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Beyond Spontaneity: Unveiling the Organized Dynamics of Mob Violence in Pakistan

This research article attempts to elucidate the recurrent nature of mob violence from 2010-2024, focusing on key elements such as preplanning, coordination, organizational control, and leadership. Through a purposive sampling technique, a diverse- case study approach is employed to examine the factual contexts and emerging patterns of mob violence incidents in Pakistan. The study aims to offer an insight into the nature and circumstances of such occurrences across various regions of Pakistan by examining n=25 sample cases. The findings reveal that mob violence is a more organized and structured form of violence, characterized by societal endorsement, contrary to the historically perceived spontaneous outbursts. Moreover, the study highlights how different societal factions (religious and political) strategically exploit mob violence to achieve ulterior objectives. The research concludes by emphasizing the need for policy interventions, both administrative and legislative, to effectively curb the occurrence of mob violence in Pakistan.

Keywords: Criminal Justice, Organized, Police, Political

Keinerlei Spontaneität: Organisierten Dynamiken von Mobgewalt in Pakistan

Dieser Artikel versucht, die wiederkehrende Natur von Mobgewalt im Zeitraum 2010–2024 zu erläutern und konzentriert sich dabei auf Schlüsselelemente wie Planung, Koordination, Organisation und Führung. Durch eine zielgerichtete Fallauswahl werden vielfältige Fallstudien verwendet, um die tatsächlichen Kontexte und entstehenden Muster von Mobgewalt in Pakistan zu untersuchen. Die Studie zielt darauf ab, durch die Untersuchung von n=25 Fällen die Umstände solcher Vorkommnisse in verschiedenen Regionen Pakistans zu verstehen. Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass Mobgewalt eine eher organisierte und strukturierte Form der Gewalt ist, die gesellschaftlich gebilligt wird; ganz im Gegensatz zur historischen Rahmung als spontane Gewaltausbrüche. Darüber hinaus hebt die Studie hervor, wie verschiedene gesellschaftliche Gruppen (religiöse und politische) Mobgewalt strategisch ausnutzen, um eigene Ziele zu verfolgen. Die Forschung zeigt die Notwendigkeit politischer Interventionen, sowohl administrativer als auch gesetzgeberischer, um das Auftreten von Mobgewalt in Pakistan wirksam einzudämmen.

Schlagwörter: Organisiert, Strafjustiz, Politisch, Polizei

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* This study is limited by the absence of direct empirical evidence on the operations of hired or financially motivated mobs due to the legal and security risks surrounding such inquiry. The sensitivity of blasphemy-related violence in Pakistan, coupled with potential threats to participants' safety, made primary data collection impractical. Consequently, the analysis relies on verified secondary sources to infer patterns of organization and incentive.

1. Introduction

Mob violence has become a grave concern in Pakistan over the past few years. Individuals engaging in acts of violence at the community level pose a serious threat to the security of fellow citizens and the smooth functioning of the criminal justice system (Singay, 2020). People take the law into their own hands and commit acts of violence to punish the presumed offender to protect themselves from perceived threats (Hussain et al., 2023). Mob violence refers to a spontaneous reaction of community members to a specific situation, resulting in acts of violence against a person or group of persons (Staub & Rosenthal, 1994). During mob violence incidents, large groups of people engage through active or passive participation, which often results in deaths, major injuries, and the devastation of state and private properties (Banaji et al., 2019).

However, studies indicate that certain groups, such as political, religious, and social entities, play a vital role in inciting people to commit acts of violence to achieve their illicit agendas (Asif et al., 2023). Consequently, mob violence becomes a tool for achieving ulterior objectives with impunity (Gonika, 2022). According to Staub and Rosenthal (1994), destructive manifestations by mobs can be done in various patterns, encompassing spontaneous outbursts to those organized at different levels through leadership. The authors exemplify the United States lynchings in the 20th century, which erupted spontaneously. However, those events were also orchestrated by organized groups with leadership element, e. g., Ku Klux Klan, which executed the violent acts with pre-planning. Although there are major incidents of mob violence in history, e. g., civil rights riots, 1960, which Milgram and Toch (1969) referred in their study, lacked the elements of organization, premeditation, leadership, and direction, in fact were the result of collective frustration. But still several aspects of mob violence need exploration. While the political leaders can instigate the followers towards mob actions, many incidents that are not linked to political movements often lack clear leadership, or the whole process of instigation and the mobs' actions are not well understood (Staub & Rosenthal, 1994).

However, La Bon (1895) argued that violent mobs are mostly composed of social misfits, criminals, and marginalized individuals. This view is inconsistent with the Milgram and Toch findings. The scholar argues that if there are understandable social deprivations, why would just marginalized groups be involved in these incidents? As a result, some explanations for mob violence focus on social environmental conditions that lead to these events (Asafo-Adjei, 2021) while others emphasize on the organized perspectives of mob violence (Staub & Rosenthal, 1994).

Also, the role of bystanders and law enforcement agencies is crucial in mob violence. Bystanders can affect the behavior of others, either by their actions, passivity (Darley, 1970), or by their words (Staub, 1994). Real-life examples indicate that the bystanders in mob violence situations can influence the actions of the perpetrators involved in organized form of violence (Staub, 1989, Hallie, 1979). However, the role of police officials cannot be ignored in the context of mob violence. Studies suggest that the police are often the main drivers of mob violence. This is often due to the excessive use of force or because police actions are influenced by political or other social pressures when attempting to control such situation (Tankebe & Asif, 2016; Asif et al., 2023). Both excessive as well as provocative actions by police can contribute to inception and intensification of mob violence (Asafo-Adjei, 2021). Shellow and Roemer (1966) suggested that police behavior is often affected by the devaluation and manipulation of certain groups.

These facets of mob violence raise pivotal questions that form the core of this study: 1. How far can mob violence be characterized as an organized form of violence? 2. And what characteristics can be assessed to unveil the organized nature of mob violence. This research article specifically addresses these questions by shedding light on recent mob violence incidents in Pakistan.

2. Common Perception about Mob Violence

Mob violence is considered spontaneous, driven by emotions of anger, frustration, unanimity, or religious sentiments (Gregory, 2016; Gupta, 2019; Kamal, 2017). However, there have been noticeable transformations in the recent mob violence occurrences in Pakistan that repudiate the perception of spontaneousness and instinctiveness of these incidents, giving rise to the notion of organized and premeditated form of violence. Recent studies (Yilmaz & Shakil, 2022; Chaudry, 2017) on mob violence provided that religious and political groups are involved in promoting pro-violence ideas. The religious groups leveraged the jihadism, vindictiveness, revanchism, and victimhood narratives and posed a serious challenge to Pakistani society by championing vigilante violence (Yilmaz & Shakil, 2022). Whereas political factions usually exploit mobs as tools to further their political agendas. The involvement of politically motivated individuals who are supported and aided to create chaos under the guise of demonstrations appears to be a non-spontaneous expression of discontent, rather based on illegal agendas for furthering political interests. As Asif and Weenink (2022) pointed out in their study, by tapping into the emotional and ideological connections of their supporters, the political groups easily manipulate large crowds and induce them towards illegal activities.

