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Indian religious minorities face increased violence under Modi : report



New Delhi: Some 200 million Muslims, (15 % minority population); are living in India, whereas 2.5% are Christians, 1.85% Sikhs, 0.8 Buddhism, Jainism 0.37% and other 0.24%. RSS mentored BJP govt with Modi as PM has stirred audacity in Hindu fundamentalists to go hard on minorities. Muslims have been targeted in Assam, Gujarat, Delhi riots and elsewhere. Many of RSS hardliners asking Muslims for shifting to Pakistan. Nuns maltreated, churches desecrated, Mother Teresa is despised.

Recently, a 10-minute-long video of a brutal lynching that emerged recently on Indian social media has shocked Indian Muslims. The footage shows a group of men beating a 22-year-

old Muslim man, Tabrez Ansari, in the eastern state of Jharkhand. The crowd forced him to shout “Jai Shri Ram” (Hail Lord Ram) — a slogan widely used by Hindu hard-liners — as he was tied to a pole and then severely beaten for an alleged burglary.

Ansari died at the hospital on Saturday, the same day the US State Department released its international religious freedom report, which paints a dark picture of the situation for religious minorities in India.

“There were reports of religiously motivated killings, assaults, riots, discrimination, vandalism, and actions restricting the right of individuals to practice their religious beliefs,” the report said. “Authorities often failed to prosecute perpetrators of ‘cow vigilante’ attacks, which included killings, mob violence, and intimidation.”

And shortly after the brutal beating of Tabrez Ansari in Jharkhand, a teacher at a Muslim seminary in Kolkata, was allegedly pushed off a moving train for refusing to chant Hindu slogans.

India’s Muslims are concerned that they are being systematically targeted. Syeda Hameed, an educator and former member of India’s planning commission, told DW that she felt Indian Muslims are in for a very difficult time. “Indian Muslims are currently facing one of the most trying moments in our history,” she said.

A Muslim member of parliament, Asaduddin Owaisi, spoke to DW about the brutal beating of the Muslim man in Jharkhand.

“There has been not one word from the prime minister or the home minister, Amit Shah, about this horrific incident in Jharkhand,” he said. “Why this silence? These incidents are not going to stop.”

Apart from the US report, reports by the Mumbai-based Centre for Study of Society and Secularism and the UK-based Minority Rights Group International both indicate that minority groups in India are increasingly encountering hate crimes, such as lynching, threats, attacks on places of worship and forced conversion.

Social activist Shabnam Hashmi pointed out that Modi had reiterated his commitment to protecting minorities during a post-election victory speech.

“Unless the political leadership acts and shows that Muslims and Dalits are safe and will be protected, there is no meaning in paying lip service,” Hashmi told DW, adding that there seems to be a “discernible pattern” in attacks against Muslims. DW

Strict restrictions imposed in Srinagar to prevent Ashura processions

Srinagar: The authorities further tightened restrictions in different areas of Srinagar to prevent people from taking out Ashura processions, today.

The curbs were intensified in Lal chowk, Alamgiri Bazar, Zadibal, Lalbazar, Tibitee Colony, Shaheed Gunj, Hawal, Nirjanpore, Aabi Guzar and other areas of Srinagar to restrict the movement of people and to stop them from converging on the traditional routes for joint processions on 10th day of Muharram.

Restrictions have been imposed in Aabi Guzar area falling under police station Kothibagh while security personnel have been deployed in strength to maintain law and order on the 10th of Muharram, the officials said.

The occupation authorities have also deployed Indian forces’ personnel in strength across

the Kashmir Valley to prevent people from taking out Muharram processions.



Indian police had detainee several Muharram mourners at various places in Srinagar after subjecting them to brute force on Tuesday when they had tried to take out processions.

Traditionally, the main procession of 10th Muharram in Srinagar usually used to start from Aabi Guzar and culminate at Zadibal while that of 8th Muharram started from Shaheed Gunj and culminated at Dalgate after passing through different areas. However, the occupation authorities banned the two major processions in 1989 fearing that these may turn into pro-Azadi demonstrations. Web Desk

End Kashmir ‘siege’: Pakistan on World Humanitarian Day

Islamabad: Pakistan on World Humanitarian Day 2021 has urged the international community, including the UN, to pressurize India to stop reported human rights abuses in the disputed Jammu and Kashmir region.

