

Sectarianism in South Asian Islam: A Comparative Study of Ahmadiyya Muslim community in India and Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

Sectarian conflict in Islam at the present time is a harsh reality of an Islamic societies within south Asia and all over the world. With the advent of the modernity and colonialism, these differences increases and at the same time new sects and reform movements within Islam emerged. Ahmadiyya movement or sect was one such sect which has its origin in late nineteenth century in the region of Punjab, India. The movement came up as a challenge to the dominant ideas and beliefs to the orthodox Muslims within South Asia and outside also, which made this movement as one of the most controversial reform movement within Islamic history. The controversies and debates which emerged because of this movement has entered into the public consciousness and in political and social spaces which resulted into the high scale opposition of the other orthodox Muslim sects towards the Ahmadiyya Muslim community. The movement over the period of time has also become an accepted feature of the political discourse of the South Asian Islam because of the exclusion and persecution of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community in South Asia. In addition to this, this article will highlight the comparative status of the Ahmadiyya community in the two neighboring countries of South Asia, India and Pakistan. It would be interesting to see that the community which faces large scale opposition in Muslim societies and are not considered as Muslims, how it is being treated in India where Muslims are themselves as a minority community.

Key Words: *Ahmadiyya, Exclusion, Islam, Minority, Persecution*

INTRODUCTION

Sectarianism within Islam is not a new phenomenon. It was in existence there from the past and has from then transformed its nature across time and space. At present, there are about 73 sects in Islam and every sect tries to dominate other sects and members of the each sect are holding the belief that their ideology and beliefs are superior and pure to other sect's ideology and beliefs. However, the concept has gained much prominence after the concept of sectarianism took a violent shape. This was evident in the political transformations of the Middle East region and the growing attacks on the Islamic minoritarian sects in these countries. South Asia also did not remain aloof from all these developments and witnessed a growing intra-religious conflicts across region. The success of the Islamic revolution in Iran in late 1970s created a fear among the majoritarian Sunni Muslims within the region which resulted into the growing opposition against this sect and other minoritarian Muslim sects within the region. In addition to this, South Asian Islam also witnessed the origin and evolution of various other sects, who at different periods of time contested the dominant narratives of being Muslim. These sects also rattled the very foundation of the dominance of the Sunni Islamic ideology within the region. One sect of

Muslims want to dominate other Muslim sects and are trying to glorify their set of values and beliefs as pure and original in comparison to other sects. At the same time, with the advent of the modernity and colonialism, these differences increase and the new sects and reform movements within Islam emerged. The present study is confined to one such sect and reform movement within Islam, namely, Ahmadiyya movement or Ahmadiyya sect which has its origin in late nineteenth century in the region of Punjab, India. The movement came up as a challenge to the dominant ideas and beliefs of the orthodox Muslims within South Asia and outside also, which made this movement as one of the most controversial reform movements within Islamic history. The controversies and debates which emerged because of this movement have entered into the public consciousness and in political and social spaces which resulted in the high scale opposition of the other orthodox Muslim sects towards the Ahmadiyya Muslim community. The movement over the period of time has also become an accepted feature of the political discourse of the South Asian Islam because of the exclusion and persecution of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community in South Asia. Though this community is considered as non-Muslims in most of the Muslim countries but in India, they are being treated as Muslims because of the fact that they are considering themselves as Muslims and also the law of the land in India through census report and judicial judgments from time to time are treating them as a sect of Muslims.

II. ORIGIN OF THE AHMADIYYA COMMUNITY

The Ahmadiyya movement is one of the most controversial and active movements of the twentieth century modern Islam. The origin of the movement is in late 19th century Punjab, India, when the Muslim power in the region and all over the world was in decline. This was also the period when most of the religious groups in the sub-continent region were encountering modernization and were facing new challenges posed by new religious reform groups and modernizing processes. [1] Because of these influential dimensions in the region there was an emergence of many religious reform movements and the resultant birth of various sects like the Deobandi, Ahl-e-Hadith and later Ahmadiyya movement within South Asian Islam. The Ahmadiyya movement from the beginning was instrumental in reinvigorating the debate on the Islamic orthodoxy among the Muslims. It was on the basis of these debates and beliefs that in the contemporary times, there is a debate whether Ahmadis are Muslims or not. The controversies and debates about the Ahmadiyya movement over the period of time have entered into the public consciousness, which has enabled it to become a familiar feature of political discourse in contemporary Muslim South Asia by virtue of continued opposition to the movement over the last century. [2] However, despite the continuous opposition, the Ahmadiyya community has been persistent and unrelenting in propagating its version of faith among Muslims and non-Muslims alike. The mosques and the missionaries of the community have been established throughout the world ranging from Asian and western countries to Africa and South America. As the movement became more public, the distinct identity of Ahmadi took shape and a notion of Ahmadiyyat as a distinct expression of Islam became increasingly politicized. At the same time the emergence of this Ahmadi identity was influenced by modern South Asian politics as much as South Asian Islam was influenced by the modernists. This influence has widened the dichotomy between Ahmadi Islam and the orthodox Islam.

