

Communal-Driven Evictions of Muslims in Assam by BJP Hindu Extremist Government Intensifies

News:

In September, around 1200 families in the Sipajhar area of Assam's Muslim-populated Darrang District in India were rendered homeless due to an eviction drive by the state's Hindu nationalist BJP government. Almost all of those evicted were Muslims of Bengali-origin who are not recognised by the government as legitimate residents of the state. Four mosques were also demolished in the area. On 23rd September, during one of these forced displacements, two Muslims were shot dead by the state's police: a 12 year old boy – Sheikh Farid, and a 33 year old man – Moinul Haque. A video went viral of the brutal beating of the body of Moinul by the police following the shooting. A photographer from the district administration was also seen stomping savagely on Moinul Haque's lifeless body. Evictions of Muslims from their homes in Assam have been commonplace for many years but have intensified under the seven-year rule of India's Hindu nationalist BJP regime, and in particular over the past few months under the leadership of Assam's Chief Minister and BJP Member, Himanta Biswa Sarma, who is renown for his anti-Muslim rhetoric and policies. In June, following a visit to a temple in Dhalpur - one of the villages in which the evictions took place - he tweeted, *"squatters would be evicted from all parts of Assam to protect our land and the Assamese identity from encroachers & intruders."*

Comment:

The government of Assam has claimed that the evictions are aimed at freeing government land from encroachment by intruders in order to make way for an agricultural project for the "indigenous community". However, many of the evicted Muslim families have lived in the area for several decades. Most are Muslims of Bengali origin who form the bulk of the state's Muslim population of more than 12 million. They are viewed as foreigners and "illegal immigrants" by the government. According to government figures, between May 2016 and July 2021, 4700 families have been evicted from their homes. Over 2000 lived in the Darrang district – a highly Muslim-populated area.

Constant erosion of the banks of the Brahmaputra River in Assam and regular flooding in the area have forced frequent migrations of people, resulting in a large percentage of the state's rural population not having land titles in their name. Consequently, in 2019, the Indian government issued permanent land titles to those who have lived in a particular piece of government land for more than 3 years...but only 'indigenous' families were eligible - a category that aims to exclude Muslims of Bengali-origin from land ownership in the area.

Muslims comprise around 35% of Assam's population and are suffering various extremist Hindutva agenda-driven purging policies aimed at removing them from the state and changing its demographics to ensure a higher population of Hindus in the region. This July, Assam Chief Minister Sarma told the state assembly that his government would create a "Population Army" to curb the birth rate in Muslim-dominated areas by engaging 1000 youth to distribute contraceptives and undertake other activities to control the Muslim population in the region. In June, the Chief Minister also announced

that his government would gradually implement a two-child policy in Assam for availing benefits.

The denial of residency and citizenship rights, the enforcement of population-control policies, the destruction of mosques and burning of homes, and being chased out of lands that their families have lived in for generations, holds echoes to the ethnic cleansing policies instigated against the Rohingya Muslims of Myanmar. However, to date, no state, including in the Muslim lands has stepped in to defend the Muslims of Assam from suffering the same fate as their Rohingya brothers and sisters. Empty words of condemnation against the atrocities are all Muslim governments can bring themselves to do...while simultaneously maintaining strong political and economic ties with the anti-Muslim, anti-Islam Hindu regime that also continues its occupation and brutal crimes against the Muslims of Kashmir.

Indeed, there can be no protection of Muslim life or property in the absence of the state which sincerely represents, defends and stands for the interests of Islam and the Believers – the Khilafah (Caliphate) based upon the method of the Prophethood. It was under this glorious state that Sind came under the rule of Islam at the hands of the great Muslim general Muhammad ibn Qasim, who was despatched with a formidable army by the Khalifah al-Walid bin Abdul Malik to rescue some Muslims who had been captured and imprisoned by the oppressive Indian Hindu King, Raja Dahir. Islam subsequently spread across India, liberating it from despotic Hindu rule, and bringing justice and protection to all under its laws and system – Muslim and non-Muslim alike. Indeed, the Islamic rule of Muhammad ibn Qasim in Sindh made no distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims in ensuring their rights. He told his administrators, *“Deal honestly between people and the state. Fix taxes according to the ability of the people to pay.”* Indeed, the justice, security and prosperity witnessed by the people of India under centuries of Islamic rule led many to convert to the Deen, and their descendants became amongst those who were at the forefront of fighting against the abolishment of the Khilafah in 1924, the consequence of which brought nothing but darkness to the Muslims of India and across the world. And it is without doubt that the Muslims of India, as well as those in Myanmar, East Turkistan and elsewhere, will not enjoy a single day of security, peace, prosperity and happiness without the return of the shade of this glorious state - the Khilafah.

﴿وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَىٰ لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُم مِّن بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا وَمَن كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ﴾

“Allah has promised to those among you who believe and work righteous deeds, that He will, of a surety, grant them in the land, inheritance (of power), as He granted it to those before them; that He will establish in authority their religion – the one which He has chosen for them; and that He will change (their state), after the fear in which they lived, to one of security and peace: ‘They will worship Me (alone) and not associate aught with Me.’ If any do reject Faith after this, they are rebellious and wicked.” [An-Nur: 55]

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by

Dr. Nazreen Nawaz

Director of the Women’s Section in The Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir