

# RISK OF MASS ATROCITIES IN INDIA

POLICY BRIEF FEBRUARY 2024



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teaches that the Holocaust was preventable and that by heeding warning signs and taking early action, individuals and governments can save lives. With this knowledge, the **Simon-Skjodt Center for the Prevention of Genocide** works to fulfill Elie Wiesel's challenge to do for the victims of genocide today what the world failed to do for the Jews of Europe in the 1930s and 1940s. The mandate of the Simon-Skjodt Center is to alert the United States' national conscience, influence policy makers, and stimulate worldwide action to prevent and work to halt acts of genocide or related crimes against humanity, and advance justice and accountability. Learn more at [ushmm.org/genocide-prevention](https://ushmm.org/genocide-prevention).

**COVER:** Relatives and neighbors wail near the body of Mohammad Mudasir, 31, who was killed in communal violence in New Delhi, India, Thursday, Feb. 27, 2020. The violent clashes between Hindu and Muslim mobs were the capital's worst communal riots in decades and saw shops, Muslim shrines and public vehicles go up in flames. *AP Photo/Manish Swarup*

## List of Acronyms

<b>BJP</b>	Bharatiya Janata Party
<b>CAA</b>	Citizenship (Amendment) Act
<b>HRC</b>	Human Rights Council
<b>NRC</b>	National Registry of Citizens
<b>OHCHR</b>	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
<b>OIC</b>	Organization of Islamic Cooperation
<b>RSS</b>	Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UPR</b>	Universal Periodic Review
<b>USCIRF</b>	US Commission on International Religious Freedom



## Key Points

- Since coming to power in 2014, India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Bharatiya Janata Party have promoted a Hindu nationalist ideology that seeks to label India's Muslim population as outsiders and a threat to India's security.
- Rising levels of dangerous speech, discrimination, and fatal attacks against religious minority communities puts millions at risk of mass atrocities.
- There are urgent steps that the Indian government and concerned partners like the US government can and should take to mitigate these risks. See policy options below.

## INTRODUCTION

Rising levels of discrimination and dehumanization of minority communities in India is putting millions at an increased risk of mass atrocities. India has ranked in the top 15 countries at risk of mass killing since the Early Warning Project's 2017–18 assessment, including its highest rank of second in the world last year.<sup>1</sup> Since coming to power in 2014, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) have promoted a Hindu nationalist ideology that characterizes India's Muslim minority population of approximately 200 million people, 14% of the population, as a threat to the security and success of India.<sup>2</sup> This identity-based ideology also threatens the safety of other minorities and excluded groups, such as Christian communities and Dalits.<sup>3</sup>

India's constitution enshrines egalitarian principles, including nondiscrimination on the basis of religious identity.<sup>4</sup> In 2021, a study conducted by the Pew Research Center found that more than 3 out of 4 Indians of all faiths believed that religious tolerance is an important part of being "truly Indian."<sup>5</sup> However, proponents of a decades old Hindu nationalist ideology, Hindutva, believe instead that "Hinduism—not the precarious balancing of all ethnic and religious communities residing in India—is the ultimate source of the country's identity," and it is this ideology that is embraced by the BJP and Prime Minister Modi.<sup>6</sup>

Scott Straus, a leading scholar on mass atrocities, has summarized research about risk factors for anticipating whether mass atrocities are likely to occur in a particular country, and these include: the presence of instability or armed conflict; adherence by political elites to an exclusionary ideology; and a history of discrimination (with impunity) against a particular group.<sup>7</sup> Today instability in India is arguably geographically limited, as with the outbreak of conflict in May 2023 in Manipur. India has experienced more widespread inter-communal violence and mass atrocities in the past, with an uneven record of accountability or redress. The BJP today promotes an exclusionary nationalist ideology which privileges the rights of Hindus and presents religious minorities, particularly Muslims, as social and cultural outsiders, and as political and physical threats. This is demonstrated through discriminatory legislation, and a barrage of hate speech, including by political and religious leaders, that has tipped into outright incitement to violence. If nothing is done to address these risks, India may continue to experience a rise in the number of violent (and fatal) attacks against religious minorities, an escalation in the scale of the violence, and an increased level of state involvement in atrocities.