Van der Linden has contextualized the growth of the Ahmadiyya movement as enabled by a modern liberal public sphere (characterized by a print culture, Anglo-vernacular education and the emergence of voluntary associations in the Punjab) that was given patronage by the British colonial state in India at a time which also

saw the birth of reform movements within Hinduism (Arya Samaj) and Sikhism (Singh Sabha). [3] According to him, all of these reform movements are situated within the physical encounter between the colonial state and the colonized and the —complex world of opportunities, constraints and motivations that this encounter created. Each of these reform movements made certain rational forms of tradition available through modern disciplinary institutions and practices for the communication of modern identity politics. They also sought the patronage of the British, and most significantly constituted a dialogue with both Western reason and Christian missionary activities through the rationalization of religion. It was this symbiosis between traditional conservatism and dynamic religious reform based on reason that set Gulam Ahmad apart from both Muslim modernist thinkers and other Indian Ulema. [4] The religious controversy which generated by Gulam Ahmad and his successors took an overtly political dimension as the nationalists and Indian Muslim causes took new urgency in 1920s and 1930s. The Ahmadiyya community's self-professed apolitical stance on various issues including communal and other political demands was slowly set aside by Mahmud Ahmad (second Khalifa of Ahmadiyya community), who began to play an increasingly important role in popular Indian Muslim causes. It was only after that Mahmud Ahmad began a dialogue with the British colonists through addresses, letters and such as a means of imparting his community's views on communal and other issues facing the Indian community. At the same time also, the community actively participated in the Kashmir freedom movement against the Maharaja in 1930s, while remained loyal and supportive to the British rule. The Kashmir crisis of 1930s became a political platform for the Ahmadiyya community through which they disseminate in the South Asian region and largely marked the entrance of the Ahmadiyya Jamaat into South Asian politics. [5] In that period, Mahmud Ahmad sought to maintain a balance between a loyalist stance towards the British on the one hand and an affinity with Indian Muslim community on the other. [6]

III.THEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN AHMADIYYA AND OTHER MUSLIM SECTS

The Ahmadiyya movement is a late nineteenth century Punjab-based 'Muslim' reformist and revivalist movement, which have been long engaged in religious controversies and controversial encounters not only with other Muslim groups but also with Christian missionaries and Hindu groups such as Arya Samaj in both colonial and post-colonial period. The key theological difference between the Ahmadis and other Islamic sects are often associated with the founder of Ahmadiyya movement, Mirza Gulam Ahmad, his messianic claims and over the question of the finality of Muhammad's Prophethood. These differences arise mostly because of the differing interpretation of the Qur'anic verses. The Ahmadis argued against the orthodox Muslim position, who are of the view that revelation ceased to exist with the prophet Muhammad who was both the seal and the terminus of prophecy I.e., Khatm-e-Nabeen and Khatm-e-Nabuwaat. In contrast to this the Ahmadis hold the view that Mirza Gulam Ahmad has prophetic qualities in him as he was subjected to divine communication and also receives revelations from time to time. Ahmadis also maintain that Mirza Gulam Ahmad was a derivate prophet in the sense that his prophetic attributes were derived from the prophet Muhammad. [7] This view of prophetic status of Gulam Ahmad and other beliefs like Gulam Ahmad's claims of Mujadid (renewal of faith), Muhaddath (a person spoken to, by Allah or by an angel), and later as the Messiah (Masih Mawud) and Mahdi, Jesus's natural death in Kashmir and rejection of violent Jihad are some of the main ideas which generated more controversies between Ahmadis and other Muslim groups. [8]

