

## Delivered Electronically

November 8, 2021

The Honorable Antony Blinken  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Blinken,

We, the undersigned, as a diverse, global coalition of human rights activists, faith leaders, civil society organizations, and business leaders, urge you to condemn recent attacks on Muslims in the Indian state of Tripura in the strongest terms.

Tripura, located in northeastern India and bordering Bangladesh, is a state home to around 4.2 million people. Muslims make up less than 9 percent of Tripura's population.

In recent weeks, Hindu extremist mobs in Tripura have attacked mosques as well Muslim-owned shops and homes.<sup>1</sup> These mobs were associated with Hindu extremist groups such as the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), Hindu Jagran Manch, Bajrang Dal, and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, which are close allies of India's ruling party, the Bharatiya Janata Party. For example, in the border town of Panisagar, the VHP organized a protest on October 26 which erupted into violence—a Hindu extremist mob attacked a mosque and several Muslim homes.<sup>2</sup>

Much of this violence has been carried out by Hindu extremist mobs in response to attacks on Bangladesh's Hindu minority during and after the recent festival of Durga Puja. Sadly, this cycle of retaliatory violence is not new in South Asia—but it must be universally condemned. These attacks are part of a larger trend of rising violence against religious minorities both in India and in South Asia as a region.

We are also disturbed to hear reports that students in Delhi have been detained by police for peacefully protesting these attacks.<sup>3</sup> In addition, two human rights lawyers who engaged in a fact-finding and legal assistance mission in Tripura on behalf of the People's Union for Civil

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<sup>1</sup> Hrish Raj, "With Little Hope of Government Protection, Muslims in Tripura Are Living in Fear," *The Wire*, November 1, 2021.

<https://thewire.in/communalism/with-little-hope-of-government-protection-muslims-in-tripura-are-living-in-fear>

<sup>2</sup> Subir Bhaumik, "Tripura: Anti-Muslim violence flares up in Indian state," *BBC*, October 28, 2021.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-59047517>

<sup>3</sup> "Students detained for protesting Hindutva violence in Tripura," *The Siasat Daily*, October 29, 2021.

<https://www.siasat.com/delhi-students-detained-for-protesting-hindutva-violence-in-tripura-2216678/>

Liberties,<sup>4</sup> as well as 102 journalists, activists, and social media accounts,<sup>5</sup> have been charged under India's draconian Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, which has been used to imprison countless human rights defenders in India.

The United States, pursuant to the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998, has the obligation to “condemn violations of religious freedom, and to promote, and to assist other governments in the promotion of, the fundamental right to freedom of religion.”

When Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman visited India last month, she declared that “we each have a serious stake in the other's success.”<sup>6</sup> It is in the United States' interest to see a thriving, pluralistic India in which all communities are able to exercise their fundamental freedom of religion and belief, as enshrined in India's own Constitution.

As a close strategic partner, it is important that the United States speaks out against these attacks on Muslims in Tripura. We are grateful that US Commission on International Religious Freedom Chair Nadine Maenza<sup>7</sup> and U.S. Representatives Thomas Suozzi<sup>8</sup> (D-NY) and Andy Levin<sup>9</sup> (D-MI) have condemned these attacks, and we hope others will follow.

We urge the US Department of State to take cognizance of these attacks against a vulnerable religious minority and uphold the US Commission on International Religious Freedom's recommendation to designate India as a Country of Particular Concern (CPC). We call on the State Department to accept the recommendation and designate India as a CPC.

With greatest appreciation for your attention to these matters,

**Organizational Endorsements:**

1. Al-Faheem Meatex Pvt. Ltd., India
2. Alliance of South Asians Taking Action, USA
3. American Muslim Institution, USA
4. Aotearoa Alliance of Progressive Indians, New Zealand
5. Association of Indian Muslims of America, USA
6. Association of Muslim Professionals, Australia

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<sup>4</sup> Tanushree Pandey, “UAPA against 2 lawyers who accused Tripura Police of inaction in violence ‘targeting Muslims,’” The Print, November 4, 2021. <https://theprint.in/india/uapa-against-2-lawyers-who-accused-tripura-police-of-inaction-in-violence-targeting-muslims/761550/>

<sup>5</sup> Zafar Aafaq, “India: Terror cases over social media posts on Tripura violence,” Al Jazeera, November 8, 2021. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/11/8/india-tripura-102-social-media-accounts-uapa>

<sup>6</sup> “Deputy Secretary Sherman's Remarks at the Ananta Centre Forum,” US Department of State, October 7, 2021. <https://www.state.gov/deputy-secretary-shermans-remarks-at-the-ananta-centre-forum/>

<sup>7</sup> USCIRF, Twitter, November 1, 2021. <https://twitter.com/USCIRF/status/1455268575682433025>

<sup>8</sup> Rep. Thomas Suozzi, Twitter, October 28, 2021. <https://twitter.com/RepTomSuozzi/status/1453733703004295179>

<sup>9</sup> Rep. Andy Levin, Twitter, November 1, 2021. <https://twitter.com/RepAndyLevin/status/1455270660977139718>

