



YEAR BOOK 2023-24



**Government of Pakistan
Ministry of Religious Affairs
and Interfaith Harmony
Islamabad**

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MESSAGE

Islam is the religion of peace, tolerance, brotherhood, peaceful co-existence of mankind and its social system is based on justice, equality and negation of all types of discrimination.

The Ministry has made all-out efforts to achieve Islamic ideals as laid down in the Constitution of Pakistan. The religious scholars' services were used to sensitize and mobilize the community to maintain sectarian and inter-faith harmony. Cooperation and coordination with Islamic and other countries was strengthened to project the true and soft image of Islam and wean away the Muslim Youth from the extremist groups. The crux of our untiring efforts was to pay undivided attention to:

- i) Facilitate the pilgrims for Hajj and Umrah.
- ii) Root out sectarianism/extremism and promote sectarian and interfaith harmony.
- iii) Take concrete steps for the welfare of minorities.

National and provincial level conferences were held for promoting inter and intra faith harmony. Concrete steps were taken to mainstream various segments of society and create an environment of peace and harmony. People from different schools of thought participated in National Seerat Conference where different aspects of the Seerah of Muhammad ﷺ were highlighted. In this context, further utmost efforts will be made to project the true image of Islam. The policy and plan for Hajj 2024 has been carried out successfully and to the full satisfaction of Hujjaj.

In the end, I would like to appreciate the valuable services of all functionaries of the Ministry who remained instrumental in achieving all targets/tasks of Hajj operation, inter and intra faith harmony and spreading the true spirit of Islam.

(Chaudhry Salik Hussain)
Minister for Religious Affairs
and Interfaith Harmony



PREFACE

In pursuance of Sub Rule (2) of Rule 25 of the Rules of Business, 1973, Year Book 2023-24 of this Ministry is being uploaded for information of the Cabinet and general public.

The Ministry facilitates Hajj Pilgrims and Zaireen. It helps Muslims to order their lives in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Quran and Sunnah. The Ministry spearheads/leads policy initiatives including legislation for interfaith harmony, international agreements and commitments in respect of all religious communities and implementation thereof. The Ministry holds National Seerat Conference, QiyamuLail and Hifz-o-Qirat Competition, meetings of National Commission for Minorities and celebrates different religious festivals/events of non-muslims with great zeal. For the uplift of minorities, the Ministry launches small development schemes, provides financial assistance and scholarships to deserving non-Muslim students. The contribution of following officers is acknowledged for their input and valuable advice in the preparation of the Year Book: -

- i) Mr. Alamgir Ahmad Khan, Senior Joint Secretary (Development and Coordination)
- ii) Mr. Ahmed Nadeem Khan Joint Secretary (Admin/Finance)
- iii) Mr. Sajjad Haider Yaldram, Joint Secretary (Hajj)
- iv) Mr. Arshad Farid Khan, Joint Secretary (Interfaith Harmony)
- v) Mr. Aftab Muhammad Khan, Joint Secretary (Dawah and Ziarat)
- vi) Syed Mushahid Hussain Khalid, Director General (Research and Reference)

The “Year Book” will serve as a reference to evaluate our performance in terms of achievements of targeted goals and objectives.

(Zulfiqar Haider)
Secretary
Religious Affairs and Interfaith
Harmony

INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Religious Affairs was created in October 1974. Prior to 1974 various Ministries had been dealing with Hajj operation. In 1976, the subjects of Minorities Affairs and Overseas Pakistanis were merged with this Ministry and the Ministry was renamed as “Ministry of Religious Affairs, Minorities Affairs and Overseas Pakistanis”; these were transferred from the Ministry in 1977 and 1992, respectively. However, the subjects of Minorities Affairs and Zakat & Ushr were again transferred to this Ministry in 1996. The Zakat & Ushr Division was again separated from this Ministry in October/November 2008. Hence, the Ministry was renamed as Ministry of Religious Affairs. After devolution of subject of Zakat & Ushr, a Zakat Cell was created in this Ministry and in 2019 Zakat was transferred to Ministry of Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety. In June 2013, erstwhile Ministry of National Harmony was merged with Ministry of Religious Affairs emerging as Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony. The Ministry has the following Wings:

- ◆ Admin and Finance Wing
- ◆ Dawah and Ziarat Wing
- ◆ Development and Coordination Wing
- ◆ Hajj Wing
- ◆ Interfaith Harmony Wing
- ◆ Research and Reference Wing

MAIN FUNCTIONS OF THE MINISTRY OF RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS AND INTER-FAITH HARMONY

1. Formulation of Hajj Policy.
2. Arranging the Muslim pilgrim's visits to India.
3. Ziarat and Umrah.
4. Welfare and safety of pilgrims and zaireen.
5. Administration of Hajj Affairs and control of the Hajj Directorates within the country and Office of Pilgrims Affairs at Jeddah.
6. Islamic studies and research including holding of seminars, conferences, etc. on related subjects to the extent of Federal Areas.
7. Training and education of Ulema and Khatib etc.
8. Error-free and exact printing and publishing of the Holy Quran in the ICT.
9. Exchange of visits of scholars of Islamic learning and education, international conferences/seminars on Islamic subjects and liaison with foreign and international bodies and institutions.
10. Ruet-e-Hilal.
11. Tabligh.
12. Observance of Islamic Moral Standards.
13. Donations for religious purposes and propagation of Islamic Ideology abroad.
14. Marriage and divorce, infants and minor's adoption to the extent of ICT.
15. Auqaf in ICT.
16. Policy and legislation with regard to inter-faith Harmony.
17. International agreements and commitments in respect of all religious communities and implementation thereof.
18. Representation of Pakistan at UN Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination to Minorities.
19. Minorities Welfare Fund.
20. National Commission for Minorities.
21. Evacuee Trust Property Board.

ADMINISTRATION WING

1. Administration Wing of the Ministry comprises of the following sections:-
 - ◆ Administration Section.
 - ◆ Budget and Cash Section.
 - ◆ General Administration Section.
 - ◆ Litigation Section.