Likewise, Asif et al. (2023) suggests that religious and political powers are considered ritual engineers that assemble crowds to generate a vengeful attitude towards (fabricated) accusations of violating moral imperatives (notably blasphemy). The involvement of political and religious powers strengthens vengeful effervescence resulting in strong networks and a structured form of mob violence. This study indicated that mob violence in contemporary scenario is more organized and controlled by the groups that hold sentimental, ideological, and financial backing. Another study conducted by Malik et al (2022) focused on mob violence from a legal perspective, emphasizing on the true meaning and spirit of justice in the light of Islamic injunctions. This study indicated the existence of pressure groups influence the community members in the name of religion and stimulates idea of self-administration of justice. However, there is no inclusive data-based approach towards the role of these pressure groups in contributing to the recurring nature of mob violence in Pakistan.

Moreover, recent scholarship illustrates that blasphemy accusations in Pakistan have evolved from isolated expressions of religious outrage into complex social and political instruments that precipitate collective violence. Legal analyses show that Pakistan's blasphemy laws particularly sections 295-B and 295-C of the Pakistan Penal Code operate less as protective provisions and more as mechanisms enabling extrajudicial punishment and coercion (Ahmed, 2020; Jenichen, 2023). Samuel MBE (2024) and the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (2023) both documents reveal how weak procedural safeguards and investigative bias produce a culture of impunity, allowing allegations to serve as pretexts for private retaliation and community-level vigilantism. Fazal Khaliq (2024) further identifies how local actors exploit legal ambiguities to pursue land appropriation, business advantage, or personal

vendettas outcomes consistent with the organized, profit-driven mobilizations observed in this study.

Parallel empirical work examines how religious and populist movements mobilize public sentiment around blasphemy to consolidate political influence. Yilmaz and Shakil (2022) trace how the Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan تحریکِ لبیک پاکستان (TLP) institutionalized vigilantism by framing mob violence as a form of moral obligation and by maintaining logistical networks that enable rapid crowd formation. The International Crisis Group (2022) similarly notes that sectarian entrepreneurs and party intermediaries transform moral outrage into organized street power, while Badrinathan, Chauchard, and Siddiqui (2024) provide experimental evidence that misinformation dramatically increases public support for mob violence in Pakistan. Collectively, these studies indicate that blasphemy-related violence functions within an ecosystem of political brokerage, patronage, and digital rumour dissemination.

Building on this body of work, the present study contributes documentary evidence showing that many mob incidents display systematic coordination and leadership and premeditation rather than spontaneous mass reaction. By explicitly connecting legal incentives, mobilization networks, and documented case studies, this analysis extends recent literature beyond normative critique to demonstrate the operational mechanisms, financial, political, and communicative setups through which mob violence incidents involving religious and criminal accusations are converted into organized mob action.

This research paper contributes to the existing literature as follows; First, it offers insights into the characterization of mob violence as an organized form of violence, challenging the prevailing perceptions/notions in previous research that emphasize its spontaneous and instinctual nature. This aspect reveals how influential segments of society strategically employ violence to further specific agendas, an area that has been insufficiently explored in earlier studies.

Second, the research identifies critical elements such as premeditation, coordination, leadership, and hierarchical control that contribute to the organization of mob violence. These findings provide new perspectives on the motivations and mechanisms behind such violence.

Lastly, by examining the roles of various societal factions in perpetuating mob violence, the study aids in formulating targeted policy recommendations and intervention strategies. These recommendations aim to address the underlying causes of organized mob violence and effectively mitigate its impact.

3. Data and Methods

The study utilizes a purposive sampling methodology to collect data on incidents of mob violence from police and levies departments across various cities in Pakistan. The study sample includes n=25 case studies spanning a fifteen-year period from 2010 to 2024. These case studies also include the recent occurrences of mob violence across Pakistan to ensure updated and generalizable findings. The data set consists of official records, specifically First Information Reports (FIRs) and police reports (Challans), which serve as primary sources of information about the incidents. These documents offer initial and thorough accounts of the events. The purposive sampling approach is justified here as it allows for a more focused assessment of cases that are most relevant to the study's objectives, ensuring that the sample is rich in context (Etikan et al., 2016). The selected sample is based on three criterions; Firstly, it is based on regional diversity, ensuring that the sample includes cases from different geographical areas,

which allows for a comprehensive understanding of how mob violence manifests across various contexts. Secondly, the sampling criterion focuses on the diversity of offences incorporating a range of accusations, degrees of violence, and the actors. This aspect is crucial for capturing the complexities and variances in mob violence incidents.

Thirdly, the sample prioritizes accessibility and the level of publicity these incidents have received in social and mass media. To address the potential biases in the police records, a triangulation strategy is adopted. Multiple independent data sources such as Media reports and articles, News Editorials, Judicial Inquiry findings, Joint Investigation Reports, and Social Media pictures and videos evidence are integrated, corroborated, and analyzed in conjunction with the police records to ensure accurate findings. This data triangulation technique reduces the risk of over-reliance on any single source (police reports) by cross-verifying conclusions through diverse datasets. The selection of cases centres on widely recognized cases from a 15 year period (2010-2024), aligning with the increasing national and international media attention on such events, thereby providing essential insights into the trends and dynamics of mob violence. Document analysis is employed to systematically examine and interpret the data from the datasets. This analytical framework facilitated a structured yet flexible approach to review and understand the police reports, Judicial Inquiry Reports, Media reports and articles, social media evidence to uncover the themes/ dynamics throughout the study period.

Document analysis was operationalized as an iterative, theory-driven coding procedure that integrated both deductive codes that were derived from existing literature on vigilantism, social and political mobilization, and inductive codes emerging from the data (diverse case studies). Process tracing was applied to sequences of events where sufficient temporal detail existed, allowing the research to assess causal mechanisms (e. g., recruitment → mobilization → violence) rather than merely cataloguing outcomes. The combined approach permitted inference about intentionality and organization while remaining grounded in documentary evidence. A codebook was developed to guide the document analysis and ensure consistency across all 25 cases. The first section, comprising descriptive codes, captured factual details such as the date, location, number of participants, nature of the allegation, victim identity, law-enforcement response, and communication platforms involved (e. g., WhatsApp or mosque announcements).

The second section comprises behavioral and operational codes that focused on observable actions, including whether aid was provided, loudspeakers were used, exits were blocked, suspects were seized from police custody, property was damaged, and the time between allegation and attack. The third section, consisting of inference codes, identified interpretive indicators such as premeditation, coordination, leadership or patronage, evidence of financial or in-kind compensation, and the involvement of political or religious actors.