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Many countries, including the United States, view India as an important strategic partner on multiple fronts, including economically and politically as a counter to China's influence in the region. This can make discussions of mass atrocity risk more sensitive, but it should also demonstrate the ways in which mass atrocities in India could reverberate. For example, violence in states along India's borders with Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Burma could exacerbate insecurity in India's neighbors. Discrimination and mass violence in India could also undermine the assumptions of stability and shared values on which global initiatives are being built.<sup>8</sup>

## BRIEF BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF MASS ATROCITY CRIMES IN INDIA

A history of mass atrocity crimes presents a risk for future atrocities in the country in which they occurred.

India is the world's most populous country, home to approximately 1.4 billion people. Hindus represent 80% of India's population, which also includes Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, and Jains. Each of India's 28 states and 8 union territories has a distinct character and rich history. In the leadup to India's independence in 1947, the Indian National Congress party organized mass protests against British rule, and the All-India Muslim League political group called for a separate Muslim state.<sup>9</sup> In 1947, a British judge decided new borders for a Hindu majority India and a Muslim majority Pakistan (and what is now Bangladesh). More than 15 million people from Hindu and Muslim communities fled their homes, often on foot, across the newly drawn borders.<sup>10</sup> With the perilous journey and a series of intercommunal massacres, between one and two million people died.<sup>11</sup> The gruesome intercommunal violence has been linked in part to the legacy of the British divide and rule colonial policy, and the mobilization of nascent political movements along religious lines in the leadup to independence.<sup>12</sup>

India's constitution enshrines the principles of equality and religious nondiscrimination, though it does not separate religion from the State. Early leaders such as Jawaharlal Nehru celebrated India's "unity in diversity," linking the political state with India's rich history of intersecting cultural traditions,<sup>13</sup> and India became one of the founding members of the United Nations (UN). The vision of "unity in diversity" however has also been contested both politically and in practice.<sup>14</sup> Founded in 1925, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) movement promoted Hindutva, and touted a vision of India as a homeland exclusively for Hindus, in opposition to the diversity of India's main independence movement (which became the political Congress Party). A few months after India's independence, an RSS member assassinated leader Mahatma Gandhi. The RSS, and its political wing, the BJP, have ascended in popularity as support for the Congress Party has waned. The RSS has long been explicit in calling Muslims in India "invaders" and "outsiders."<sup>15</sup>

In 2002, in the Indian state of Gujarat, a series of violent riots occurred in which Hindu extremists massacred their Muslim neighbors. Current Prime Minister Modi, a longtime member of the RSS and the BJP, was then the chief minister of Gujarat. Modi and the BJP were criticized by human rights groups, opposition parties, and US lawmakers for failing to prevent the violence, and even encouraging it.<sup>16</sup> As a consequence, Modi was sanctioned and banned from entering the United States.<sup>17</sup> But in 2014, he came to national power, and in 2019 increased the reach of the BJP through a second electoral win.

## EXCLUSION, DISCRIMINATION, AND INCITEMENT TO VIOLENCE

Straus has indicated that previous violence or discrimination against an identity group, particularly with impunity, can pose a risk of future atrocities against this group. In India today, political elites promote an ideology that builds on prior discrimination and memories of violence to justify the exclusion of minorities, particularly Muslims. The pursuit of this ideology through the passage of discriminatory legislation, the use of hate speech linked with incitement, and overwhelming impunity for violence against minorities, all increase the risk of mass atrocities.

### Discriminatory Laws and Policies

Prime Minister Modi and the BJP have pursued a variety of discriminatory laws and actions that have created an environment that encourages and normalizes discrimination and violence against minorities. At the national level, one of Prime Minister Modi's first acts in 2019 was to revoke the special autonomous status of Jammu and Kashmir, India's only Muslim majority territory (over which Pakistan also claims sovereignty), a move seen by many as an answer to a longstanding demand of Hindu nationalists.<sup>18</sup> In 2019, the government passed the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), which allows for the fast-tracking of citizenship for migrants from neighboring countries, except for Muslim applicants. The UN's Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) warned that this risks having "a discriminatory effect on people's access to nationality."<sup>19</sup> The BJP has also pledged to complete a National Register of Citizens (NRC), which would force Indians to prove their citizenship, and could render Muslims who lack necessary documentation stateless.<sup>20</sup>