ADMINISTRATION SECTION:

2. The Administration section is responsible for looking after the matters relating to human resource management of the Ministry. Activities of the Admn Section during 2023-24 are as under:-
 - ◆ One hundred and ninety seven (197) medical reimbursement cases of serving employees and twenty six (26) medical reimbursement cases of retired officers/officials were processed.
 - ◆ Seventy five (75) cases of posting/transfer/provision of replacement were processed.
 - ◆ The following advances were sanctioned for employees of this Ministry during Financial Year 2023-24: -

Sr. No.	Name of Case	Number
1	House Building Advance granted to officers/officials	37
2	Motor Car Advance granted to employees	24
3	GPF advance granted to employees	51

BUDGET AND CASH SECTION:

3. The main functions of Budget and Cash Section are as follows:-
 - ◆ Preparation, compilation and submission of budgetary estimates of the Ministry, Directorates of Hajj and Directorate of Hajj, Jeddah to Finance Division.
 - ◆ Processing cases for re-appropriation in respect of the Ministry, Directorates of Hajj and Directorate of Hajj, Jeddah.
 - ◆ Dealing with cases for supplementary grants, savings and surrender of funds.
 - ◆ Submission of contingency bills to the AGPR and collection of cheques from AGPR and Chief Accounts Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
 - ◆ Preparation of Medium Term Budgetary Framework estimates (Green Book) and its submission to the Finance Division.
 - ◆ Reconciliation of monthly expenditures with the AGPR in respect of Main Ministry on monthly basis
 - ◆ Submission and collection of service books from AGPR, Islamabad after verification
 - ◆ Issuance of LPCs to non-gazetted staff.
 - ◆ Submission of cases of long-term advances to AGPR, Islamabad.

- ◆ Processing monthly computer change (modification in pay and allowances), issuance of LPCs and Pay slips to officers from AGPR, Islamabad.
- ◆ Handling of cash and dealing with matters related to State Bank of Pakistan.
- ◆ Dealing with matters of Foreign Exchange Budget with Ministry of Finance and Chief Accounts Officer Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

PERFORMANCE DURING FINANCIAL YEAR 2023-24

Total Allocation 2023-24	Re Appropriation (+)	Supplementary Grant (+)	Re Appropriation (-)	Surrender (-)	Revised Budget 2023-24	Total Expenditure
1693.915	309.112	0	235.669	14.577	99.125	1632.843

SUBMISSION OF CONTINGENCY BILLS:

2,139 bills submitted to AGPR, Islamabad during financial Year 2023-24.

GENERAL SECTION

4. The General Section is responsible for following:-

- ◆ Look after the Security of Office building and watching incoming/outgoing visitors as well as vehicles parked in front of Office building.
- ◆ Purchase of Transport (currently ban as austerity measures).
- ◆ Purchase of furniture and fixture, Machinery & Equipment, Computers and other Assets (currently ban as austerity measures).
- ◆ Purchase of Stationery.
- ◆ Purchase of Miscellaneous items.
- ◆ Purchase of POL for official use of this Ministry.
- ◆ Payment of utilities bills i.e. Telephone/DSL Electricity/Sui Gas.
- ◆ Repair of Transport (General vehicles of the Ministry).
- ◆ Repair of Telephones.
- ◆ Repair of Machinery & Equipment Computers/Printers/ACs/Electricity.
- ◆ Repair of Photocopiers & Fax Machine.
- ◆ Arrangements of Printing of Office material i.e. File Covers, Minister's, Minister of State and Secretary's Offices material, Summary file covers and all other printings of the Ministry.
- ◆ Arrangements of official meetings.
- ◆ Reservation of accommodation in hotels, meal arrangements of official guests.
- ◆ Dispatch of outdoor Dak i.e. Immediate / routine Dak through Courier and General Post Office.

- ◆ Distribution of indoor mail received from Couriers and General Post Office in the Ministry.

5. General Section during FY 2023-24 has made efficient arrangements to ensure security measures of the office building and to facilitate Hajj and Research and Reference wings to convene meetings regarding Hajj arrangements and International Seerat Conference which is evident from their success. The section provided logistic support to the Ministry by providing transport to the officers to attend meetings/court hearings/dispatch of passports to airports and pick & drop facility to the Hajj staff during Hajj operation who sat late and attended office during public holidays for smooth execution of Ministry's work. Detail is as under:-

S.#	Arrangement Detail	Total Participants
1	Providing logistic support to the all committees constituted for arrangements of National Seerat Conference, 2023	PNCA Hall = 500 Person Pak-China Friendship Centre = 1000 Persons
2	Arrangements of moon sighting committee	12 meetings
3	Dak Received/Diary	5147 Nos
4	UMS (dispatch)	12347 Nos
5	Letter Dispatched/delivered through D.Rs	11000 Nos
6	E-Office Internal	1600 Nos

LITIGATION SECTION:

6. Ministry's Legal section works under the able leadership of Secretary, Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony. The nature of cases is vast which includes civil matters (Dealt by IH Wing), service matters, hajj matters and writ jurisdiction. Hence, this continuous process of filling, settling of the cases but with the efforts of the section under guidance of Joint Secretary (Admn), number of court cases reduced to 53 from 98 during current year. Detail is as under: -

S#	Name of Court	No. of Cases	Pending	Disposed off
1.	Supreme Court of Pakistan	42	12	30
2.	Islamabad High Court	14	09	05
3.	Lahore High Court	12	09	03
4.	High Court of Sindh, Karachi	19	14	05
5.	Peshawar High Court	04	03	01
6.	Balochistan High Court, Quetta	07	06	01
Total		98	53	45

DAWAH & ZIARAT WING:

7. Dawah & Ziarat Wing of the Ministry comprises of the following sections: -
- ◆ Ziarat Section
 - ◆ Umrah Section
 - ◆ Dawah Section

ZIARAT SECTION:

VISIT OF PAKISTAN ZAIREEN FOR URS IN INDIA.