The incidents were identified as demonstrating the three core interpretive constructs: premeditation, coordination, and leadership through explicit documentary criteria. *Premeditation* was identified when evidence showed prior planning, such as pre-event calls/hate speeches to assemble, logistical preparations, or a considerable time gap between accusation and attack marked by organizing actions. *Coordination* was coded where data indicated synchronized group behavior, including simultaneous actions across sites, identifiable organizers issuing instructions, or use of structured communication channels to manage collective movement. *Leadership* was constructed when credible sources (religious, political or community leaders) attributed guidance to specific groups of individuals or organizations through media, legal, or witness documentation. Ambiguous or anonymous claims were excluded or marked as least

confidence inspiring to maintain evidentiary rigor. This analytical framework helps to extract pertinent pieces of information, to identify the themes, and to understand the trends of mob violence in instances (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

To address contradictory evidence, the analysis applied a structured triangulation by source-weighting protocol. All documents were categorized by type and credibility: e. g., official records (first information reports, police reports/challans, judicial inquiry reports, joint investigation reports and NGO reports given greater evidentiary weight than unverified media or social media sources. High-confidence inferences/accounts were cross-checked through additional documents (eyewitnesses' testimonies and video clips) ensuring conservative interpretation.

4. Organized nature of mob violence

Traditionally, mob violence is considered a spontaneous act of aggression that is typically unorganized (Kamal, 2017). Contrary to this common perception, recent cases have revealed that instances of mob violence are not always spontaneous reactions but are often premeditated, orchestrated with specific agendas or motives in mind. These incidents have unveiled hidden elements such as pre-planning, coordination, leadership, and a high level of control, which fundamentally alter the prevailing notion of spontaneity associated with such actions. Considering the emerging scenario, the following elements are necessary to look at to analyze the organized nature of mob violence.

As demonstrated in the data (Appendix), these incidents are superficially unorganized and lack pre-planning and long-term objectives. Community members appear to be engaging in such activities due to social tensions, ethnic or political disputes, or religious or sectarian outrage. However, through an analysis of the data, it is found that the common perception of mob violence has been transforming gradually. The acts that were previously seen as impulsive are now displaying the elements of planning, coordinating, leadership, high degree of direct or indirect control, intimidation etc., showing a worrisome shift in mob violence. The following section analyzes the recent mob violence occurrences through the lens of organized crime and explores the recurring characteristics of mob violence.

5. Police role

The data (Appendix, Case 1) can serve as an example of prevalent modus operandi in mob violence, characterized by the dissemination of rumours to target presumed offenders. The visible absence of police intervention at the scene, encouraging the fatal assault on two brothers, imply a disconcerting level of coordination between the attackers and the law enforcement authorities entrusted with maintaining order.

Furthermore, an analysis of the available data, (Appendix, Case 1) underscores that the assembly of the mob was not a spontaneous occurrence. Instead, it was a premeditated plan devised by a faction within the mob leading to the barbaric murders of the victims. The dissemination of rumours linking the victims to the acts of dacoity and murder, coupled with the presence of police officials and a group of people having previous personal animosity towards the victims, collectively underscore the elements of preplanning and coordination, underpinned by ulterior

motive rather than a sudden outburst of spontaneous anger. The confessional statement provided by one of the perpetrators, implicating a high-ranking law enforcement official, strengthens the assertion that the incident was orchestrated and directed.

The lack of police intervention rather an apparent support, the ruthlessly violent nature of the killings, and the brutal desecration of the victims' dead bodies hanging them on the street wall for a long time suggest a coordinated attempt driven by specific motivations behind this incident. Likewise, the data, as delineated in (Appendix, Case, 4) illuminates a sequence of events that culminated in the victim's murder at the hands of a mob. These events encompassed the victim's open criticism of the university's administration for their alleged involvement in illegal activities, which was thoughtfully countered by leveling allegations of blasphemy against the victim. The victim's subsequent expulsion from the university, the establishment of an inquiry committee to investigate blasphemous content posted on social media by the victim and his associates, suggest an element of preplanning to eliminate the victim under the garb of religious contempt.

Notably, the creation of these circumstances indicates an organized hierarchical structure, specific target selection, and the use of intimidation suggesting that the incident was not an impulsive eruption of anger. Instead, it exhibited signs of potential coordination and deliberate planning, masking itself under the cover of mob violence. A noteworthy facet of this case is that the chief instigator of the mob violence held the position of a tehsil counselor, a public office, and maintained affiliations with a prominent political party at the time. This dimension of the case also unveils the element of organizational influence and control leveraged to exploit religious sentiments for ulterior motive.

Along the same line (Appendix, Case 6) indicates that the mob was acting upon allegations of inappropriate video recording of female pedestrians on a mobile, which allegations were promptly refuted by the victims. Subsequently, what emerged from this episode was a transformation of the situation, as the individuals from the Hazara ethnic group turned this situation into one of intimidation and violence. It is discernible from the data that the element of premeditation was at play, driven by a motive of evading payment of debts owed to the victims. The perpetrators attempted to execute the plan under the garb of mob-driven violence. The evident unification among the mob participants and the act of law enforcement, harboring the attackers in their escape, accentuate the elements of organization and premeditated intent. Furthermore, the data underscores the presence of deliberate and purposeful leadership by the principal instigator (Saloon owner), who adeptly rallied members of his community (Hazara), inciting and inflaming their emotions, and ultimately directing their collective aggression towards victims who were from a different ethnic background (Pashtoon). The nature of the attack, involving the undignified act of disrobing the victims and subjecting them to humiliation and intimidation, suggests specific targets and motives, intimidation, and violence, exploiting the community's moral, cultural and sectarian sentiments against the victims.

6. Religious and Political Command

6.1. Incitement and Facilitation

Moreover, according to data (Appendix, Case 7) size of the mob and the extent of the violence perpetrated, notably the act of setting the victim's body ablaze, suggest elements of coordination and facilitation among the participants within the mob. Notably, immolating the deceased, and the chanting of slogans لبيك لبيك (I am Present) associated with the religious political party Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan, indicate the presence of organizational control and leadership components behind the mob's actions. This aspect suggests a potential influence and manipulation exerted by religious political groups in both mobilizing and orchestrating such acts of violence. It is crucial to note that the case data, particularly the First Information, and the findings outlined in the Human Rights Focus Pakistan (HRFP) report authored by Brody (2021), reveal a disconcerting aspect, e. g., the protracted duration of the attack, the assembly of the mob, and the pursuit of Kumara, who managed to elude for a time, no preemptive or intervening actions were taken by any state actors or law enforcement entities. The lack of intervention reflects elements such as organizational influences, and control, indicating the involvement of powerful segments of society in the incident.

The data, presented in (Appendix, Case 8), indicates a narrative wherein a false rumor regarding child abduction gave rise to a climate of trepidation and panic, culminating in an outbreak of mob attack. Crucially, a religious figurehead plays a pivotal role in the mob's attempt to commit violence, asserting the righteousness of their actions. Simultaneously, women within the community incited the men, labeling them as cowards should they spare the victims' lives. This episode indicates the influence of religious heads, marks leadership, social pressures, and organizational control over the conduct of the mob participants. The involvement of influential individuals, particularly religious leaders, in systematically fomenting violence constitutes a manifestation of highly organized mob aggression.

