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**PUBLIC STATEMENT**

LATEST DEVELOPMENT
March 21, 2019

# Pakistan must prevent mob violence after blasphemy accusations

Mashal Khan's killing in 2017 exposed how quickly an unverified blasphemy allegation can become a threat to someone's life.

### What we know

A mob killed Mashal Khan, a university student in Mardan, after accusations of blasphemy circulated in April 2017. Investigators reported finding no evidence that he had committed blasphemy and identified people suspected of inciting the mob. Courts later convicted multiple defendants, most recently two more men on March 21, 2019. [1–5]

### Our position

No allegation, however serious, justifies a killing. Anyone accused of blasphemy is entitled to due process, and anyone targeted by a mob is entitled to protection. Pakistan is a state party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. [6–7]

### Our calls

Amnesty Freedom calls on the authorities to:

1. Protect anyone targeted by a mob, regardless of what they are alleged to have said.
2. Give universities clear emergency procedures for threats of mob violence.
3. Investigate credible threats and incitement to violence.
4. Distinguish individual responsibility in prosecutions, respect due process, and exclude the death penalty.

### Supporting information


1. Lynched Pakistani man did not commit blasphemy: police
2. Mashal murder case: JIT finds group in university incited mob against student on pretext of blasphemy - Pakistan - DAWN.COM
3. Mashal Khan lynching: Shooter Imran Ali sentenced to death, 5 given life imprisonment - Pakistan - DAWN.COM
4. Pakistan convicts two over blasphemy lynching case
5. World Report 2018: Pakistan | Human Rights Watch
6. United Nations, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
7. OHCHR, Rabat Plan of Action on incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence



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**Note to editors:** *This statement is based on the public sources listed above. The date shown is that of the most recent development recorded in those sources; later developments may not be reflected.*



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