8. As per protocol signed with India in 1974 this Ministry is mandated to arrange visits of Pakistani Zaireen to India on the eve of scheduled Urs of prominent Muslim Saints as per following details: -

Sr. No.	Name of Urs	Per-determined No. of Zaireen
1	Hazrat Mujadid Alf Sani (RA), Sarhand Sharif	200
2	Hazrat Khawaja Allauddin Ali Ahmed Sabir (RA), Kalyar Sharif	200
3	Hafiz Abdullah Shah (RA), Agra	150
4	Hazrat Khawaja Nizamuddin Aulia (RA), Delhi	250
5	Hazrat Khawaja Moinuddin Chisti (RA), Ajmair Sharif	500
6	Hazrat Amir Khusro (RA), Delhi	200

VISIT OF PAKISTAN ZAIREEN TO IRAN, IRAQ, SYRIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES

9. To regulate, streamline and facilitate Pakistani Zaireen, Government of Pakistan has taken an initiative to formulate first ever comprehensive “Zaireen Management Policy” in consultation with all stakeholders. The Policy has been approved by the Federal Cabinet on 13.04.2021. Salient features of the Policy are as under: -

- Diversification of Means of Transportation i.e. by Road, Air and Ferry Services.
- Construction of services areas (Padak, Nukandi & Dalbadin) on Quetta-Taftan Road.
- Development, enhancing capacity and provision of better facilities at Pakistan House, Taftan and Haji Camp Quetta.
- Exploration and Consideration of alternative crossing points i.e. Mand and Gabd (Baluchistan).
- Registration of Zaireen Group Organizers (ZGOs) and signing an MoU with host countries.
- Group/individual visa for Zaireen to be regulated by signing a MoU with host countries.
- Launching of appropriate awareness campaign to provide information, education and awareness to the intending Zaireen.
- Provision of mandatory health insurance to the Zaireen by ZGOs.

The implementation of the Policy is in process. Out of a total of 1400 applicants, 180 Zaireen Group Organizers (ZGO) have been registered and the remaining are under process with the security agencies for clearance. About 5-7 lac Pakistani Zaireen, visiting Iran, Iraq and Syria will benefit from the Policy annually.

UMRAH SECTION

10. The Ministry has also performed following functions in connection with Umrah in FY 2023-24 (1445 A.H): -

- Attested 55 contract agreements of Umrah Tour Operators.
- Processed 16 complaints against Umrah Tour Operators.
- Formulated draft Umrah Rules in anticipation of Hajj & Umrah (Regulation) Act 2024.

DAWAH SECTION

SELECTION FOR HUFFAZ FOR QIYAMUL LAIL MEHFIL-E-SHABINA

11. A Competition for selection of Huffaz for recitation of Holy Quran in Qiyamul Lail 2024 was held at Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony on 28.02.2024 through video link wherein Huffaz from all over the country participated. For the said competition, 14 Huffaz were selected by the Judges committee for Qiyamul Lail / Mehfil-e-Shabina, 2024, which was held at Faisal Masjid Islamabad from 21st to 27th of Ramadhan-ul-Mubarak 2024. The event was covered live by Pakistan Television Corporation (PTV).

NATIONAL HIFZ-O-QIRAT COMPETITION

12. National Hifz-o-Qirat Competition was held on 8th to 9th May, 2024 in Hotel Heaven Heights Islamabad wherein Huffaz / Qura as nominated / selected by the provinces, Gilgit Baltistan, AJK and ICT as well as the Armed Forces participated in 10 different categories of Hifz-o-Qirat. Cash prizes worth Rs. 80,000, Rs. 60,000 and Rs. 40,000 were distributed among the top 3 winners of each category respectively.

INTERNATIONAL QURAN COMPETITION

13. On receipt of invitations from different Muslim countries i.e Dubai, Russia, Turkey, KSA, Kuwait and Morocco, Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony recommends nominees from the position holders of the most recent National Hifz-o-Qirat Competition and forward the same through Ministry of Foreign Affairs for participation in the International Quran Competition.

RECEPTION OF FOREIGN DELEGATION

14. Dawah Section also deals with the foreign delegation / coordination meetings/ arrangements of visits of Minister and Religious Scholars / dignitaries to/ from foreign countries regarding Religious Affairs. Recently Dr. Muhammad Bin Abdul Karim Al- Issa, Secretary General of Muslim World League (MWL), visited Pakistan from Saudi Arabia from 07th to 15th April 2024 and Dr. Salah Mohamad M Albdeer, Imam Masjid Al-Nabvi visited Pakistan from Saudi Arabia, from 08 to 14 August 2024.

MoU WITH SAUDI ARABIA

15. Dawah Section also deals with the MoUs on Religious Affairs signed with different Muslim countries. An MoU to be signed with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for cooperation in the field of Dawah and Guidance has been sent to Saudi side for finalization of the MoU

DEVELOPMENT AND COORDINATION WING:

16. Development & Coordination Wing consist of following section: -

- **PMU Section**
- **Council and Coordination Section**

PMU SECTION

17. PMU Section perform the following functions:

- Examining PC-I / PC-II / PC-III / PC-IV of all development schemes prepared by respective Sections / Wings of the Ministry and other stakeholders.
- Convening DDWP meetings for consideration of development schemes within power of PAO.
- Preparation of minutes of DDWP meetings and subsequent circulation to all stakeholders and Implementing and Executing agencies.
- Coordinate and liaison with Planning Commission through Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives for authorization of funds for approved development schemes.
- Release of funds from Finance Division after getting authorization from Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives for approved development schemes of Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony.
- Processing of development schemes for approval of CDWP/ECNEC/ NEC as per competency of the said Fora.
- Coordination for development schemes with all sponsoring wings of Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony.

18. The detail of PSDP of this Ministry during financial year 2023-24 is as under: -

Sr. #	Name of Project	Approved Cost	Approval date	Date of commencement	Project duration / Completion date as per PC-I
1.	Construction of Hajj Complex at Lahore	Rs.1971.787 Million	11.05.2022	07.10.2022	03 Year 2022-23 to 30 June 2025
2.	Establishment of Recycling Plant for Shaheed Quran Papers in Islamabad.	Rs. 330.773 Million	28.03.22	01.07.22	02 Years 2022-23 to 30 June 2024



COUNCIL AND COORDINATION SECTION

19. The Council and Coordination Section perform the following functions:
- Prepare replies and brief the Minister, Minister of State and Parliamentary Secretary regarding Parliamentary business of the Ministry.
 - Arrangements and assistance relating to meetings of the Standing Committee.
 - Coordination with other Ministries/Divisions and Departments in the official matters.
 - Preparation of Year Book of the Ministry.
 - Provision of the report regarding implementation of the Cabinet Decisions.
 - Preparation of report on Principles of Policy in compliance with Article 9 of the Constitution of Pakistan.

