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PERSECUTION OF RELIGIOUS MINORITIES IN INDIA



FOLLOWING POLICE ORDERS ENFORCING ECONOMIC APARTHEID AHEAD OF A HINDU PROCESSION IN UTTAR PRADESH, A MUSLIM VENDOR DISPLAYS A SIGN IDENTIFYING HIS RELIGION. PHOTO CREDIT: TIMES OF INDIA.



Indian American Muslim Council (IAMC) is a Washington, DC based advocacy organization established in 2002 by Muslim Americans of Indian descent, with chapters across the United States.

IAMC is the largest advocacy organization of the Indian Muslim diaspora. It is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt non-profit.

IAMC's core values are as follows:

- To defend the fundamental and civil rights of all
- To preserve the pluralistic and democratic ethos enshrined in the constitutions of the United States and the Republic of India
- To facilitate increased interfaith and inter-community understanding in the United States with the goal of safeguarding American society and institutions from infiltration by divisive and hate-filled ideologies
- To increase awareness about India in order to improve cultural and trade relations between the United States and the Republic of India

Phone: 1-800-839-7270

Email: info@iamc.com

www.iamc.com

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Violence and persecution against India's religious minorities, particularly Muslims and Christians, continued through the second quarter of 2024 as Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu supremacist government, led by the far-right Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), was elected for a third term in June 2024.

The elections have been criticized for not being free and fair by critics. In addition to controlling the mainstream media, the Modi regime abused government agencies to jail opposition leaders, freeze the Congress Party's bank accounts, and suppress Muslim voters. Modi and BJP candidates regularly made anti-Muslim hate speeches in clear violation of Indian election laws, which prohibits communal speeches as a means to win votes. At the polls, Muslims reported facing voter suppression in the form of violence, intimidation, and manipulation of voter registries.

During and after elections, violence against minorities continued at both an individual and structural level. The weeks immediately after the beginning of Modi's third term saw a series of anti-Muslim mob lynchings across the country. Punitive demolitions, discriminatory policies, arbitrary detentions, online censorship, and police brutality. The state also failed to curb cow vigilantism, other forms of routine anti-minority violence, hate speech, as well as housing, economic and educational discrimination.

Government bodies and human rights groups continued to criticize¹ India's democratic backsliding and treatment of minorities, including Rohingya refugees.²

In light of this ongoing and systemic persecution, it is essential for the international community to pressure the Indian government to curb skyrocketing anti-Muslim violence and hate speech, ensure accountability for the perpetrators, and ensure protection of India's religious minorities.

¹ state.gov/secretary-antony-j-blinken-2023-international-religious-freedom-report-rollout

² ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/07/india-must-end-racial-discrimination-against-rohingya-cease-forced

PERSECUTION & DISCRIMINATION AGAINST MUSLIMS

In May, there were a number of cases of police brutality against Muslims.

On May 2, in Gujarat's Vadodara, a 28-year-old Muslim egg seller was brutally attacked by police for keeping his store open late. The victim was left permanently paralyzed due to the severity of his injuries, and died a month later.³ In Maharashtra's Amravati on May 19, four police officials tortured two Muslim men over accusations of transporting cattle. The victims reported that they were beaten with a belt and robbed of over \$1000 USD.⁴

On May 30, police in Delhi tortured a 26-year-old Muslim man for the minor offense of riding a motorcycle without a license plate. The victim reported that after he told the officers his name, they began calling him by anti-Muslim slurs and took him to the police station, where he was tied up, beaten, dragged by his genitals, and threatened with castration.⁵

Hostility against Muslims persisted within communities, both at the hands of Hindu supremacist groups as well as everyday citizens.

On May 10, an Uttarakhand court found that an accusation of "love jihad" that led a town to drive out 41 Muslim families was a hoax.⁶

Last year, Hindu supremacist groups claimed two men, one of them Muslim, had tried to abduct a 14-year-old girl, convert her to Islam, and marry her to a Muslim. The resulting surge of anti-Muslim hatred led 41 families to flee. However, a court has acquitted both men after deeming that the only eyewitness in the case, a member of the Hindu paramilitary group Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), had ordered the uncle of the girl to file a complaint against them.

On June 3, in Uttar Pradesh's Aligarh, a Muslim man was stripped naked and beaten by a Hindu extremist

³ theobserverpost.com/vadodara-egg-seller-dieegg-seller-succumbs-to-injuries-after-month-long-struggle-in-hospital-following-police-beatings-after-police-beating-family-demands-justice

⁴ iamc.com/police-brutally-torture-rob-muslim-men-over-alleged-cattle-transport

⁵ clarionindia.net/muslim-youth-abused-brutally-beaten-up-in-delhi-police-station

⁶ scroll.in/article/1070672/love-jihad-drove-out-muslims-from-an-uttarakhand-town-in-court-it-turned-out-to-be-a-hoax

mob who accused the victim of “love jihad” for allegedly talking to a Hindu girl.⁷

On June 9, in Himachal Pradesh’s Banganga, members of the Hindu militant groups Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and Bajrang Dal attacked a Muslim vendor after they discovered his religious identity. The militants fractured the victim’s hand after he declined to chant the Hindu supremacist warcry “Jai Sri Ram” (Glory to Ram).⁸

On June 11, in Gujarat’s Vadodara, Hindu residents of a housing complex held a protest after an apartment was rented to a Muslim family. This followed just months after a similar protest held by Hindu residents of a different housing complex in the same city, demanding a wall be built between them and a neighboring Muslim locality.⁹

On June 12, Hindu residents of a neighborhood in Rajasthan’s Jaipur put up posters demanding that Hindus should stop the “migration” of non-Hindu residents to the

neighborhood by “not [selling] their house to non-Hindus.”¹⁰

On June 13, in Uttarakhand’s Dehradun, Hindu militants from the Bajrang Dal beat a Muslim man after he was seen in the company of a Hindu woman. A video of the attack shows the man holding his ears as an act of self-defense while Hindu militants strike his head.¹¹

On June 20, OpIndia, a Hindu far-right propaganda site, published an article falsely accusing independent Muslim journalist Meer Faisal of “spreading hate against Hindus”, triggering a harassment campaign against him. The website is known for promoting hate speech, fake news, and smear campaigns against critics of Hindu supremacy, Modi, and the BJP. OpIndia has repeatedly slandered Faisal in several articles, portraying him as an extremist and associating him with banned organizations.¹²

On June 29, Indian comedian Daniel Fernandes was forced to cancel a show in Telangana state after BJP leader T. Raja Singh threatened that

⁷ iamc.com/muslim-man-lynched-to-death-over-suspicion-of-goat-theft-in-jharkhand

⁸ iamc.com/far-right-indian-scientist-calls-for-israel-like-solution-in-kashmir

⁹ iamc.com/far-right-indian-scientist-calls-for-israel-like-solution-in-kashmir

¹⁰ iamc.com/mosque-imam-shot-dead-in-uttar-pradesh

¹¹ iamc.com/mob-of-100-hindu-extremists-attack-muslims-over-aid-preparations

¹² maktoobmedia.com/india/journalist-meer-faisal-sends-notice-to-opindia-for-defamatory-articles

the BJP’s workers would “come and thrash” him over a joke he had made. Fernandes reported that in the aftermath, he received a slew of messages threatening him with “violence and vandalism.”¹³

On June 30, in Uttar Pradesh’s Moradabad, a Muslim doctor was assaulted by a mob of around 25 Hindu extremists, including a local BJP leader. The victim reported that the attackers were strangers, and had begun beating him after they asked him his name.¹⁴



A Muslim doctor shows his bruises after being attacked by a mob. Photo via The Observer Post.

On July 1st, in Uttarakhand state, Hindu extremist groups gathered to harass a Muslim lawyer who had previously represented interfaith couples and helped register their marriages. Uttarakhand is one of several Indian

states that has passed laws criminalizing interfaith relationships, particularly those between Hindu women and Muslim or Christian men.¹⁵

On July 2, a 36-year-old Muslim man was beaten by Hindu extremist passengers on a bus journey from Karnataka. The victim had fallen sick while on the bus, and when he asked for a medicine tablet, two other passengers asked him his name. Upon learning his religious identity, Hindu passengers began to beat him with sticks and belts, calling him a thief. Despite the victim’s attempts to escape, he was again assaulted by Hindu locals from the area, incited by the co-passengers.¹⁶

On July 3, a mob of Hindu extremists brutally beat two Muslim brothers after a dispute at a shop in Bulandshahr, Uttar Pradesh. A video of the incident shows the men surrounded on all sides by the mob, being restrained, grabbed by the neck, and violently struck in the head. Despite being victims of assault, they were arrested by police “breaching the peace.”¹⁷

On July 4, a Muslim man who ran

¹³ maktoobmedia.com/india/comedian-daniel-fernandes-cancels-show-after-bjp-mla-t-raj-singh-warns-of-physical-assault

¹⁴ theobserverpost.com/they-attacked-me-after-asking-my-name-doctor-istekhar-assaulted-by-mob-in-moradabad-fir-filed

¹⁵ iamc.com/hindu-mob-lynches-imam-after-bike-accident

¹⁶ clarionindia.net/bhatkal-youth-assaulted-while-traveling-from-hyderabad-police-accused-of-shielding-culprits

¹⁷ iamc.com/six-muslim-houses-demolished-over-interfaith-relationship-in-uttar-pradesh

a coaching center for students in Delhi was beaten by members of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad after a Hindu parent falsely claimed that the man was forcing children to convert to Islam. The victim's family reported that police failed to provide them with protection, despite the VHP sending its members repeatedly to their home.¹⁸

On July 14, a Hindu extremist mob, led by a former lawmaker, destroyed parts of a mosque using sledgehammers and attacked around 50-60 Muslim-owned homes in Maharashtra's Kolhapur. The mob also attacked at least 40 Muslims, including children before going on to attack Muslim homes in neighboring areas, where they set a house on fire along with several vehicles.¹⁹



Hindu extremist mob attacks a mosque in Maharashtra's Kolhapur.

On July 26, ahead of a Hindu religious procession, authorities in Uttarakhand's Haridwar covered two mosques and a Muslim shrine along the procession's route with large white sheets. The administration claimed that the measure was taken to prevent the Hindu devotees' religious sentiments from being hurt. The sheets were removed later in the day after widespread backlash.²⁰

In August, police in Maharashtra's Thane arrested a Muslim woman after her Hindu neighbor decided to convert to Islam. Police also arrested a local mosque trustee who stamped the woman's official conversion document in 2022.²¹

On August 10, in Bihar's Muzaffarpur, a group of Hindu extremists choked a Muslim teenager, kicked him in the neck, and forced him to chant the Hindu supremacist warcry "Jai Shri Ram." A video clip of the incident went viral on social media, showing them assaulting the minor by choking his throat with his leg for refusing to chant the slogan.²²

¹⁸ theobserverpost.com/delhi-muslim-coaching-centre-owner-beaten-by-right-wing-groups-fir-filed-for-alleged-forced-quran-reading

¹⁹ maktoobmedia.com/india/in-maharashtra-mob-part-of-former-mps-rally-vandalises-mosque-attacks-muslims-no-cases-registered

²⁰ maktoobmedia.com/india/haridwar-mosques-along-kanwar-yatra-route-hidden-with-cloth-sheets

²¹ theobserverpost.com/thane-girl-converts-to-islam-parents-allege-coercion-and-foul-play-police-arrest-mosque-trustee-and-neighbor

²² theobserverpost.com/forced-to-chant-jsr-muslim-minor-kicked-on-the-neck-arrests-made-after-video-went-viral

On August 15, in Uttar Pradesh's Muzaffarnagar, Muslims offering prayers at a centuries-old mosque located on the grounds of a local jail were barred from doing so. Authorities went on to threaten to arrest the worshippers if they attempted to pray at the mosque.²³ Around the same time, in Haryana's Karnal, Bajrang Dal militants installed idols inside a structure on Waqf property, chanted Hindu prayers, and placed saffron flags on the structure's domes.²⁴

On August 20, Hindus in Uttar Pradesh's Bareilly threatened a mass exodus from a neighborhood after a Muslim family purchased a house in their locality. Hindu residents also demanded an immediate annulment of the property's registration.²⁵ That night, in Uttar Pradesh's Lucknow, four Hindu extremist men assaulted a Muslim food delivery worker, subjected him to anti-Muslim slurs, poured liquor on him, held him hostage for over an hour at a house where he was dropping off a delivery.²⁶ A day later, a Muslim man was brutally assaulted over an hour-long livestream by Hindu extremists in Rajasthan's

Ajmer.²⁷ A viral video assault shows the victim severely injured and begging the extremists to stop. One of them can be seen repeatedly kicking the victim and punching him in the face.