Gulam Ahmad's claims to being the Mujaddid and Muhaddath drew on various medieval Islamic traditions that had given limited importance to these personalities. For example, it is held by popular Muslim traditions that Prophet Mohammad had spoken of a Mujaddid making an appearance at the turn of every century to revive and uplift Islam and to return it to its perfect purity. Various persons in Islamic history had claimed or been awarded the title of Mujaddid and in itself the claim to be a Mujaddid is not a controversial one from the perspective of Islamic theology. The claim of Gulam Ahmad as Muhaddath is a more controversial one because of its involvement of divine communication, which is considered to be an essential element of Prophethood. Gulam Ahmad drew both these claims of personalities from both the Sufi and classical Sunni traditions and in the process transforming them by vesting with a scriptural role, whose religious standing is hardly inferior to that of prophets. [9] The claim of being a Messiah by Gulam Ahmad also drew in Islamic thought that holds that Jesus Christ did not die on the cross and will return to the earth before the Day of Judgment. This claim of Messiah allowed Gulam Ahmad to participate in Christian missionary debates because of his questioning basic Christian beliefs of the centrality of crucifixion and the doctrine of vicarious atonement. [10] Finally Gulam Ahmad claimed to be a Mahdi, which referred to a figure whose appearance is foretold in both *Sunni* and *Shi'ite* traditions as the bloody leader who will appear before the Day of Judgment and at the same time as Christ (and the Antichrist) and will be instrumental in restoring Islam. Gulam Ahmad claimed that the Jesus and the Mahdi were the same person embodying the qualities of all previous prophets and realized in him. However, Gulam Ahmad did not believe in the bloody attributes of the Mahdi and claimed that the Mahdi was a peaceable person. This revision was necessary in light of Mirza Gulam Ahmad's highly controversial rendering of the concept of *Jihad* as conducted through the pen and missionary activities and not through the sword. According to him, the commandment of Jihad came into being as a result of the great dangers that Islam faced in the first years of existence. He further mentioned that, despite the suffering inflicted upon him, "the Prophet was not commanded to wage Jihad for years to end. It was only when the Muslims had no way out of their predicament and when the cruelty and oppression of their enemies exceeded all bounds did Allah give them permission to resist, and the first Qur'anic verse allowing Jihad was revealed". [11] In nutshell, Gulam Ahmad was trying to convey that even if Jihad had been justified in the past, it lapsed with the appearance of the promised Messiah and Mahdi, who himself Gulam Ahmad was, and who was believed to be a peaceful figure and does away with war. [12].

Gulam Ahmad's most controversial claim is his reinterpretation of the notion of *Khatam-e-Nabuwwat* (or *Khatam al'Nabiyyin*) relating to the issue of the finality of Prophethood. *Khatam al'Nabiyyin* is most often literally translated as —the seal of the prophets and in traditional Islamic beliefs, Prophet Mohammad holds this seal. Friedman mentions that in the earlier centuries of Islam, there was no fixed interpretation of the term *Khatam al'Nabiyyin* and that the emergence of false prophetic claimants in the Muslim community gave an impetus to the development of the dogma concerning the finality of Muhammad's Prophethood. So from time to time in the past there have been a number of claimants to prophecy in Islamic history, however, none has ever been accepted as a true prophet in either Sunni or any other sect of Islam. [13] Ahmadiyya community in contrast to this argued that *Khatam* in *Khatam-e-Nabuwwat* referred to the termination of those prophets who brought forth Allah's legislative injunctions or the *Shari'at* (Islamic law). However, non-legislative prophets, that is, prophets who were not carriers of divine books, were prophesied by the Prophet Mohammad himself and would appear not as independent prophets but as extensions of Prophet Mohammad. Gulam Ahmad used the

terms *Zilli* and *Buruzi* which he translated as shadowy and manifestational to argue for continued prophecy as the completion of Prophet Mohammad's mission. [14]