HAJJ WING

20. The Ministry of Religious Affairs & Interfaith Harmony in Pakistan is responsible for overseeing and facilitating the Hajj pilgrimage, one of the five essential pillars of Islam. This mandate is carried out under the Rules of Business, 1973, which outline the Ministry's role in ensuring the smooth organization and execution of the Hajj operation.

21. The Hajj Wing of the Ministry plays a central role in the preparation and coordination of all Hajj-related activities. This involves collaborating with multiple stakeholders, both in Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, to ensure that the facilities and services provided to Pakistani pilgrims meet their needs and adhere to religious, safety, and logistical standards. Key stakeholders include various government ministries, Saudi Arabian authorities, banks, airlines, Hajj Group Organizers (HGOs), religious scholars, prominent figures, and members of the Pakistani Parliament.

22. The Ministry takes incessant steps to improve the quality of the Hajj experience, including efforts to streamline the visa process, enhance accommodations, provide medical and transportation services, and ensure the welfare of pilgrims throughout their journey. The ultimate goal is to facilitate a smooth and safe pilgrimage for all Pakistani Muslims wishing to perform Hajj.



HAJJ POLICY & PLAN: -

23. The Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony has made significant efforts to improve the facilities and overall experience for Hajj 2024. In line with this, the Hajj Wing has taken proactive steps to ensure a smooth and efficient Hajj operation. These efforts include:

- **Debriefing Meetings:** The ministry conducted thorough debriefing sessions to review the previous Hajj operations, assess challenges, and identify areas for improvement.
- **Consultative Workshops:** These workshops were organized to engage all relevant stakeholders, including ministries and organizations from both the Saudi and Pakistani governments. The goal was to foster collaboration and ensure all operational aspects were addressed comprehensively.

- **Stakeholder Engagement:** The Hajj Wing worked closely with a variety of stakeholders, including banks, airlines, and Hajj Group Organizers (HGOs), to streamline processes, enhance services, and ensure the needs of Pakistani pilgrims were met effectively.
- **Improved Facilities:** Steps have been taken to enhance the facilities available to pilgrims, aiming to provide them with better services, accommodation, and transportation during the pilgrimage.

These initiatives reflect a commitment to improving the Hajj experience and ensuring the smooth facilitation of the pilgrimage for all Pakistani pilgrims in 2024.

24. The salient features of Hajj Policy 2024 were as under: -

- The Hajj quota allocated to Pakistan for 2024 was 179,210.
- The above quota was distributed between Government & Private Hajj Schemes at a ratio of 50:50 i.e. 89605 each.
- Out of the Government Hajj Scheme a quota of 25,000 seats was reserved for Sponsorship Scheme.
- Pilgrims above 80 years of age were allowed to proceed for Hajj only with attendant.

Hajj Package	North Region (Other Stations)	South Region (Karachi, Quetta & Sukkur)
Hajj Package for long stay of 38-42 days (without Qurbani)	Rs. 1,075,000/-.	Rs. 1,065,000/-.

- Hajj package for short stay was as under:

Short Package (20 – 25 days)		
Region	Short Package	Sponsorship Scheme
North	1,150,000/-	\$4,050/-
South	1,140,000/-	\$4,015/-

- 300 seats were reserved for labour / low paid employees of companies registered with EOBI and Workers Welfare Fund.
- No Mehram was required for women for Hajj 2024 subject to the conditions that:
 - i) their parents or husbands allow them.
 - ii) they are in the group of reliable females.
 - iii) there is no threat to their dignity, as per the decision the Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) taken in its session no. 232 held on 6th-7th June, 2023.
- No Mehram was required for women for Hajj 2024 subject to the conditions as per the decision of the Council of Islamic Ideology.
- Nominations of Hujjaj against Regular Hajj quota were made through balloting while nominations against sponsorship Scheme were made without balloting on first come first serve basis.

- A Place of Departure (POD) wise waiting list of Hujjaj comprising of only 0.5% of Government Hajj quota was maintained.
- There was no provision for free Hajj in the policy.
- Immunization of KSA approved vaccines was mandatory.
- A comprehensive awareness campaign for training of Hujjaj was launched through print and electronic media.
- Hajj Medical Mission, Muavineen-i-Hujjaj, Seasonal staff of MORA & IH and KSA-based Muavineen-i-Hujjaj were deployed for facilitation / assistance of Hujjaj.
- “Road to Makkah” facility was extended from Karachi alongwith Islamabad.
- A robust complaints redressal system was put in place through Pak Hajj App to address complaints registered by Hujjaj both in Pakistan as well as in KSA on daily basis.
- Service Provider Agreement was signed with the HGOs for assurance of facilitation of Hujjaj.
- The HGOs were monitored by the trained staff of the Ministry to ensure facilitation of Hujjaj as per the agreements between HGOs and Hujjaj.
- Hujjaj Mohafiz Scheme based on the concept of “Takaful” continued.

NEW INITIATIVES IN HAJJ-2024

25. The **Pak Hajj App** is designed to improve the Hajj experience for both pilgrims and officials, integrating real-time information and a complaint management system. Key features include:

- **Real-Time Information:** Provides pilgrims with personal details, training materials (videos, PDFs), maps, and notifications about Hajj schedules and updates.
- **Complaint Module:** Pilgrims can easily file complaints, which are immediately visible to Moavineen for prompt resolution. The app allows for dynamic complaint categories and call center reps can also log complaints on behalf of pilgrims.
- **Seamless Integration:** The app works smoothly with Moavineen systems, ensuring efficient handling of complaints and better coordination between pilgrims and officials.
- **User-Friendly Interface:** Simple to navigate, even for less tech-savvy users, providing easy access to all features.
- **Complementary Items:**
 - Luggage, hand carry, abaya (female), ihram belt (male), and shoe bag.
- **Hajj SIM Card:**
 - Ufone SIM with 8.5 GB data, 120 minutes (local & international), WhatsApp access without VPN, pre-activated (no biometric needed).
- **Hajj App:**
 - Mandatory app for training, tracking, and assistance, works offline and online.
- Expansion of the "Road to Makkah" project to Karachi.
- Shorter Hajj duration (20-25 days).
- Multiple accommodation options in Makkah.
- Hajj Group Organizers (HGOs) restructured with a minimum of 500 pilgrims per group.