On August 26, Hindu residents of a housing complex in Uttar Pradesh's Ghaziabad disrupted the recitation of the Qur'an by some madrasa students in one of the neighboring apartments.²⁸ The students had been invited for a recitation event, held by a Muslim woman in the hopes of blessing her sick daughter. The Hindu residents accused the family of attempting to convert the flat into a madrasa and went on to claim that recitation can't be held without permission from authorities. Police then registered a complaint against the students who recited the Qur'an.

On August 27, in Assam's Sivasagar, Hindu extremists attacked 12 Muslim laborers from West Bengal. The victims were stripped, beaten, and forced to chant slogans praising Assam and local indigenous organizations. The victims have filed a police complaint against BJP leader Mayur Borgohain, alleging that he owes them around \$17,000 for

²³ clarionindia.net/up-muslims-barred-from-offering-prayers-in-muzaffarnagar-jail-mosque

²⁴ iamc.com/hindu-extremists-assault-muslim-man-for-alleged-cattle-transport

²⁵ siasat.com/up-residents-threaten-mass-exodus-after-minority-family-buys-house-3082535

²⁶ maktoobmedia.com/india/they-asked-my-name-muslim-zomato-delivery-agent-assaulted-by-hindu-men-in-up

²⁷ theobserverpost.com/rajasthan-muslim-man-beaten-forced-to-chant-jai-shree-ram-in-viral-live-streamed-attack

²⁸ clarionindia.net/ghaziabad-society-residents-create-ruckus-over-quran-recitation-in-flat

their work, which they believe could have motivated the attack.²⁹

A number of non-Muslim individuals also reported being attacked for Hindu mobs after being mistaken for Muslims. On May 12, journalist Raghav Trivedi was attacked by BJP supporters during an election rally for federal minister Amit Shah in Uttar Pradesh after attendees assumed he was Muslim. Trivedi reported that he was beaten “relentlessly” while his attackers shouted, “He is a Muslim, he is an anti-national.”³⁰ On July 13, also in Uttar Pradesh, a Hindu extremist mob beat three Hindu priests with sticks and rods after accusing them of being Muslims in disguise. The incident, which occurred in front of a police station, was recorded and posted online by one of the attackers.³¹



A man with a stick attacks three Hindu priests, calling them Muslims in disguise.

Violence & Discrimination in Schools

Anti-Muslim violence and discrimination have permeated India’s education system at all levels, affecting students as young as elementary schoolers, as well as Muslim teachers and administrators. This abuse is perpetrated by Hindu students, teachers, and administrators alike, and is sometimes spurred by outside pressure from Hindu militant groups.

On May 7, the principal of a Mumbai school, Parveen Shaikh, was fired from her job for engaging with pro–Palestine content on social media and criticizing Hindu supremacy. Leading up to her firing, Shaikh was the victim of an extensive harassment campaign spearheaded by OpIndia, a Hindu extremist propaganda website, which labeled her as “pro-terror” and “pro-Islamist” for supporting Palestine. Hindu supremacist social media users also lambasted her³² as a “radical” and “terrorist sympathizer”, and applauded her firing.

On May 16, in Maharashtra’s

²⁹ iamc.com/muslim-laborers-from-west-bengal-stripped-and-beaten-in-assam

³⁰ siasat.com/yeh-mullah-hai-journalist-raghav-trivedi-recounts-assault-on-him-at-amit-shah-rally-3028452

³¹ theobserverpost.com/up-three-hindu-priests-beaten-by-a-mob-over-suspicion-of-being-muslims-in-disguise

³² theobserverpost.com/mumbai-somaiya-school-principal-sacked-for-her-pro-palestinian-views-on-x

Mumbai, a college imposed restrictions on wearing the hijab and burka on campus, doubling down on an anti-Muslim dress code it had initially begun in August 2023. Despite students' protests, the Bombay High Court dismissed a plea challenging the hijab ban, claiming it was "not inclined to interfere" with the school's discriminatory directive.³³



Muslim women protest hijab bans. Photo by Thoufeeq K., via Maktoob Media.

On May 29, police in Karnataka's Bidar booked 17 Muslim students after a Hindu supremacist song was played at a college event, resulting in a clash between students. The song's lyrics included clearly hateful lyrics, including a line that said "Every child in India will now say 'Jai Sri Ram.'"³⁴

On June 5, a Muslim professor was

forced to resign from her position at a college in West Bengal's Kolkata, citing repeated harassment from her colleagues for wearing a hijab. The victim reported that administrators told her she would not be allowed to enter the college wearing a hijab.³⁵

On June 21, a Muslim student was pressured to remove her hijab in order to take a National Eligibility Test in Karnataka.³⁶ On June 23, two Muslim students—one of them from Jammu and Kashmir, the other from Uttar Pradesh—were barred from taking a government exam in Rajasthan's Jaipur because they were wearing the hijab.³⁷

On July 31, a Muslim student was expelled from a college in Uttar Pradesh's Bareilly for sporting a beard. In the month prior, the student was repeatedly pressured by the school principal to shave his beard and faced threats of expulsion if he did not comply. On the day of his expulsion, the principal refused to let the student attend classes, stating, "This is a college, not a madrasa. Cut your beard; you can't study like this here."³⁸

³³ maktoobmedia.com/india/bombay-hc-dismisses-plea-against-hijab-ban-by-mumbais-ng-acharya-dk-marathe-college

³⁴ siasat.com/clash-among-students-after-hindutva-song-played-at-karnataka-college-event-3035043

³⁵ theobserverpost.com/kolkata-professor-resigns-over-harassment-for-wearing-hijab

³⁶ iamc.com/hindu-militant-group-p pressures-16-muslim-businessmen-to-flee-city

³⁷ maktoobmedia.com/india/hijab-wearing-student-not-allowed-to-sit-for-rajasthan-judicial-exam

³⁸ clarionindia.net/this-is-not-a-madrasa-you-cant-keep-beard-student-expelled-from-up-college

In August, during a Hindu religious procession in Uttar Pradesh's Hapur, a group of Hindu extremists attempted to break into a madrasa while chanting the Hindu supremacist warcry "Jai Shri Ram." The group tried to force their way in by hitting the school's gate with sticks. They also verbally abused and threatened the madrasa staff.³⁹

On August 12, a college in Uttar Pradesh's Bijnor denied entry to Muslim students because they were wearing hijabs.⁴⁰ Days later, a 12th-grade Muslim student was brutally assaulted by a mob of radicalized Hindu youth—including two of his classmates—for talking to a female friend.⁴¹ The extremists accused the victim of "love jihad", tied his hands, removed his shirt, and dragged him by a rope while parading him in front of a crowd. The girl was also harassed and assaulted by the mob. Although no extremists were arrested for the assault, the victim was arrested under the POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act), despite the girl denying being in a romantic relationship with the victim and acknowledging that they were friends.

On August 23, Hindu militants from the Bajrang Dal physically assaulted and verbally abused Muslim girls for offering prayers at a school in Telangana, according to a letter by Muslim leader Amjed Ullah Khan to the state's Chief Minister. In a video of the incident, grown men from the Bajrang Dal can be seen interrogating the girls about who gave permission for praying in the school.⁴²

Days later, a school in Uttar Pradesh's Bijnor, suspended a Muslim teacher for allegedly preventing students from wearing the tilak, a mark worn by Hindus on their forehead. The teacher refused the allegations, saying she had never discriminated against students once in her 30-year career.⁴³



A Muslim teacher bids goodbye to her students after Hindu supremacist complaints led to her firing.

³⁹ iamc.com/court-dismisses-pleas-seeking-to-protect-historic-mosque-from-hindu-extremists/

⁴⁰ maktoobmedia.com/india/muslim-students-sent-home-by-uttar-pradesh-college-for-wearing-hijab

⁴¹ maktoobmedia.com/india/assam-class-12-muslim-student-assaulted-paraded-for-talking-to-hindu-girl-arrested-under-pocso

⁴² siasat.com/bajrang-dal-men-thrash-telangana-girls-for-offering-namaz-in-school-amjed-ullah-3085485

⁴³ theobserverpost.com/up-muslim-teacher-in-bijnor-suspended-over-alleged-tilak-ban-students-bid-tearful-goodbye

Violence & Harassment on Eid

On the Islamic holiday Eid-al-Adha, which is celebrated by sacrificing and distributing animal meat to the needy, Hindu supremacists launched several attacks against Muslims over allegations—baseless or otherwise—of slaughtering cattle. Muslims were also harassed by law enforcement during congregational prayers on the holiday.

On June 15, militants from the Bajrang Dal engaged in threatening behavior outside a housing complex in Maharashtra's Mumbai where Muslim families brought home sacrificial lambs for Eid. The incident occurred on Mira Road, a Muslim-majority neighborhood targeted by Hindu supremacist mobs in January 2024 following the inauguration of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya. Similar incidents were also reported in other cities in Maharashtra.⁴⁴

Also on June 15, in Telangana's Medak, several Muslims were injured after a mob of over a hundred Hindu extremists attacked Muslim residents over the community buying cattle for

the Eid sacrifice. The mob attacked a Muslim-run school, resulting in serious injuries to at least eight people, including a 60-year-old man. The mob then went on to target Muslim-owned shops and establishments, including a hospital, while armed with sticks and other weapons.⁴⁵



A Muslim man is bloodied after a Hindu extremist attack on a madrasa. Photo via The Observer Post.

On June 17th—on the day of Eid—a Hindu extremist mob tied a Muslim teen to a pole and beat him with bamboo sticks in West Bengal's Birbhum after accusing him of throwing a packet of meat in front of a Hindu temple.⁴⁶ According to his brother, the victim was on his way to a relative's house to distribute the meat, and had merely dropped the packet on the road.

Also on the day of Eid, police in Uttar Pradesh's Kushinagar arrested

⁴⁴ iamc.com/mob-of-100-hindu-extremists-attack-muslims-over-eid-preparations

⁴⁵ theobserverpost.com/telangana-mob-vandalizes-muslim-owned-businesses-in-medak-jai-shri-ram-chants-heard-ahead-of-bakrid

⁴⁶ clarionindia.net/west-bengal-mob-assaults-muslim-youth-in-birbhum-several-arrested

11 Muslims,⁴⁷ including minors and the elderly, for offering congregational prayers for the holiday outdoors—an act that has been criminalized by the Hindu supremacist state government.⁴⁷ Meanwhile, two Muslim religious leaders were arrested by police in Gujarat’s Bharuch for sharing an educational social media post describing the Islamic procedure for animal sacrifice, accused of attempting to “hurt Hindu sentiments” and provoke communal violence.⁴⁸



*Muslim cleric Shabbir Ali Patel after being detained.
Photo via The Observer Post.*

On June 18, in Odisha’s Balasore, the government imposed a curfew and suspension of social media sites after Hindu supremacists claimed that local Muslims slaughtered cows for Eid, leading to mobs of Hindu men attacking Muslim homes and families.⁴⁹

On June 19, in Himachal Pradesh’s Nahan, a Hindu mob attacked and looted a shop after its Muslim owner shared a picture of an animal sacrifice for Eid on WhatsApp.⁵⁰



A mob attacks and loots a Muslim man’s shop in Himachal Pradesh. Photo via Article 14.

