

UNITED NATIONS  
ECONOMIC  
AND  
SOCIAL COUNCIL



Distr.  
GENERAL

E/CN.4/1298/Add.3  
16 November 1979

Original: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS  
Thirty-sixth session  
Item 23 of the provisional agenda

RIGHTS OF PERSONS BELONGING TO NATIONAL, ETHNIC,  
RELIGIOUS AND LINGUISTIC MINORITIES

Comments received from Governments pursuant to  
Commission resolution 14 A (XXXIV)

ADDENDUM

PAKISTAN

[Original: ENGLISH]

[6 November 1979]

1. In the Islamic Republic of Pakistan the rights and privileges of minorities who form 3.25 per cent of the total population are properly safeguarded and they have full opportunity for self-development and advancement.
2. A full-fledged Ministry of Minority Affairs was established in December 1971 for safeguarding the constitutional rights of minorities, promoting their welfare and giving them the sense of being full and equal citizens of the State.
3. The Government of Pakistan has also issued in June 1976 a "Declaration on Minorities" comprising the following eight points:
  - (i) That the Minority Communities are an integral part of the people of Pakistan.
  - (ii) That it is the duty and obligation of the Government to see that the rights of the Minorities are fully safeguarded.
  - (iii) That the Minorities shall be integrated and accepted in the general stream of national life, without affecting their religious and cultural identities.
  - (iv) That the minorities are a sacred trust with the people of Pakistan and that their rights and interests are fully protected in accordance with law.
  - (v) That the Muslims shall follow the example of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), whose attitude towards the votaries of other religions was that of tolerance and magnanimity.

- (vi) That special measures shall be adopted to ~~help~~ and support the under-privileged sections of the society, irrespective of their creed, caste or colour.
- (vii) That since most of the problems and difficulties of the Minorities are the same as those of the majority community, the main challenge is to fight poverty, to eliminate misery born of economic and social inadequacies and to raise the standard of living of all the people of Pakistan.
- (viii) That in order to gain strength, Pakistan shall look at the problems of the Nation in their entirety, as those of a people with common and collective interests.

4. Some of the major steps taken for the welfare of Minorities are as follows:

- (i) Constitution of an Advisory Council for Minority Affairs. The function of the Council is to advise the Federal Government on matters concerning the welfare of minorities.
- (ii) Constitution of a cultural council for the advancement of the cultural activities of minorities.
- (iii) Publication of a colourful monthly journal "Hamvaten" in Urdu for minorities.
- (iv) Institution of Cultural Awards for the Minority artists, worth Rs.57,000/- annually.
- (v) Holding of two minorities Conferences in April 1973 and June 1976.
- (vi) Celebration of a "Minority Week" from 1 June to 7 June 1976.
- (vii) Establishment of the Pakistan Minorities Welfare Fund (Rs.20.00 lakh) for the grant of financial help to the needy and poor persons of the minority communities. A total amount of Rs.16,21,000/- has been spent so far from this fund.
- (viii) Provision for the grant of scholarships to the minority students both at the Federal and Provincial levels.
- (ix) Reservation of 8 and 15 additional seats for minorities in the National Assembly and Provincial Assemblies respectively to be filled up through separate Electorate, besides special seats reserved in local bodies proportionate to their population.
- (x) Provision for reservation of additional seats for minorities in the Local Councils.
- (xi) Provision for the broadcast/telecast of special programmes on Radio/T.V. on occasion of important festivals of the minorities communities.
- (xii) Provision for admission of the Minority students in educational institutions including professional colleges on merit with a special reservation of seats for the Scheduled Caste candidates in the province of Sind.

- (xiii) Special provision for employment of the minority candidates to non-technical posts in the taken-over industries in addition to 6 per cent vacancies reserved for the Scheduled Caste candidates in the Federal Services.
- (xiv) Amendment of the Divorce Act, 1869 simplifying the Procedure for the dissolution of marriage between the Christians.
- (xv) Applicability to minorities of provision of the Dowry Act, 1976 to eliminate the social evil of extravagance on marriage festivals.
- (xvi) Minorities' representation on the Evacuee Trust Property Board and Punjab Social Services Board.
- (xvii) Nomination of Additional Deputy Commissioners as Minorities Officers in each District.
- (xviii) Constitution of District Minorities Committee in each district and holding of periodical meetings of these committees under the Chairmanship of the concerned Deputy Commissioner. These committees comprising prominent minority leaders look into day-to-day local problems of minorities.
- (xix) Three and a half hours off to all Christian employees to enable them to offer their prayers on Sundays.