

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SECRETARIAT
(Standing Committee on Religious Affairs and Inter-Faith Harmony)

PRESS RELEASE

Standing Committee on Religious Affairs rejects baseless report of British Group. PSDP for 2021-22 of Ministry of Religious Affairs and Inter-Faith Harmony okayed. Construction of Hajj Complex Lahore needs to be improved: Standing Committee

Islamabad Standing Committee on Religious Affairs and Inter-Faith Harmony of the National Assembly, in its meeting, unanimously condemned the report titled “Suffocation of the Faithful” issued by so-called all parties parliamentary group for Ahmedia Muslims (Qadiyani) community. The Standing Committee resolved that the report was baseless, false and misleading. The Standing Committee demanded that the concerned group of Britain should withdraw the report. Standing Committee was informed that a pro qadiyani group has blamed State of Pakistan stating that non-Muslims and religious minorities and exploited by the Government of Pakistan. The Standing Committee declared that State of Pakistan has always protected the minorities. Parliamentary Secretary for Ministry of Religious Affairs and Inter-Faith Harmony honourable Shunila Ruth strongly condemned the report. She said that she feels more protected, safe and peaceful in Pakistan than any other country of the world. Member Standing Committee honourable Jamshed Thomas read “Condemnation Resolution” on behalf of the Standing Committee, which was unanimously approved. Honourable Shunila Ruth showed her commitment to examine the report comprehensively and to issue its rebuttal in the days to come. The Standing Committee decided to move a unanimous resolution in the National Assembly to condemn the report of so-called British Group. The Standing Committee directed Ministry of Foreign Affairs to give its reaction on the report, forthwith. Ministry for Religious Affairs and Inter-Faith Harmony submitted its PSDP, for examination and approval, for the financial year 2021-22 to the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee approved all of the projects of Ministry of Religious Affairs except the construction of building of Hajj Complex at Lahore. The Standing Committee was informed that Ministry of Religious Affairs and Inter-Faith Harmony has no building in Lahore. So, the pilgrims are made to stay in a rented building owned by Evacuee Trust Property Board. The building of Evacuee Trust Property Board is an old one. So, the pilgrims face difficulties during their stay there. Hence, Ministry of Religious Affairs and Inter-Faith Harmony has decided to construct its own building for pilgrims in Lahore at the cost of Rs. 937.40 million. Standing Committee was apprised that Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform had already raised an objection on the proposed building. Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform was of the view that Hajj season is only of three months. Thereafter, the proposed building should be used for some commercial purposes. Ministry of Religious Affairs and Inter-Faith Harmony informed the Committee that there is only one street of ten feet which leads to the location of the proposed building of Hajj Complex. So, due to non-availability of main road the building shall not be suitable to be used for commercial purposes. The Standing Committee declared that due to non-availability of a proper approach road the bus deployed for transportation of pilgrims would also be unable to reach to the proposed building of Hajj Complex at Lahore. So, huge amount of more than 937 million cannot be approved on such useless building. The Standing Committee directed that the building of Hajj Complex, Lahore be constructed on such place where the buses of pilgrims can easily approach.

The meeting was presided over by the Chairman Standing Committee of National Assembly on Religious Affairs and Inter-Faith Harmony, Mr. Asad Mahmood and attended by Members National Assembly; Mr. Saleem Khan, Sahibzada Sibghatullah, Mr. Muhammad Bashir Khan, Prince Muhammad Nawaz Allai, Mr. Mujahid Ali, Chaudhary Javed Iqbal Warraich, Mr. Jamshed Thomas, Ms. Saira Bano, Ms. Shunila Ruth (Parliamentary Secretary), Chaudhary Faqir Ahmed, Begum Tahira Bokhari, Syed Imran Ahmed Shah, Mr. Kesoo Mal Kheeral Das, Mahar Irshad Ahmed Khan, Pir Syed Fazal Ali Shah Jilani, Ms. Shagufta Jumani and Ms. Shahida Akhtar Ali. Additional Secretary, Ministry of Religious Affairs and Inter-Faith Harmony, Additional Secretary, Evacuee Trust Property Board and many other senior officers attended the meeting.

(CH. MUKHTAR AHMED)
Secretary Committee