IV. AHMADIYYA MUSLIM COMMUNITY IN PAKISTAN

When the demand for the establishment of the Pakistan was intensified in the 1946 and the partition was coming nearer, the question of the Ahmadiyya community has placed before the Nationalist leadership and architectures of the Pakistani state. In one of the Press Conference when Muhammad Ali Jinnah said that, "Who am I to declare a person non-Muslim who calls himself a Muslim?" By popular Ahmadi accounts, Jinnah invited the community to migrate to Pakistan at the time of the partition and assured the Ahmadis that their rights as full citizens of Pakistan would be fully protected. [15] However, the Ahmadiyya community was also confused in web of partition along with the rest of the Muslims who were living on the Indian side of the border. The Ahmadis theological importance of Qadian, who was part of the district Gurdaspur on Indian side, prevented them in abandoning it altogether. When the situations got worsened in Punjab, Mahmud Ahmad left for Pakistan to make future arrangements for the community members and instructed 313 members of the community to stay in Qadian and to defend it from any onslaught. Mahmud Ahmad gave them the title of *darveshan-I qadian* (the dervishes of Qadian) and equated the merit of these members to the merit of 313 companions of the prophet Muhammad who participated in the battle of Badr. [16] In Pakistan, they bought a new land on the banks of Chenab River and founded a new village called Rabwah. The name of the place was chosen to strengthen the claim of Gulam Ahmad's affinity with Jesus. The name Rabwa, which literally means 'a hill' and is mentioned in the Quran (23:51), a place where Jesus and his mother, Mary, was given refuge by Allah. [17] The migration of the Ahmadi leadership to Pakistan also resulted into the transfer of many institutions of the movement to Pakistan. The institution of Khilafat was also now working from Pakistan and remained there until it was moved to London in 1984 because of the violent opposition from both the Pakistan government under Zia-ul Haq and other political and religious organizations.

When the state of Pakistan became fully functional, the new phase of Ahmadiyya history began as the Ahmadi headquarters were transferred to Pakistan where Islam after the initial years of its existence became a dominant factor in determining the country's politics and social issues. The controversy over the Ahmadiyya movement was publicly visible in Pakistan than in India. This may be because the major influential Muslim groups and organizations were more powerful there as compared to India. The issue whether Ahmadis are Muslims or not was made in Pakistan a constitutional problem which over the course of time have extensive implications on the civil and political rights of Ahmadis in Pakistan. The community's leadership in the post-partition again showed much interest in the Kashmir conflict. Zafrullah Khan, who became the first foreign minister of Pakistan, highlighted the Kashmir problem at many international forums including Security Council. At the community level, Mahmud Ahmad became again active in resolving the Kashmir problem by establishing a separate battalion in 1948 at the border to fight for the people of Kashmir. The battalion came to be known as 'Furqan Battalion' and was being administered under the leadership of Mirza Nasir Ahmad, the eldest son of Mahmud Ahmad. The purpose of the battalion was to provide permanent support to the Pakistani Army in war against India over Kashmir. The battalion included four categories of people including, elite officers of the Pakistani army both retired and active, employees of Ahmadiyya community, unpaid volunteers with military training and

unpaid volunteers without any military training. [18] The battalion was later disbanded in June, 1950. This shift in the Ahmadiyya community's policy of adopting violent jihad as compared to the non-violent jihad of Gulam Ahmad raised many questions regarding the leadership of the movement. However, Mahmud justified this shift and argued that there was a need of violent jihad (*Jihad bi'l-sayf*). [19]

The first controversy after partition which developed involving Ahmadis was during the funeral of Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Zaffarullah Khan, who served as a first foreign minister of Pakistan, voluntarily self-excluded himself from the funeral because it was led by non-Ahmadi Imam. To participate in this funeral was going against the Ahmadi teachings for Zafarullah Khan. This controversy of Ahmadis not participating in Jinnah's funeral was regarded by ordinary Muslims as very insulting. [20] The Ahrars and other mainstream Sunni organizations singled out attack on Zafarullah Khan and demanded his removal from his office. Thereafter, in 1949, Ahrars and their supporters held various public meetings and made appeals to the government to declare Ahmadiyya community as a legally classified non-Muslim minority in Pakistan. However, these demands were not accepted by Pakistani government.

When the demands of the Majlis-I Ahrar were not accepted, Ahrari leaders and associates decided to hold All Pakistan Muslim Parties convention in Karachi in Jan. 1953. The main agenda of the conference was to protect the doctrine of Khatam-e-nabuwwa and the other explicit demands of declaring Ahmadiyya community as non-Muslims, to remove Zafarullah Khan as Pakistan's Foreign minister and also to remove Ahmadis from other high ranking posts. The convention was attended by Pakistan's leading Ulemas and organizations including Jamaat-i-Islami, Jamiyyat Ulama-I Islam, Majlis-I Ahrar etc. The continuous anti-Ahmadi protestors in Pakistan resulted into the Punjab disturbances and riots of 1953, which had both religious and political implications on Pakistani state and society. The doctrine of Khatam-e nabuwwa meanwhile in Pakistan became politically empowering idea and over the period of time served as a catalyst for Islamization in Pakistan. The notion of being an 'Ahmadi' had also taken a new meaning and was used as a synonym with anti-Muslim or non-Muslim. Thereafter, there was a politicization of the Ahmadi identity and controversies, which were used by different groups at different time to downplay each other publicly and to gain prominence among general masses. Conspiracy theories involving Ahmadis were the most convincing arguments for many Pakistanis and used by different groups like Ahrars to mobilize the masses especially in rural South Asia. Similarly these conspiracy theories were also used as justification for the subsequent anti-Ahmadi actions.