A video of the incident shows police watching as the mob throws the clothes from the shop into the street. The mob then marched to the local district collector’s office, chanting genocidal slogans such as “shoot the traitors (Muslims).” Within twenty-four hours of the incident, members of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and Bajrang Dal forced seven Muslim businessmen to flee the town, prompting an exodus of at least 16 Muslim businessmen from Nahan.⁵¹

⁴⁷ siasat.com/minors-among-11-held-for-offering-eid-prayers-at-open-site-in-up-3049989

⁴⁸ theobserverpost.com/gujarat-2-clerics-arrested-over-a-social-media-post-detailing-rituals-of-animal-sacrifice-on-eid-ul-adha

⁴⁹ maktoobmedia.com/india/odishas-balasore-remains-under-curfew-following-communal-clashes-on-eid

⁵⁰ article-14.com/post/hindu-men-who-provoked-mob-against-muslim-shopkeepers-in-himachal-are-still-out-spewing-hate-66837192d2ab0

⁵¹ maktoobmedia.com/india/muslim-leaders-in-hps-nahan-say-over-a-dozen-businessmen-fled-town-after-hindutva-attack-vow-to-resist-islamophobia

Mob Lynchings and Murder of Clerics

Hindu supremacist mobs continued to lynch Muslim men throughout the summer months, frequently inventing spurious accusations of theft to justify brazen murders.

June 6 marked the first mob lynching of Modi's third term as Prime Minister, with the mob-led killings of 23-year-old Chand Miyan, 35-year-old Guddu Khan, and 23-year-old Saddam Qureshi in Odisha state. The victims were lynched by cow vigilantes who had followed their truck and planted nails in their path. Their bodies were found beneath a 30-foot-high bridge, from which they had possibly been thrown or had jumped from.⁵²

Later in June, police arrested a BJP leader, Raja Agarwal, and four others in connection with mob lynching of three Muslim men in Chattisgarh's Raipur. All five perpetrators were part of Hindu extremist groups. Hindu militants from the Bajrang Dal and Vishwa Hindu Parishad later held a rally in support of the murderers.⁵³

Beginning on June 19, West Bengal state saw a string of mob lynchings, during which four people from marginalized groups were lynched and 10 people were injured over the course of 12 separate incidents within the span of two weeks.⁵⁴ All of the victims were falsely labeled as thieves by Hindu mobs before being attacked and murdered. The relatives of the victims stated that the accusations of theft were completely fabricated.



The family of mob lynching victim Irshad Alam. Photo by Debasish Bhaduri, via Indian Express.

Also on June 19, a Muslim man, Mohammad Farid, was murdered by a Hindu supremacist mob in Uttar Pradesh, also over alleged theft.⁵⁵ A mob of at least twelve people punched, kicked, and beat him with batons and hockey sticks until he died, making Farid the fourth Muslim man to be lynched within a twelve-day span.

⁵² indianexpress.com/article/india/families-alleged-mob-lynching-but-police-chargesheet-says-cow-transporters-jumped-to-their-deaths-9459933

⁵³ maktoobmedia.com/india/raipur-lynching-of-three-muslim-men-bjp-yuva-morcha-leader-among-4-arrested

⁵⁴ thehindu.com/news/national/west-bengal/rising-mob-lynching-incidents-in-west-bengal-symptom-of-a-bigger-social-issue/article68396632.ece

⁵⁵ indianexpress.com/article/cities/lucknow/muslim-man-mob-lynching-up-aligarh-theft-9401538

On June 22, in the sixth mob lynching case since the beginning of the month, twenty-three-year-old Salman Vohra was mercilessly beaten to death by a mob of Hindu extremists in Gujarat. Witnesses report that the mob had been angered by the fact that Muslim players were excelling in the match. His death left his pregnant wife and child without a father and husband.⁵⁶

Around the same time, a Muslim mechanic, Irshad Alam, was lynched by a mob in West Bengal's Kolkata after he was accused of stealing a cell phone. A mob of fourteen people held him captive in a hostel while they beat him with heavy bats and sticks.⁵⁷



Muslim mob lynching victim Irshad Alam. Photo via The Observer Post.

In early July, 50-year-old Muslim man, Azgar Molla, was tied up and beaten to death over suspicion of theft

in West Bengal's Bhangar.⁵⁸ In Uttar Pradesh's Shamli, a Muslim man named Firoz Qureshi was also beaten to death by a mob after being accused of theft. The family denied the allegations and reported that Qureshi was "beaten with bamboo sticks and cast iron weights."⁵⁹

On July 7, a Hindu extremist mob lynched a Muslim man, Akhtar Ansari, over suspicion of goat theft in Jharkhand's Ranchi. According to local residents, the incident unfolded late at night when a mob confronted Ansari, demanding to know his identity before launching the fatal assault.⁶⁰

A number of Muslim clerics were also murdered during the quarter. On June 9, 70-year-old Muslim cleric, Maulana Mohammad Farooque, was beaten to death by a Hindu man over a land dispute in Uttar Pradesh.⁶¹ On June 11, the imam of a mosque in Uttar Pradesh's Moradabad, Maulana Akram, was shot dead by unidentified individuals at 4 a.m.⁶²

On June 30, a Hindu mob in Jharkhand lynched an imam who had

⁵⁶ shorturl.at/TP7za

⁵⁷ theobserverpost.com/irshad-wasnt-a-thief-attackers-demanded-10-thousand-rupees-says-wife-of-kolkata-mob-lynching-victim

⁵⁸ theobserverpost.com/west-bengal-sees-another-lynching-man-killed-in-bhangar-over-theft-suspicion-two-arrested

⁵⁹ theobserverpost.com/muslim-man-lynched-to-death-in-uttar-pradeshs-shamli-over-allegations-of-theft

⁶⁰ theobserverpost.com/mob-lynches-akhtar-ansari-in-ranchi-over-alleged-goat-theft-family-seeks-justice

⁶¹ theobserverpost.com/up-madrasa-owner-maulana-mohammad-farooque-beaten-to-death-in-land-dispute-accused-chandramani-tiwari-flees

⁶² iamc.com/mosque-imam-shot-dead-in-uttar-pradesh

been involved in a bike accident. The victim, Maulana Sahabuddin, accidentally collided his bike with an auto carrying a Hindu woman, leaving her with a minor injury. Over this minor accident, the mob beat him to death with bats and sticks, ignoring the woman's pleas to stop beating him.⁶³

On August 27, cow vigilantes in Haryana lynched 22-year-old Muslim migrant worker after accusing him of cooking beef in his shanty. The victim, Sabir Malik, was a rag-seller from West Bengal state who had migrated to Haryana with his wife and two-year-old daughter. A witness reported that Malik was attacked, then abducted on a motorcycle by the extremists, who then beat him to death.⁶⁴



Haryana police arrest Hindu extremists for lynching a Muslim worker. Photo via Maktoob Media.

Cow Vigilantism

Violent cow vigilante activity continued during Modi's third term as prime minister, with perpetrators frequently facing no legal repercussions for their attacks on Muslim cattle transporters, families, food workers, and even individuals with no ties to the cattle trade. In spite of the fact that India is the world's third largest exporter of beef, governments, Hindu extremists, and vigilante groups continued to kill Muslims on mere suspicion of transporting or consuming cattle.

May saw a relentless stream of cow vigilante violence. In Karnataka, Muslim cattle trader Bande Nawaz was assaulted by extremists affiliated with the Bajrang Dal.⁶⁵ A video of the early-May attack shows Nawaz's body covered in multiple wounds and bloodstains. Also in May, in Chhattisgarh's Rajnandgaon, Hindu extremist cow vigilantes assaulted a truck driver for transporting cattle.⁶⁶

Two more incidents occurred in Rajasthan on May 17, where a victim was struck until he bled from the eye,

⁶³ siasat.com/jharkhand-imam-lynched-by-mob-police-deny-communal-angle-3054648

⁶⁴ shorturl.at/WXc4l

⁶⁵ theobserverpost.com/karnataka-muslim-cattle-trader-assaulted-by-alleged-bajrang-dal-group

⁶⁶ iamc.com/bjp-candidate-demands-muslim-women-lift-face-veil-at-polling-booth

⁶⁷ hindutvawatch.org/cow-vigilantes-thrashed-a-truck-driver-for-transporting-cattle-in-rajasthan

⁶⁸ hindutvawatch.org/cow-vigilantes-dangerously-chased-a-mini-truck-resulting-in-an-accident-in-bharuch

hindutvawatch.org/two-muslim-youths-beaten-by-cow-vigilantes-for-allegedly-transporting-cattle-in-dhule

and on May 28, where a victim was beaten and left profusely bleeding from the head.⁶⁷

Similar incidents also occurred in Gujarat's Bharuch and Maharashtra's Dhule on May 23.⁶⁸



A victim is filmed and intimidated by cow vigilante attackers. Image via Hindutva Watch.

June was no better. On June 2, in Rajasthan's Jaipur, Hindu extremist cow vigilantes tied up an alleged cattle trader, throwing him to the ground and beating him.⁶⁹

On June 9, in Haryana's Julana, Hindu extremist cow vigilantes

assaulted three men over allegations of transporting cattle, forcing them to kneel with their hands tied before a camera.⁷⁰

In Jharkhand's Gamharia on June 12, Hindu extremists set fire to a vehicle that was allegedly transporting cattle,⁷¹ while in Odisha, Hindu extremist cow vigilantes entered a house, seized all the meat inside, and stole the household's fridge over suspicion of storing beef.⁷²

On June 14, in Karnataka's Raichur, Hindu extremist cow vigilantes attacked a young man for allegedly transporting cattle.⁷³

On June 15, in Haryana's Mewat, cow vigilantes armed with guns raided a village and assaulted two Muslims men over accusations of cattle slaughter and selling beef.⁷⁴

On June 19, in Haryana's Faridabad, Hindu extremist cow vigilantes assaulted a Muslim meat shop owner, as well as two Hindu customers for buying chicken.⁷⁵ That same day, in Uttar Pradesh's Basti, Bajrang Dal

⁶⁹ hindutvawatch.org/cow-vigilantes-brutally-thrashed-a-man-over-transporting-cattle-in-jaipur

⁷⁰ hindutvawatch.org/cow-vigilantes-assaulted-three-men-over-transporting-cattle-in-julana

⁷¹ timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/vehicle-ferrying-cattle-set-ablaze-in-jharkhand-probe-launched/articleshow/110949077.cms

⁷² clarionindia.net/odisha-cow-vigilantes-charge-into-muslim-home-seize-meat-and-fridge

⁷³ hindutvawatch.org/cow-vigilantes-attacked-a-youth-for-allegedly-transporting-cattle-in-raichur

⁷⁴ shorturl.at/zOtui

⁷⁵ siasat.com/haryana-cow-vigilantes-assault-a-muslim-meat-seller-and-two-hindu-men-3048184

militants attacked a rickshaw driver for allegedly carrying a bag of beef.⁷⁶

On June 24, Uttarakhand police raided a home and arrested a woman for allegedly having 50 kilograms of beef.⁷⁷

On June 22, the BJP-ruled government of Madhya Pradesh invoked the draconian National Security Act (NSA) against two Muslim men accused of involvement in an alleged cow slaughter. Speaking on the incident, state Chief Minister Mohan Yadav stated, “No crime against mother cow will be tolerated,” labeling cow slaughter as “barbaric killings.”⁷⁸



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav with key police officers. Photo via Maktoob Media.

