**Sanitary workers in Pakistan**

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In Pakistan, Christians who are the descendants of lower-caste Hindus are still disadvantaged, confined to filthy jobs and limited opportunities. An increase in the Christian sanitary cleaners in Pakistan highlights the existence of religious discrimination in Pakistan. In Pakistan, social hierarchy is dominated by Muslims and Christian sweepers are hired by municipalities all over the country for roles in sanitary. In the past, when authorities in Karachi attempted to hire Muslims to clean gutters, many refused to go down into the sewers, preferring to sweep the streets instead. The Christian cleaners have kept the sewer system moving in Karachi’s enormous port metropolis by unclogging decaying drainpipes of faeces and dangerous hospital waste. In order to rescue their kids from the racism that led them into this job, Christian families often try to send their kids to a school far away from the city’s sewage cleaners’ crowded and divided neighbourhood. However, many of the children still continue to face discrimination.

[Jahangir Tareen vows to continue public service](https://nation.com.pk/30-Dec-2021/jahangir-tareen-vows-to-continue-public-service)

Many organisations are striving hard to make manual sewage cleaning employment illegal and are asking the government to take necessary action. However, the majority of the sweepers are uneducated and disorganised, making it easier for employers to pressurise them into accepting the positions as their main source of money. Furthermore, Christians only formed 1.6 percent of Pakistan’s population, but held 80 percent of the sanitary posts in Pakistan as per the 1998 census.

However, the remaining vacancies are also primarily filled by Hindus from lower castes. These workers spend hours in the sewers of the city and since they are constantly exposed to human garbage and hazardous pollutants, many develop chronic respiratory and skin illnesses, and for some, it’s been a life or death situation. There have been reports of doctors refusing to treat sweepers because of the stigma. The existence of cast-based practices is officially denied by Pakistan. Discrimination, though, continues to exist across the country. In the past, sanitary jobs were reserved for non-Muslims under a systemic policy devised by the government. In 2015, a Hospital in Punjab advertised ten opportunities for sanitation jobs that were earmarked for minorities only. Furthermore, in the same year, another hospital published an advertisement in many publications that the job for sanitation work is only reserved for non-Muslims but following the backlash, the advertisement was later taken down. However, this isn’t the first time Christians have been linked to janitorial employment. In Bannu, a local Urdu newspaper published the advertisement for only minorities to be appointed sweepers. As per the advertisement, male and female applicants must be Hindu or Christian. Furthermore, the district council of Swabi in KP passed a resolution in January mandating that all sweepers hired in the district’s hospitals must be Christians. The positions of guards and peons should be given to the Muslims as per the resolution. This resolution was a breach of Article 27 of the Constitution. Furthermore, it not only violated Jinnah’s vision for the country but also violated fundamental Islamic principles. While some of the Muslims work in sewers, they refuse to do any sanitation work after being hired.

[PML-Q decides to support Govt on mini-budget](https://nation.com.pk/30-Dec-2021/pml-q-decides-to-support-govt-on-mini-budget)

According to a World Watch Monitor analysis, minorities account for more than 80 percent of sanitation labour in Pakistan and as per the report out of 935 sanitation personnel working in the Peshawar Municipal Corporation 824 are Christians. 6,000 of the 7,894 employed by the Lahore Waste Management Company and 768 out of 978 employed by the Quetta Municipal Corporation are Christians. According to a 2013 poll by the World Watch Monitor, Christians were disproportionately represented in the sweeper and other sanitation jobs in major Pakistani cities compared to their percentage of the population. They also discovered that Christians made up roughly 70 percent of the sanitation crew in Lahore, whereas 80 percent of the staff in Karachi were Christians. Despite the fact that the Pakistani constitution guarantees religious freedom, progress on religious freedom has been slow as Pakistan transitions from Zia’s dictatorship to democracy. Minority laws were still strict, archaic and outdated until the twenty-first century. The Pakistan army has demonstrated that it is one of the few organisations in the country that really loves fairness and condemns religious bias by removing this discriminatory regulation inside its own ranks. Unlike a large portion of the government, it is the only organisation where appointments are completely based on merit.

[Anti-Corruption Sindh arrests DG KDA](https://nation.com.pk/30-Dec-2021/anti-corruption-sindh-arrests-dg-kda)

Many Christian sanitary workers believe they have no voice in Pakistan’s mainstream media to voice their concerns. Furthermore, they have grave qualms about their controversial societal representation and express concerns about the media, which frequently magnify such portrayals. Despite their lack of education, the study’s participants appear to comprehend the role of media in a democratic and multicultural society. As a result, they expect traditional media to focus on their true challenges which, in their opinion, may make their lives much simpler.