Additionally, using religious sentiments and inclination to secure social support underscores another tactic used to manipulate and regulate communities. The act of controlling, leading, and persuading followers toward violent actions clearly signifies the organized nature of mob violence. Another side of the case is highlighted from the data (police reports), wherein the perpetrators provided confessional statements, revealing that they had engaged in violence predicated on hearsay evidence, under the direction and influence of notables and community fellows. This angle further aligns with the assertion that the recent incidents significantly demonstrate the organized nature of mob violence.

Likewise, the recent incident (Appendix, Case 9) highlights the organizational nature of mob violence through involvement of a political party. Although a counter version had already been lodged at the police station against the accused for desecrating pages of the Holy Quran under the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC 1860), the initial police investigation revealed that the accused had written derogatory statements against Muslims. The individuals involved fled the scene after committing the act.

6.2. Leadership and Control

The data (Appendix, Cases 10,11,12,13,14,15,16) revealed that the leadership of the religious scholars who were associated with a political party suggests the pre-organization of the incident. The acts of mobilizing the people who were neither aware of any incident, nor verified the hearsay account, provoking and instigating them to gather and block the roads, suggest the level of manipulation and leadership. The other aspect is the use of loudspeakers of the mosque that indicates the preplanned strategy to exploit the religious sentiments, provoking mass action. Whereas the involvement of the political party Tehreek-e-Labaik reflects the ulterior agenda possibly through demonstrating power in that very region. The mob armed with sticks, bricks and petrol bombs also suggests a well-orchestrated effort rather than a spontaneous reaction to the rumor. The data (Appendix, Case 10) also underscores that there was a clear persuasion "مسلمانی کتھے اے تہاڈی، تہانوں تے مر جانا چاہیدا اے"(Where is your Muslimness, you should just die) rather command not to rely on the law enforcement who won't be able to arrest the culprits. This indicates a highly offensive statement (Hate speech) and a deeper connection of political/religious head to support vigilante justice rather than the legal system.

Following the initial act of mob violence, a series of subsequent incidents occurred. A mob of 300 to 500 individuals, led by religious scholars, targeted another Christian community. During this attack, they set fire to the Catholic Church, Covenant Church, and UP Church, and demolished the wall of a Christian graveyard. The entire series of mob violence (Appendix Cases 9-16) clearly signifies that it was deliberate and pre planned strategy to target the religious sites /churches and graveyard underlying an ulterior motive beyond mere retaliation. The burning down the churches at different locations, trespassing and vandalizing the households of the Christian community indicate a desire to marginalize that community, possibly to incite fear and manipulation over them. However, the involvement of the religious scholars from a religious political party Tehreek-Labaik also points a sectarian aggression to ascertain religious and political dominance. The data (Appendix, Case 11) reveals that the leaders continued to incite the mob, urging them to inflict as much damage as possible at different locations which suggests an organized and structured effort to target the Christian minority in the area. Moreover, multiple religious sites were attacked in a coordinated manner. Each piece of data (Appendix Cases 1260/23, 1261/23, 1262/23, 1270/23, 1271/23, 1272/23, 1273/2023) indicates a planning, at a larger organizational level, potentially involving the political connections that sought to exploit the situation for their own interests. The extent of coordination and the scale of violence and damage (19 churches burnt down, 84 houses destroyed, 400 people affected) denotes the elements of coordinated strategy, an organized effort, hierarchical support and leadership with deepen sectarian and political goals.

The recent case (Appendix, Case 17) depicts that the gathering of a large crowd in front of the police station was a coordinated effort as the facts suggested that there was a prior communication to rush to the police station. Furthermore, the specific demand for the custody of the accused person from the law enforcement shows that the mob had an objective from the outset, indicating the element of preplanning, coupled with their disregard for the legal system and desire to mete out the extra judicial execution. The data suggests that the motive of the mob is beyond seeking justice within the legal limitations. However, it would be viable to say that the murder and the burning of dead body reveal that the mob had a deeper motive of retaliating than the simple protest against alleged commission of blasphemy. Whereas the facts narrated

in the First Information Report clearly depicts that the mob was led and instructed consistently, which suggests an organized hierarchy, e. g., religious scholars, who directed the mob's actions and ensured that the objectives are met systematically. Additionally, the availability of firearms and the acts (stoning/ setting the official vehicles on fire), implies direction and control, the characteristics of effective leadership within the mob. Moreover, locating the accused person despite the police efforts to hide him in a safe destination, suggests a high level of organization, possibly an established network within the law enforcement leaking information. The series of actions, e. g., systematic destruction of police property, brutal treatment to the dead body, highlights the well-calculated efforts to assert dominance and intimidation that create hallmarks of organized violence.

Additionally, data (Appendix, Case 18) in Sargodha demonstrates a prior coordination among the perpetrators, suggesting a broader mobilization effort. Despite police intervention to save the Christian man from the mob, the violence underscores a failure in proactive law enforcement measures to prevent the escalation, highlighting deficiencies in police preparedness, availability of sufficient resources (number of special task force) and response in such volatile situations.

Furthermore, the incitement of the mob, triggered by blasphemy allegations, shows how these accusations can easily bypass legal systems, with people taking law into their own hands rather than relying on legal processes. The registration of a criminal case of blasphemy against the victim adds complexity, raising concerns about the misuse of such laws to justify violence and gives rise to "Double Jeopardy". This incident reflects systemic issues in controlling mob violence, preventing incitement, and ensuring trust and respect for the legal processes.

6.3. Conviction of Morality

It is a notable fact (Appendix, Case 19) that the religious scholars play a key role in intensifying the situation, particularly figures like the "Imam Mosque" can play vital role. The data illustrates that Imam Mosque exploiting religious sentiments and manipulating the trust people have in their religious leaders, motivates the crowd to bypass the legal system, claiming that justice cannot be served by the authorities. This act of blackmailing the community's emotions, by using religion as a tool, led directly to mob violence.

By inducing, that the law could not adequately convict the accused person "وہ ناقص قانون سے بچ نکلے گا، اسے پولیس سے چھڑوا کر اس کے انجام تک پہنچانے کے لیے عاشقانِ رسول تھانے کے سامنے اکٹھے ہو کر جلاؤ گھیراؤ کر کے اسے پولیس سے چھین لیں۔" ("He will escape the flawed law. To bring him to justice, the lovers of the Prophet should gather in front of the police station, create a disturbance, and seize him from the police"), the Imam effectively eroded public's trust in the criminal justice system, encouraging vigilantism culture. This suggests how religious leaders can exert influence not only through spiritual guidance but also by shaping social actions – often for destructiveness in such incidents. The sacred spaces like mosques are used as platforms for agitation, and therefore, become effective strategy for organizing mob violence, under the guise of moral obligation.

7. Police Complicity in Mob violence

The data (Appendix, Case 20) demonstrates a different prosecution story, but possible indication to the organized form of violence. The sequence of the events, protest and vandalism by the residents and in the leadership of religious scholars were not spontaneous reactions but coordinated responses to the alleged video of blasphemy recorded by the victim. The whole story from the data reveals that there was a collective mobilization of residents, along with the blocking of roads and destruction of property, indicates premeditated and structured actions, consistent with mob violence often observed in such sensitive cases.