On June 24, in Madhya Pradesh’s Indore, Bajrang Dal militants raided a

hotel over allegations of selling beef in the establishment.⁷⁹

Days later, police in Uttar Pradesh’s Moradabad shut down two cafes and arrested a cafe owner for allegedly selling beef burgers as part of their menu. The move followed a complaint by a local Bajrang Dal leader, who claimed that the sale of beef burgers hurt his religious sentiments.⁸⁰

In early July, authorities in Uttar Pradesh’s Pilibhit confiscated property worth over \$151,000 belonging to a Muslim man over allegations of the man’s involvement in cattle smuggling. Authorities also confiscated a Muslim man’s house and property, worth around \$19,400, over similar allegations.⁸¹

On July 12, in Uttar Pradesh’s Mathura, members of the cow vigilante group Gau Raksha Dal Bharat joined police officials in carrying out a raid on a cafe, accusing the establishment of “cafe jihad”.⁸²

In a similar incident in Punjab’s Ludhiana, the cow vigilante group

⁷⁶ siasat.com/surge-in-attacks-on-muslims-by-cow-vigilantes-across-india-in-june-3048905

⁷⁷ hindutvawatch.org/police-raided-a-house-and-arrested-a-women-for-allegedly-storing-50-kilograms-of-beef-in-uttarakhand

⁷⁸ maktoobmedia.com/india/madhya-pradesh-nsa-slapped-on-two-muslim-men-in-cow-slaughter-case

⁷⁹ hindutvawatch.org/bajrang-dal-members-conduct-raid-at-essentia-luxury-hotel-over-alleged-beef-sale

⁸⁰ maktoobmedia.com/india/uttar-pradesh-cafe-sealed-owner-arrested-after-police-finds-beef-burger-on-menu

⁸¹ iamc.com/slum-dwellers-attacked-over-false-allegations-of-being-bangladeshi

⁸² hindutvawatch.org/gau-raksha-dal-bharat-members-along-with-police-raid-a-cafe-alleging-cafe-jihad

Gau Raksha Dal, notorious for its role in a high-profile mob lynching case in 2023, launched a raid on a Muslim-owned meat shop and assaulted a worker for allegedly selling beef.⁸³

Later, on August 1, BJP Delhi Councillor Ravinder Negi shut down Muslim-owned meat shops and harassed their shopkeepers, demanding that they display their names in front of their stores as a way to show their religious identity.⁸⁴

On August 10, two Dalit men were tied to a tree and beaten with sticks and stones by a mob of around 50 Hindu extremists after they skinned a dead cow in Andhra Pradesh state. The mob attacked after accusing the men of slaughtering the cow, though the victims reported that they were hired to skin the animal after it died of electrocution.⁸⁵

On August 17, a mob of cow vigilantes attacked an elderly Muslim man after they accused him of cattle smuggling. A video of the incident shows the man pleading for mercy while being beaten by the mob.⁸⁶



An elderly Muslim man pleads with his attackers.

On August 25, in Rajasthan's Bhilwara, a Hindu extremist mob assaulted two Muslims as they passed by an area where Hindus were protesting after a severed tail of a cow was found near a temple. Mobs of Hindu extremists also pelted stones on Muslim houses and vandalized Muslim-owned shops.⁸⁷

On August 26, a 55-year-old Muslim woman died from a panic attack in Uttar Pradesh's Bijnor district after police officials stormed her home and ransacked it, following a baseless tip-off that beef was stored in her house.⁸⁸ Days later, cow vigilantes broke into Muslim-owned homes in a slum in Haryana's Dadri, accusing residents of cooking beef. The extremists assaulted

⁸³ hindutvawatch.org/gau-raksha-dal-leader-vishal-thakur-assaulted-a-muslim-man-for-allegedly-selling-beef

⁸⁴ hindutvawatch.org/bjp-delhi-councillor-ravinder-negi-enforces-shutdown-of-muslim-owned-meat-shops

⁸⁵ khaleejtimes.com/world/men-beaten-up-over-dead-cow-in-india

⁸⁶ siyasat.com/bihar-elderly-man-thrashed-by-mob-over-cow-smuggling-suspicion-3080544

⁸⁷ clarionindia.net/rajasthan-2-muslims-thrashed-as-hindutva-outfits-protest-over-cow-issue-in-bhilwara

⁸⁸ maktoobmedia.com/india/up-55-year-old-muslim-woman-dies-after-police-barge-into-her-home-searching-for-beef

a number of Muslim residents, confiscated pans in which meat was being cooked, and called the police.⁸⁹

On August 30, in an incident that sparked outrage across India, a group of Hindu supremacists on a train beat their co-passenger, 72-year-old Ashraf Ali Sayyed Hussain, who was traveling to visit his daughter in Maharashtra's Kalyan. A viral video of the attack shows the extremists—all of them on their way to take an exam to become policemen—accusing the elderly man of carrying beef with him on the train. The extremists then began striking him on his face and chest, chased him, and threatened to throw him off the train and rape the women in his family. Hussain's face was left swollen, his eye blackened, and at the police station, he was unable to speak from the trauma of the incident.⁹⁰

Violence & Hate Speech After Political Upheaval in Bangladesh

Following a popular uprising in Bangladesh, which culminated in the ouster of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on August 5⁹¹, Indian Hindu

extremists on social media pushed multiple false claims about attacks against Bangladesh's Hindu minority. While the ghastly attacks against Hindus did occur, Hindu extremists in India pushed disinformation that directly resulted in violent retaliation against Indian Muslims throughout the month.⁹²

On August 5, BJP leader Nitesh Rane posted on social media threatening retaliation against Bangladeshi Muslims in India for any attacks in Bangladesh against Hindu, saying, "We will kill them one by one."⁹³

Days later in Delhi, Hindu extremists attacked scrap collectors, falsely accusing them of being Bangladeshi immigrants or Rohingya refugees.⁹⁴

In Maharashtra, a Hindu extremist speaker at a rally organized by the Antarrashtriya Hindu Parishad called for gruesome anti-Muslim violence during a protest against violence faced by Hindus in Bangladesh, saying, "If they kill Hindus there, we will also cut (Muslim) people here and throw them in drains."⁹⁵

⁸⁹ iamc.com/muslim-woman-dies-after-police-barge-into-her-home-searching-for-beef

⁹⁰ thewire.in/communalism/maharashtra-muslim-man-beef-suspicion-train-assault

⁹¹ aljazeera.com/news/2024/8/5/bangladeshs-sheikh-hasina-forced-to-resign-what-happened-and-whats-next

⁹² scmp.com/week-asia/politics/article/3275603/misinformation-about-hindus-being-targeted-bangladesh-fuels-islamophobia-fears

⁹³ iamc.com/bjp-lawmaker-threatens-to-kill-all-bangladeshi-muslims-in-india

⁹⁴ iamc.com/scrap-workers-attacked-over-false-allegations-of-being-bangladeshi-rohingya

⁹⁵ iamc.com/slum-dwellers-attacked-over-false-allegations-of-being-bangladeshi

Over the next few days, members of the BJP's youth wing, the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha, detained 34 people in Odisha's Sambalpur after falsely accusing them of being Bangladeshi nationals.⁹⁶



Hindu extremists attack Bengali migrants after anti-Bangladeshi sentiments skyrocket. Photo via Al Jazeera.

Meanwhile, in Uttar Pradesh's Ghaziabad, militants from the group Hindu Raksha Dal attacked slum dwellers, accusing them of being Bangladeshi. The attackers beat the victims with sticks and set their shanties on fire, claiming that the attack was in retaliation for the targeting of Hindus in Bangladesh.⁹⁷

In Delhi, mobs of Hindu extremists vandalized shanties belonging to poor slum dwellers, accusing them of being Bangladeshi and Rohingya refugees.⁹⁸ In Maharashtra's Mumbai, Hindu

supremacist leader Dhanashree Kelshikar called for an anti-Muslim boycott, saying, "Throw these Bangladeshi and Rohingya out. They are increasing Jihad in India and Hindus are unsafe."⁹⁹

In Maharashtra's Amravati, a Hindu supremacist leader made a similar call for the mass expulsion of Muslims, saying, "[Hundreds of thousands] of Rohingya live here in India. [Tens of millions] of Bangladeshis live here in India... So our first demand is that these Rohingya Muslims and Bangladeshi Muslims, these traitors, be kicked out of India."¹⁰⁰

Near the end of August, Assamese ethno-nationalist groups launched a campaign targeting Bengali-speaking Muslims. The groups went door to door with threats, demanding that Muslim families vacate their homes within a week.¹⁰¹

Hate Speech & Calls for Violence

Hindu extremist leaders and BJP officials alike continued to propagate public hate speech against Muslims

⁹⁶ maktoobmedia.com/india/odisha-hindu-right-wing-groups-target-bengali-speaking-workers-label-them-bangladeshi-infiltrators-mama-ta-intervenes

⁹⁷ hindutvawatch.org/members-of-the-far-right-hindu-raksha-dal-attacked-slum-dwellers-accusing-them-of-being-bangladeshi-in-ghaziabad

⁹⁸ iamc.com/hindu-extremist-mob-assaults-muslim-man-over-theft-allegation

⁹⁹ muslimmirror.com/eng/bangladesh-prms-ouster-triggers-anti-muslim-violence-in-india

¹⁰⁰ iamc.com/muslim-passerbys-beaten-up-during-hindu-extremists-protest-over-injured-cow

¹⁰¹ iamc.com/muslim-passerbys-beaten-up-during-hindu-extremists-protest-over-injured-cow

and minorities, including explicit calls for violence.

On May 3, at a Hindu extremist event in Solapur, Maharashtra, one militant leader threatened to “kill many Afzals, Akbars,” referencing common Muslim names. He also implied that Hindus should inflict violence on Muslim men in the name of preventing interfaith relationships, adding, “You (Hindus) should pick up arms to protect your sisters.”¹⁰²

On May 16, in Maharashtra’s Mumbai, Hindu extremist leader Dhananjay Desai gave a speech in which he declared, “Non Hindus living in India are like a disease living in a human body.” He also referred to Rohingya refugees living in India as “termites.”¹⁰³ Days later, on May 19, Hindu supremacists in Chhattisgarh’s Raipur took a group oath in which they vowed to reconvert people who convert away from Hinduism.¹⁰⁴

On May 26, in Gujarat’s Valsad, a leader of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad explicitly threatened violence against Muslims, saying, “If one Hindu

is attacked in one place, hundreds of theirs should be attacked in ten places...Just because no riots have happened in the last 10 years doesn’t mean that it won’t happen again. We have to be prepared.”¹⁰⁵

On June 4, a Hindu extremist leader in Bihar’s Purnia threatened to “cut [Muslim men] from top to bottom” if they were to enter interfaith relationships with Hindu women.¹⁰⁶

On June 9, Indian scientist and far-right political commentator Anand Ranganathan sparked widespread outrage after advocating on a news podcast that India enact an “Israel-like solution” in Kashmir, referencing Israel’s indiscriminate slaughter of civilians, including children, in Gaza.¹⁰⁷

On July 17, federal minister and BJP leader Giriraj Singh claimed that India’s “biggest mistake was to let Muslims live here.”¹⁰⁸ On the same day, virulent Hindu supremacist Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, claimed that “changing demography”—a Hindu supremacist conspiracy that falsely claims the Muslim

¹⁰² iamc.com/we-will-kill-many-muslims-say-hindu-extremist-leaders-at-event

¹⁰³ iamc.com/hindu-extremist-leader-calls-indian-muslims-christians-a-disease

¹⁰⁴ iamc.com/six-christians-arrested-over-allegations-of-forced-religious-conversion

¹⁰⁵ iamc.com/indian-celebs-harassed-by-hindu-supremacists-for-showing-solidarity-with-palestinians

¹⁰⁶ iamc.com/muslim-men-beaten-to-death-by-cow-vigilantes-in-chhattisgarh

¹⁰⁷ maktoobmedia.com/india/indian-scientist-calls-for-israel-like-solution-of-kashmir-faces-backlash

¹⁰⁸ maktoobmedia.com/internet/the-biggest-mistake-was-to-let-muslims-live-here-says-union-minister-giriraj-singh

population is vastly outgrowing the Hindu population—is a “matter of life and death.” This conspiracy is used to further anti-Muslim hatred, violence, and calls for genocide.¹⁰⁹



Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma. Photo via Maktoob Media.