INTERFAITH HARMONY WING

INTERFAITH HARMONY IN PAKISTAN

26. Interfaith harmony is an important aspect of Pakistani society, given its diverse religious landscape. The country is home to people from various religious backgrounds, including Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism, and others. The theme of interfaith harmony therefore focuses on promoting mutual understanding, respect, and peaceful coexistence among people of different faiths. This includes recognizing and celebrating the diversity of religious beliefs and practices, as well as promoting dialogue and cooperation between different religious communities. It also involves addressing issues such as discrimination, marginalization, and violence against religious minorities, and promoting their rights and protection under the law.

27. To promote and preserve interfaith harmony, the government has developed several laws, policies, and institutions that work towards creating an environment of tolerance, respect, and peaceful coexistence among different faiths.

28. The Constitution of Pakistan recognizes and protects the rights of individuals of all religions. Article 20 of the Constitution states that "every citizen shall have the right to profess, practice and propagate his religion subject to law, public order, and morality." Similarly, Article 36 of the Constitution provides for the protection of minorities' rights including the freedom to profess and practice their religion.

ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN

DURING THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2023-24

FINANCIAL UPLIFT/SUPPORT TO THE MINORITIES THROUGH MINORITIES WELFARE FUND

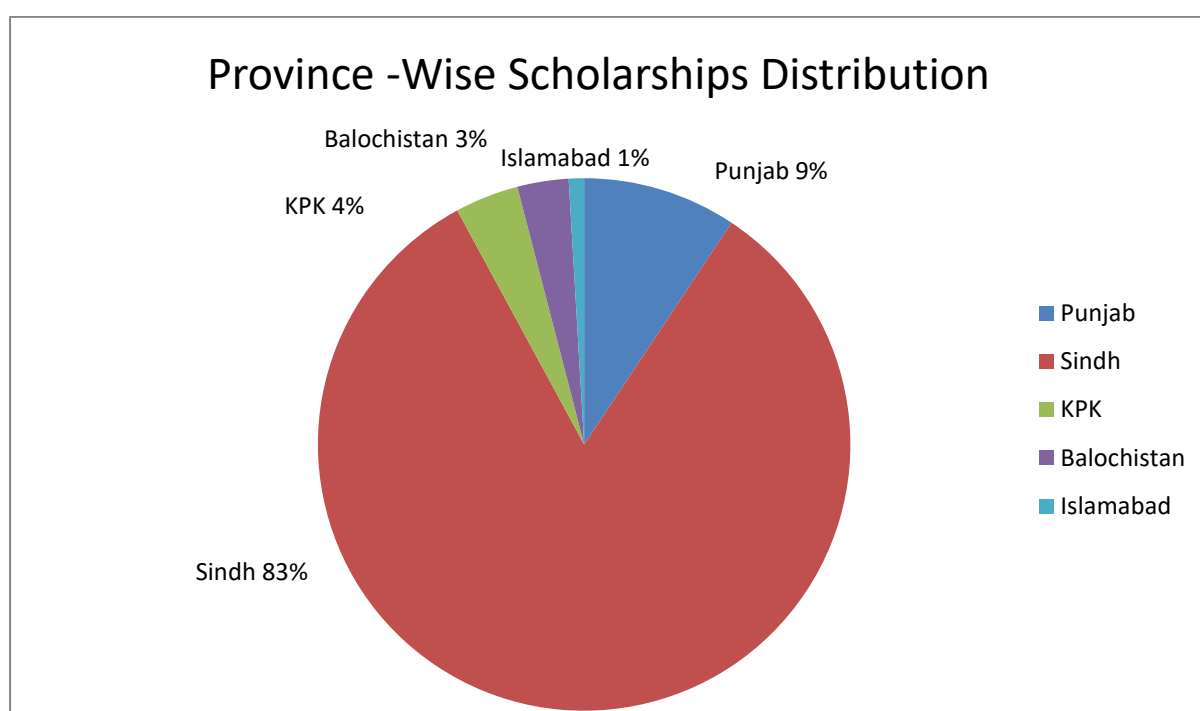
29. **Minorities Welfare Fund**, operative in the Interfaith Harmony Wing since 1985, is used for execution of Small Development Schemes for the repair/maintenance of the worship places of minorities, for grant of Financial Assistance to the poor and needy members of the minorities communities as well as grant of Scholarships on merit. This Fund is used as per provisions of the Accounting Procedure duly approved by the Finance Division and Auditor General of Pakistan. The details of utilization of funds during the financial year 2023-24 are tabulated as under:-

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Sr	Year	No. of Beneficiaries	Amount (in Million)
1	2023-24	2202	15.35

SCHOLARSHIPS (Province-wise disbursement)

Sr.	Province	Application received	Dropped	Eligible	Amount(Rs) Involved
1.	Punjab	483	184	299	6,345,600
2.	Sindh	4279	2924	1355	35,179,200
3.	KPK	200	72	128	3,626,400
4.	Balochistan	161	57	104	4,372,800
5.	Islamabad	48	10	38	468,000
Grand Total		5171	3247	1924	49,992,000



HOLDING OF INTERFAITH HARMONY CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS: -

30. In order to promote, interfaith harmony and a culture of tolerance in society, the Ministry arranges “Interfaith Harmony Conferences and Seminars” on various topics every year. During the preceding year, IH Conferences and Seminars on different IH-related topics were arranged at Islamabad, Provincial Headquarters and renowned Universities at Islamabad & Karachi as per the following details: -

Sr.#	Conferences/seminars/	Venue	Date
1.	Interfaith Harmony Conference	PNCA, Islamabad	30.08.2023
2.	Interfaith Harmony Conference	Serena Hotel, Peshawar	07.10.2023

3.	Interfaith Harmony Conference	Hazoori Bagh, Badshahi Masjid, Lahore	25.11.2023
4.	Interfaith Harmony Conference	St. Patrick's Cathedral Church, Karachi	20.01.2024
Interfaith Harmony Seminars			
1.	IH Seminar on “ Bridging Beliefs: Interfaith Harmony in Pakistan	Karachi University, Karachi	26.12.2023
2.	IH Seminar on “Religious Minorities and Interfaith Social Tolerance in Pakistan”	NED University, Karachi	28.12.2023
3.	IH Seminar on “ Significance and Need for the Promotion of Interfaith Harmony in Society”	Iqra University, Islamabad	05.01.2024
4.	IH Seminar on “Religious Minorities and Interfaith Social Tolerance in Pakistan”	Iqra University, Karachi	18.01.2024
5.	IH Seminar on “Bridging Beliefs: Interfaith Harmony in Pakistan”	Dawood University, Karachi	19.01.2024