The Indian state of Assam, which borders Bangladesh, has had an NRC since 1951, which was at that time created to distinguish Indian citizens from migrants from what is today Bangladesh. An updated NRC was ordered by the Supreme Court in 2013. When an NRC list was published in 2019, more than 1.9 million people were left off of the list, nearly half of whom were Muslim, and who were forced to provide documentation dated before 1971 or argue their case in "foreigner tribunals."<sup>21</sup> Those who could not prove

their case, including whole families with children, faced prolonged detention and statelessness. The NRC process in Assam proved costly, laborious, and traumatic, sparking suicides and overwhelming courts, and predominantly affecting minorities.<sup>22</sup> Following the release of the NRC list, the BJP announced that any Hindus facing statelessness would be protected by the CAA. Dilip Kumar Paul, a BJP lawmaker, said that, “Our BJP’s stand is that Hindus can never be foreigners.”<sup>23</sup>

The BJP not only holds power in the central government but also controls a number of state governments. While there are particular states and cities in India that have seen a greater uptick in discriminatory legislation, these incidents do not appear reliably confined to any one region or state. Some of these laws, including those which target the religious practice of minorities, predate the rise of the BJP, others were expressly drafted and implemented under BJP leadership. Examples of discriminatory laws include so-called “conversion laws,” intended in name to prevent forced conversion, but which have in practice resulted in mobs harassing, assaulting, or even murdering Muslims and Christians engaging in religious practice or involved in interfaith relationships with Hindus.<sup>24</sup> Police have routinely arrested Muslims and Christians under anti-conversion laws,<sup>25</sup> while Hindus are rarely prosecuted, leading to the critique that the legal and social “default” is that “conversion into Hinduism is a natural progression for the national identity and constitution of India.”<sup>26</sup>

Police in India have been accused of neglecting to protect persecuted individuals or even actively participating in or aiding violence against minorities.<sup>27</sup> Between December 2019 and June 2020 there were a number of protests in Uttar Pradesh against the CAA. This led to a crackdown with police reportedly committing murder, torture, and unlawful imprisonment in a systematic manner against religious minorities; a Panel of Independent Experts concluded that these acts could amount to crimes against humanity.<sup>28</sup>

In 2022, when a series of protests and then riots broke out around religious festivals, BJP officials demolished the homes and businesses of those accused of participating, most of whom were Muslim, reportedly without notice or due process.<sup>29</sup> In Madhya Pradesh, where the homes of Muslims accused of throwing rocks were bulldozed, the home minister announced that “the homes from where stones came will be reduced to stones themselves.”<sup>30</sup> Three UN Special Rapporteurs expressed alarm that the demolitions were “ordered by local governments arbitrarily to punish Muslim minorities and low-income communities.”<sup>31</sup> In August 2023 the Punjab and Haryana High Court halted bulldozer action in Nuh and Gurugram, raising whether “an exercise of ethnic cleansing is being conducted by the State.”<sup>32</sup> Far from uniformly condemning these acts, the response from the BJP has been to incorporate bulldozers into their electoral narrative, for example nicknaming one candidate “bulldozer baba.”<sup>33</sup>

Following the outbreak of intercommunal violence in May 2023 in the Northeast State of Manipur, UN experts raised the alarm about reports of serious human rights violations.<sup>34</sup> Yet, it took two months for a public response from Prime Minister Modi, who made a statement only after a video emerged of a Meiti mob stripping and parading two Kuki women. Prime Minister Modi called the situation “a disgrace.” The BJP chief Minister in Manipur announced arrests, but also defended the delayed response by saying that “similar incidents had taken place.”<sup>35</sup> The BJP government in Manipur launched an internet shutdown following the outbreak of violence, which rendered the conflict in Manipur “invisible” for months.<sup>36</sup>

## Dangerous Speech in India

Rachel Hilary Brown, an expert on countering hate speech, described “dangerous speech” as “speech that increases the risk for violence targeting certain people because of their membership in a group, such as an ethnic, religious, or racial group. It includes both speech that qualifies as incitement and speech that makes

incitement possible by conditioning its audience to accept, condone, and commit violence against people who belong to a targeted group.”<sup>37</sup> Hate speech in India has evolved into dangerous speech, including dehumanizing words and phrases, depicting minority groups as a threat, and encouraging, inciting, or valorizing violence against these groups.