However, this case differs from other instances in the data (Appendix, Cases 1 -19) as the victim was not directly killed by the mob. Instead, the extrajudicial killing by a police officer was a consequence of the intense public demonstrations and widespread influence exerted by the masses. This incident suggests the critical role of the police in such cases. The fact that the victim was murdered inside the police station suggests that law enforcement often tacitly supports the killing of individuals, especially in blasphemy-related accusations, as evidenced by data (Appendix, Case 20).

In contrast, the police's lack of intervention in other cases (Appendix)reveals an underlying ideological alignment with the mob's objectives. Additionally, the filing of murder case and the subsequent compounding of the offense by the victim's family underscore the influence and backing of powerful actors, such as religious leaders and law enforcement. This support enables the transformation of mob violence into a more organized and coordinated phenomenon, rather than a mere outburst of anger.

The data (Appendix, Case 20, 21 FIR No. 227/24, 66/24) also divulges how law enforcement's involvement in the extra judicial killing of the suspect/victim collapses a lawful procedure and an indirect support of the violence. It is evident from the data that even if a victim survives the mob's barbaric actions, they are not safe in the hands of law enforcement. Taking law into their own hands, reflects how law enforcement can become an extension of mob violence when influenced by societal or religious pressures. The subsequent compromise between the victim's heirs and the police officer (accused person) further underscores how law enforcement can be instrumental in organized violence without proper accountability.

Moreover, (Appendix, Case 22, 23, 24) further concerns law enforcement's role in enabling and perpetuating mob violence in an organized manner. Law enforcement's role in this case can be seen as more than passive non-intervention as they actively facilitate the completion of the mob's intent through their action (police encounter). The current data aligns with the prosecution narratives presented in Appendix (Cases 20 and 21), as both sets of evidence reveal the police's role in executing mob's objectives of retaliating against and punishing the victim. The construction of prosecution story of police encounter, and the failure to protect the victim's family not only reflect law enforcement's susceptibility to mob influence but also their complicity in endorsing violence under the guise of justice and maintaining public order. The data reveals how mob aggression can be institutionalized and normalized when law enforcement, influenced by societal pressures and political support, actively or passively participate in or support such violence. The data (Appendix, Case 22, 23, 24, 25) further illustrates how mob influence, along with the power of political and religious segments, can manipulate law enforcement to be blind spectators or coordinate in mob violence either during or after the mob's

aggression. Initially, the mob's reaction led to the destruction of the victim's property (Appendix, Case 23) and extreme tensions in the area. The police, under public pressure, claimed self-defense to justify the shooting of the accused, which apparently aligned with the mob's desire for victim's punishment.

As indicated in data (Appendix, Case 20, 21) r/w data (Appendix, Case 22, 23, 24)**,** the sequence of events shows how law enforcement can become a tool for executing mob justice under a legal guise. The subsequent failure of law enforcement to protect the victim's family even after police encounter, demonstrates a tacit endorsement of the mob's actions. Whereas Political and religious forces supporting law enforcement to give a cover of legitimacy, further exacerbates the organization of mob violence.

Despite knowing the critical situation and a high risk of mob retaliation, the police handed over the body of the victim without taking necessary security measures. The mob's subsequent attack on the family and the burning of the victim's body emphasizes the extent to which law enforcement executed the mob's original intent (the elimination of the accused). This indicates that the law enforcement, either through passive inaction or active collaboration, played a co-ordinative role in ensuring the mob's objectives were carried out.

Additionally, while civil society, lawyers held demonstrations for the extrajudicial killing of victim, the explicit support and appreciation of DIG (Deputy Inspector General) Police further suggests endorsement of extrajudicial violence, political backing for such actions, and providing institutional legitimacy to what is essentially an organized violence. This political support also indicates the convergence of interests between law enforcement, political actors, and religious segments of society, turning mob violence into a more structured and coordinated act, rather than a spontaneous reaction.

The data (Police Inquiry Report, 09/24**)** further suggests that the victim had already surrendered to law enforcement, who were responsible for transferring him to the appropriate police jurisdiction. However, instead of following procedure, the police at Sindhri staged a fabricated encounter, resulting in the victim's death. Given their awareness of the heightened tensions in the area, it is evident that law enforcement deliberately orchestrated the killing to appease the mob's demands. This aspect of the data highlights how law enforcement, in coordination with the influential persons of the community, plays an active role in facilitating and executing organized violence, giving it a cover of impulsive reactions of the mob. By aligning Law enforcement's actions with the mob's objectives, the data (Initial Inquiry Report) suggests that nature of mob violence has converted into a more organized, structured, and premeditated form, characterized by networks among community leaders (both political and religious), organizational backing/ control (law enforcement), and strategic planning and coordination to achieve what is otherwise unlawful.

8. Hired Mobs

Although there is no direct empirical evidence available on the incidents involving hired mobs, there is secondary data available to support this section in furtherance of above empirical evidence. The organization of mob violence for individual or collective interest social disparities,

economic hardships, and lack of trust in law enforcement contributed to individuals' resorting to mob violence as a tool for seeking justice and security (Rathore, 2020). It is important to understand how the public contributes to perpetuating the cycle of organized mob violence in Pakistan. As evident from the data above, mob violence has become a common form of persecution in Pakistan.

However, it is not merely the result of spontaneous reaction or aggression, but the individuals are engaged in running a "hired mob" business, renting out mobs for instigating and participating in mob violence (Yousuf, 2015) These mobs are hired by religious militant groups to give a message to the rival group, and political parties for rallies, demonstrations, and individuals for personal vendettas. Like other businessmen, these mob business runners provide a list of rates for a mob depending on the intensity of violence they are directed to do, e. g., murder, burning, etcetera (Eitzaz, 2015). Hence, in these circumstances, the term "organized" cannot be excluded from consideration. Mob violence becomes an insidious action that is carried out at the behest of orchestrators who want to manipulate others for an ulterior motive or illegal gain. Additionally, the organization of mobs with pre-meditation, and specific objectives transform into an organized form of violence (Yilmaz & Shakil, 2022).

Evidence emerging from recent scholarship and human-rights documentation suggests that a commercial dimension increasingly underpins mob violence in Pakistan. Although direct transactional records are inaccessible, the convergence of political sponsorship, local brokerage, and material gain points toward the existence of quasi-market arrangements in which crowd mobilisation can be incentivised or indirectly compensated. Human Rights Watch (2025) documents several blasphemy-related incidents in which business owners and landlords leveraged accusations to dispossess religious minorities of property or commercial assets often following orchestrated public unrest (Appendix Case No. 9-16). These findings demonstrate how the *threat* or *use* of mob violence operates as a strategic instrument of economic coercion or gain. A fact-finding report by the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (2023) documented looting, arson and forced evacuation of Christian homes and churches across multiple localities in Jaranwala. This data (Appendix case 9-16) indicates that mob participants, operating under the guise of moral or religious obligation, engaged in looting the properties of victimized communities before setting these properties and sacred sites on fire. This pattern of behavior reflects a clear element of financial motivation. While such actions may not constitute contractual or premeditated financial gain, they nonetheless reveal the underlying economic dimensions of these incidents. Similarly, Asif, Weenink, and Mascini (2023) show that lynching rituals in Pakistan are often "engineered" through structured networks linking religious leaders, political intermediaries, and local strongmen/actors capable of rapidly assembling participants through social and financial inducements.

