It is rare for a Pakistani politician to openly talk about the plight of minorities in Pakistan, including Ahmadis, says Uzair Younus

VIDEO Miftah Ismail’s bold statement in support of minorities hailed widely

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ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Miftah Ismail Sunday won hearts when he made a bold statement in favour of minorities who face unfavourable situations in the country.

During Geo News' programme "Naya Pakistan", the finance minister shed light on why Pakistan has failed to develop while other countries who gained independence after it are far ahead of us.

He said we should ask ourselves why we have lagged behind many countries of the world.

"We are a narrow-minded and emotional nation. We do not give much priority to education. We find faults if Dr Abdus Salam wins the Noble Prize because he was a Qadiyani. We do not like it if Malala Yousafzai receives the Noble Prize."

"However, Pakistanis are immensely talented people. There is a lack of tolerance in the country. Our religious leaders are also to blame for it. Some time ago, a Christian couple was burnt alive, how many people raised their voices against it? Recently, an Ahmadi was killed, how many people raise their voices? People are afraid."

He said successive governments had failed to check the rapidly growing population.

"If you start working to control the population growth, Islam is endangered. The police, army and our teachers are martyred in anti-polio campaigns," he added.

The finance minister’s remarks about minorities and other sensitive issues received appreciation from the netizens who hailed him for “being so upright and principled in calling out social ills in our society that keep us from progressing”.