On July 19, at an event in Madhya Pradesh’s Khandwa, Hindu extremist leader Ashok Paliwal called on his supporters to “hunt down” and “kill all supporters of Palestine.” Following his hate speech, members of Hindu supremacist groups marched in the streets while brandishing Israeli flags.¹¹⁰

On July 20, in Jharkhand’s Ranchi, federal minister and BJP leader Amit Shah gave a speech in which he promoted the anti-Muslim conspiracies “love jihad” and “land jihad,” both of which are used to justify violence

and discrimination against Muslims. He also repeatedly used the word “infiltrator” in reference to Muslims.¹¹¹

On August 3, at an event in Maharashtra’s Mumbai, VHP and Bajrang Dal leader Gautam Kanji Rawaria threatened to “pluck out” Muslim men’s eyes and “cut off their hands” while peddling the anti-Muslim conspiracy of love jihad.¹¹² On the same day, Nitesh Rane threatened Muslims, saying, “If you kill one of ours, we will make sure to kill two of yours.”

On August 17, a Hindu extremist monk in Rajasthan’s Balotra region delivered a hate speech labeling Muslims as “demons” and “cannibals,” saying, “If they (Muslims) kill a Hindu, we will kill a hundred. We will go to their homes and kill them.”¹¹³ A day later, Nitesh Rane threatened that Hindus will “kill [Muslims] one by one,” and urged Hindus to “take inspiration from Ayodhya,” referring to the “quick” demolition of the historic Babri Masjid by a Hindu militant mob in 1992.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁹ maktoobmedia.com/india/hate-speech-cm-himanta-sarma-claims-muslim-population-in-assam-now-40-says-matter-of-life-and-death

¹¹⁰ maktoobmedia.com/india/kill-all-palestine-supporters-madhya-pradesh-hindutva-leader-calls-for-violence

¹¹¹ iamc.com/hindu-extremists-urges-hindus-to-kill-all-palestine-supporters

¹¹² hindutvawatch.org/vishwa-hindu-parishad-bajrang-dal-leader-gautam-kanji-rawaria-peddles-love-jihad-conspiracy-and-advocates-violence

¹¹³ theobserverpost.com/kill-a-hundred-muslims-for-every-hindu-hindu-monk-in-rajasthan-calls-for-violence-against-muslims

¹¹⁴ iamc.com/muslim-leaders-house-demolished-after-protests-against-hindu-monks-hate-speech

Minority Representation in General Election Outcome

While the BJP fell short of winning an absolute majority of parliamentary seats in the elections, and therefore was required to form a coalition government, minority representation in the government suffered. For the first time in India's history, the ruling party formed a government without a single Muslim cabinet member.¹¹⁵

Additionally, despite making up nearly a fifth of India's population, Muslim representation shrunk to 4.42% of elected legislators, with only twenty-four Muslim lawmakers out of 543 seats.¹¹⁶

Representation of Muslims in state-level government is similarly low; out of four thousand lawmakers across twenty-eight states, Muslims hold only around 6% of seats.¹¹⁷

Activists have attributed the stark drop in Muslim political representation to the BJP's aggressively anti-Muslim policies and hateful rhetoric.¹¹⁸

Election-Related Violence & Voter Intimidation

Between April and June, Muslims and other marginalized groups reported facing violence and intimidation at the polling booths during India's general elections. Across India, Muslim voters found their names deleted from the electoral roll without notice during election season, driving up concern that the BJP deliberately suppressed Muslim voters.¹¹⁹

In May, the names of 700 Muslim voters were deleted before this election after their homes were razed last year. Similar concerns surfaced in Uttar Pradesh's Sitapur, with residents reporting that over a hundred Muslim voters' names were missing from the electoral roll.¹²⁰

On May 7, Muslims attempting to vote in BJP-ruled Uttar Pradesh's Sambhal were beaten by police and prevented from casting their votes.¹²¹ On May 5, villagers in BJP-ruled Gujarat's Devbhoomi Dwarka reported that more than 500 Muslim names were removed from the voter list

¹¹⁵ theobserverpost.com/modis-third-term-cabinet-lacks-muslim-representation-for-first-time-in-independent-india

¹¹⁶ maktoobmedia.com/features/muslim-presence-in-lok-sabha-shrinks-to-4-42-24-mps-from-nine-states-in-dwindling-representation

¹¹⁷ pbs.org/newshour/world/indias-parliament-sees-fewer-muslims-as-the-strength-of-modis-party-grows

¹¹⁸ apnews.com/article/india-general-elections-muslims-modi-c01281195f71a4c8b4bd53146695a0e5

¹¹⁹⁻¹²⁰ maktoobmedia.com/elections-2024/in-polls-for-existence-muslims-find-their-names-missing-from-electoral-rolls

¹²¹ iamc.com/muslim-cattle-trader-assaulted-by-hindu-militants-in-karnataka

without reason. The affected individuals reported that they were able to vote in previous general elections in 2019, and were “deliberately sidelined” this year.¹²²



BJP parliamentary candidate Dharmapuri Arvind harasses Muslim voters at a polling booth. Photo via Maktoob Media.

On May 13, BJP electoral candidate Dharmapuri Arvind harassed Muslim women who arrived at a polling booth in Nizamabad, Telangana, while wearing the burka. In a video of the incident, Arvind can be seen entering the polling booth and arguing with Muslim women as they cast their votes. Arvind was also filmed berating the staff, demanding to know if women were allowed to vote without comparing their faces and ID cards.¹²³ In a similar incident on the same day,

the BJP’s candidate in Hyderabad, Madhavi Latha, demanded that Muslim women lift their veils at a polling booth.¹²⁴

On May 20, BJP workers beat a Dalit man in front of his family in Uttar Pradesh’s Kaushambi after learning he did not vote for the BJP.¹²⁵ On the same day, Muslims in Uttar Pradesh’s Amethi, a key constituency in India’s ongoing elections, reported that police charged at them with sticks to prevent them from voting.¹²⁶

Following the election results, BJP supporters held violent and intimidating victory celebrations in some states. On July 5, in Kerala’s Kozhikode, BJP workers celebrated winning a seat in the state’s parliament by throwing firecrackers at and attempting to break into the headquarters of a Muslim-owned news channel, MediaOne TV.¹²⁷ In Karnataka’s Dakshina Kannada, BJP supporters intimidated Muslims by chanting “Glory to Modi” and the Hindu supremacist warcry “Jai Sri Ram” in front of a mosque.¹²⁸

Voter suppression continued beyond

¹²² maktoobmedia.com/india/gujarat-more-than-500-muslim-voters-removed-from-voter-list-deliberately-sidelined-they-say

¹²³ maktoobmedia.com/elections-2024/telangana-bjp-candidate-intimidates-niqab-clad-female-voters-and-staff-at-polling-booth

¹²⁴ maktoobmedia.com/elections-2024/hyderabad-bjp-candidate-booked-after-asking-burqa-clad-women-to-lift-veil-to-check-identity

¹²⁵ siasat.com/up-dalit-family-beaten-up-for-not-voting-for-bjp-in-kaushambi-3029575

¹²⁶ siasat.com/lis-polls-after-sambhal-muslims-not-allowed-to-vote-in-ups-amethi-3029559

¹²⁷ muslimmirror.com/eng/kerala-mediaonetv-headquarters-attacked-by-bjp-activists

¹²⁸ theobserverpost.com/bjp-victory-celebration-jai-sri-ram-and-jai-modi-chants-outside-mosque-in-karnatakas-dakshina-kannada-district

general elections. During a local election in BJP-ruled Uttarakhand state's Manglaur, on July 10, Muslim voters were attacked and stopped from voting during assembly polls. In videos of the incident, a number of Muslims, including the elderly, can be seen covered in blood.¹²⁹

Hate Speech During Elections

Campaigns for India's 2024 general elections, which are held between April 19 and June 1, were rife with anti-Muslim hate speech. Despite the fact that Indian law prohibits communal speech during elections, BJP leaders—including Modi—repeatedly deployed anti-Muslim hate speech on the campaign trail. According to Human Rights Watch, at least 110 out of 173 campaign speeches made by Modi contained “Islamophobic remarks apparently intended to undermine the political opposition.”¹³⁰ US-based watchdog group Hindutva Watch similarly documented hundreds of rallies where senior BJP officials targeted Muslims throughout the election season.¹³¹

On May 1, the official Instagram

account of the BJP posted an election campaign video that demonized Muslims to target the opposition party, claiming, “If the Congress [Party] comes to power, it will snatch all wealth of non-Muslims.”¹³² This claim followed on the heels of repeated hate speeches given by Modi and senior BJP leaders claiming that voting for Congress would somehow lead Muslims to obtain excessive privileges.



Narendra Modi gives a speech. Photo by Mahesh Kumar A./AP Photo.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath made similar claims on the same day in Maharashtra's Solapur, and further declared that the opposition party intended to “make India an Islamic nation with a Taliban-style government.” At another rally in Birbhum, West Bengal, Adityanath

¹²⁹ maktoobmedia.com/india/muslim-voters-attacked-stopped-from-voting-in-uttarakhands-manglaur-murder-of-democracy-allege-congress-candidate-former-cm

¹³⁰ hrw.org/news/2024/08/14/india-hate-speech-fueled-modis-election-campaign

¹³¹ voanews.com/a/us-watchdog-documents-hundreds-of-india-election-rallies-targeting-muslims/7621513.html

¹³² maktoobmedia.com/elections-2024/congress-will-snatch-all-wealth-of-non-muslims-says-bjps-new-islamophobic-instagram-reel

threatened to forcibly seize Muslims' inheritance assets.¹³³

In a similar bid to demonize Muslims as well as opposition parties, federal minister Amit Shah referred to the opposition as a “a government of Mullas, Madrassas and Mafia” at an election rally in West Bengal. He added that the opposition would redistribute the nation's wealth among Muslims.¹³⁴

Prime Minister Narendra Modi also continued to spread anti-Muslim propaganda in his speeches. At rallies in Telangana and Gujarat on April 30 and May 1, Modi reiterated that Muslims must be stripped of benefits provided by the reservation system, the Indian equivalent of affirmative action for disenfranchised minorities.¹³⁵

A day later, on May 2, Modi directly promoted anti-Muslim conspiracy theories of “love jihad” and “land jihad” for the first time at an election rally in Gujarat.¹³⁶

On May 7, Modi declared that the BJP would prevent the opposition from putting a “Babri [mosque]

lock” on the Ram Temple in Ayodhya, and from reinstating the special status of Muslim-majority Jammu and Kashmir.¹³⁷

Other BJP leaders called for anti-Muslim violence, demonized Muslims' presence in India, or implied that Muslims should be expelled from the country. On May 4, BJP leader Sakshi Maharaj claimed at an election rally that “some people (Muslims) want to invade India so that in 2045, the Islamic flag will be unfurled in India.”¹³⁸

On May 5, at an election rally in Maharashtra's Amravati, BJP candidate Navneet Rana said, “If you want to live in India, then you have to say Jai Shri Ram (glory to Ram). Otherwise, you have to go to Pakistan.”¹³⁹ Three days later, at a rally in Telangana state, Rana threatened, “It will only take us 15 seconds to wipe you (Muslims) out... a vote for MIM or Congress (opposition parties) is a vote for Pakistan.”¹⁴⁰

On May 7, BJP leader T. Raja Singh, who has had a number of police reports filed against him for hate speech, was

¹³³⁻¹³⁵ iamc.com/pm-modi-continues-anti-muslim-hate-speech-in-election-rallies-2

¹³⁶ iamc.com/in-a-first-pm-modi-promotes-anti-muslim-conspiracy-theories-at-election-rally

¹³⁷ maktoobmedia.com/india/need-more-than-400-lok-sabha-seats-to-prevent-congress-from-putting-babri-lock-on-ram-temple-says-pm-modi

¹³⁸⁻¹³⁹ iamc.com/we-will-kill-many-muslims-say-hindu-extremist-leaders-at-event

¹⁴⁰ iamc.com/graves-demolished-and-idols-installed-inside-600-year-old-shrine

once again booked in Maharashtra after giving an anti-Muslim speech at an event.¹⁴¹ Singh encouraged the Hindu extremist crowd to boycott halal products and use bulldozers as collective punishment against Muslims, saying, “Land jihad, love jihad or cow slaughter... we will see who dares to defy us.”