7. Beloved Community Interfaith Network of Prince George's County, USA
8. Brick by Brick Constructions, India
9. Center for Liberty and Peace in South Asia, USA
10. Coalition for Secular Democratic India, USA
11. Coalition of Seattle Indian Americans, USA
12. Friends of India, Texas, USA
13. Global Indian Progressive Alliance, USA
14. Hindus for Human Rights - Australia and New Zealand
15. Hindus for Human Rights - United Kingdom
16. Hindus for Human Rights - USA
17. India Civil Watch International, USA
18. India Solidarity Germany
19. Indian American Muslim Council, USA
20. Indian Americans for Harmony, USA
21. Indian Muslim Network, USA
22. International Human Rights Commission, Sweden
23. International Internship University, Nigeria
24. International Organization to Preserve Human Rights, United Kingdom
25. International Society for Peace & Justice, USA
26. Islamic Circle of Australia and New Zealand
27. Maharashtra Minority NGO Forum, India
28. Museum of World Religions (United States Office)
29. Parity, USA
30. Petrichor Publications, India
31. Students Against Hindutva Ideology, USA
32. The Humanism Project, Australia
33. WeWork Incubator, India
34. Young Muslims Network Australia
35. Zypp Solutions, India

**Individual Endorsements:**

*Institutional affiliation is provided for identification purposes only and does not constitute institutional endorsement.*

1. A Javed, Australia
2. Aarif Hussain, India
3. Abdul Gaffar Syed, USA
4. Abdul Kasim, CEO, Indian Muslim Network, USA
5. Abdul Mohammed, UPS, Australia
6. Abdul Rahim, India

7. Abdul, Australia
8. Abu Galib, Al Hayat Medical Services, Qatar
9. Abubacker Siddick, MS Swaminathan Research Foundation, India
10. Abul Aala Ashhar Jalil Khan, Australia
11. Acif, India
12. Afroz Ahmed, Urdu Academy, Melbourne, Australia
13. Afshan, Canada
14. Afzal SM, USA
15. Afzal, New Zealand
16. Ahmad, India
17. Ahmed Syed, USA
18. Akbar Hussain, USA
19. Akhil Ahmed Chakwa, USA
20. Akhter Sadiq, USA
21. Ali, Australia
22. Andrews, India
23. Ania Loomba, Professor, University of Pennsylvania, USA
24. Anjum Farooqui, USA
25. Annie Syed, USA
26. Arif Mohammed, Saudi Arabia
27. Arshia Rahman, United Kingdom
28. Asfia, UAE
29. Ashfaq Mohammed, USA
30. Asif, AJ TechnoEnterprise, Australia
31. Atiya Fatima Mohiuddin, India
32. Ayub Shariff, Atlas International, Canada
33. Azam, Oman
34. Basheer Anwar, Oman
35. Danish Khan, Aligarh Muslim University, India
36. Deen, Australia
37. Dhanraji Ramlakhan, Trinidad and Tobago
38. Dr. Khalid Abdus Sami, Chairman of Board of Regents, Northwest Suburban College, USA
39. Dr. Maqsood Siddique, Assistant Professor, University of South Florida, USA
40. Ebrahim Mehta, India
41. Ehtesham Uddin Mohammed
42. Equebal Ahmad, India
43. Faheem Razvi Syed, Razvi Group, Australia
44. Faiz Khan, Technical Director, Aurecon, Australia
45. Farhan Shaikh, Canada

46. Fauzia, Australia
47. Fayaz, Kashmir
48. Firdous Hameed, Australia
49. Firoz Vohra, President, Indian Americans for Harmony, USA
50. Ghazalee, India
51. Hakeem Iftikar Ahmad, Gee Enn Kay Memorial Institute of Education, India
52. Halima Khan, Global Indian Progressive Alliance, USA
53. Hamid Gharagozloo, U.S. Representative, International Organization to Preserve Human Rights, United Kingdom
54. Haroon Salaria, India
55. Hussain, Kenya
56. Imran Shaikh, India
57. Imran Syd
58. Ismail Dalal, Zambia
59. Ismail Malik, Student, India
60. Jabir, Australia
61. Jabir, India
62. Jalaludeen S, India
63. James Ahmed, Student, Houston Community College, USA
64. Javaid Ahmad Malik, India
65. Jhulfikar Kabeer, Senior Engineer, USA
66. Junnu, USA
67. Kabir Gandhi, India
68. Kancheri Majeed, UAE
69. Kashif Asad, India
70. Kashif Salman, Australia
71. Khalid Ahmed, Malaysia
72. Khaliq Mohiuddin, India
73. Liaquat K, Canada
74. Liyakat Ali, India
75. M. Rajaula, USA
76. Maqbool Patel, USA
77. Maqsood Ahmed Kazi, USA
78. Maria D Habito, International Program Director, Museum of World Religions, United States Office
79. Matin Shriwardhankar, Online Service Provider, India
80. Mazharuddin Syed Ahmed, Ara Institute of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand
81. Mehmood Sayed, India
82. Mir Nisar Ali, Australia
83. Mohamed Yahya Khan, India