Hate speech by public figures reportedly increased by 490% in the first four years of the BJP’s rule, with 90% of the politicians involved being BJP members.<sup>38</sup> Government officials, Hindu religious leaders, and private individuals have disseminated hate speech dehumanizing religious minorities, principally Muslims, in both public fora and on social media, often branding Muslims as “anti-nationalists,” “traitors,” and “terrorists.”<sup>39</sup> This language purposely identifies Muslims as both a threat and as outsiders, and is often accompanied by an explicit call to violence, including sexual violence against Muslim women, and even calls for the “genocide” and “cleansing” of Muslim communities “like in Myanmar.”<sup>40</sup> Reports have identified social media as a conduit for the dissemination of hate speech, disinformation, and incitement.<sup>41</sup>

India has laws against hate speech that prohibit insults based on religious belief, or that are intended to incite “enmity against a particular religion.”<sup>42</sup> While individuals have occasionally been arrested in line with these laws, in most cases, hate speech and incitement have been met not only with impunity but tacit approval or participation by the ruling BJP. For example, State legislator Haribhushan Thakur Backhaul called for Muslims to be “set ablaze, just as Hindus burn effigies during the Dussehra festival.”<sup>43</sup> Hindu extremist Yogi Adityanath spoke of “feeding bullets, not biryani” to Muslim “troublemakers”; in 2017 he was appointed by Prime Minister Modi to the leadership of the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, home to about 45 million Muslims.<sup>44</sup>

Hate speech and incitement have accompanied discriminatory laws and policies, and encouraged vigilantism around them. For example, laws in place to protect cows, which are sacred in Hinduism, from slaughter or transport, have contributed to vigilantism, which is often carried out with impunity and even with encouragement from religious and political officials. The BJP, including at the state level, has campaigned for stronger cow protection laws and increased enforcement of the slaughter bans.<sup>45</sup> One BJP member called for supporters to “kill anyone involved in cow slaughter.”<sup>46</sup> Prior to the NRC in Assam, Muslims had been referred to as “infiltrators” and “foreigners.” In promising a truly national NRC, former BJP Party President (now Home Minister of India) Amit Shah pledged to supporters in West Bengal to “remove every single infiltrator from the country, except Buddhists, Hindus and Sikhs: by implementing the National Registry of Citizens nationwide.”<sup>47</sup> Shah has also referred to illegal immigrants as “cockroaches,” which, according to one reporter, is widely perceived to be a dog-whistle for Muslims.<sup>48</sup>

Political and religious leaders have also been observed encouraging riots during protests. In Delhi in 2020, when protests broke out over the CAA, BJP politicians and their supporters publicly called for the use of violence against minorities involved in protests, and adherents responded by killing around 50 people, mostly Muslims.<sup>49</sup> Instead of charging those responsible, authorities instead mostly charged minorities who had been protesting the Act.<sup>50</sup> Horrifyingly, mob violence risks becoming “the new normal,” according to India’s Supreme Court.<sup>51</sup>





A man sits in front of burnt out properties owned by Muslims in a riot-affected area following clashes between people demonstrating for and against a new citizenship law in New Delhi, India, March 2, 2020. *REUTERS/Danish Siddiqui*

## PRESENT AND FUTURE RISKS

Straus has indicated that previous violence or discrimination against an identity group, particularly with impunity, can pose a risk of future atrocities against this group. In India today, political elites promote an ideology that builds on prior discrimination and memories of violence to justify the exclusion of minorities, particularly Muslims. The pursuit of this ideology through the passage of discriminatory legislation, the use of hate speech linked with incitement, and overwhelming impunity for violence against minorities, all increase the risk of mass atrocities.

### What to Watch

#### Persistent use of “dangerous speech” and a lack of accountability

Straus found that labeling civilian groups as the “enemy,” as well as impunity for crimes against these groups, can be warning signs for mass atrocities.<sup>52</sup> Tracking the use of hate speech and incitement in India, as well as cases of impunity, can aid in the assessment of the evolving levels of violence, and predicting the likelihood of mass atrocities in India.