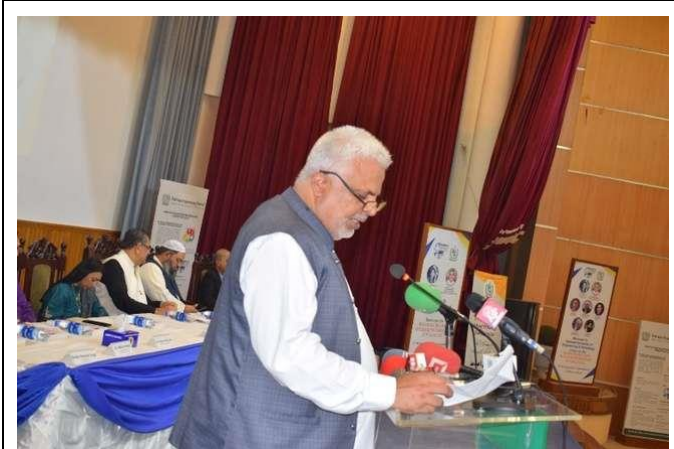














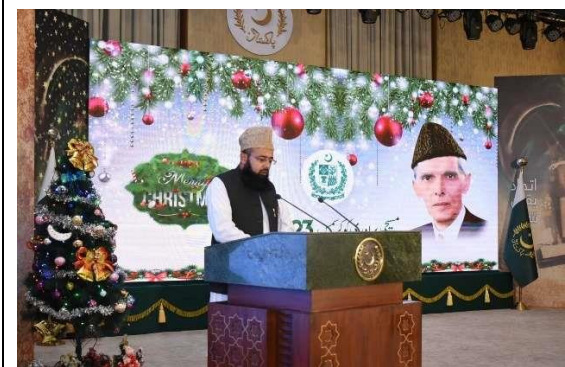
CELEBRATION OF RELIGIOUS FUNCTIONS OF MINORITIES.

31. In order to promote understanding and harmony among all segments of society, this ministry celebrates important religious festivals of Minority Communities officially. These festivals include Christmas and Easter for Christians, Holi and Diwali for Hindus, Baisakhi and Birthday of Guru Nanak for Sikhs, Nauroze for Zoroastrians, Eid-e-Ridvan for Baha'i's, and Chelum Jusht for Kalash people. This effort of the Ministry is aimed at presenting a soft image of Pakistan as minority-friendly country on the national and international levels. Celebrations of these events bring all segments of society closer to each other for peaceful co-existence.

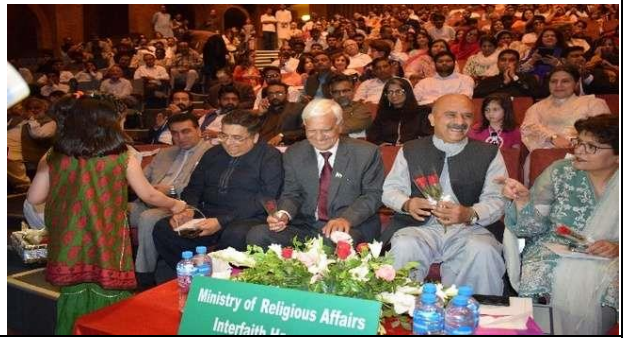
32. During the last financial year 2023-24, the following religious functions of the minorities were celebrated at the official level to promote interfaith culture: -

- Minority Day-2023 celebrations was arranged on 11th August, 2023, at Awan-e-Sadr, Islamabad.
- Christmas-2023, celebration of Christian community was arranged on 20th December, 2023 at Aiwan-e-Sadr Islamabad.
- *Eid-e-Ridvan*-2024, celebration of Baha'i Community was arranged on 2nd May 2024 at Auditorium of PNCA, Islamabad.









DRAFTING OF POLICY ON INTERFAITH HARMONY

33. Cognizant of the religio-cultural diversity in the country and its related issues, promotion of interfaith harmony is one of the most inevitable priorities for realization of a peaceful and tolerant Pakistan. Therefore, the National Commission for Minorities drafted a policy on Interfaith Harmony. After consultation with all stakeholders, the IH Policy is under process for approval of the Federal Cabinet.

34. The Policy on Interfaith Harmony will help to address issues of promotion of Interfaith Harmony among different faiths living in Pakistan and will project the soft image of Pakistan as a Tolerant, Moderate and Peaceful Society. The Crux of the draft IH Policy is as under: -

- The Policy defines the vision, objectives and direction towards realization of ideological, social, cultural and religious cohesion amongst various segments of the nation.
- The policy is specifically aimed at devising a strategy to promote Interfaith Harmony, increasing awareness about the rights of minorities and respect of religious freedom, combating intolerance in the society through Interfaith dialogues, curbing hate material/speeches to avoid rift amongst the religious communities, mainstreaming of minorities through enabling legislative/administrative initiatives, and dispelling adverse propaganda against Pakistan regarding the alleged persecution of minorities.
- It also includes a Plan of Action to achieve these objectives through feasible measures at all levels.

TASKFORCE TO DEVELOP A STRATEGY ON RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE

35. In pursuance of Para 37(i) of judgment of the Supreme Court of Pakistan dated 19.06.2014, a Task Force, under the chairmanship of Additional Secretary MoRA&IH was notified on 11.06.2022 by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony with the aim to develop a strategy for the promotion of religious tolerance amongst all segments of the country. The composition of the committee is as under:-

a)	Additional Secretary, M/o Religious Affairs & Interfaith Harmony	Chairman
b)	Chairman NCM or his rep	Member
c)	Rep of Council of Islamic Ideology	Member
d)	Rep of M/o Interior not below the rank of Joint Secretary	Member
e)	Rep of M/o Law & Justice not below the rank of Joint Secretary	Member
f)	Rep of M/o Human Rights not below the rank of Joint Secretary	Member
g)	Rep of M/o Foreign Affairs not below the rank of Joint Secretary	Member
h)	Rep of M/o Professional & Technical Training not below the rank of Joint Secretary	Member
i)	Rep of M/o Information & Broadcasting not below the rank of Joint Secretary	Member
j)	Rep of FIA not below BS-20 or equivalent	Member
k)	Rep of ISI not below BS-20 or equivalent	Member

l)	Rep of Pakistan Telecom Authority not below BS-20 or equivalent	Member
m)	Rep of Provincial Governments not below BS-20 (one member from each Province)	Member
n)	Joint Secretary (IH), M/o RA&IH	Member / Secretary

36. During the financial year 2023-24 two meetings of the Taskforce on Religious Tolerance were held. The most recent meeting was held on May 30, 2023. In the last meeting, the Task Force was apprised that the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony has developed a draft Interfaith Harmony Policy that is linked to the principles of policy implementation envisaged in the National Security Policy (2022-2026) to develop synergy with the National Action Plan.