By the 1960s and 1970s, the Pakistan People's Party emerged in Pakistan under Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, which was seen as a more liberal and relatively more secular party of Pakistan. The Ahmadis supported PPP and openly campaigned for it in order to establish a new regime, which would be more tolerant towards them. However, after coming to power, the Ahmadi question again came at the national level and the religious opposition parties started exerting pressure on government to declare Ahmadis as non-Muslims. The constitution which was adopted in 1973 included many new articles in addition to the earlier Islamic articles of faith like a declaration that the incumbents believe in the finality of Muhammad's Prophethood. [21] Later in 1974, the reports of violent clashes emerge among students of Ahmadi faith and other students. Representatives of Jamaat-I Islami and other religious groups demanded a debate in the national Assembly on this issue, which was earlier rejected by the government. But with the continuous protest of the opposition parties and a walkout from the national

Assembly prompted the Bhutto government to take action on this. On June 30, 1974, the Assembly appointed a special committee to determine the status of those who do not believe in the finality of the Prophethood of Muhammad. This special committee met with many representatives of various organizations including the Khalifa of Ahmadiyya community of that time, Mirza Nasir Ahmad. All the deliberations and discussions were held behind closed doors. The Assembly met in open session on Sep.7, 1974, and unanimously decided to amend Article 260 of the constitution by adding the clause which stipulated that

“A person who does not believe in the absolute and unqualified finality of the Prophethood of Muhammad (pbuh) the last of the prophets, or claims to be a prophet, in any sense of the world, or of any description whatsoever, after Muhammad (pbuh), or recognizes such a claimant as a prophet or a religious reformer is not a Muslim for the purposes of the constitution or law”. [22]

Furthermore Article 106 (3) of the 1973 constitution was amended to include Ahmadis in the list of Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Parsis to provide a separate representation in the provincial assemblies of Baluchistan, Punjab, North West Frontier Province and Sindh. The Assembly also decided that “a Muslim who professes, practices or propagates against the concept of the finality of the Prophethood of Muhammad” would be punishable under a section of the Pakistani penal code. [23]

As a result of this declaration by the Pakistan’s National Assembly the anti Ahmadi campaign intensified in South Asia and in other parts of the Muslim world. International Islamic organizations began to adopt anti Ahmadi resolutions. For instance, in April 1974, the World Muslim Association (rabitat al-alam al-islami) urged Muslim governments to declare Ahmadis a non-Muslim minority. A Jordanian council of ‘ulama’, immediately after Pakistan Assembly’s resolution, declared Ahmadis as non-Muslims. The Fifth World Islamic conference (al-nadwa al-islamiyya al-alamiyya), held in Mecca in 1976, listed ‘Ahmadis’ among “the destructive tendencies” rampant in the Muslim world. [24] In 1975 in another anti-Ahmadi measure, the religious affairs minister of Pakistan, Kawthar Niyazi, announced that Ahmadis would be barred from performing the hajj and those who are desirous to perform would have to sign a declaration affirming his belief in the finality of the Prophethood of Muhammad. However, there were reports that this measure was demanded by Saudi government, which provided aid to various countries in return of their anti-Ahmad stand. [25] After declaring Ahmadis as non-Muslim minority and seats were reserved for them in Assemblies, they did not participate in elections and also barred the members to contest or to vote in the elections. There was one instance when Bashir Tahir, an Ahmadi member was nominated to represent the Ahmadis and was elected as a member of National Assembly in 1976, the community disassociated itself from him and was later expelled from the community. [26]

