

Christian Father May Be Executed by Islamic Country

A Pakistani Christian is awaiting a possible death sentence after allegedly downloading “blasphemous material” on social media.

Ishtiaq Saleem, 34, is a father and a sanitation worker from Islamabad. He was arrested in November 2022 for allegedly downloading the material, and has languished in prison as his case proceeds, according to a March 10 release from ADF International.

The legal advocacy group said that Saleem fell victim to the “Blasphemy Business Group” – a network accused of “fabricating blasphemy accusations to entrap individuals for the purpose of blackmail and extortion.”

The entity reportedly works with Pakistan’s Federal Investigation Agency to pin blasphemy charges on Christians and other religious minorities.

Rao Abdur Rahim, the lead prosecution counsel in the Saleem case, also happens to be the leader of the Blasphemy Business Group.

In Pakistan, blasphemy laws are a major threat to Christians, violating their right to freely and peacefully worship.

Ishtiaq Saleem, a Christian father, has been imprisoned for 3 years and could soon be given the DEATH PENALTY, all because of his faith.

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– ADF International (@ADFIIntl) March 20, 2026

That raises “serious concerns about the fairness of the proceedings,” ADF International noted.

Saleem’s trial is now over, but Muhammad Umair, who is accused alongside Saleem, still has ongoing court proceedings.



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That means a verdict will likely be decided when those proceedings are over as well.

“Ishtiaq committed no wrong and was simply living his life as a Christian in Pakistan when he was arrested. He has now spent three years behind bars, separated from his family,” Tehmina Arora, the director of advocacy at ADF International for Asia, said in the release.

Pakistan Christian Saleem Ishtiaq, a sanitation worker in Islamabad, arrested for allegedly of posting blasphemous content on Facebook. As a result, he was arrested for electronic crimes PECA & #blasphemy 295c PPC Mandatory Penalty death sentence.

– Faraz Pervaiz (@FarazPervaiz3) January 15, 2026

“No one should face the threat of death or years in prison based on fabricated accusations of blasphemy. Cases like this illustrate the immense pressure faced by Christians and religious minorities in Pakistan.”

While awaiting a verdict, Saleem has appealed numerous times for bail, but his applications have been denied by lower courts and even the Supreme Court of Pakistan.

While Saleem remains under tremendous threat because of his Christian faith, ADF International is “hopeful that the trial

has exposed significant weaknesses in the prosecution's case and the misuse of the blasphemy laws to exhort and harass religious minorities."

They are hoping for an acquittal so that Saleem can return to his family.

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