37. Consequent upon the decision of 2nd meeting of Task Force held on 30.05.2023 this Ministry has devised a draft strategy plan for eliminating religious intolerance and hate speech in the society. The Strategy details the response mechanism and key points performance indicators to achieve the purpose of religious tolerance in the society.

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR MINORITIES (NCM) ACT 2024

38. As per Schedule-II of the Rules of Business, 1973, the subject of “National Commission for Minorities (NCM)” has been assigned to this Ministry. The NCM was initially established with the approval of the Federal Cabinet vide Case No. 194/15/90, dated 02.07.1990 and has been reconstituted on a triennial basis since its inception. The existing ToRs of the Commission do not provide for its administrative, financial and operational powers. In order to enable the Commission to perform its functions independently/effectively as a statutory body, this Ministry in consultation with all concerned stakeholders at the Federal and Provincial level including NCM members and One-Man Commission has drafted the Bill entitled “National Commission for Minorities Act, 2024”. After vetting by Law and Justice Division and approval of the CCLC/Cabinet, the Bill was introduced in National Assembly on 20.02.2023 and was referred to NA Standing Committee on RA&IH for further discussion/ deliberation. The Bill was passed by the National Assembly on 07.08.2023 and forwarded to the Senate on 08.08.2023. However, the Bill lapsed under Article 76(3) of the Constitution due to dissolution of the National Assembly (09.08.2023). The present Government has taken up the case again and the Bill is currently under consideration of a Cabinet Committee. The salient features of the Draft bill titled “National Commission for Minorities Act, 2024” is as under:

- The bill provides for establishment of NCM with administrative/ financial autonomy.
- It envisages a high-level selection panel headed by a retired judge of the Supreme Court with Minister incharge MORA, chairperson HRCP as the member, for appointment of Chairman NCM.
- The commission has been invested with administrative independence in terms of hiring/firing of its employees, consultants etc.
- The Bill also requires of all state agencies, executive authorities and district level judicial officers to assist/facilitate the Commission.

- The Commission has been empowered to take suo moto notice and receive complaints/petitions of violations of rights of minorities.
- In discharge of its investigative functions, the Commission has been entrusted with powers of a civil court.
- The draft bill also authorizes the NCM to require presence of any person and requisition any information/data pertaining to a matter under its investigation/inquiry.
- The commission shall make appropriate recommendations to the Government/concerned authorities for action to be taken on its inquiries.
- The law also authorizes the commission to appoint chairman ETPB.
- The commission has also been empowered to review any policy/legislation and make recommendations for its reviews/improvement with reference to the protection of the rights of minorities.

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR MINORITIES (NCM)

39. The composition of NCM which completed its tenure on 10.05.2023 was as follows:-

- Non-official members: 12
- Official members: 07

The proposed composition of the NCM under process of reconstitution is as under:

- Non-official members: 16
- Official members: 07

40. The non-official Members included 02 Muslims, 03 Christians, 04 Hindus (incl. the Scheduled Caste), 03 Sikhs and one each from Parsi, Bahai, Kailash and Buddhist communities. It is important to note that the last Commission did not include any representation of the Scheduled Cast (Hindus), Baha'i, and Buddhist communities; this deficiency has now been made up in the proposed composition.

PERFORMANCE OF NCM

41. The NCM helped the Ministry in drafting the Interfaith Harmony Policy which spells out the visions, objectives, plan of action with measurable performance indicators and assignment of responsibilities to the concerned federal and provincial agencies/stakeholders. Subject to approval the policy would make it incumbent upon the Government to take administrative measures to ensure respect/safety of religious personalities, worship places and holy books of all religions. The approval of Interfaith Harmony Policy is under process.

42. The NCM rendered invaluable assistance in drafting the bill for National Commission for Minorities Act to enable the commission to function independently with financial and administrative powers as a statutory body, as detailed above.

43. The NCM promptly acted against incidents of violence against minorities like Terri Mandar desecration, murder of a Sri Lankan employee at Sialkot, desecration of Bhong Mandir etc., and helped in normalizing the situation.

RESEARCH AND REFERENCE WING:

SEERAT ACTIVITIES:

44. Ministry of Religious Affairs & Interfaith Harmony conducted following activities to pay homage to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) during this year:

- One day National Seerat Conference 1446 AH / 2024 on 12th Rabi ul Awal was arranged on the following topic:

ریاست کا تعلیمی نظام ...سیرت النبی ﷺ کی روشنی میں“

Persons from all walks of life including diplomats, politicians and other prominent personalities attended the conference. The President of Pakistan of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan was the chief guest at the conference and conferred the prizes to the position holders of Seerat Books Competition 1446AH /2024AD.

- Mehfil-e-Naat was organized at Pakistan National Arts Council on the evening of 11th Rabi ul Awwal wherein country's renowned Naat Khawan both male and female participated and presented their tributes to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ).
- A comprehensive country-wide Milad un Nabi Celebration Program was chalked out consisting of various activities/ programs and was disseminated among the Federal and Provincial ministries/departments with instructions to celebrate Milad un Nabi all over the country in a befitting manner.