On the same day, Yogi Adityanath threatened Muslims at a rally in Uttar Pradesh, saying, “If you chant for Pakistan, then live there, don’t be a burden on India; Opposition supports terrorists [and] supports cow slaughter.”¹⁴²

Meanwhile, in West Bengal’s Budbud, a local BJP leader urged Hindu women to “save themselves from jihadis” by using “weapons like knives, blades... Otherwise they will take away your wife, mother or husband.”¹⁴³

On May 9, Maharashtra’s Jalgaon, BJP leaders Navneet Rana and Raksha Khadse held up a sign that read “Hindu Rashtra” (Hindu nation), during an election rally.¹⁴⁴

On the same day, Rana mimed shooting an arrow at a mosque as she passed by it with a crowd of Hindu supremacist supporters.¹⁴⁵



BJP candidate Navneet Rana mimes shooting an arrow at a mosque.

On May 10, federal minister and BJP leader Rajeev Chandrasekhar, implied in a social media post that Muslim population growth in India is primarily due to “illegal immigration and conversion.” He also claimed that the Muslim community is “outgrowing other communities” and “altering the demography.”¹⁴⁶

In Telangana’s Karimnagar on May 11, T. Raja Singh threatened violence against Muslims, saying, “We [Hindus] don’t need 15 minutes, we just need 15 seconds [to kill them].”¹⁴⁷ On May 12, at an event in Delhi, BJP lawmaker Rakesh Sinha declared, “We know how to chop off the fingers of those

¹⁴¹ siasat.com/maharashtra-police-book-raja-singh-for-hate-speech-3021288

¹⁴² iamc.com/graves-demolished-and-idols-installed-inside-600-year-old-shrine/

¹⁴³⁻¹⁴⁴ iamc.com/bjp-leaders-urge-hindus-to-take-up-arms-threaten-violence-against-muslims

¹⁴⁵ hindutvawatch.org/bjps-navneet-rana-directs-imaginary-arrow-while-passing-through-a-mosque

¹⁴⁶ maktoobmedia.com/india/hate-speech-union-minister-rajeev-chandrasekhar-says-muslims-outgrowing-other-communities-altering-demography

¹⁴⁷ iamc.com/bjp-leaders-urge-hindus-to-take-up-arms-threaten-violence-against-muslims

(Muslims) pointing fingers at Lord Ram, Krishna and Shiva's mandirs (temples)."¹⁴⁸ On the same day, Assam Chief Minister encouraged an audience to destroy historic mosques and replace them with temples, saying, "We need to liberate the birthplace of Krishna (from Shahi Idgah mosque) in Mathura... And in place of Gyanvapi Mosque, we need to build the grand Shiv Temple."¹⁴⁹

On May 14, Modi continued to peddle anti-Muslim conspiracy theories, claiming that "infiltrators with a jihadi mindset are getting support from the opposition and putting our [Hindu] sisters in danger."¹⁵⁰ Two days later, Modi claimed that the opposition would welcome "Bangladeshi immigrants" into the country, and reiterated that the opposition has declared "vote jihad" against him.¹⁵¹ On May 16, at a rally in Bihar, Amit Shah threatened further anti-Muslim violence, saying, "Give Modi a third term and we will fix these cow killers."¹⁵²

On May 18, at a rally in Maharashtra, Yogi Adityanath boasted about the lack of religious freedom for Muslims in

Uttar Pradesh, saying, "No one dares to even pray namaaz (Muslim prayers) on our roads. The mosques have removed their mics. In the next 5 years people will forget about screams (call to prayer) from mosques." The next day, Adityanath told an election rally that the elections were between Hindus, whom he referred to as "worshippers of Ram", and Muslims, whom he called "anti-nationals and traitors to the nation."¹⁵³

On May 21, at an election event in Delhi, BJP leader Kapil Mishra openly threatened to kill Muslims, saying, "They asked how many Afzals (Muslims) you will kill? You will find Afzal in each household. Wherever Afzal comes out, we will enter that house and kill him."¹⁵⁴ He also referred to Muslims as "termites" and "diseases," adding that Narendra Modi was only laying the foundation and removing termites: "In this third term, all these diseases would be treated," implying mass violence and ethnic cleansing of Muslims.

On May 26, in Maharashtra's Sangli, T. Raja Singh also gave a direct call for anti-Muslim violence, encouraging

¹⁴⁸⁻¹⁴⁹ iamc.com/bjp-leaders-urge-hindus-to-take-up-arms-threaten-violence-against-muslims

¹⁵⁰ iamc.com/bjp-leader-threatens-to-finish-off-muslims-in-15-seconds

¹⁵¹ iamc.com/hindu-extremist-leader-calls-indian-muslims-christians-a-disease

¹⁵² hindutvawatch.org/home-minister-amit-shah-delivers-communal-speech-in-madhubani

¹⁵³ iamc.com/police-charge-muslims-with-sticks-to-keep-them-from-voting-in-uttar-pradesh

¹⁵⁴ iamc.com/cow-vigilantes-lynch-muslim-man-to-death-in-gujarat

Hindu youth to “shoot the chest of people who do love jihad.”¹⁵⁵

Anti-Muslim Laws and Policies

At both the state and federal level, the government announced policies that would directly target Muslim safety and property, rendering them even more vulnerable to Hindu supremacist violence.

On July 9, the federal Indian government lifted a decades-old ban on government employees associating with the country’s oldest Hindu supremacist paramilitary group, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), and its activities.¹⁵⁶ Historically, the RSS has been banned in India twice due to its fascist ideology and role in mass violence, and it remains a key driver of India’s Hindu supremacist movement. In August, the BJP-led government in Rajasthan lifted a similar ban on government employees taking part in RSS activities.¹⁵⁷



Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh members. Photo via The Observer Post/Meta.

On July 30, the BJP-led Uttar Pradesh government announced plans to enforce stricter punishments for those convicted under the state’s draconian “anti-conversion” or “love jihad” laws, with the penalty for converting away from Hinduism for the purpose of marriage extending to life imprisonment.

In August, the BJP-led government of Assam announced that it, too, would be enforcing stricter punishments for violations of anti-conversion laws.¹⁵⁸ Such laws criminalize conversion to Islam and Christianity, and in the context of “love jihad” conspiracies, are weaponized as a way to target Muslim men for consensual relationships with Hindu women.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁵ iamc.com/bjp-lawmaker-rajya-singh-urges-hindus-to-shoot-muslims-in-the-chest/

¹⁵⁶ theobserverpost.com/modi-government-lifts-58-year-ban-on-government-employees-associating-with-rss-congress-says-bureaucracy-can-now-come-in-knickers

¹⁵⁷ scroll.in/latest/1072413/rajasthan-lifts-52-year-old-ban-on-public-servants-participating-in-rss-activities

¹⁵⁸ clarionindia.net/assam-cms-planned-laws-on-love-jihad-land-sale-to-muslims-slammed

¹⁵⁹ siasat.com/up-proposes-life-term-in-strict-love-jihad-law-3070499

Around the same time, the government of Assam also proposed to make the Chief Minister's consent necessary for land transactions between Hindus and Muslims, in an attempt to curb land sales to Muslims.¹⁶⁰

On August 8, the federal government introduced the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, which aims to usurp control over Muslim-owned lands by enjoining that boards managing land allocated for Muslim religious use (Waqf boards) must have non-Muslim members. The bill would also strip historic powers given to Waqf boards and allow for what Opposition leaders describe as “excessive interference” from the Hindu supremacist government.¹⁶¹ The bill has been referred to a Joint Parliament Committee and is currently under review.

On August 13, the BJP-led Madhya Pradesh government made it mandatory for colleges across the state to incorporate books written by leaders of the Hindu paramilitary group Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) into their curriculums.¹⁶² The works of prominent RSS leaders such as M.S.

Golwalkar and Veer Savarkar include praises of fascism and Nazi Germany, and advocate for India to be turned into a Hindu ethno-state.

Economic Apartheid

On July 13, police in BJP-ruled Uttar Pradesh state gave an unconstitutional mandate which ordered all vendors and business owners in Muzaffarnagar and other cities to self-declare their religious identity by displaying their names in front of their establishments ahead of a Hindu religious procession.¹⁶³



As per police orders ahead of a Hindu procession in Uttar Pradesh, a Muslim vendor holds a sign displaying his religious identification. Photo credit: Times of India.

Muzaffarnagar police stated that the move would “ensure that there’s no confusion among the kanwariyas (Hindu devotees)” participating in the procession. Legal experts, however,

¹⁶⁰ clarionindia.net/assam-cms-planned-laws-on-love-jihad-land-sale-to-muslims-slammed

¹⁶¹ thehindu.com/news/national/opposition-members-raise-an-array-of-objections-to-waqf-amendment-bill/article68554943.ece

¹⁶² siasat.com/mp-mandatory-to-include-books-authored-by-rss-leaders-in-college-3078397

¹⁶³⁻¹⁶⁴ scroll.in/article/1070838/kanwar-yatra-food-directive-is-unconstitutional-and-the-police-know-this

slammed the order as setting the stage for an economic boycott of Muslims, while activists and politicians warned that the move would place a target on Muslims, increasing the risk of hate crimes and mob violence.¹⁶⁴ Muslim politician Asaduddin Owaisi labeled the mandate as “apartheid.”¹⁶⁵

Though the Supreme Court stayed the order after an outcry from opposition leaders Muslim groups and rights experts, Hindu extremists continued to harass Muslim fruit vendors who had not publicly displayed their names and religious identities, before an upcoming Hindu procession.



A vendor's name written on a fruit stall.

Civic officials in Madhya Pradesh state have ordered small vendors, restaurants, hotels, and other businesses to “display their names” in

front of their establishments as a way to show their religious identity, a move that civil society leaders have compared to apartheid and Nazism.¹⁶⁶

In Sitapur, Uttar Pradesh, Hindu supremacists placed nameplates on all Hindu shops and vendors to easily distinguish them from Muslim vendors.¹⁶⁷

Illegal Demolitions and Evictions

Demolitions of Muslim-owned properties, including homes, shops, mosques, and shrines, continued throughout the quarter. Amnesty International has criticized state BJP governments’ use of targeted demolitions against minority communities—known colloquially as “bulldozer justice”—as a violation of international law.¹⁶⁸

On May 7, a Hindu extremist mob demolished Muslim graves and installed Hindu idols inside a 600-year-old Muslim shrine in Gujarat’s Ahmedabad.¹⁶⁹ The attack heightened communal tensions in the area, culminating in stone pelting and the arrest of 30 people.

¹⁶⁵ freepressjournal.in/india/video-muzaffarnagar-hawkers-restaurant-owners-put-up-signboards-with-their-names-on-it-ahead-of-kanwar-yatra-on-july-22

¹⁶⁶ maktoobmedia.com/india/after-up-uttarakhand-shops-in-madhya-pradesh-ujjain-told-to-display-owners-names-numbers

¹⁶⁷ x.com/HindutvaWatchIn/status/1816775719814361306

¹⁶⁸ amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/02/india-authorities-must-immediately-stop-unjust-targeted-demolition-of-muslim-properties

¹⁶⁹ maktoobmedia.com/india/graves-demolished-and-idols-installed-inside-ahmedabads-600-year-old-dargah-a-culmination-of-post-babri-vhp-campaign

On May 21, authorities in Assam’s Dholpur demolished the makeshift shanties of about 2,000 evicted families, most of them Muslim, in order to make way for an agricultural project in the area.¹⁷⁰

On June 10, officials in Uttar Pradesh’s Lucknow began a militarized demolition drive of shops and homes in Akbar Nagar, a predominantly Muslim locality that houses over 10,000 residents and around 2,000 homes and businesses.¹⁷¹



A bulldozer destroys Muslim-owned shops and homes in Lucknow’s Akbar Nagar.

