



ASIA/PAKISTAN - Real estate interest behind the attacks on Christians: looking for the perpetrators

Lahore (Agenzia Fides) - There seems to be real estate interests and the attempt to expel Christians from Joseph's Colony, in the center of Lahore (in Punjab), behind the attack on behalf of the Muslim mob, which took place last Saturday (see Fides 9/3/2013). According to information sent to Fides, the attack was well orchestrated: this would increase the accountability of Police forces, who were unable to prevent it or stop it. The Supreme Court, during the hearing on the case, granted to leaders of the Punjab government and police officials, criticized the police's attitude as "not satisfactory". It was noted, in particular, that the inhabitants of the colony had been evacuated from their homes on Friday evening and that the police had defined the situation "under control". The fires were also started by using a special flammable liquid, which is not usually available in homes or markets: this element also generates questions and reflections of those who organized the attack.

As learned by Fides, in a motion presented today at the Federal Chamber, the Minister of State for Harmony, the Catholic Akram Masih Gill, called for a transparent investigation that is able to find the real perpetrators, noting that behind the attack on Joseph Colony there could be a "land mafia" that wants to take possession of the area to promote new real estate projects. No official voice - note sources of Fides - has instead been raised in the Federal Senate, where the other political and Christian senator, Kamran Michael, a member of the "Muslim League-M", the ruling party in the province of Punjab sits.

Christians in Pakistan, meanwhile, today observed a day of mourning for the death of a Christian woman, who died on March 11 because of tear gas fired by the police during the protest in the city of Yohannabad. The Christian faithful are asking, "If the police fired tear gas on the crowd, killing a Christian who was protesting, why did they not disperse the Muslims who were burning our houses?". (PA) (Agenzia Fides 13/03/2013)