Pakistani Teen Cuts Off Hand After Cleric Accuses Him of Blasphemy

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A Pakistani teenager cut off his hand after a Muslim cleric wrongly accused him of blasphemy, a local police chief told CNN.

Mohammad Anwar, a 15-year-old from Hujra Shah Muqeem, a village in Punjab province about 120 kilometers (75 miles) southwest of Lahore, was being hailed as a hero by locals for his actions, Station House Officer Nausher Ali, the local police chief, told CNN.

Media reports in Pakistan also identified the teenager.

Ali said the incident took place Wednesday after the boy misheard the words of cleric Shabbir Ahmed during a sermon.

Ahmed had asked those present to raise their hands if they did not love the Prophet Mohammed, the police chief said, and the teen had mistakenly raised his hand.

Ahmed accused him of blasphemy, and the teen responded by going home, cutting off his hand and presenting it to the cleric on a plate, Ali said.

Police arrested the cleric -- accusing him of hate speech inciting violence, an offense under Pakistan's anti-terror National Action Plan -- once they learned about what happened, Ali said.

The teen, by contrast, had gained a hero's status among locals, the police chief said, adding that the boy's father was proud of his actions.