## Violence around the spring 2024 elections

India will be holding general elections in the spring of 2024. The BJP and their affiliates have a record of using hate speech targeted at Muslim communities prior to elections.<sup>53</sup> If this trend continues, minority groups may be violently targeted around the elections, and may be discouraged from freely participating in the democratic process. The aftermath of the elections can also be a precarious time regarding future violence. The BJP's desire to maintain not just a political majority, but dominance over the narrative of India's identity and future, raises the stakes for them and their supporters. This can make it harder for them to accept even minor election losses, and tempting to reward political gains with more exclusionary policies.

## The announcement of a National Registry of Citizens

The announcement of an NRC at the national level, or the implementation of additional NRCs at the state level, is a potential trigger that could lead to an escalation in the risk for vulnerable communities, particularly Muslims, of disenfranchisement, detention, and mass violence.

## Democratic Institutions

India's democracy should be a system through which risks can be addressed and mitigated. Civil society groups continue to document violent incidents and advocate for rights, and India's judiciary has been able to correct discrimination in some cases.<sup>54</sup> Unfortunately, experts warn of an overall weakening of democratic norms and a shrinking of civic space in India. Reporters without Borders have documented a seven year downward trend in press freedom in India, with the government accused of monopolizing radio stations and media platforms, and targeting critics with shutdowns, fines, and detentions.<sup>55</sup> In addition, the same hate speech and incitement used to target minority communities has been used to target reporters and advocates, particularly women.<sup>56</sup> India's Foreign Contribution Regulation Act and the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act have been criticized by the former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights as being overbroad, and having been used to target advocates for minority communities, and to stifle criticism from civil society organizations.<sup>57</sup> The police, as noted above, have been implicated in discrimination and violence against minorities, and the justice system and even state level human rights commissions are allegedly becoming more politicized.<sup>58</sup>

## INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

India has positioned itself as a political and economic rising power both regionally and globally, and there has been scant pushback on the targeting of minorities within its borders. In 2022, following Islamophobic remarks from a BJP official, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) called on India to curb growing hate against Islam and Indian Muslims.<sup>59</sup> UN experts have publicly called on the government of India to reverse discriminatory policies. At the 2022 Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of India at the UN Human Rights Council (HRC), fourteen countries recommended that India undertake steps to protect the rights of all minorities.<sup>60</sup>

The United States has cultivated a partnership with India that includes deep economic, political, and security based cooperation, which some experts say has led US officials to be reluctant to publicly criticize the Indian government.<sup>61</sup> In 2014 President Barack Obama invited newly elected Prime Minister Modi to the White House, reversing the previous visa ban that had been put in place following the violence in Gujarat.<sup>62</sup> Recently, some members of Congress have raised concerns about religious discrimination and democratic backsliding.<sup>63</sup> In June 2023, more than 70 US Senators and Representatives signed a letter calling on the administration of President Biden to address human rights concerns in his talks with Prime Minister Modi during Modi's US visit that month about shrinking civic space, deteriorating freedom of the press, and rising attacks on religious minorities.<sup>64</sup> The US Commission on International Religious Freedom's (USCIRF) 2023 Annual Report has recommended India be designated as a "country of particular concern" for the fourth year in a row on the basis of systematic discrimination against religious minorities; the US Secretary of State has yet to make this designation.

## A WAY FORWARD

In Prime Minister Modi's most recent visit to the US, President Biden spoke of a common ground of democratic values.<sup>65</sup> However, the erosion of India's democracy and the growing dehumanization of millions of Indians weakens the foundation of shared values and stability on which the US is heavily investing politically and economically. The normalization of hate speech mixed with incitement that leads to violence, generally with impunity, can become increasingly difficult to defuse or control, especially with the passage of legislation that disenfranchises vulnerable communities and curtails critical voices. At a USCRIF hearing on India in September 2023, the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of minorities testified that India risks becoming "one of the world's main generators of instability, atrocities, and violence because of the scale and gravity of the violations and abuses." The close relationship between the US and India, and the direct role of India's government in aggravating or mitigating risks, may present sensitivities, but it also offers opportunities for protection and prevention at a crucial juncture.

