بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Ever Merciful

Press Desk

Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat
INTERNATIONAL

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PRESS RELEASE

PEACE LOVING MUSLIM COMMUNITY ATTACKED IN BANGLADESH

Ahmadi Muslims have not been able to return to their homes after vicious attack in District Rangpur

On 7 November 2012 fanatical religious extremists attacked the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat in Taraganj, District of Rangpur in an extremely brutal and vicious attack. The attack took place in the village of Kisamat, Menanagar where the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat was constructing the 'Centenary Memorial Mosque'.

At least 15 local Ahmadi Muslims were injured during the course of the attack. Apart from the Mosque, two Ahmadi homes, one of which was used as a prayer centre were also attacked. The three properties were all vandalised, looted and set on fire.

Background and Facts of case:

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat was established in Kisamat Menanagar in the year 2000. On 25 August 2012 the foundation for a Mosque was laid and the construction work continued uninterrupted until 5 October 2012.

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On 5 October 2012 a group of religious extremists came to the Mosque site and obstructed the construction work. They also issued a number of threats to the Ahmadi Muslims. Subsequently, local authorities took the initiative of convening a meeting at the Hariarkuti Union Council offices and advised suspension of the construction work for one month. The Ahmadis acceded to this request in the interest of peace and postponed the construction work.

Despite the fact the construction of the Mosque was postponed, within one week the local religious extremists again began a co-ordinated campaign to spread hatred against the Ahmadi Muslims and to urge the local population to demolish the incomplete Mosque.

The religious extremists also instigated a campaign to intimidate the Ahmadi Muslims with a variety of threats. The local Ahmadis were harassed and it was made clear to them that they were in imminent danger.

On 25 October 2012 religious extremists led a procession pelting stones at the homes of local Ahmadi Muslims and obstructing the entrances to them.

The extremists also warned the Ahmadi Muslims that unless they renounced their faith by 5 November 2012, their homes would be demolished and set on fire. Despite the hostilities and threats, none of the Ahmadi Muslims waivered in their faith and so the extremists carried out their threats with the attack on 7 November 2012.

Since the 7 November attack the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat has held meetings with the local Government who have determined that Ahmadi Muslims cannot build any Mosque within 1.5miles of the local non-Ahmadi Mosque. No serious action has been taken against any of the perpetrators of the 7 November attack.

Abid Khan, Press Secretary of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat said:

"The local Ahmadi Muslims have seen their homes, their prayer centre and the under construction Mosque destroyed. All the local Ahmadis have been moved to safe location and are unable currently to return to their village as it is too dangerous.

We would urge the Government of Bangladesh and all relevant authorities to make sure that Ahmadi Muslims and their places of worship are protected. The persecution of any group must be condemned by all parties. The right to practice and profess one's religion openly and without fear is a basic human right that each citizen has a right to."

End

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