“On this occasion, we would once again urge the global humanitarian fraternity to do everything it can to ameliorate the worsening humanitarian situation in Indian Occupied Kashmir including call for lifting the year-long draconian military siege and provision of unfettered access and assistance to Kashmiri people in dire need of healthcare, target killing of Kashmiri youth amounts to systematic genocide. India’s inhuman methods to subjugate the Kashmiri people through killings, torture, forced disappearances and incarcerations have failed in the past and will not succeed in the future ” read a statement by its Foreign Ministry referring to the communication blockade of the disputed valley, following revoking of its longstanding semi-autonomous status last year.

The Muslim-majority Himalayan valley – held by both the countries in parts but claimed in full – has been a major bone of contention between the nuclear arch-rivals for decades.

“We reiterate the need for evolving a strategic approach to address humanitarian emergencies, guided by the imperative of upholding international humanitarian law, preventing conflicts from eruption, and peacefully resolving long-standing disputes and

conflicts,” the statement added.

Islamabad urged the global community “to uphold the principles of burden- and responsibility-sharing” to support sustainable humanitarian responses in large refugee hosting countries, a reference to Turkey, and Pakistan, which host millions of Syrian, and Afghan refugees, respectively.



“Pakistan and its people have shown exemplary generosity, compassion and hospitality in hosting more than three million Afghans for over four decades, the press release said, thanking its partners, particularly the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, for helping in taking care of Afghan refugees.

“The protracted refugee situations continue to impact millions of lives and should be supported by the international community in every aspect,” it said.

Paying tribute to humanitarian workers in conflict zones, Islamabad also commended their “active role and substantial contribution” in responding to the unprecedented health and socio-economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

The annual day commemorates humanitarian workers killed and injured in the course of their work. It was designated in memory of the Aug. 19, 2003 bomb attack in Baghdad, Iraq, killing 22 people, including the chief humanitarian in Iraq, Sergio Vieira de Mello. Web Desk

Modi’s popularity plummets over poor handling of coronavirus pandemic

New Delhi: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been hit hard due to his poor handling of the COVID-19 crisis at home, as a recent survey indicated his popularity graph had fallen to 24% from 66% a year ago.

According to an Indian media report, the primary reason for the fall in ratings was attributed

by respondents to the COVID-19 crisis. The South Asian nation has been hit hard by the pandemic, with over 32 million cases and more than 433,000 deaths reported ever since the first case was reported in the country.

The findings of India Today's "Mood of the Nation" survey were released earlier this week, showing people are extremely unhappy with the National Democratic Alliance government over the surging inflation and the government's failure to control the price hike.



"While Modi was lauded for his handling of the first wave with a high 73% approval rating in January 2021, the disruption experienced during the second wave has seen that figure drop to 49%," the report said.

As many as 27% of those who participated in the survey said that large gatherings, including election rallies, were responsible for the second wave of the pandemic in India. About 26% said that it was caused due to blatant disregard of the COVID-appropriate behaviour.

Echoing a foreign media report, the majority of the respondents also doubted the government data regarding COVID-19 infections and deaths due to the virus. However, 44% of the participants attributed the health crisis to both the central and state governments.

About 23% of the respondents thought the unemployment rate was the second biggest failure of the Modi government.

On the other hand, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has been rated the third most popular face for the prime minister's post, with a rating of 10% after Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Adityanath. Gandhi has seen a rise in popularity ratings from 8% in 2020, the India Today survey found.

The survey was conducted between July 10 and July 22 with 14,599 participants, with 71% of the respondents from rural areas and 29% from the urban sector. India Today

Birmingham streets reverberated with Free Kashmir slogans

Birmingham: Thousands of Pakistanis and Kashmiris took to the streets of various cities of

the United Kingdom and Europe to commemorate 15th August, India's Independence Day, as Kashmir's Black day on the call of Tehreek-e-Kashmir UK and Europe.

The largest Kashmir March was held in Birmingham. Thousands of pro Kashmir supporters gathered outside Birmingham City Council House and marched towards the Indian consulate. The protesters chanted slogans against Indian occupation and brutalities while shaming India's fake democracy



President Tehreek-e-Kashmir UK, Fahim Kayani presented a resolution adopted by the organisers that highlighted the solution to the Kashmir conflict must be according to the United Nations resolutions with an end to the mass gross human rights violations, the return of civil liberties and the release of political prisoners.

British MP Tahir Ali reaffirmed his commitment to highlighting the issue of Kashmir at every level, and representing the suppressed voices from IOK. Former MEP Phil Bennion praised TEK's commitment to unity and persistence in presenting the cause of Kashmir while condemning the brutal BJP regime.



Before marching towards Indian Consulate President Tehreek-e-Kashmir Europe, Muhammad Ghalib thanked all participants and pledged to keep alive the sacrifices of the people in Indian Occupied Kashmir by regularly holding events on key dates in Kashmir's history. Placards and banners described the atrocities in Indian occupied Kashmir with protestors chanting freedom slogans and condemning the Indian occupation and its machinery.