### Policy Options

#### The Indian Government

- Ensure that government officials refrain from hate speech or incitement to violence, and that there is an official rebuke when public authority figures use dangerous speech;
- Ensure that campaigning in 2024 is in line with India's own laws on hate speech;
- Ensure that any laws and policies passed, including with regard to citizenship, or civil society, correspond with constitutional protections and international legal obligations;
- Cease harassment of civil society and media in public and online spaces, and properly investigate when such claims are made;
- Ensure those—including government officials—who commit mass atrocities are held accountable;
- Protect civilians and safeguard human rights and the rule of law in Jammu and Kashmir, and Manipur;
- Adopt and act on recommendations that United Nations member states made at India's UPR process in 2022 aimed at protecting religious minorities.<sup>66</sup> Among these recommendations were calls for India to protect the rights of all minorities in accordance with its constitution, to repeal laws preventing religious conversion, investigate cases of religious violence and discrimination, and to condemn and address hate speech against Muslims and other minorities.

## **The US Government**

- Ensure that expressing serious concern about dangerous speech and the mass atrocity risks facing minorities is a regular part of US diplomatic engagements with Indian officials;
- Develop an interagency atrocity prevention strategy for India that enables coordination and consistency with US interlocutors in India;<sup>67</sup>
- Support the Indian government as a fellow democracy in fostering an enabling environment for civil society and a free press. This includes engaging with the Indian government on the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act and the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act, and ensuring that the US can provide and increase funding safely for civil society organizations in India, including those working on documentation of mass atrocities, combatting disinformation in the digital space, and promoting social cohesion and peacebuilding;<sup>68</sup>
- Consider financial sanctions or visa restrictions on those individuals most responsible for mass violence against civilians in India. Visa restrictions may be particularly effective given the close relationship between the US and India and frequency of informal travel by many nationals and officials to the United States;
- The State Department could designate India as a “country of particular concern” in accordance with the International Religious Freedom Act in accordance with USCIRF recommendations for 2023, and support an official USCIRF visit to India.<sup>69</sup>

## **Multilateral Institutions**

- Based on India’s standing invitation for UN Special Procedures, more Rapporteurs representing relevant mandates could visit India to meet with affected communities and offer recommendations to officials;<sup>70</sup>
- The UN’s OHCHR could establish an office for the first time in India. UN Member States can support this effort by encouraging the Indian government to enable the creation of this office, and can provide or identify for the office when requested. This Office can be used as an opportunity to support the protection of vulnerable communities, the documentation of and accountability for crimes against civilians, and for the provision of support to the Indian government in bringing laws and practices in line with international obligations;<sup>71</sup>
- UN Member States involved in India’s UPR at the HRC can follow up bilaterally on recommendations made for protections for religious minorities.