The demolition resulted in one resident committing suicide after losing

his livelihood and being forced to live in a tent.¹⁷²

Around the same time, officials in Ahmedabad demolished a mosque, claiming the Muslim community did not have “permission” to use it.¹⁷³

On June 14, officials in Madhya Pradesh’s Ratlam demolished the home of a Muslim man after Hindu supremacist groups pressured police to take action regarding the discovery of a severed cow head at a temple.¹⁷⁴ The man was detained and his house was demolished without proper investigation or evidence.

A similar incident occurred two days later in Madhya Pradesh’s Mandla, where officials bulldozed the homes of 11 Muslim families after police claimed they had found beef stored in their refrigerators—before testing the meat samples found in their homes.¹⁷⁵ Around 50 people were left homeless, with victims reporting that their families and belongings were left on the road, children were left “crying in pain” due to the heat, and they struggled to find food to eat.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁰ shorturl.at/EY6h4

¹⁷¹ maktobmedia.com/india/thousands-in-distress-as-demolition-drive-begins-in-lucknows-akbar-nagar

¹⁷² theobserverpost.com/muslim-tailor-commits-suicide-after-house-demolished-in-lucknow/

¹⁷³ iamc.com/officials-demolish-muslim-shrine-in-bjp-ruled-gujarat

¹⁷⁴ iamc.com/officials-demolish-muslim-mans-home-without-any-proof-of-crime

¹⁷⁵ theobserverpost.com/mp-11-muslim-families-houses-demolished-after-beef-found-in-refrigerators-in-mandla

¹⁷⁶ shorturl.at/yYUkY



A bulldozer demolishes a home in Bhainswahi Village in Madhya Pradesh. Photo via The Observer Post.

On June 20, civic officials in Delhi demolished a local mosque, the Janat ul Firdous Masjid, after claiming the place of worship was an “illegal encroachment.”¹⁷⁷ Five days later, Delhi officials demolished another mosque after a local Hindu supremacist leader claimed it had been built illegally.¹⁷⁸ Around the same time, officials in Gujarat demolished a Muslim shrine after alleging that it was constructed illegally.¹⁷⁹

On June 24, authorities in Assam’s Morigaon left around 8,000 Muslims homeless after demolishing their homes, claiming they were built illegally on railway land.¹⁸⁰ The families had lived in the settlement for nearly four decades. Residents have accused authorities of clear religious

discrimination, reporting that Muslim households were specifically targeted while Hindu structures remained untouched, despite also occupying railway land.

In late June, police in Uttar Pradesh’s Gonda confiscated the properties of five Muslim men for their alleged involvement in cattle slaughter and trade.¹⁸¹ Around the same time, Uttar Pradesh officials demolished six houses belonging to a Muslim family, after they were accused of trying to abduct a 20-year-old Hindu woman who was in an interfaith relationship with a man from the family.¹⁸²



The rubble of a Muslim family’s home after a punitive demolition over an interfaith relationship. Photo by Gajendra Yadav for Indian Express.

On July 18, officials in Uttar Pradesh’s Bareilly demolished the homes of 11 Muslim families barely

¹⁷⁷ iamc.com/muslim-man-tied-to-pole-beaten-by-hindu-extremists-on-eid

¹⁷⁸ maktoobmedia.com/india/on-hindutva-leaders-complaint-another-mosque-demolished-in-delhi-cited-as-illegal

¹⁷⁹ iamc.com/officials-demolish-muslim-shrine-in-bjp-ruled-gujarat

¹⁸⁰ maktoobmedia.com/india/in-assam-over-8000-muslims-evicted-from-railway-land-while-houses-of-hindu-families-remain-untouched

¹⁸¹ iamc.com/officials-demolish-homes-seize-properties-of-muslims-over-alleged-cow-slaughter

¹⁸² indianexpress.com/article/cities/lucknow/how-an-interfaith-relationship-culminated-in-demolition-of-six-houses-in-moradabad-9425097

hours after a Hindu man was killed during communal clashes over a Muslim religious procession.¹⁸³ Thirty-five individuals, all Muslims, were also imprisoned.

On July 28, Delhi officials bulldozed a 52-year-old mosque, the Faizyab Masjid, and its adjoining madrasa.¹⁸⁴

In August, authorities in Uttar Pradesh's Mirzapur demolished a church after baseless allegations that local Christians were forcibly converting Hindus to Christianity.¹⁸⁵

On August 17, officials in Madhya Pradesh's Udaipur demolished the home of the family of a 15-year-old Muslim boy who reportedly stabbed his Hindu classmate.¹⁸⁶ Following the alleged assault, Hindu supremacist groups set fire to vehicles, raised incendiary slogans, and vandalized public property. After the demolition, the landlord said that four more families were also asked to leave and their houses demolished.

Days later, in Madhya Pradesh's Chhatarpur, police officials demolished

the home of a Muslim leader, Shehzad Ali, after Muslims pelted stones during protests in front of a police station against a Hindu extremist monk's hateful remarks about Prophet Muhammad.¹⁸⁷



A bulldozer demolishes the home Muslim leader Shehzad Ali in Madhya Pradesh.

¹⁸³ shorturl.at/IVmFj

¹⁸⁴ clarionindia.net/community-outrage-as-52-year-old-faizyab-mosque-bulldozed-in-delhi

¹⁸⁵ theobserverpost.com/authorities-demolish-church-in-uttar-pradeshs-mirzapur-amid-illegal-conversion-allegations

¹⁸⁶ theobserverpost.com/udaipur-authorities-demolish-house-of-muslim-boy-accused-of-stabbing-classmate

¹⁸⁷ iamc.com/muslim-leaders-house-demolished-after-protests-against-hindu-monks-hate-speech

SUPPRESSION OF DISSENT

Dissent against the policies and ideology of the far-right government, whether in the form of protest or academic criticism, was criminalized and resulted in arrest, fines, and other penalties.

In particular, police throughout India repressed shows of support for Palestine, in line with the Indian government's unwavering support for Israel's ongoing genocide in Gaza.

In early June, Karnataka police detained 15 activists at a protest, some of whom, including a female student, later said they had been assaulted.¹⁸⁸

On July 10, police arrested a Muslim man in Uttar Pradesh's Bhadohi after booking him and two others for raising the Palestinian flag during a Muslim religious procession.¹⁸⁹ Three people were later arrested in Bihar's Nawada after a video showed them waving a Palestinian flag ahead of Muslim religious processions.¹⁹⁰



A pro-Palestine protester is dragged away by Karnataka police. Photo via Deccan Herald.

Similarly, in Madhya Pradesh, four Muslim men were arrested on July 23 for waving the Palestinian flag during a religious procession, following complaints from the Hindu militant group Bajrang Dal.¹⁹¹ A number of Muslim men in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Kashmir were also arrested for waving the Palestinian flag at religious processions.

Dissent in academic spaces was also penalized. On June 14, university administrators at the National Institute of Technology (NIT) in Kerala imposed nearly \$4,000 USD in fines on five students who protested

¹⁸⁸ deccanherald.com/india/karnataka/bengaluru/police-thwart-pro-palestine-agitation-detain-15-protesters-3048920

¹⁸⁹ clarionindia.net/up-two-muslim-men-booked-for-waving-palestinian-flag-one-held

¹⁹⁰ thewire.in/article/rights/three-arrested-for-waving-palestinian-flag-in-bihars-nawada/amp

¹⁹¹ timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/indore/four-arrested-for-waving-palestine-flag/articleshow/111895051.cms

the suspension of fellow student activists in March. The student activists had themselves been suspended for holding a protest against the Ram Temple consecration ceremony in January.¹⁹² The Ram Temple was built on the site of the demolished Babri Mosque, which was violently destroyed by Hindu supremacist mobs in 1992.

In late July, an international university in Delhi issued a notice to an Indian scholar for citing renowned American intellectual Noam Chomsky's criticism of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his doctoral research proposal.¹⁹³ The university also initiated a disciplinary inquiry against the scholar's supervisor, who has now resigned. The scholar quoted a 2021 interview of Chomsky, in which he said that Modi came from a "radical Hindutva tradition" and was trying to "dismantle Indian secular democracy" and "impose Hindu technocracy."

Online Censorship

In addition to its physical violence against dissenting voices, the Indian government also continued to repress

critics online. On May 1, the Free Speech Collective published a report stating that there have been 134 instances of free speech violations since the beginning of 2024, reporting that "with false narratives, deliberate disinformation and hate speech dominating the electoral agenda, the space for verified information, the voicing of dissent or even raising serious debate has all but disappeared."¹⁹⁴

On June 9, police in Uttar Pradesh filed a police report against YouTube channel Hindustani Media for reporting that a Muslim man had been lynched by a mob in the state's Shamli district.¹⁹⁵ The channel, which has more than 300,000 subscribers, is run by Muslim journalist Sadaf Kamran. Police also detained two Muslim journalists, Zakir Ali Tyagi and Wasim Akram Tyagi, and three others for sharing information about the same incident on social media.¹⁹⁶

In August, the Indian government attempted to expand its suppression of online dissent by introducing a new bill, the Broadcasting Services (Regulation) Bill, 2024, aimed at

¹⁹² maktoobmedia.com/india/nit-calicut-fines-students-rs-33-lakh-for-protesting-night-curfew-suspensions-of-students-over-ram-temple-protest

¹⁹³ independent.co.uk/asia/india/naom-chomsky-south-asia-university-b2586873.html

¹⁹⁴ maktoobmedia.com/india/india-witnessed-134-instances-of-free-speech-violations-this-year-free-speech-collective

¹⁹⁵ maktoobmedia.com/india/up-police-file-fir-against-youtube-channel-hindustani-media-for-reporting-mob-lynching

¹⁹⁶ maktoobmedia.com/india/journalists-among-five-booked-for-social-media-post-alleging-mob-lynching-of-muslim-man-in-ups-shamli

classifying online content creators and social media pages that “produce content or discuss current affairs or news” as “broadcasters.”¹⁹⁷ However, the bill was met with backlash, with critics labeling it an attempt by the Modi government to “bring all news and news-adjacent content online—text, podcasts, audio, video—under its sole regulatory oversight.”¹⁹⁸

Some analysts have theorized that the bill was drafted in retaliation against YouTubers and social media activists who worked to counter BJP propaganda, contributing to the BJP’s loss of its government majority following election season.¹⁹⁹

Also in August, the Uttar Pradesh government approved a controversial new digital media policy that mandates legal action against digital platforms or influencers who upload “objectionable content” criticizing the government on sites such as Facebook, Instagram, X, and YouTube. On the other hand, it has made the spread of propaganda lucrative for those sharing the “achievements” of the government.²⁰⁰

Arrest & Ongoing Detention of Prisoners of Conscience

The Indian government continued to imprison political opponents, activists, and prisoners of conscience, in some cases years after their initial arrest. In August, the rights group Campaign for Judicial Accountability and Reforms (CJAR) expressed significant concerns over the excessive delay in bail proceedings in cases involving Muslim activists who were arrested for protesting the discriminatory Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA).



Activist and Prisoner of Conscience Umar Khalid (right) being escorted by police. Photo via India.com.

