

## **CLAAS fact-finding report on Police violence against Christians in Lahore**

### **The Information**



**The place of occurrence where Adeel Masih killed by a bullet fire arm and died on the spot**

On August 14, 2012 Mr. M.A Joseph Francis MBE (National Director CLAAS) was informed about an incident of police violence against Christian residents in Nawaz Sharif Colony, Lahore and he was also informed about the killing of a Christian and seriously injured four others in the occurrence. Following the sensitivity of the matter on August 15, 2012 a fact-finding team headed by Mr. Nadeem Anthony Advocate (Research Officer CLAAS) including Mr. Asher Sarfraz (Field Officer CLAAS), Mr. Ayaz Gill (Court Clerk CLAAS) and Mr. John Paul (Supporting Staff CLAAS) visited the

place of occurrence, meeting with the family of deceased and the seriously injured Christians, meeting with area residents, visited place of occurrence and visited the concerned police station and note the following:

### **The area and condition of Christian residents**

According to Ashraf Masih aged 40 s/o Sohan Masih is a Christian by faith and is granduncle of deceased Adeel Masih, the vicinity of Nawaz Sharif Colony, Lahore is located on the Eastern Part of Lahore situated at Ferozepur Road, Lahore. Round about 1000 Christian families are residing in the locality. The Christian inhabitants are laborer, domestic workers, masons and sanitary workers while the literacy rate among the Christians is 30%.

### **Family background of deceased Adeel Masih**

The deceased was identified Adeel Masih aged 15 son of Irfan Masih, a Christian by faith and was resident of Nawaz Sharif Colony, Lahore. Deceased Irfan was on number third among siblings. The names of other two siblings are as Suneel Masih aged 19, a barber by profession and daughter named Bibi aged 12, a student of grade 6<sup>th</sup>. His father Irfan Masih is working as sanitary worker while his mother Rani Bibi is working as domestic worker. When the CLAAS team visited the aggrieved family and noticed that the family and relatives were sit down on the ground for mourn. The CLAAS team expressed concerns with him but the distressed Irfan Masih was unable to deliver a single word while his younger brother Ashraf Masih expressed his grief concerns over the sudden death of his nephew and demanded justice.

## The background of Police Violence

Prevaiz John aged 43, a Christian by faith is known as liquor supplier in the locality while many other unknown Christians are connected for vending the illegal sale of liquor in the vicinity and surrounding areas of Nawaz Sharif Colony, Lahore. According to the information collected by CLAAS the illegal sale of liquor was in the notice of the area police as well as the surrounding police stations were also aware thoroughly. In this connection the police get money and bottles of liquor on monthly basis from Pervaiz John. It was also informed the CLAAS team that if Pervaiz John stopped and failed in the continuous supply of the liquor and monthly bribe, the police always raided on his house, assaulted the women and other family members, brutality tortured John Perviaz and demanded money and bottles of liquor from him under duress.

## The incident



**Critically injured Pervaiz John narrating the facts to the CLAAS team while his injured son also seen in the photo**

The CLAAS team meeting with Pervaiz John aged 43, a Christian by faith and father of six children. Pervaiz John said, “I am known as liquor supplier in the locality but some five months before I left the business of sale of liquor. On the day of the incident on August 12, 2012 at about 11:00 in the night a traditional ceremony of Haqeeqa (usually Christians are arranging such kind of functions to call the relatives and family friends for joining in their happy moments) of my nephew was in full swing. My relatives were gathered to join in the happy moments of Haqeeqa. As usual the known police

constables namely Ilyas Jutt, Ehtesham, Muhammad Shah and Muhammad Muhajid of Naseerabad Police Station were on mobile duty and stopover near the Haqeeqa ceremony to extort monthly bribe and bottles of liquor from me. I along with my relatives look after the police constables and offered them dinner followed by liquor etc. In the meanwhile I left the party because my physical condition did not allow me to go on the party. I came home to rest and sleep. Near about 12:00 the police constables after taking the heavy quantity of liquor demanded sufficient stock of liquor and money for celebrating Eid. The Eid-ul-Fitar, Eid is an Arabic word meaning “festivity” while Fitar means “breaking the fast”, the Eid-ul-Fitar celebrates the conclusion of 30 days down to sunset fasting during the entire month of Ramdan. When the drunken police constables did not find me in the party they became infuriated and raided my home and demanded bottles of liquor and money for celebrating the day of Eid-ul-Fitar. The demand of the police was much difficult for me and I requested them excuse me from their demands because this time I am in position and able to fulfill the demands accordingly. The police constables became

violent and started torturing me and assaulted the female family members and later bring me off in the street's square and cruelly threw me on their motorbike and trying to take me along with them, which I resisted and following my hue and cries the local residents came out for help. The police constables in the presence of local residents inhumanly attacked me and badly hurt my head with the grip handles of their guns. I sustained severe injuries on my head and became unconscious.”



Yousaf Masih one of the eyewitness and resident of the same locality further added and said,” When Pervaiz John fell down on the ground and became unconscious while the body of Pervaiz John was not moving and the gathered Christian residents comprehended that he has been expired by the police torture and on the other side the constables try to escape from the place of occurrence. Later, the assembled Christian residents demanded the police constables to take the body of Pervaiz John along with

them. The drunken police constables were reluctant to do so while the Christian residents were under fear that if the police will not take him along with them than the police must try to implicate them in this crime. Afterwards, the Christians resisted and started protesting against the police. Resultantly, a scuffle took place between Police and the Christians while following the situation in the meantime, the police constables contacted their colleagues at the police station and narrated the whole circumstances and urged them to respond immediately. Within few minutes six unknown policemen arrived at the scene.