When Zia-ul Haq came to power by overthrowing the Bhutto government in Pakistan, the fate of the Ahmadis in Pakistan changed to a considerable amount. There was a new wave of anti-Ahmadiyya activism in Pakistan in the year 1984. The events were similar to that of 1974, like pressure from the Ulemas and religious organizations for further stringent laws against Ahmadiyya community, threats of widespread agitation from these organizations and the subsequent anti-Ahmadi action by the government. Thereafter in April 1984, Zia government passed an ordinance XX, as an amendment to the penal code of Pakistan, which prohibited

Ahmadis from posing as Muslims by using Islamic symbols and nomenclature in describing their religion or places of worship, making it a crime punishable by imprisonment and heavy fines. While Amendment of 1974 was serious constitutional development against Ahmadis but had relatively minor legal implications, the 1984 ordinance, on the other hand made the religious life of the members of the Ahmadiyya community in Pakistan illegal. The ordinance also transforms the daily life of Ahmadis into a criminal offence. Section 298(C) of the ordinance, while prohibiting religious life of Ahmadis states that,

“Any person of the Qadiani group or the Lahori group (who call themselves as Ahmadis or by any other name) who, directly or indirectly, poses himself as a Muslim, or calls, or refers to, his faith as Islam, or preaches or propagates his faith, or invites others to accept his faith, by words, either spoken or written, or by visible representations, or in any manner whatsoever outrages the religious feelings of Muslims, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three years or shall also be liable to a fine”. [27]

The Amendment forbids the Ahmadis to call their worshiping place as ‘mosques’, their call to prayer as ‘Adhan’ and also forbids them to use the religious titles for their heads, which were used for Muslims in the past. In the wake of these developments against Ahmadis, the Khalifa of the community moved to London in order to avoid the possible imprisonment from the government. But the hatred against the common Ahmadis staying in Pakistan was increasing widely and frequently. In a message to the conference of International Khatme-e-nabuwwat, held in London in 1985, Zia-ul Haq promised to “preserve in our effort to ensure that the cancer of Qadianism is exterminated”. [28] As a result of these cultural implications of the laws and Constitutional Amendments regarding Ahmadis in Pakistan over the period of time, persecution and hate-related incidents are constantly reported from different parts of the country. Since then Ahmadis have been the target of many attacks led by various extremist religious groups. The biggest among these attacks was on the two Ahmadi Mosques in Lahore in May 28, 2010, in which around 90 people were killed and over hundred have been injured.[29]

V.AHMADIYYA MUSLIM COMMUNITY IN INDIA

India has a significant Ahmadiyya population and spread across all the regions of the country. A growing intolerance against the community in majority of the Muslim countries and particularly in South Asia is beginning to leave its impact on India’s Ahmadiyyas as well. The worrying part is that these attacks are not just carried out by the radical fringe elements within the society but sometimes by the established and powerful Muslim organizations and leaders as well. In fact, this violent opposition and persecution by other Muslim groups and sects towards Ahmadiyya community has developed more after the declaration of Ahmadis as Non-Muslims by Pakistan National Assembly in 1974. However, unlike in Pakistan and some other Muslim-majority countries, the law of the land in India backs the Ahmadiyyas and considered the community as Muslims. A Kerala High Court judgment of 1970 makes it clear that Ahmadiyyas have the right to call themselves Muslims and that other Muslim sects cannot force them to abandon their Islamic identity. [30] The judgment observed that Ahmadiyyas are Muslims because, like other Muslims, they also adhered to the fundamental tenets of Islam like the supremacy of Allah as the one God and recognition that Prophet Muhammad was a messenger and servant of Allah. Hence there is no legal restrictions on the religious activities of Ahmadis in India and are free

to practice their religion and call themselves as Muslims. In spite of declaring them Muslims, the Indian Ahmadis suffer other forms of exclusion in different places. The community has been kept out of the All-India Muslim personal Board, a body that is supposed to represent the diversity of Indian Islam. The community was also refrained from including them as a sect of Islam in the census report till 2011 census despite successive High Court judgments uphold their status as Muslims. [31] The opposition to not include them in the census was mainly coming from the Muslim clerics who deemed the community as heretics. Further, It was observed by the Madras High Court in 1952 that : "If a person is born into a particular religion, the mere fact that he is of an unorthodox type or has no belief personally in the tenets of that religion would not take him out of the category of persons professing that religion". [32]

However, in spite of these judgments, the violent opposition against the Ahmadiyya community in India had increased from the last decades of the twentieth century. This hate campaign is evident from the booklet published by Majlise- Tahaffuz- Khatm-e Nabuwat trust in Hyderabad which highlights that:

