**Unnecessary attacks**

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This Thursday witnessed another blatant attack on minorities and their place of worship by citizens poisoned with extremism to their core through years of concentrated efforts. The incident took place in Bhong town in Rahim Yar Khan after a nine-year-old Hindu boy who allegedly urinated in a local seminary, was granted bail by a local court on Wednesday. Ironically, the people who were protesting against the release on bail of a child accused of desecration of a holy place themselves responded by vandalising and desecrating a temple, a place of worship for Hindu community. The videos of attack and vandalism have gone viral and picked up by both local and international media.

The incident is not an isolated one because minorities, their homes and their places of worship have been consistently under attack by the extremist elements within the society. Every time an incident like this happens, eyewash condemnations pour in from the people in ‘power’ not to be backed by any action whatsoever or any long-term comprehensive plan that tries to address the root cause of such problems. Mere arrest and prosecution of the people involved in these horrendous acts will not suffice.

[Pakistan receives Sinopharm vaccine under COVAX](https://nation.com.pk/11-Aug-2021/pakistan-receives-sinopharm-vaccine-under-covax)

Anti-minority and anti-Hindu vernacular has become acceptable among the Pakistani political elite which has trickled down to the masses. Various festivals, having Hindu origin names, were perceived to be part of ‘Hindu culture’ and have been sidelined over the years. The phenomena gained momentum particularly in the aftermath of the 1965 and 1971 wars with India. The words ‘Hindu’ and ‘India’ became interchangeable. Anti-Hindu rhetoric was considered acceptable in public discourse including the school text books where Hindus were labelled as ‘cunning’, ‘scheming’, ‘deceptive’ and ‘mischievous’.

In our neighbouring country, Muslims and other minorities have been facing a similar situation at the hands of a right-wing government. There has been a significant increase in the number of attacks on Muslims and other minorities since the Modi government has come to power. India has also illegally annexed Kashmir and the residents of this valley have been exposed to waves of violence, torture, curfews and disappearances. Pakistan has been trying to present the case of these minorities at the international level, hoping to build enough international pressure so that the Modi Government may reconsider its vision of Hindu India. However, what moral high ground the state of Pakistan is left with when it is treating its own minorities like second class citizens? Why would the international community take the word of a state seriously when it cannot guarantee basic protection of life and property to its minorities? These are the questions that people in power in Pakistan cannot evade for long and will have to address sooner or later.

[PM Khan to reach Bahawalpur on day-long visit today](https://nation.com.pk/11-Aug-2021/pm-khan-to-reach-bahawalpur-on-day-long-visit-today)

A holistic approach is the need of the hour if Pakistan aims to curb this problem of extremism and specifically this wave of extremism against minorities. Textbooks need to be reviewed thoroughly and all disparaging and derogatory references to minorities need to be expunged.

Instead, content should be included that focuses on values of harmony, humanitarianism and all-inclusiveness. Religious seminaries need to be registered and their syllabus must be thoroughly reviewed bringing it in line with the demands of a globalised world and a nation state containing people of all backgrounds, religions and sects. Extremist elements and people involved in mob attacks should be dealt with strictly so that the state can reclaim its lost monopoly over power. Only then Pakistan can hope to have a chance at redressal of this menace of extremism which by far is its biggest problem.

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[National Minority Day being celebrated today](https://nation.com.pk/11-Aug-2021/national-minority-day-being-celebrated-today)

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