As noted above, local brokers often play a central role in mobilizing mobs through financial inducements. However, this phenomenon is not limited to informal local networks. In Pakistan, certain religious-political organizations have institutionalized similar practices by providing financial and logistical support to participants. Yilmaz and Shakil (2022) illustrate how Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) has developed an extensive infrastructure for mobilization including transport, sustenance, weapons (sticks studded with nails, bricks etc.) and accommodation arrangements that effectively blurs the boundary between ideological commitment and compensated participation. Although participants may publicly justify their involvement in moral or religious terms, the provision of material incentives and the mediation of brokers

suggest that portions of these mobilizations operate within quasi-contractual frameworks. Complementing this analysis, the International Crisis Group (2022) observes that political actors and sectarian entrepreneurs frequently instrumentalize religious sentiment to project strength or extract concessions, thereby transforming moral outrage into a tradable asset within local power economies.

9. Conclusion

Mob violence has posed a significant challenge for Pakistan, given its devastating impact on both the state and society. This study attempted to elucidate the organized dynamics mob violence in the light of various incidents across Pakistan.

This study suggests that mob violence is an organized form of violence that involves the participation of extremist factions and influential segments of society, including political and religious groups, vying for dominance. Instances arise where elements, including organizational leadership, premeditation, coordination, intimidation, violence with specific targets and motives, exploit mob dynamics and exhibit the organized nature of mob violence directed against targeted person, group, or community. Mob violence serves as a tool to achieve personal agenda. The study indicates that certain eminent figures in Pakistani society (religious and political) exploit its most sensitive aspect (religion), refusing to follow the law to gain power. They incite community members to take the law into their own hands by using sacred spaces, such as mosques, to deliver hate speeches and provoke mobs. These actions are increasingly organized, coordinated, and supported to achieve their objectives.

The study further finds that the backing/support for such violence by the religious/political leaders is meant to legitimize what otherwise is unlawful (Anti-Terrorism Act 1997, Pakistan Penal Code 1860). This religious endorsement strengthens the perception of defying the law without fear of legal consequences. In doing so, they play an active role in perpetuating organized mob violence, creating an environment where laws are disregarded in favor of immediate, emotionally driven actions justified by religious rhetoric. The analysis further indicate that mob violence is not simply a spontaneous, disorganized event but rather a well-coordinated effort supported by powerful factions of society. According to the study, these entities (Political, Religious) manipulate mob violence to further their political or social agendas by exploiting the emotional responses of communities.

The findings highlight instances of both active and passive complicity by the police in mob violence, raising concerns about the mechanisms and systemic factors that may contribute to these actions. Whether law enforcement agencies in Pakistan receive direct or indirect support from state institutions or other influential actors? Contributing to their complicity in mob violence. This complicity may take the form of active involvement, where law enforcement overtly supports or participates in violent acts, or passive inaction, where authorities fail to intervene or intentionally become blind spectators. Data indicates concerning trends, where victims rescued from mobs were later handed back to the perpetrators, killed in custody, or eliminated in staged encounters by law enforcement. Such behaviors raise concerns about the potential backing or coordination among powerful political, religious, or institutional networks that may encourage law enforcement by fostering a culture of impunity.

To sum up, addressing mob violence requires effective and enduring strategies. The government should formulate and implement comprehensive policies at both the administrative and legislative levels to ensure the effective control of such incidents. Democratic and responsive political institutions, relative economic equality among subgroups of a society, and the absence or weakness of cultural characteristics that promote intergroup conflict (devaluation, authority orientation, etc.) are among the conditions that can be expected to minimize the chances of mob violence in difficult times.

To this end, all stakeholders, including the police, prosecution, and civil society organizations, should be engaged to strictly enforce the laws. Raising awareness among communities about the repercussions of such acts is helpful to dissuade their involvement in such violence.

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Appendix

Case 1; Sialkot Mob Violence Case, 2010

This case revolves around two brothers, Hafiz Mughees and Muneeb, who suffered a gruesome demise at the hands of an enraged mob. The brutality meted out to them included not only their killing but also mutilation, desecration, and even hanging. The incident occurred before a large crowd of onlookers, which included both police officials and rescue workers, who refrained from intervening to prevent the illegal and inhumane acts. The alleged reason for this barbarity was an accusation of dacoity and murder leveled against the two brothers. However, a subsequent judicial inquiry exonerated them, establishing their innocence. It was further revealed in the investigative report that nine police officials were present at the scene, with their actions seemingly encouraging the gruesome killings. Moreover, a confession from one of the perpetrators recorded during investigation indicated that the murders were carried out at the behest of the district police officer (DPO) of Sialkot.

Key Points:

- The First Information Reports (FIR) indicated that a group of persons within the mob had a prior enmity with the victims.
- The commission of violence happened in the presence of 9 police officials and the Rescue 112 team.
- Police officials who were present at the scene faced separate charges, as they were deemed to have omitted their duty.

Case 2; The Kasur Mob Violence Incident, 2014

A Christian couple, Shama Masih and Shehzad Masih, who resided and earned their livelihood by laboring in one of the brick kilns in Chak 59, district Kasur. The tragic event took place when the discovery of burnt pages from the Holy Quran near their mud brick house were found. News of this discovery rapidly disseminated throughout the area, setting in motion a sequence of events. Notables of the vicinity and certain extremist villagers within the community resolved to act against the family. Sensing the danger, the couple contemplated leaving the area. However, they were compelled to stay there due to a financial obligation to the company manager, who refused to grant them clearance until their debts were settled. A group of extremist villagers, accompanied by clerics, congregated, and employed loudspeakers in the mosque to incite the population to come out of their houses and defend their faith. In response to this, an enraged mob forcibly extracted the couple from the room where they had been confined by the company manager. The couple was brutally attacked with bricks and shovels, and were thrown in the brick kiln, met with a horrific death by immolation (Jillani, 2014; Aqeel, 2014).

Key Points:

- According to the First Information Report (FIR), police officers and a security guard were also subjected to violence by the mob as they attempted to extricate the couple from the hands of mob.
- The police, in their investigative report, asserted that the congregation of individuals occurred in response to the provocation and urging of clerics who mobilized the people of the area through announcements made in local mosques.
- The police contended that, owing to large size of the mob, their efforts to control the mob was ineffective.