**Injured Sarfraz Masih explaining about his injuries**

Apparently the situation got deteriorated and ultimately led to the severe clashes between the police and Christian residents. Finally, the police party opened straight fire on the Christians and resultantly three Christians namely Sarfraz aged 20 got gunshots on his chest, Irfan aged 23 got gunshots on his shoulders and sustained bullet injuries. While 15 years old Adeel Masih got straight bullet of the backside of his head and to come forth from his eye and the bullet taken out his eyeball and as result Adeel Masih died on the spot and the same bullet badly stroked on the forehead of Robestor John son of Pervaiz John, who sustained bullet injuries on the upper side of his right eye and on the forehead. The situation became out of control and the policemen however,

leaving their weapons and motorcycles at the crime sight managed to escape from the



crime scene. The Christians their own shifted Pervaiz John, Sarfraz, Irfan, Robestor John and Adeel Masih to the nearby General Hospital where Adeel Masih was pronounced to dead while other four were declared as out of danger but sustained severe injuries. Whereas two police constables also received slight injuries during the clash.

**Critically injured 11 years old Robestor John,  
younger son of Pervaiz John**

### **Reaction from the Christians**

The CLAAS team was informed that the news of police violence against Christians in Nawaz Sharif Colony sparked without any delay and the local Christians as well as neighbored Christians from Bahar Colony, LDA Quarters and Peter Colony etc gathered to show their solidarity and concerns. The Christian protesters peacefully staged a protest demonstration and demanded immediate arrest of policemen involved in the attack and blocked Ferozepur Road and suspended traffic for several hours. The angry Christians set the tyres on fire and chanted slogans against police violence and demanded the registration of case FIR against the responsible police constables. The clashes erupted between the police and the Christian protestors and the angry protestors pelted the police and private vehicles with stones. Virtually, the Ferozepur Road turned into battlefield for several hours. Following the critical situation of the police high officials namely Awais Malik, Superintendent of Police, Model Town, Lahore with heavy contingent of police including senior officer reached at the spot and gave assurance for prompt justice to the victims and requested the protestors to let the traffic open. After, assurance from the police officials the protestors dispersed peacefully.

### **Registration of Case FIR**

On August 13, 2012 a case FIR No. 589/12 offence under section 302, 324, 148 & 149 of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) registered on the complaint of Ashraf Masih, granduncle of deceased Adeel Masih against three police constables namely Ilyas Jutt, Ihtsham, Muhammad Mujahid and six other unidentified police officials at the police station, Naseerabad, Lahore.

### **CLAAS team visited the Naseerabad Police Station**

The CLAAS team meeting with Aslam Sindhu (In-charge investigation-Naseerabad Police Station) and urged him to carry out his investigation on merit and the also demanded that Justice should be done. Aslam Sindhu informed the CLAAS team about the registration of case FIR and assured the CLAAS team that justice will be done with the aggrieved family of deceased Adeel Masih and seriously injured Christians and also bring up to date that no accused person has arrested till. The CLAAS team learnt that the concerned police officers using delay pretext and wants to hold up the matter for the time being. It was also revealed that the concerned police officers are active to safe their fellow colleague.

### **CLAAS team visited the Liaqatabad Police Station**

The CLAAS team also informed about the registration of case FIR against Christians residents at the police station Liaquatabad, Lahore for setting a container on fire and damaging the private vehicles with stones during the protest. The Christians alleged that after the assurance of justice by the Superintendent of Police (SP) they returned in the colony and they never set a container on fire and not damage the private vehicles. The CLAAS team also visited Liaquatabad, Police Station for following-up the registration of case FIR and the concerned police official informed the CLAAS team that no FIR has registered till date and the owner of the container submit an application for the registration of case FIR which is in the possession of Station House Officer (SHO).

### **CLAAS Findings / Observations**

1. The police constables create lawlessness and the police violence was unjustified and against the law.
2. The seriously injured Christians were shifted in the hospital by the Christian residents of the area.
3. The seriously injured Christians were discharged from the hospital after few hours and the CLAAS team found that the injured need more medical care accordingly.
4. Pervaiz John was involved in the illegal sale of liquor under the police protection.
5. The police extort monthly bribe and bottles of liquor from Pervaiz John on daily basis or any time the needs.
6. The police administration is not taking the matter seriously and as result none of accused constables has arrested till date.
7. The CLAAS team revealed that the concerned police officers are active to safe their fellow colleague.
8. The CLAAS team also learnt that the concerned police officers using delay pretext and for the time being wants to hold up the matter.
9. Deceased Adeel Irfan was murdered unjustly and he has nothing to do with the clash.

10. The Christian protesters peacefully staged a protest demonstration and demanded immediate arrest of policemen involved in the attack and blocked Ferozepur Road and suspended traffic for several hours.
11. The angry Christians set the tyres on fire and chanted slogans against police violence and demanded the registration of case FIR against the responsible police constables.
12. The police with mala fide intentions put out news through media that the police have killed two wanted terrorists in the encounters in Nawaz Sharif Colony.
13. Deceased Adeel Masih was buried in the area graveyard.

### **Recommendations**

- 1- A fair and transparent investigation must be carried out as soon as possible in the interest of justice to ensure that the innocent Christians should not be victimized, abused and harassed by the criminal police officers.
- 2- The police administration should investigate those police officers involved in the illegal sale of liquor and extorting money and liquor under duress.
- 3- The police administration should arrest the killer police constables immediately for fulfillment of administration of justice.
- 4- The criminal and departmental actions should be initiated against the responsible police officers for taking law into their hands.
- 5- The government should compensate the aggrieved family of deceased Adeel Masih as well as to the critically injured Christians.

### **Up-dates**

Till the filing of this report no criminal has been arrested so far while the so-called investigation is underway.

### **Reported By**

**CLAAS Team  
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