

BREAKING NEWS: Asia Bibi is to be freed!

A press release from the [Dawn.](#)

The Supreme Court on Wednesday acquitted Asia Bibi, a Christian woman condemned to death on blasphemy charges after accepting her 2015 appeal against her sentence.



A three-judge bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Mian Saqib Nisar, Justice Asif Saeed Khosa and Justice Mazhar Alam Khan Miankhel had reserved its ruling on Asia Bibi's final legal appeal against execution (Asia Bibi v. The State, etc) on October 8.

The appeal challenged the Lahore High Court's October 2014 verdict upholding a trial court's November 2010 decision sentencing Bibi to death for committing blasphemy in 2009.

"The appeal is allowed. She has been acquitted. The judgement of high court as well as trial court is reversed. Her conviction is set aside," said Justice Nisar in the ruling. "Her conviction is set aside and she is to be relieved

forthwith if not required in other charges,” he added.

The 56-page detailed judgement has been authored by CJP Nisar, with a separate concurrent opinion note from Justice Khosa.

“It is a well settled principle of law that one who makes an assertion has to prove it. Thus, the onus rests on the prosecution to prove guilt of the accused beyond reasonable doubt throughout the trial,” noted the top judge in the order. “Presumption of innocence remains throughout the case until such time the prosecution on the evidence satisfies the court beyond reasonable doubt that the accused is guilty of the offence alleged against him. . . principles which seeks to ensure that no innocent person is convicted.

“Keeping in mind the evidence produced by the prosecution against the alleged blasphemy committed by the appellant, the prosecution has categorically failed to prove its case beyond reasonable doubt,”

The CJP ended the judgement with a hadith of the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) on the rights of minorities. *(is his life now going to be in danger from the mob? Or is he more powerful than the politicians who were killed after expressing support for her? The riots have already started – see below)*

“I can’t believe what I am hearing, will I go out now? Will they let me out, really?” Bibi told *AFP* by phone from prison after the ruling. “I just don’t know what to say, I am very happy, I can’t believe it.”

Bibi’s husband also hailed the verdict. “I am very happy. My children are very happy. We are grateful to God. We are grateful to the judges for giving us justice. We knew that she is innocent,”

Shortly after the ruling, [Reports are coming in](#) of protests in the form of blocked roads and sit-ins.



Reports of protests breaking out as of 9:41am outside the Punjab Assembly after the verdict was announced. Workers of right wing political party began gathering outside the assembly.

Islamabad's hospitals have been put on high alert and the leaves of all paramedical staff have been cancelled. The metro bus service has been suspended in Lahore. Several schools have announced early closure and are sending children home. . . reports of minor unrest emerged from Karachi's Numaish.

Traffic at Merewether Tower in Karachi has been blocked, as have roads in Baldia Town. The protest in Baldia is being led by MPA Qasim Fakhri. Protesters have begun burning tyres at Tower. A protest has begun outside the Sukkur Press Club against the Supreme Court verdict. Both sides of the road outside the club were blocked. The police are on high alert at entry and exit points to the city. Protests have also sprung up at Farooq Azam Chowk in Charsadda. The police are on standby in the city.

In Islamabad, the Abapara and Faizabad roads have been blocked due to protests.

The Faizabad-Islamabad Expressway has been blocked. Shops in Sargodha were forcibly closed as protesters began protesting at 12 Block Chowk. Fatima Jinnah Road has also been blocked due to protests.

Supporters of right wing political parties blocked both tracks of GT Road in Gujjar Khan, near Rawalpindi.