

Joseph R. Biden  
President of the United States  
White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden,

We, the undersigned, are disappointed that your administration is reportedly considering [hosting](#) Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi for a state visit later this year.

While your administration is working to defend democracy globally, we are alarmed that you would confer this diplomatic honor on a foreign leader with a decades' long history of severely curtailing civil and political liberties and undermining democratic norms. The United States government itself had imposed [a visa ban on Modi](#) in 2005 for his role in the egregious mass violence against Muslims in Gujarat state in 2002.

A BBC documentary reports the UK government found Modi [“directly responsible” for the “climate of impunity”](#) surrounding the killings of 1,000 Muslim men, women and children in 2002, “which had all the hallmarks of ethnic cleansing.” Shockingly, India has [banned](#) the film and [raided](#) BBC offices in India. [Senate Foreign Relations Committee](#) Chair, Senator Bob Menendez, has said the raid “threatens free speech [and] is part of a broader pattern of intimidation that undermines India's democracy [and] credibility.”

Religious persecution in India [has escalated under Modi](#) leading to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) to recommend thrice since 2020 that the US designate India as a Country of Particular Concern (CPC). as the Modi Government is “engaging in and tolerating systematic, ongoing, and egregious religious freedom violations, as defined by the International Religious Freedom Act (IRA).”

The USCIRF has condemned India’s two [anti-Muslim laws](#), the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), and the National Register of Citizens (NRC), which are designed to revoke the citizenship of millions of Indian Muslims. The UN Office of the High Commission of Human Rights (OHCHR) has [called](#) these laws “fundamentally discriminatory.”

“The manner in which government officials have enforced [the NRC] has enabled intolerance of religious minorities and exacerbated communal divides, resulting in violence, deaths, injuries, sexual assault, destruction of property including houses of worship, arbitrary detentions, harassment including online harassment, and social boycotting of religious, scheduled caste, and tribal communities,” USCIRF has [said](#).

Modi has kept silent as [Hindu supremacists](#) affiliated to his BJP party have openly called for a genocide of Muslims, as well as [lynched Muslims](#), [burned mosques](#), and [displaced hundreds from their homes](#) for protesting their persecution.

U.S. leaders have also strongly condemned Modi's relentless attack on human rights.

Congressman [Jim McGovern](#), Co-Chair of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, has said "there is every reason to fear" the CAA because it "institutionalized discrimination against Muslims." Senator [Ed Markey](#) has said these laws "fly[ing] in the face of India's inclusive secular Constitution and the core tenets of any democracy." Congressman Jamie Raskin has warned of India taking "the road to authoritarianism." Recently, [Senator James Lankford](#) wrote that the US "must have a robust discussion about the deteriorating religious freedom conditions for religious minorities in India."

In 2020, Congressman [Raskin](#) also called on the US to denounce the Modi regime's "authoritarian" raids on [Amnesty International's](#) offices. In 2019 Senator [Bernie Sanders](#) had condemned the Indian government's decision to "unilaterally revoke Kashmir's long standing autonomy, crack down on dissent, jail political leaders and institute a communications blackout," calling the decisions a "human rights disaster."

This month, Modi's BJP party leaders joined two rallies where a Hindu monk Hari Singh urged crowds to "[kill Muslims and Christians](#)," and a supremacist leader named Sakshi Gaikwad said, "Muslims are like sacrificial lambs, [waiting to be sacrificed](#)."

Muslims across India are [incarcerated on false charges](#), many [merely for marrying Hindu women](#). A 24-year-old Muslim man, Arbaaz Aftab Mullah, was [hacked to death](#) for his interfaith relationship. The federal government and many state administrations continue to [illegally demolish Muslim homes](#), while [Lynchings](#) of Muslims, dalits, Christians continue to rise on Modi's watch. The Modi regime has also implemented a suite of new Islamophobic policies, such as [banning hijabs](#) in schools.

Last year, [attacks on Christians](#) in India increased 157% at nearly 1,200 attacks. Most were "planned and orchestrated [as] part of a larger design to create a Hindus-only state, to the exclusion of the people of Abrahamic faiths," the Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations of North America, a US-based group, has said.

[Freedom House](#), a watchdog, has downgraded India's democracy to "Partly Free" citing "rules that made it easier for authorities to compel social media platforms to remove

unlawful content,” spyware installed on the phones of journalists and opposition leaders, and “discriminatory policies and a rise in persecution affecting the Muslim population.”

[Reporters Without Borders](#) (RSF) last year downgraded India’s Press Freedom Rank to 150th, behind Uganda, Somalia, Ethiopia, South Sudan, the UAE, Nigeria, and Rwanda. Hindu nationalists “wage all-out online attacks on any views that conflict with their thinking. [Terrifying coordinated campaigns](#) of hatred and calls for murder are conducted on social media,” more violently against [women journalists](#),” RSF said.

The [Committee to Protect Journalists](#) (CPJ) stated that India tied with Mexico for the highest number of media worker deaths in 2021. The [New York Times](#) has written that Modi has “fallen squarely” into the camp of “populist and authoritarian leaders” whose “alarming hallmark [is] the misuse of their powers to intimidate, censor, silence or punish independent news media.” Modi’s “actions to suppress freedom of the press are undermining India’s proud status as “the world’s largest democracy,” it said.

Your embrace of Modi will legitimize his suppression of civil and political liberties and strengthen [Hindu extremism in the US](#), whose proponents are already fundraising for forced conversions to Hinduism and the destruction of churches in India, while parading [anti-Muslim hate symbols](#) and inserting [anti-Muslim language](#) into state laws in the US.

President Biden, it is imperative that you condemn Modi’s descent into authoritarianism just as you have admirably condemned [China’s persecution](#) of the Uyghurs.

We urge you to not invite Modi to a state visit.

Sincerely,

Indian American Muslim Council (IAMC)  
Hindus for Human Rights (HfHR)