Case 3; The Hub Mob Violence Case, 2017

Distinguishing itself from other instances of mob violence, the Hub Mob Violence Case of 2017 presents unique facets of victimization. In this case, the victim was a 13-year-old boy who, quite by chance, found himself in the vicinity of a protest organized against an alleged Hindu blasphemer. The accused party in this scenario was a Hindu school principal, employed at a private institution within Hub City, who faced allegations of spreading blasphemous content via WhatsApp. The accused was taken into custody by the local police. However, this news of blasphemy gave rise to a gathering of a large mob directly in front of the city's police station, demanding custody of the accused. Despite the police officers' efforts to convey that the accused had already been transferred to Gaddani jail pursuant to the court's order, all in vain. The mob resorted to an assault on the police station, resorting to the hurling of stones at the officers due to which Superintendent of Police (SP), the Deputy Commissioner (DC), and other Edhi rescue workers sustained injuries. To disperse the mob, law enforcement authorities utilized tear gas and aerial firing that resulted in death of a 13-year-old passerby (Ali & Zafar, 2017).

Key Points:

- Police officials who attempted to disperse the mob also encountered violent resistance.
- According to police report, the mob possessed deadly weapons and responded with gunfire, leading to the death of an innocent passerby.
- The First Information Report (FIR) indicated that the mob engaged in vandalism, targeting official vehicles parked at the police station and the police station building itself.

Case 4; The Mashal Khan Murder Case in Mardan, 2017

Mashal Khan, a Pashtun Muslim student pursuing a degree in journalism at Sardar Abdul Wali Khan University in Mardan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, was murdered at the hands of an enraged mob within the premises of the university campus. This heinous act of violence was provoked by allegations of Mashal Khan posting blasphemous content online and advocating Ahmadi beliefs. The initial investigations into the matter, however, failed to produce any substantive evidence supporting the allegations of blasphemy against the deceased. Subsequently, a Joint Investigation Team (JIT) exonerated Mashal Khan of all charges, holding the incident as a premeditated murder orchestrated by certain elements within the university's administration. Mashal's open criticism of the administrative bodies and the prevailing mismanagement

within the university was a motivation behind the murder. Around a month before his murder, Mashal granted an interview to a local television channel, where he drew attention to criminal activities transpiring within the university. Notably, despite the presence of around 15 police officials at the university at the time of the incident, Mashal Khan lost his life. Furthermore, one of Mashal Khan's associates, who was perceived as supportive of his anti-Islamic views, also faced assault but was ultimately rescued by the intervention of the police.

Key Points:

- The investigative report confirmed the absence of substantiated proof pertaining to the allegations of blasphemy against the deceased.
- It is pertinent to mention that one of the principal instigators of the violence held the position of Tehsil Counselor within a political party.

Case 5; The Bahadur Abad Incident in East Karachi, 2019

In the Bahadur Abad incident, which occurred in East Karachi, a teenager named Rehan was accused of trespassing into a residence with the intent of theft. Subsequently, the young boy was apprehended by the residents of the house and forcibly conveyed to the rooftop. There, Rehan was bound to a pigeon's cage, his jeans forcibly removed in a degrading act of humiliation, and his video was recorded via cell phones, and uploaded on social media platforms. Throughout this torturing assault, Rehan persistently refuted the allegations of theft, proving his innocence. Initially, two individuals subjected Rehan to physical assault, but the crowd rapidly escalated further to nearly 35 individuals, inflicting punishment in the form of brutal beatings with wooden sticks, rods, and stones. The perpetrators made the decision to summon the Rangers, but Rehan succumbed to his wounds before reaching the hospital. In the wake of this unspeakable tragedy, Rehan's father took the courageous step of lodging a formal complaint against those responsible for the heinous killing of his innocent son, who had not been implicated in any criminal wrongdoing.

Case 6; The Bilal Noorzai Case, 2020

This case revolves around three friends who were lynched by a large mob in Aliabad, Hazara Town, Quetta. The incident was apparently triggered by allegations that the friends had recorded videos of women passersby on their cell phones. Among the victims, Bilal Noorzai succumbed to his injuries on the spot, with the mob subsequently subjecting his lifeless body to desecration and mutilation. The two remaining friends, Niaz Mohammed and Khalil, suffered critical injuries and were later rescued by the intervention of the police. The principal instigator of the incident, a hair salon owner, propagated a rumor accusing the three friends of filming women within their community using their cell phones. This accusation served as a trigger for the mob's violent response. The violence was captured by onlookers within the crowd, and the presence of police officials on spot was also recorded. However, these officials were seemingly harboring the perpetrators in fleeing the crime scene (Zafar, 2020).

Key Points:

- According to the First Information Report (FIR) and the testimonies of eyewitnesses, the crux of the matter stemmed from a car transaction involving the main accused, who was the owner of the salon, and the deceased, Bilal. The accused owed money to Bilal, and to evade financial liability, he propagated the false rumor, ultimately leading to the lynching of the deceased.
- The locale where this incident occurred was mainly inhabited by the Hazara ethnic group, while the deceased and injured individuals belonged to the Pashtoon ethnic group.
- Considering the perceived negligence in their duties, the police officials, including the Station House Officer, faced suspension.

Case 7; The Priyantha Kumara Case in Sialkot, 2021

In Sialkot, Punjab, an incident took place where Priyantha Kumara, a Sri Lankan national who served as a general manager for a company in the region, was brutally murdered by a large mob, which had accused him of blasphemy. The perpetrators of this heinous act went to the extreme of setting Kumara's lifeless body on fire. Despite the efforts of one of his colleagues, the deputy manager, Malik Adnan, who courageously intervened to rescue Kumara from the clutches of the mob, Malik found himself outnumbered and incapable of preserving Kumara's life due to the large, enraged mob. The accusations against Kumara centered on his alleged act of tearing posters inscribed with Islamic verses. Kumara had resided in Pakistan for 11 years, diligently serving the Rajko company. At the time of his murder, his two brothers were also employed in Pakistan.

Key Points:

- According to the police report, perpetrators had affiliation with the religious political party TLP (Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan), an organization previously banned by the government due to its designation as a militant group.
- The size and rage of the mob were such that the police found themselves incapable of preventing the burning of the deceased's body in the middle of a public thoroughfare.
- The incident took place within the district of Sialkot, situated in the Punjab province, renowned for its manufacturing facilities. The aftermath of the event resulted in suspension of businesses and the disruption of routine activities due to the prevailing atmosphere of fear and apprehension in the vicinity.
- Law enforcement authorities arrived at the scene, after Kumara had already succumbed to his injuries.

Case 8; The Machar Colony Case in Karachi, 2022

In a remote area, "Machar Colony" in Karachi, two telecommunications workers, an engineer, and a driver, were checking the cellular signals in the area, present in their vehicle when subjected to brutal violence by an angry mob. The trigger for this violent act was the labeling of these individuals as child abductors and kidnappers, as rumors disseminated by unknown

sources. The mob got enraged out of fear and panic. The victims were forcibly extracted from their vehicle and subjected to barbaric beatings with construction blocks and stones. Notably, the Senior Superintendent of Police affirmed the identities of the deceased as telecom workers employed by a company in Karachi, and no evidence could be found to implicate them in the alleged crime of kidnapping (Ali, 2022; Dawn News, 2022, October 21). As per the challan report, women within the crowd played a pivotal role in inciting the mob to take the law into their own hands and execute the two men, asserting that they were child abductors. Concurrently, a religious scholar in the vicinity urged the crowd, invoking the notion that the elimination of such criminals was a virtuous act. The testimonies of eyewitnesses, who themselves were co-accused in the events, revealed that they committed violence on the hearsay accounts disseminated within the mob, which labeled the two men as kidnappers. The mob could not be dispersed by the police despite their efforts. Subsequently, the victims' vehicle was also set ablaze by the enraged mob. It was found out by the police in the inquiry that no substantiated evidence existed implicating the victims in any criminal act related to kidnapping.

