



## **ASIA/PAKISTAN - Blasphemy and attacks against Hindus: the condemnation of Catholic Bishops**

Lahore (Agenzia Fides) - Strong condemnation for an act of intolerance and request to the government to protect the places of worship of any religion: is what is expressed, in a statement sent to Fides, by the "Justice and Peace" Commission of the Pakistani Bishops, expressing outrage concerning the attacks against a temple and the Hindu religious shrine "Dharam Shala" which took place on March 15 in Larkana (Sindh province in southern Pakistan), while the Hindu community was celebrating the feast of "Holi". The attack was carried out by Islamic extremists who accused the Hindu community of "blasphemy" and, according to the note sent to Fides, is "the fruit of hatred and premeditated istigation".

As reported to Fides, the question of religious intolerance was the focus of a recent conference and a day of discussion held in Multan (Punjab ) titled "The role of youth in peace building". Experts, representatives of institutions, theologians, civil society activists, remarked that peace building in Pakistan passes through the education of the younger generation's mentality. Distorted education, prejudice against religious minorities, hatred towards Christians and Hindus in school textbooks are the main elements that create disharmony and conflict in society and derail peace in Pakistan. Young people of all religious communities, were sensitized "to welcoming religious diversity", rejecting violence. The young people then visited a mosque, a church and a Hindu temple, spent a day with different religious communities, got to know the traditions, symbols, and history of different religions. (PA-KC) (Agenzia Fides 20/03/2014)