45. **National Seerat Book Competition 1446 AH / 2024 AD** was conducted and the prize winners were awarded prize money & certificates on the occasion of two days National Seerat Conference in following nine categories:

Sr.	Name of Category	No of Prizes
1	Seerat Books in Urdu	3
2	Seerat Book in Regional Language	6
3	Religious / Seerah Books for Children	3
4	Seerat Books (Foreign Language)	3
5	Naat Books in Urdu	3
6	Naat Books in Regional Language	6
7	Religious Books by Women / Female	3
8	Mujallat (Seerat editions)	3
9	Maqalat for Men and Women / Research Articles	33
Total		63

PUBLICATION OF MESSAGES:

46. The messages of the President and the Prime Minister of Pakistan to the nation were released on the following six specified religious occasions:

- New Hijri Year
- 10th of Muharram-ul-Haram (Youm-e-Ashur)
- 12th Rabi-ul-Awwal
- Ramazan-ul-Mubarak
- Eid –ul-Fitr
- Eid-ul-Azha
- Other Religious event

PRINTING AND DISTRIBUTION OF MAQALAT-E-SEERAT:

47. The prize winning Maqalat of 2023 / 1445 AH were published in a book form & distributed among the libraries throughout Pakistan.

"ملکی معاشی استحکام کے لیے حکمتِ عملی ، سیرت النبی ﷺ کی روشنی میں"

SECTARIAN HARMONY MEETINGS:

48. A meeting of Ulema from all schools of thought is convened every year before commencement of Muharram in order to ensure peace and harmony during the Holy month. In continuation, a meeting was convened in the Ministry on 03-07-2024. The Ulema and representative of other relevant departments & Security Agencies attended the meeting. In pursuance of the deliberations emerged in the meeting, a unanimously agreed upon declaration was framed and distributed among all the concerned.

LEGISLATIONS:

Sr#	Name of the Bill	Status
1	The Publication of the Holy Quran (Elimination of Printing and Recording Errors) (Amendments) Act, 2024	To ensure error free printing of the Holy Quran, an Official Bill "The Publication of the Holy Quran (Elimination of Printing and Recording Errors) (Amendments) Bill, 2023 was drafted by this Ministry." The said bill passed by Majlis-e-Shoora (Parliament) and President of Pakistan assent the same. Now, the said bill has been enforced at ICT level.
2	Ruet-e-Hilal Bill, 2023 was drafted by this Ministry	To bring harmony and uniformity on religious festivals in the country, "The Pakistan Ruet-e-Hilal Bill, 2023" was prepared by this Ministry in consultation with all stakeholders. The said bill passed by Majlis-e-Shoora (Parliament) and presently waiting for assent of the President of Pakistan.

WEB EVALUATION CELL

CONTROVERSIAL / OBJECTIONABLE LINKS

49. The Web Evaluation Cell (WEC) was established in the Ministry in 2017 for evaluation of religiously objectionable content, being reported from various segments through online content social media and other channels.

50. The summary of total figure regarding objectionable links reported for blockage to PTA till 30-06-2024 category and platform wise states of Web Evaluation Cell are shown below:-

CATEGORY WISE STATS		PLATFORM WISE STATS		STATUS WISE STATS	
CATEGORY	LINKS	PLATFORM	LINKS	STATUS	LINKS
Pornography / Obscene content	2,322	X (Twitter)	4,363	Processed	7,980
Blasphemy	3,176	Instagram	2,653	Open	1,675
Anti-Islamic	1,734	Facebook	1,307	Under-Process	227
Defiling of Holy Quran	1,506	Others	942	Already Blocked	90
Qadiani	339	YouTube	327		
Hate Speech	249	Website	98		
Against Decency and Morality	176	Pinterest	93		
Anti-Religion	227	Reddit	78		
Others	116	TikTok	33		
Already Blocked	84	Flickr	41		
Against Holy Personages	29	WhatsApp	28		
Sectarianism	29	Blogspot	15		
Links Reported before			11-09-2023	53,501	
Links Reported from		11-09-2023	till 22-10-2024	9,972	
Links Decided by Apex Committee and Reported through letter till 22 nd Meeting				180	
Total				63,653	

CONSTITUTION OF APEX COMMITTEE

51. An Apex Committee comprising of Ulema from all schools of thought, university academia and representatives from PTA, Federal Investigation Agency, Council of Islamic Ideology and Law and Justice Division has been constituted to analyze sensitive online contents and prepare recommendations for taking further appropriate actions. The Apex Committee holds it's regularly & till now **nineteen** meetings have been held.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF CIVIL AWARDS

52. The Ministries and their divisions are invited by the Cabinet Division to recommend candidates for Civil Award. Renowned nominees are considered by three award committees after which final recommendations are sent to the President for approval. After the President's approval, the announcements are made on Independence Day and investiture takes place on Pakistan Day. The Ministry of Religious Affairs & Interfaith Harmony is responsible for recommending names of renowned personalities for Conferment of Pakistan Civil Awards in Religious categories i.e. Qirat, Naat, Religious services as well as Minorities in the category of Interfaith Harmony.

53. Following personalities rendering Religious services were recommended for Civil Award by the Ministry of Religious Affairs & Interfaith Harmony in 2024:

NAME	FIELD	AWARD
MAULANA ILYAS QADRI	RELIGIOUS SCHOLAR	SITARA-E-IMTIAZ
DR MOHYUDDIN HASHMI	RELIGIOUS SCHOLAR	TAMGHA-E-IMTIAZ
DR. MUHAMMAD ILYAS	RELIGIOUS SCHOLAR	TAMGHA-E-IMTIAZ
PIR SYED MUHAMMAD ALI RAZA BUKHARI	RELIGIOUS SCHOLAR	TAMGHA-E-IMTIAZ
DR. SAMIA RAHEEL QAZI	RELIGIOUS SCHOLAR	TAMGHA-E-IMTIAZ
NABEERA ANDALEEB NAEEMI	RELIGIOUS SCHOLAR	TAMGHA-E-IMTIAZ
SARWAR HUSSAIN NAQSBANDI	NAAT KHAWN	SITARA-E-IMTIAZ
SYED ZEEHAN BUKHARI	NAAT KHAWN	TAMGHA-E-IMTIAZ
SYED ALTAF HUSSIAN KAZMI	NAAT KHAWAN	TAMGHA-E-IMTIAZ
HAFIZ MAQBOOL UR REHMAN	NAAT KHAWAN	TAMGHA-E-IMTIAZ
QARI SYED SADAQAT ALI	QARI	NISHAN-E-IMTIAZ
FR.DR. JAMES CHANNON OP	INTERFAITH HARMOMY	TAMGHA-E-IMTIAZ
HUMPHREY SARFARAZ PETERS	INTERFAITH HARMOMY	TAMGHA-E-IMTIAZ