Case 9; The Jaranwala Mob Violence Cases, 2023 (FIR 1258/23 P.S. CJW-8/16/2023/8282)

Case 10 (FIR 1260/23. P.S. Janranwala CJW-8/16/2023/8288 City, District Faisal Abad); Case 11 (FIR 1261/2023. CJW-8/16/2023/8289); Case 12 (FIR 1262/23); Case 13 (FIR 1263/23 CJW-8/16/2023-8291); Case 14 (FIR 1270/23/ CJW-8/ 21/2023-8373); Case 15 (FIR 1271.23 CJW-8/21/2023/8372); Case 16 (FIR 1272/23 CJW-8/2023-8373.)

As per contents of the FIR, on the fateful day, the complainant, who was a Sub-Inspector of Police, heard an announcement over the loudspeakers of a mosque. The announcement urged people of the vicinity to gather in front of the mosque, claiming that a blasphemy/desecration of the Quran had occurred by Christians. The announcement further incited the crowd by declaring that those who did not come out to protest and block the roads should be willing to die. Subsequently, a mob of 500 to 600 people, led by religious scholars associated with the political party Tehreek-e-Labaik, formed. Armed with sticks, bricks, and petrol bombs, the mob entered the Christian colony, trespassing into the homes of the Christian community. They proceeded to vandalize property and set the church building on fire. Consequently, a series of incidents took place in reaction to the first incident (FIR. 1258/23). Although a counter FIR (1258/23, P.S Janranwala City) had already been registered against the alleged accused persons under the Pakistan Penal Code for desecrating pages of the Holy Quran. The initial police investigation revealed that the accused had written derogatory statements against Muslims. The individuals involved fled the scene after committing the act.

Key Points:
- The mob was gathered on the incitement by the religious scholars.
- The participants in the mob were associated with a political party, Tehreek-e- Labaik.
- Serious damage was caused to the sacred building/Churches and houses of Christian community.

Case 17; The Sawat Mob Violence Case, 2024 (FIR 221, 2024)

On the fateful day, the police were informed that a large mob had assembled in front of the police station, demanding custody of the arrested individual, Mohammed Suleman who had allegedly committed blasphemy, and desecrated the pages of holy Quran. The police attempted to engage in dialogue with the enraged mob, assuring them that the accused would be punished according to the law. However, these efforts were in vain, and the crowd continued to grow.

As the situation escalated, some perpetrators began leading the mob. The crowd started firing shots and throwing stones at the police officers and the police station, eventually setting official vehicles on fire. Anticipating the severity of the case, the police had hidden the accused in a different location. Despite this precaution, the mob discovered his whereabouts, forcibly removed him from the hiding place, brutally murdered him, and then dragged his body through the streets before setting it ablaze.

Key points:
- FIR depicts that people that the mob was acting under the leadership of accused persons.
- Police sustained major injuries and great damage to the official property happened.
- The mob size was around 2000 to 25000.

Case 18; The Sargodha mob violence incident, 2024

The recent incident, where a Christian man in Sargodha, who was rescued from a mob attack last month, died at a hospital in Rawalpindi succumbing the injuries. Although law enforcement intervened to save the man from an enraged mob protesting a desecration allegation, which also targeted other minority community members in Mujahid Colony, Sargodha, Punjab. The mob brutally assaulted the man, setting fire to his family's shoe shop and damaging their home by breaking walls and doors. In response, police filed a terrorism case against 44 named and 300-400 unidentified suspects, with over 100 arrests made. Additionally, the police registered a blasphemy case against the Christian man.

Case 19; The Nankana Sahab Mob Violence Incident, 2023

A case was registered in the Nankana Sahib region of Punjab against an accused of allegedly desecrating pages of the Quran. The accused, predicting life threats, approached the police for protection from the enraged residents. While the police were conducting an initial interrogation, an announcement was suddenly made from the mosque by the Imam (the head of the mosque). The Imam incited the community to forcibly take custody of the accused from the police, urging them to deliver what he called "justice" to the alleged blasphemer. He further inflamed the crowd by declaring that the law would not adequately punish the accused. In response, a mob of around 800 people, armed with sticks, rods, and other weapons, gathered and attacked the police station, chanting religious slogans. They assaulted the police officers, vandalized the police station, and dragged the accused into the streets. In a brutal display of

violence, the mob barbarically murdered the accused and tied his body to a transformer. They attempted to set the body on fire, but the police arrived just in time to rescue the remains of the victim.

Case No. 20 and 21 Quetta Mob Violence Case (FIR No. 227, FIR No. 66/2024. Police station Kharotabad, Police station Cantt)

An FIR was lodged at the Kharotabad Police Station in Quetta against an accused person (the victim) for sharing a blasphemous video on social media in the Pashto language. In the video, which was filmed by an unknown person, the accused is seen addressing religious scholars (Ulema Karam) and making derogatory remarks about the Prophet. In response, residents and Ulema Karam staged a protest, blocked the road, and vandalized the accused's hotel.

A related FIR further details that the accused in this case was arrested and detained at the Cant Police Station. While in custody, a police officer entered the lockup and fatally shot him. As a result, the officer was charged with the murder of the victim. However, the case was later settled between the victim's legal heirs and the accused officer.

Case 22-25; Mob Violence Case Umer Kot, Southern Karachi, 2024 (FIR NOs 45/2024, 46/2024, Sindhri Police Station, Fir 42/2024, 45/2024, Police Station UmarKot)

According to the prosecution's account in data (Appendix, Case 22, 23, 24, 25), the accused, a veterinary doctor at the Civil Hospital, was charged in a criminal case for sharing blasphemous content on social media. In response, residents became enraged, leading to widespread vandalism in the area, including an attack on the victim's clinic.

A counter FIR (First Information Report) and police report states that the accused attempted to evade arrest and allegedly fired at the police. In self-defense, the police opened fire, resulting in the accused sustaining severe injuries, to which he later succumbed. The police then handed over his body to his family.

While the family was transporting the victim's body home, the mob attacked them once again, forcing them to abandon the body to save their own lives. The mob then set the victim's body on fire. Four separate cases were registered in connection with the incident. The victim was charged with blasphemy, attempted murder of the police officials, and illegal possession of arms and ammunition. Additionally, a separate case was registered against the police officers involved in the encounter with the victim, following protests by lawyers and civil society. Furthermore, an independent case was registered against the mob that seized the victim's body from the police and set it on fire.