Farooq Baig , Secretary General Tehreek-e-Kashmir Germany led the Protest in Bremen. Rehana Ali , Information secretary Tehreek-e-Kashmir UK led the protest outside Indian High Commission London, Adeel Ahmed President Tehreek-e-Kashmir Denmark led the protest in Copenhagen. Hafiz Muhammad Azad, Secretary General Tehreek-e-Kashmir UK led the Kashmir car rally in Bradford.

Viral footage of US Marine aiding baby captures Kabul chaos



Washington: A heart-breaking video showing a US Marine lifting a baby over a razor wire-topped wall at Kabul's airport caught global attention Friday, amid the chaos of thousands trying to flee Afghanistan newly controlled by the Taliban.

The video, which shows the infant, its diaper slipping off, being pulled up by one arm high above a crowd of Afghans seeking to enter the airport, took over social media nearly one week into the airlift to evacuate foreigners and Afghans from the war-torn country.

It put a tender edge on the tense evacuation, in which nearly 6,000 heavily armed US troops have taken control of the airport, while their long-time foe the Taliban patrol the streets outside and begin to exercise what many fear will be a harsh and anti-American rule.

Pentagon spokesman John Kirby said the Marines were told the unidentified baby was sick and were asked to help.

"The video you are talking about – the parent asked the Marines to look after the baby because the baby was ill," he told reporters.

"So the Marine you see reaching over the wall took it to a Norwegian hospital that is at the airport. They treated the child and returned the child to the child's father," he said.

"It was an act of compassion because there was concern about the baby."

He said he did not know who the family was, or their status – whether or not they had been accepted to immigrate to the United States under a special program for Afghans who worked for the Americans or were otherwise at high risk from the Taliban.

While the video of that act appeared to be independently filmed, the US military released several other officially approved photographs of soldiers helping out children of people hoping to escape Afghanistan.

In one, a soldier in his combat gear sits with a blanketed baby in his arms, smiling at the child like the father of a newborn, while his fellow soldiers stand nearby on alert.

In another, two female American soldiers hold babies in their arms.

Still another depicts one of the US troops giving water to a little boy.

“This is the America we need to be,” said US congressman and military veteran Peter Meijer on Twitter of the images.

The official Pentagon images stood out amid a stark lack of independently taken pictures from inside the airport, where thousands of people waited Friday amid difficult conditions to board US C-17 cargo aircraft bound for Qatar. In the Gulf state, they will still face days of waiting to be cleared by US immigration officials. AFP

They are hungry’: Haiti quake survivors fear for children’s future

Cap-Haitien: Many survivors of an earthquake that killed more than 2,200 people in southern Haiti are worried about providing for their children, with more than half a million minors feared to be at risk from the fallout.

The August 14 quake hammered infrastructure, destroying or damaging some 130,000 homes, cutting off roads and pitching thousands of families in the Western Hemisphere’s poorest country into an uncertain future.

When the magnitude 7.2 quake struck, homemaker Lovely Jean was resting inside the general hospital of the southern city of Les Cayes, while her three-day-old baby, Love Shaiska, was in the neonatal ward being treated for an infection.

The three survived, though the hospital suffered damage that forced some of its departments, including the neonatal ward, to operate outside for days after the disaster. But the problems were only beginning for Jean and her husband, a subsistence farmer.

Alexandre’s fields were buried by landslides during the earthquake and rain unleashed by Tropical Storm Grace, which pummeled Haiti last Tuesday. His entire potato and yuca crop was unreachable, leaving the family with barely any food to eat.



Meanwhile, Love Shaiska was struggling to suckle, forcing her parents to pull together cash to buy formula.

More than a dozen other parents who spoke to Reuters in the quake zone expressed similar concerns about how they would cope.

Over half a million children were affected by the earthquake, the U.N. children's agency UNICEF said.

Recovery efforts have been impeded by flooding and damage to roads, feeding tensions in hard-hit areas. In the past few days, residents have looted aid trucks in several towns across the south, stirring concerns about security.

Deep in the mountains of Haiti's southern peninsula, in the department of Grand'Anse, near the town of Duchity, about a hundred farmers are living in slender tents of wooden poles and bedsheets they erected along the highway. The quake destroyed their homes, crops and the deep concrete-lined holes used to collect and store rain water.

"The children are very vulnerable; there is no water so we can't even wash them to keep them clean," Michele said. Her older children had taken off earlier that morning, walking to a nearby village in search of food. "I didn't send them; they just left without even asking me because they are hungry," she said. Reuters



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