

ALERT



INDIA

“Where and how will we feel safe? ... This all happened in an urban area, near India’s capital, and in the presence of police.”

—A man who witnessed his brother’s murder by a mob, as quoted by *Al Jazeera*

INDIA, THE WORLD’S LARGEST DEMOCRACY with over 1.4 billion people, is at risk of mass atrocities. Since coming to power in 2014, India’s Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) have promoted a Hindu nationalist ideology that seeks to label India’s minority Muslim population of 200 million as “outsiders” and a threat to India’s security. This method of exclusion has also been used against other religious minorities and persecuted groups in India, including Christians and Dalits. As a result, all of these groups have been victims of fatal attacks that are rising in both frequency and scale.

The Indian government has passed a series of laws that discriminate against India’s Muslim community. A number of BJP members, extremist political groups, Hindu clerics, and private individuals have spread hate speech and incited violence against Muslims in public, the media, and on social media platforms. Legal action has been taken against some offenders, but the rise in hate speech and the passage of discriminatory laws have created an environment that fuels and normalizes violence.

This environment has encouraged Hindu extremists to commit crimes against religious minorities, including lynching, murder, rape, arson, and assault. Crimes committed against minorities typically go unpunished, and security forces have been accused of targeting

Photo: Rukhsar, a Muslim woman who fled her home along with her family following Hindu-Muslim clashes triggered by a new citizenship law, reacts as she takes shelter in a relief camp in Mustafabad in the riot-affected northeast of New Delhi, India, March 3, 2020. REUTERS/Anusbree Fadnavis

minorities for arrest, detention, and destruction of property. Bias in the judicial system and the suppression of journalists and activists who are critical of the government present even more challenges for holding perpetrators accountable. India has a history of interreligious violence, which is a risk factor for future atrocities. The upcoming 2024 elections also increase the potential for deadly riots and targeted attacks.

The Museum's **Simon-Skjodt Center for the Prevention of Genocide** is deeply concerned about the escalation in violence and potential for mass atrocities against minority groups in India. To address these risks, India must:

- Protect religious minorities and vulnerable groups and pursue accountability for past crimes.
- Ensure that all officials refrain from hate speech and incitement to violence and that action is taken when authority figures use dangerous speech.
- Uphold democratic values and human rights and create a safe environment for journalists and activists.
- Ensure that laws and policies honor the protections established in India's constitution and meet international legal standards.

YOUR VOICE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Learn more at ushmm.org/india



WHAT YOU DO MATTERS. We can all play a role in helping prevent genocide and related crimes against humanity. Action takes many forms, and every action counts. You can:

Stay informed. Follow the news; visit our website to learn more about communities at risk, ushmm.org/genocide-prevention/countries.

Join the Museum community. Sign up to receive email updates and follow us on Facebook @CenterForThePreventionOfGenocide and X (Twitter) @CPG_USHMM.

Engage with your community. Spread the word about what you've learned with friends, family, and colleagues.

Support education and relief efforts. Find out more about organizations that help, what they are doing in response to mass atrocities, and how you can assist.

Contact the media. Tell television, radio, newspaper, and online journalists that you want better coverage of places at risk of genocide and other mass atrocities; visit their websites, tag them on social media, call them, and send emails that provide feedback on their coverage.

Contact your elected representatives. Alert them to the need to protect civilians, stop the violence, provide humanitarian assistance if needed, and promote solutions to crises.

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