"the breed of Qadianis will never change. They may multiply up to 99 generations; still the 100th one will continue to be a dualist-infidel and apostate. The reason is that their crime is a never ending one. The offence will never cease to exist in their progeny. Let it be clear to every Muslim that the crime of apostasy runs throughout the lineage of a Qadiani. If he is adamant and refuses to renounce his apostasy, then Allah's sacred soil deserves to be cleaned of his foul existence. By the law of Sharia, they should be awarded capital sentence because they are dualist-infidels (Zindiq). If they are masquerading as Muslims on the globe, it is because they have not been sentenced. Hunt the liar in his mother's haunt (Britain). I ask my Muslim brethren- don't you have any grace left in you to answer these shameless Qadianis? Peel their camouflage off from every nook and corner of the world, just it has been done in Pakistan." [33]

It was also during this time that a decision was taken by the Waqf board that "take over possession of the mosque and the graveyard of the Qadianis. Since Sunni and Shia mosques cannot be administered by the non-Muslims, it is ordered that the said property be taken under the Waqf's direct management." [34] These hate campaigns and other developments led to the attacks and exclusion of the community in many places across the country. For instance, in August 2008, some Muslim clerics in Uttar Pradesh have threatened the Mayawati government of dire consequences unless a chapter on the Ahmadiyya Islamic Sect is removed from the social study book of standard Xth. [35] In another instance, the Islamic seminary Deoband has asked the Saudi Arabian government to ban Ahmadis from visiting Mecca and Medina to perform Hajj and Umrah. [36] The seminary reminded the Saudi monarch of an Organization of Islamic Country's resolution that ex-communicated the Ahmadiyya sect from Islam in 1979. In another occasion the Shahi Imam of Jamia Masjid and other hundreds of supporters held a protest in Delhi against a three day seminar organized by the Ahmadiyya community. [37] There were also numerous attacks on the members and property of the community like in July 2008, the exhumation of the body of 35 years old woman of the community by some groups from graveyard at Royapettah in Chennai. [38] There were also attacks on the mosque of Ahmadiyya community in Saidabad Hyderabad from the majority Muslim community when an Ahmadiyya community's foundation day was celebrated there by the members of the community. [39] So the exclusion and persecution which was happening in Pakistan against the Ahmadiyya sect has now reached in India also. However, irrespective of all these violent oppositions by some of the fringe elements within Indian Muslims, the Ahmadis are still enjoying lot of freedom

as practicing Muslims in India than in Pakistan. The blasphemy laws which are present in Pakistan have no place in Indian political and social systems, so portraying themselves as Muslims and by following an Islamic credentials, the Ahmadis in India cannot be arrested or persecuted as happening in Pakistan. There is also another important aspect of this exclusion though this exclusion and persecution is not as high as in Pakistan but Muslims themselves being a minority in India, the major oppositions against the Ahmadiyya Muslim community is mostly happening in Muslim majoritarian areas like in the regions of Hyderabad, Lucknow, Kashmir etc.

VI. CONCLUSION

Sectarianism from the last two centuries have emerged as a dominant force within the South Asian Islam. The challenges to the dominant narratives of the South Asian Islam have ushered a new phase in the South Asian Islam. One element of such phase was the coming of the Ahmadiyya movement, whose beliefs and ideas were largely in contrast to the other orthodox Islamic sects present in the region and all over the world. Though the Ahmadiyya sect has been declared as non-Muslims in most of the majoritarian Muslim countries including Pakistan, the Ahmadis on the other hand still enjoy the right of being Muslims in India. However, in India also, particularly after declaring Ahmadis as non-Muslims, the community due to the consistent hate campaigns and physical attacks particularly from other mainstream Muslim groups have been pushed to the corners, excluded from mainstream Islamic undertakings and even faced frequent attacks and persecution. At the same time while facing constant attacks and violent oppositions from both state and non-state agencies in Pakistan, the Ahmadis in India on the other hand, are living their lives as Muslims with respect and dignity and at the same time are enjoying state opportunities without any hindrances. The fact of the matter is that, the fate of the community is not favorable in Muslim majority countries like Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Indonesia and in some other Arabian countries. Simultaneously the community also started to face these kinds of opposition in Non-Muslim majoritarian countries like India and England. At present, the committee has its headquarters in London, where it's Khalifa (supreme leader) stays and is active in propagating its faith, predominantly in African, American and European countries and is also involved in the various humanitarian aid movements.

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