



The Chair of the Bar

Mr Farooq Hamid Naek
Chairman, Executive Committee
Pakistan Bar Council
Supreme Court Building
Constitution Avenue, G-5/2
Islamabad
Pakistan

Sent by email: info@pakistanbarcouncil.org

19 February 2024

Dear Mr Naek,

On behalf of the Bar Council of England and Wales, I wish to congratulate you on your recent appointment as Chairman of the Executive Committee of Pakistan Bar Council.

As you may know, we have been in touch with the Pakistan Bar Council over the past year with respect to Ahmadi Muslim lawyers, who we understood had been barred admission to the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Bar Council and District Bar Association of Gujranwala unless they denounced the teachings of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community and its founder Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

I write in response to the letter from Mr Hassan Raza Pasha, the former Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Pakistan Bar Council, dated 10 January 2024. In this letter, Mr Pasha set out that the Executive Committee had recently considered the position at its meeting on 29 December 2023. Thank you for considering this issue.

From Mr Pasha's reply, I understand that the Pakistan Bar Council decided that the restrictions are incompatible with the constitution of Pakistan and are therefore void. In effect, Ahmadi Muslim lawyers cannot be required to denounce their faith in order to be called to the relevant Bar Council and Association, presently or in future. Could you please

THE BAR COUNCIL

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confirm that my interpretation of the letter is correct? Assuming that is the case, we very much welcome this decision of the Pakistan Bar Council.

May we further whether the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Bar Council has been informed of the Executive Committee's decision? I would be very grateful if you would kindly pass a copy of this communication to us.

We understand that when the Bar Council considered the issue at its December meeting only the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Bar Council had responded to the Pakistan Bar Council. Have you since received a reply from the District Bar Association of Gujranwala? We would very much welcome the Pakistan Bar Council sharing its decision and interpretation with the District Bar Association of Gujranwala. Is this your kind intention?

Thank you for your assistance with this troubling matter. It is very much appreciated.

It may be of interest that I am a Bencher of the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn. Should you (and) or Mr Hassan Raza Pasha have any plans to visit London, I would like to invite you to lunch at the Bench table with me. It would be a useful opportunity to discuss matters of common interest more generally.

I look forward to hearing from you.

With kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S J Townend'. The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Samuel Townend KC
Chair of the Bar of England and Wales