

Organizations in Canada

According to its Web site, the Qadiani Ahmadiyya organization has a total of 14 branches in Canada, including its headquarters located in Maple, Ontario (Ahmadiyya Muslim Community Canada n.d.). The Secretary of Mission House at the Maple, Ontario office provided the following information in correspondence with the Research Directorate dated 17 November 2006:

The [Qadiani] Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, which came into existence on March 23, 1889, has been registered as Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam Canada; when its founder Mirza Ghulam Ahmed, a resident of Qadian (a town in India), claimed to be that particular subordinate Prophet and Reformer as foretold by the Holy Prophet Muhammad ... through numerous prophecies.

The members of Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam take the oath of Allegiance at the hands of the current head of the community and take it upon themselves to propagate through peaceful means the tenets of Islam and prophecies of the Holy Prophet

The people who did not put faith in Mirza Ghulam Ahmed of Qadian gave insulting nickname as 'Qadiani Ahmadiyya Organization'. You would appreciate that no religion has ever been named after any city of that country.

The requirements [for] membership [in the] Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam are listed below:

- i) Firm belief in the existence of one and only one God and the Holy Prophet Muhammed ... is His messenger.
- ii) Mirza Ghulam Ahmed of Qadian is his subordinate prophet and reformer of the present time.
- iii) Full faith in all the principles of Islam and Holy Quran as the divine book for guidance of the whole mankind.

Every member of the Community who comes to Canada is registered in Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam Canada. Exhaustive procedures of verification to judge the authenticity of the member are carried out through interviews at various levels of the organization of the community. In case [of] any doubts, the matter is referred to our headquarters in Rabwah, Pakistan.

The community is a religious organization and has no political ambitions in any country. Thus, any individual without status in Canada can become a member of Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam Canada.

The President of Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam Canada, Naseem Mahdi, or his Vice-president, Abdul Aziz Khalifa signs the certificate. A specimen of the certificate is attached for information.

The headquarters office of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community exists in Qadian, India, and its branch has been established in Pakistan at Chanab Nagar (formerly known as 'Rabwah') in district Jhang. The branches of the community are also functioning in approximately 180 countries in the world.

A copy of the above mentioned certificate used to confirm membership is attached to this Response to Information Request.

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The following information was provided during a telephone conversation of 22 November 2006 with the Missionary in charge of Eastern Canada (hereinafter referred to as the Missionary) from the Qadiani Ahmadiyya Ottawa branch. The Missionary stated that there are a total of 60 Qadiani branches located in Canada and that they do not use the term "Qadiani" as it is a derogatory word. According to the Missionary, membership codes are issued from the Toronto branch, which serves as the headquarters in Canada. When an Ahmadi wants to join their organization, he or she must fill out an application form. A copy of the application form, provided by the Missionary in correspondence dated 23 November 2006, is attached to this Response to Information Request. If the organization is satisfied that the applicant is an Ahmadi, a membership code is issued by the Toronto office using the organization's computerized system. This code is then given to the regional office and then provided to the new member. If the organization is not satisfied that the applicant is an Ahmadi, the Missionary indicated that they would forward the application form to the head office in the country of origin of the applicant via the international headquarters in London, UK, where they would verify whether or not the applicant is an Ahmadi. The country of origin office would then send its findings to the international headquarters in London, which would then be sent to the Toronto headquarters and, finally, forwarded to the regional office.

The Missionary also indicated that their organization provides letters to confirm that a person is in fact a member of their organization for Ahmadi who claim refugee status on the basis of their religious affiliation. The Missionary explained that he is responsible for issuing such letters for Eastern Canada and that he sends such letters to claimants' lawyers and directly to the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB).

Organizations in the United States

According to the International Web site of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, there are a total of 39 branches listed in 20 US states (n.d.a). The Web site also provides the following information regarding the organization:

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is a religious organization, international in its scope, with branches in over 178 countries in Africa, North America, South America, Asia, Australasia and Europe. This is the most dynamic denomination of Islam in modern history, with worldwide membership exceeding tens of millions.

...

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in Islam was created under divine guidance with the objective to rejuvenate Islamic moral and spiritual values. It encourages interfaith dialogue, and diligently defends Islam and tries to correct misunderstandings about Islam in the West. It advocates peace, tolerance, love and understanding among followers of different faiths. (n.d.b)

Additional information on Qadiani Ahmadiyya organizations located in the United States could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

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 additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, Canada (AMI). 17 November 2006. Maple, Ontario headquarters. Correspondence from the Secretary of Mission House.

Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. N.d.a. "Contact Us." <<http://www.alislam.org/contactus/index.php?sh=st&co=North%20America&cu=United%20States%20of%20America&st=&ct=>> [Accessed 28 Nov. 2006]

_____. N.d.b. "An Overview." <<http://www.alislam.org/introduction/index.html>> [Accessed 28 Nov. 2006]

Ahmadiyya Muslim Community Canada. N.d. "Branches." <<http://www.ahmadiyya.ca/contact.php>> [Accessed 31 Oct. 2006]

Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat (Community) (AMJ). 23 November 2006. Telephone interview with the Missionary in charge of Eastern Canada.

Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources: The Windsor branch, the National United States (US) Headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, the Washington, DC branch, the New York branch, the Arizona branch and the National Secretary of Public Affairs of the US organization did not respond within the time constraints of this Response.

A Qadiani Ahmadi human rights journalist did not have information on the subject.

Attempts to contact the Regina branch, one Florida branch, one New Jersey branch and the Lynnwood, Washington branch were unsuccessful.

Internet sites, including: Ahmadiyya Muslim Community U.S.A., Factiva.

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Attachments

Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, Canada (AMI). N.d. Headquarters in Maple, Ontario. *Certificate of membership*. Sent to the Research Directorate on 21 November 2006 by the Secretary of Mission House, 1p.

Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat (Community) (AMJ). N.d. Ottawa branch. "Particulars of the Ahmadi Applicant." Sent to the Research Directorate on 23 November 2006 by the Missionary in charge of Eastern Canada, 2 pp.

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