# ENDNOTES

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- <sup>1</sup> The Early Warning Project uses quantitative and qualitative methods to spotlight countries where mass killings have not begun, but where the risk for such violence is high. A mass killing episode is considered to have occurred when the deliberate actions of armed groups within a country, including but not limited to state security forces, rebel armies, and other militias, result in the deaths of at least 1,000 non combatant civilians targeted as part of a specific group over a period of one year or less.  
“Country – India | Early Warning Project,” *Early Warning Project*, accessed September 2023, <https://earlywarningproject.ushmm.org/countries/india>.
- <sup>2</sup> Waris Hussain, “Rising Mass Atrocity Risks in India,” *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*, March 30, 2022, <https://www.ushmm.org/genocide-prevention/blog/rising-mass-atrocity-risks-in-india>.
- <sup>3</sup> The Dalit community represents the lowest caste in India, otherwise referred to as “untouchables.” The Dalits represent approximately 2% of the population, have traditionally faced oppression, and are still vulnerable to violence and exploitation.  
“Dalits,” *Minority Rights Group*, accessed September 2023 <https://minorityrights.org/minorities/dalits/>;  
Christians in India represent approximately 2% of the population.  
International Commission on Religious Freedom, *2023 Annual Report*, 2023, [https://www.uscifr.gov/sites/default/files/2023-05/2023%20Annual%20Report\\_1.pdf](https://www.uscifr.gov/sites/default/files/2023-05/2023%20Annual%20Report_1.pdf).
- <sup>4</sup> Government of India Legislative Department, *Constitution of India*, <https://legislative.gov.in/constitution-of-india/>.
- <sup>5</sup> “Religion in India: Tolerance and Segregation,” *Pew Research Center*, June 29, 2021, <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2021/06/29/religion-in-india-tolerance-and-segregation/>.
- <sup>6</sup> Milan Vaishnav, “Religious Nationalism and India’s Future - The BJP in Power: Indian Democracy and Religious Nationalism,” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, April 4, 2019, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/04/04/religious-nationalism-and-india-s-future-pub-78703>.
- <sup>7</sup> Scott Straus, *Fundamentals of Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention* (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum: 2016).
- <sup>8</sup> Mass atrocities are instances of “large-scale, systematic violence against civilian populations.” Scott Straus, *Fundamentals of Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention* (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum: 2016).
- <sup>9</sup> Lindsay Maizland and Alyssa Ayres, “India’s Muslims: An Increasingly Marginalized Population,” *Council on Foreign Relations*, 2022, <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/india-muslims-marginalized-population-bjp-modi>.
- <sup>10</sup> Lindsay Maizland and Alyssa Ayres, “India’s Muslims: An Increasingly Marginalized Population,” *Council on Foreign Relations*, 2022, <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/india-muslims-marginalized-population-bjp-modi>.
- <sup>11</sup> William Dalrymple, “The Bloody Legacy of Indian Partition,” *The New Yorker*, June 22, 2015, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/06/29/the-great-divide-books-dalrymple>.
- <sup>12</sup> Lindsay Maizland and Alyssa Ayres, “India’s Muslims: An Increasingly Marginalized Population,” *Council on Foreign Relations*, July 14, 2022, <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/india-muslims-marginalized-population-bjp-modi>.
- <sup>13</sup> Michael Gottlob, “India’s Unity in Diversity as a Question of Historical Perspective,” *Economic and Political Weekly*, 42, no. 9 (2007): 779–89, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4419309>.
- <sup>14</sup> India has navigated intercommunal violence and insurgency movements. For example, India’s Sikh independence movement would become an armed insurgency in the 1970s and 1980s, ultimately suppressed by a brutal government crackdown. “What to Know About the Khalistan Movement,” *Time*, September 20, 2023, <https://time.com/6315922/khalistan-india-canada-tensions/>.
- <sup>15</sup> Lauren Frayer, “India’s RSS Has Played A Powerful Role In The Rise Of Hindu Nationalism,” *NPR*, 2019, <https://www.npr.org/2019/05/03/706808616/the-powerful-group-shaping-the-rise-of-hindu-nationalism-in-india>.
- <sup>16</sup> Lindsay Maizland and Alyssa Ayres, “India’s Muslims: An Increasingly Marginalized Population,” *Council on Foreign Relations*, July 14, 2022, <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/india-muslims-marginalized-population-bjp-modi>.
- <sup>17</sup> When Prime Minister Modi was elected in 2014, the Obama administration removed these restrictions to enable him to visit the United States.  
Cherian George, “The Rise of Hindu Nationalism,” *The MIT Press Reader*, February 28, 2022, <https://thereader.mitpress.mit.edu/the-rise-of-hindu-nationalism/>;
- “Timeline: U.S.-India Relations,” *Council on Foreign Relations*, <https://www.cfr.org/timeline/us-india-relations>.
- <sup>18</sup> Yasmeen Serhan, “The Hinduization of India Is Nearly Complete,” *The Atlantic*, 2022, <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2022/05/narendra-modi-india-religion-hindu-nationalism/630169/>.
- <sup>19</sup> “New citizenship law in India ‘fundamentally discriminatory’: UN human rights office,” *UN News*, December 13, 2019, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/12/1053511>.
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<sup>52</sup> Scott Straus, *Fundamentals of Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention* (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum: 2016), pg. 76.

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<sup>64</sup> “Jayapal, Van Hollen Lead Bicameral Letter with Over 70 Members, Urging President Biden to Discuss Upholding Human Rights and Democratic Values During Upcoming Meeting with Indian PM Modi - Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal,” *Office of Pramila Jayapal*, 2023, <https://jayapal.house.gov/2023/06/20/jayapal-van-hollen-lead-bicameral-letter-with-over-70-members-urging-president-biden-to-discuss-upholding-human-rights-and-democratic-values-during-upcoming-meeting-with-indian-pm-modi/>.



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