“We note with disappointment the disturbing trend in courts where bail matters have been left pending for more than two years without a verdict—a grave violation of

¹⁹⁷ [business-standard.com/india-news/explained-new-broadcasting-bill-2024-and-its-impact-on-digital-creators-124080900665_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/explained-new-broadcasting-bill-2024-and-its-impact-on-digital-creators-124080900665_1.html)

¹⁹⁸ [thewire.in/media/broadcasting-bill-broadly-casts-citizen-subject](https://www.thewire.in/media/broadcasting-bill-broadly-casts-citizen-subject)

¹⁹⁹ ft.com/content/ba8fdc6b-bca8-4dce-8a77-db0bd2763b72

²⁰⁰ [thewire.in/article/government/up-social-media-influencers-to-get-rs-8-lakh-for-govt-publicity-and-jail-for-anti-national-content/amp](https://www.thewire.in/article/government/up-social-media-influencers-to-get-rs-8-lakh-for-govt-publicity-and-jail-for-anti-national-content/amp)

the fundamental rights of the individuals,” the group’s statement read. CJAR specifically mentioned the cases of Gulfisha Fatima and Khalid Saifi, student activists who were arrested in 2020 under the draconian Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

Opposition politician and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, who was arrested in March just before Indian election season began, remains in judicial custody.²⁰¹ Opposition leaders have criticized the arrest as an act of retaliation for Kejriwal’s party joining an alliance in opposition to the BJP. Similarly, Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren was imprisoned for five months as an act of political retaliation from the BJP, before finally being released on June 28.²⁰²

In May, a Delhi court denied bail to Prisoner of Conscience and human rights activist Umar Khalid, who was arrested over trumped up charges of carrying out violence during the anti-Muslim Delhi pogrom in 2020.²⁰³ Khalid has been imprisoned for over 1,300 days under India’s draconian anti-terror law.

The Delhi High Court also denied bail to 72-year-old Muslim leader E. Abubacker, the former chairman of the now-banned Indian Muslim outfit Popular Front of India (PFI).²⁰⁴ Abubacker is a cancer survivor and now suffering from Parkinson’s disease. Earlier, the court had also refused to place Abubacker under house arrest, as per his family’s request to provide him proper treatment.



Former Popular Front of India (PFI) Chairman E. Abubacker being escorted by authorities. Photo via Maktoob Media.

In June, a tribal human rights defender known for protesting police and paramilitary violence against tribals, Sunita Pottam, was arrested by the BJP-led Chhattisgarh government over accusations of having ties with the banned Communist Party of India (Maoist).²⁰⁵

²⁰¹ economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/why-is-delhi-cm-arvind-kejriwal-still-in-jail/articleshow/111171787.cms

²⁰² maktoobmedia.com/india/hemant-soren-back-as-jharkhand-cm-for-third-term-after-5-months-in-jail

²⁰³ maktoobmedia.com/india/1353-days-in-jail-no-bail-for-umar-khalid-in-uapa-case

²⁰⁴ maktoobmedia.com/india/delhi-hc-denies-bail-to-pfi-leader-e-abubacker-despite-deteriorating-health

²⁰⁵ maktoobmedia.com/india/chhattisgarh-advansi-woman-fighting-extra-judicial-killings-arrested-as-maoist-un-rapporteur-demands-release

PERSECUTION & DISCRIMINATION AGAINST CHRISTIANS

Christians contended with routine attacks from both state and non-state actors affiliated with Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party. The mere attempt to practice the Christian faith resulted in legal persecution and violence. Christians falsely accused of "forcible conversion" were the victims of Hindu supremacist violence and wanton arrest. The RSS-affiliated Bajrang Dal was responsible for numerous attacks this year.

In early May, a group of Hindu extremists disrupted a Christian prayer meet in Chhattisgarh, accusing them of forcibly converting Hindus to Christianity.²⁰⁶ Towards the end of the month, Chhattisgarh police arrested six Christians over allegations of forcibly converting Hindus to Christianity.²⁰⁷ In Mathura, Uttar Pradesh, Hindu supremacists disrupted a Christian prayer meet over similar allegations.²⁰⁸

On June 1, prayer services at a church in a village in Madhya Pradesh state

were suspended following a Hindu extremist attack on Christian worshippers.²⁰⁹ A mob of about 20 villagers, led by members of the Hindu militant group Bajrang Dal, broke into the house of a pastor and began beating the 50 people gathered for prayer, including women and children. The mob also seized a 54-year-old Christian man and pelted him with stones, threatening to kill anyone else who gathered for prayers there again.

Members of the RSS-affiliated Bajrang Dal assaulted 3 Christians in June over suspicions of forcible conversion in Maharashtra.²¹⁰



Hindu militants film Christians as they are attacked in Maharashtra. Photo via The Siasat Daily.

²⁰⁶ iamc.com/we-will-kill-many-muslims-say-hindu-extremist-leaders-at-event

²⁰⁷ hindutvawatch.org/police-arrest-6-members-of-christian-community-over-alleged-religious-conversions-in-balrampur

²⁰⁸ hindutvawatch.org/locals-disrupt-christian-prayer-meet-over-alleged-religious-conversions-in-mathura

²⁰⁹ christiandaily.com/news/hindu-extremist-attack-shuts-down-churchs-services-in-india.html

²¹⁰ siasat.com/bajrang-dal-members-attack-3-christians-in-pune-on-suspicion-of-conversion-3043933

On June 12, in Chhattisgarh's Jagdalpur, Hindu extremists forced Christian families to sign a pact denouncing their religion and convert to Hinduism within 10 days.²¹¹ The same mob beat two Christian victims unconscious, attacked properties, demolished field walls, and destroyed crops, resulting in many thousands of dollars of damage.

On July 5, in Rajasthan's Bharatpur, a Hindu mob led by a member of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad broke into a house and assaulted a group of Christians in prayer, injuring a man and tearing a woman's clothes.²¹²

On July 14, a Hindu mob attacked worshippers at a Christian prayer meet in Uttarakhand, including children and women.²¹³ The mob, led by an RSS member, broke into a home where the group was at prayer, attacked the congregants, kicked a cross, and harassed a woman, demanding to know where her sindoor, a mark worn by married Hindu women, was. In a video of the incident, a member of the mob can be heard saying, "They are targeting poor Hindu families, lure

them with bags of rice and force them to convert to Christianity."



A Christian prayer meeting is attacked by a Hindu extremist mob in Uttarakhand. Photo via The Siasat Daily.

Later in July, in Bhopal, police arrested three Christian nurses after they were baselessly accused of forcibly converting Hindus to Christianity.²¹⁴ On July 28, in Tamil Nadu's Vellore, Hindu supremacists disrupted and stopped an event organized by local Christians over similar baseless allegations.²¹⁵

On August 4 in Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh, Hindu militants from the Bajrang Dal joined police officials in disrupting a Christian prayer meeting, based on unfounded claims that the attendees were forcibly converting Hindus to Christianity.²¹⁶

²¹¹ maktoobmedia.com/india/chhattisgarh-hindutva-group-attacks-christian-families-forces-to-sign-pact-to-convert-within-ten-days

²¹² theobserverpost.com/vhp-led-mob-assaults-christians-in-rajasthan-claims-forced-conversions

²¹³ siasat.com/where-is-your-sindoor-hindutva-mob-attacks-christian-prayer-meet-in-dehradun-3063171

²¹⁴ hindutvawatch.org/police-arrested-3-nurses-from-christian-community-over-allegations-of-religious-conversions-in-bhopal

²¹⁵ siasat.com/christian-event-disrupted-in-tamil-nadu-over-conversion-allegations-3070155

²¹⁶ hindutvawatch.org/bajrang-dal-members-and-police-disrupt-a-christian-prayer-meet-over-alleged-religious-conversions

JAMMU AND KASHMIR

Last quarter marked the beginning of the fourth year that Muslim-majority Jammu and Kashmir began spent under the full control of Prime Minister Modi’s government, after the region was stripped of its special autonomous status in August 2019. Kashmiris remained subjected to increased government surveillance, frequent arrests, and other human rights abuses. Journalists and human rights defenders remained particularly vulnerable to arrest under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA), India’s draconian anti-terror law.

According to the Kashmir Law & Justice Project, multiple killings were reported in May and June including by torturing people to death in custodial killings.²¹⁷ In most cases, Indian forces labeled the victims “terrorists.” The Kashmir Law & Justice Project further reported at least 10 instances of the Indian government expropriating property from Kashmiris in May.

On June 17, the Indian government denied permission for Eid prayers to be held in Kashmir’s largest mosque, Jamia Masjid, for the sixth time. Muslim cleric Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, who delivers sermons and leads the prayer in the mosque, was also placed under house arrest around Eid.²¹⁸

In early July, a video went viral on social media, which appeared to show Indian armed forces using Kashmiri civilians as human shields.



Indian officers order Kashmiri civilians to investigate a bunker. Photo via Maktoob Media.

In the clip, army personnel can be heard ordering a civilian to enter a bunker where militants were believed

²¹⁷ cdn.prod.website-files.com/6031a13f23a42e1120a8c37c/668c415b4ca3fdadd13e413d_Kashmir_Updates_May_2024.pdf
cdn.prod.website-files.com/6031a13f23a42e1120a8c37c/66afb2d9b126fc5ae994553e_Kashmir_Updates_June_2024.pdf

²¹⁸ maktoobmedia.com/india/admin-bans-eid-prayers-at-srinagars-jama-masjid-for-sixth-consecutive-year

to be hiding, squeeze into tight spaces, and film the endeavor.²¹⁹ The incident follows a long history of Indian army personnel using Kashmiris as human shields.



Kashmiri lawyer Nazir Ahmad Ronga. Photo via Maktoob Media.

Retaliatory arrests of Kashmiri activists also continued. On July 11, lawyer Nazir Ahmad Ronga, a vocal critic of the Modi government's abrogation of Kashmir's autonomous status, was arrested²²⁰ under the Public Safety Act (PSA), a law that Amnesty International has criticized as a way for the Indian government to detain Kashmiris without adequate evidence of a crime.²²¹ His family reported that he was picked up from his residence in the middle of the night, without an arrest warrant.

²¹⁹ maktoobmedia.com/india/human-shield-questions-on-indian-army-after-militant-hideout-video

²²⁰ maktoobmedia.com/india/kashmir-lawyer-arrested-in-midnight-raid-charged-under-draconian-psa-sent-to-jail

²²¹ [amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/asa200122011en.pdf](https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/asa200122011en.pdf)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Indian government must prioritize the creation and enforcement of comprehensive legislation aimed at safeguarding the rights of religious minorities. Such laws should explicitly address hate speech, communal violence, and targeted attacks, ensuring that those responsible are held to account. Additionally, the legislation should affirm the right to freedom of religion, allowing individuals to practice their faith without fear of persecution or coercion. By enhancing legal protections, the government can send a decisive message that any form of discrimination or violence against religious minorities is unacceptable.
- To effectively tackle human rights violations and ensure unbiased investigations, independent oversight bodies should be established. These bodies should be tasked with monitoring and reporting instances of abuse and discrimination against religious minorities, with the authority to conduct thorough investigations, prosecute offenders, and recommend preventative measures. This approach will demonstrate the government's dedication to upholding human rights and will help restore trust within religious minority communities.
- The Union government must pass a national anti-lynching bill to protect religious minorities from Hindu militias and cow vigilante groups.
- The Citizenship Amendment Act, the National Register of Citizens and other laws that disenfranchise minorities must be revoked.
- BJP-led state governments must uphold every citizen's right to a safe home and immediately stop bulldozing Muslim homes, livelihoods, and places of worship in the name of anti-encroachment drives.
- The government should, under no circumstances, allow police or civic authorities

to enable economic apartheid or any other coordinated discrimination campaigns against minorities. Calls for economic boycotts against minorities by Hindu extremists should result in swift and appropriate penalization.

- The international community should actively engage with the Indian government to express concerns regarding the treatment of religious minorities and increasingly frequent cases of transnational repression.
- If the Indian government fails to address these issues, sanctions or trade measures should be considered. The President of the United States has the authority to impose sanctions on individuals involved in severe human rights violations through the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act. The Biden administration should consider sanctioning leaders and members of RSS, VHP, Bajrang Dal, and other Hindu militant groups, including their affiliates in the United States.
- Additionally, the US Department of State should heed the United States Commission for International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) recommendation to designate India as a Country of Particular Concern (CPC) for its serious violations of human rights and religious freedoms. Human rights and religious freedoms should be integral components of the US-India Strategic Dialogue.