84. Mohammad Arish, ICFAI Business School, India
85. Mohammad Arshid Ansari, Australia
86. Mohammad Atikulla Khan, India
87. Mohammad I. Uddin, President, Coalition for Secular Democratic India, USA
88. Mohammad Irfan, QA/QC Supervisor, Fresh Meat Factory, Qatar
89. Mohammad Muzaffar Ali, Australia
90. Mohammad Muzzammil Quraishi, Australia
91. Mohammad Waseem, India
92. Mohammed Abdul Khuddus
93. Mohammed Abdul Saleem, Australia
94. Mohammed Burhanuddin, India
95. Mohammed Iqbal, CEO, Zypp Solutions, India
96. Mohammed Mateen, Treasurer, Association of Muslim Professionals, Australia
97. Mohammed Moizuddin, Islamic Center of Long Island, USA
98. Mohammed Sadiq, India
99. Mohammed Sanaulla Khan, Howmet Aerospace, Australia
100. Mohammed, IT Tech, USA
101. Moin SF, India
102. Moin, Australia
103. Moonis Ahmed, India
104. Muhammad Zia ul Haq, Australia
105. Muhsin, India
106. Murtaza Karwani, Canada
107. Muzaffar, India
108. Myriam St-Germain, Owner, AA VENDING Services Inc., Canada
109. Nagesh, India
110. Naif, India
111. Najmuddin Abbasi, Retired Govt Employee, Indian Bank, India
112. Nasim Malik, General Secretary, International Human Rights Commission, Sweden
113. Naveed Ahmed, USA
114. Nazir Husain Mohamed, Student, UAE
115. Nikhil Mandalaparthi, Advocacy Director, Hindus for Human Rights, USA
116. Nisar S, Islamic Foundation North, USA
117. Parvez Achhwa, Department of Work and Pension, United Kingdom
118. Parvez, India
119. Pieter Friedrich, Journalist, Center for Liberty and Peace in South Asia, USA
120. Porus Dadabhoy, Outreach Director, United for Peace, USA
121. Prof. Dr. Chap. General Ebhoria Usiholo Charles, Founder, DPRMI and Africa Head  
& Country Director, International Internship University, Nigeria
122. Qadeer Mohammad, Australia

123. Qaiyum Ashar, Angel Park Public School, India
124. Qutub, India
125. Rabbi Barat Ellman, USA
126. Rafiq Shaikh, USA
127. Rahi, Freelance Researcher, India
128. Rahil, India
129. Rameez NLM, NEMRA Properties Pvt. Ltd., Sri Lanka
130. Rashid Khan, India
131. Ravees Ahmad, UAE
132. Rehan Khan, MD, MS, President, International Society for Peace & Justice, USA
133. Rev. Marian Edmonds-Allen, Executive Director, Parity, USA
134. Rev. Mark J. Lukens, Bethany Congregational Church, USA
135. Riaz Jaweed Mohammed, Al Kuhaimi Metal Industries, Saudi Arabia
136. Rohini Hensman, Writer and independent scholar, India
137. Rose Sheriff, Australia
138. S Ansari, India
139. S. Haider Salman Naqvi, Nokia, India
140. S. M. Ismail, Oman
141. Saeed Ahmed, India
142. Safia Khatoon, Canada
143. Sajida Khan, Cosmetic Dental Center, India
144. Salim Kazi, Self Help Group, India
145. Sami Uddin, IAMC, USA
146. Shabnam F. Quraishi, USA
147. Shadab Hussain, USA
148. Shagufta Hakeem, Researcher, Global Indian Progressive Alliance
149. Shahab Uddin, Electrical Engineer, USA
150. Shahanulla Khan, India
151. Shaik Ahmed, India
152. Shams Tabrez, Professor, King Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia
153. Shariq Mohammed Khan, Student, India
154. Shaziya, India
155. Shoaib Khan, USA
156. Shouket Ahmad Tilwani, Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia
157. Sid Lodi, USA
158. Sravya Tadepalli, Board Member, Hindus for Human Rights, USA
159. Sunita Viswanath, Executive Director, Hindus for Human Rights, USA
160. Suvir Kaul, Professor, University of Pennsylvania, USA
161. Syd Rizwan, Author, Petrichor Publications, India
162. Syed, UAE

163. Tabarak, India
164. Talha Mohamed, USA
165. Tariq Farooqui, India
166. Tariq Irshad, Student, Australia
167. Thoufeek HU, UAE
168. Uma Shankari, India
169. Vallangiman Srinivasan, USA
170. Vasim Ahmed Shariff, President, V S Tees
171. Victor Begg, Author, Interfaith Leader, Treasure Coast Interfaith Council, USA
172. Vijay Parameshwaran, Facilitator, Beloved Community Interfaith Network of Prince George's County, USA
173. Wajiha, USA
174. Yasmin Qureshi, USA
175. Zaitoon Subhan, India