

ISLAMABAD, Dec 23 President Dr Arif Alvi Wednesday said that all minorities in Pakistan enjoyed complete religious freedom and equal rights and the government was committed to ensure all steps in this regard.

Addressing a Christmas function at Aiwan e Sadr, the president said Islamic teachings and Constitution of Pakistan had guaranteed the religious rights of all minorities.

The country's constitutional articles were very clear about their rights, he said.

The president said the founder of Pakistan, Quaid e Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah in his historic speech of August 11, had in a very elucidated manner pronounced the religious freedom and equal rights of all. For many, the same reference in his speech was a sort of agreement reached with all minorities. The president said the incumbent government had already resolved under Prime Minister Imran Khan's promise of equal treatment of all minorities. The prime minister had resolved to show to the world how minorities were treated in Pakistan, he added. The president cited unmatched precedents set up in Riasat e Madina by the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) with regard to treatment of people of different faiths. "It is the duty of all to ensure these principles of equity and inter-faith harmony," he stressed. The president further said contrary to such treatment in Pakistan, they witnessed the alarming situation in their neighborhood where religious minorities were deprived of citizenship on basis of religious discrimination. The president said under Ehsaas programme, minorities were also supported under a transparent manner. The president while extending felicitations to Christian community appreciated role of Pope for raising voice for the Palestinians and issues like inequality of wealth. The ceremony was attended by ministers, diplomats and representatives of different religions.

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