



# AL-SHAJARAH

ISTAC Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization

Published by IIUM Press

2021 Volume 26 Number 1

# AL-SHAJARAH

## EDITORIAL BOARD

### EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

OSMAN BAKAR, ISTAC-IIUM, Malaysia

### EDITOR

AHMAD MURAD MERICAN, ISTAC-IIUM, Malaysia

### SECTION EDITOR

IMTIYAZ YUSUF, ISTAC-IIUM, Malaysia

### BOOK REVIEW EDITOR

ZALEHA KAMARUDDIN, ISTAC-IIUM, Malaysia

### MEMBERS

SYED KHAIRUDIN ALJUNIED, NUS, Singapore

BADROL HISHAM @ FARISH AHMAD NOOR, NTU, Singapore

PETER CHANG, UM, Malaysia

MOHAMED ASLAM MOHAMED HANEEF, IIUM, Malaysia

THAMEEM USHAMA, ISTAC-IIUM, Malaysia

DANIAL MOHD YUSOF, ISTAC-IIUM, Malaysia

TENGKU MOHD AZZMAN SHARIFFADEEN, ISTAC-IIUM, Malaysia

## INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD

AFIFI AL-AKITI (UK)

JOHN L. ESPOSITO (USA)

MOHD KAMAL HASSAN (Malaysia)

YASUSHI KOSUGI (Japan)

AMIN SAIKAL (Australia)

TU WEIMING (China)

AZYUMARDI AZRA (Indonesia)

MUHAMMED HARON (Botswana)

IBRAHIM KALIN (Turkey)

SEYYED HOSSEIN NASR (USA)

MUHAMMAD SUHEYL UMAR (Pakistan)

SALLEH YAAPAR (Malaysia)

*Al-Shajarah* is a refereed international journal that publishes original scholarly articles in the area of Islamic thought, Islamic civilization, Islamic science, and Malay world issues. The journal is especially interested in studies that elaborate scientific and epistemological problems encountered by Muslims in the present age, scholarly works that provide fresh and insightful Islamic responses to the intellectual and cultural challenges of the modern world. *Al-Shajarah* will also consider articles written on various religions, schools of thought, ideologies and subjects that can contribute towards the formulation of an Islamic philosophy of science. Critical studies of translation of major works of major writers of the past and present. Original works on the subjects of Islamic architecture and art are welcomed. Book reviews and notes are also accepted.

The journal is published twice a year, June-July and November-December. Manuscripts and all correspondence should be sent to the Editor-in-Chief, *Al-Shajarah*, F4 Building, Research and Publication Unit, International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation (ISTAC), International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), No. 24, Persiaran Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin, Taman Duta, 50480 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. All enquiries on publications may also be e-mailed to [alshajarah@iium.edu.my](mailto:alshajarah@iium.edu.my). For subscriptions, please address all queries to the postal or email address above.

Contributions: Submissions must be at least 5,500 words long. All submissions must be in English or Malay and be original work which has not been published elsewhere in any form (abridged or otherwise). In matters of style, *Al-Shajarah* uses the *University of Chicago Manual of Style* and follows the transliteration system shown on the inside back cover of the journal. The Editor-in-Chief reserves the right to return accepted manuscripts to the author for stylistic changes. Manuscripts must be submitted to the Editor-in-Chief in Microsoft Word. The font must be Times New Roman and its size 12. IIUM retains copyright to all published materials, but contributors may republish their articles elsewhere with due acknowledgement to *Al-Shajarah*.





# ISLAMOPHOBIA IN INDIA DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS: A SURGE OF STIGMATIZATION, VILIFICATION AND MURDER

*Thameem Ushama<sup>1</sup>*

## **Abstract**

*This article discusses how zealots exploit the COVID-19 pandemic to amplify Islamophobia in India. Qualitative content analysis of publications, speeches, websites, news bulletins, periodicals, YouTube and social media reveals a surge of anti-Muslim rhetoric and activity. It highlights deliberate misinformation by campaigns and outrages. These include blaming Muslims for the contagion, denying them medical treatment, official justification by doctors to murder Muslim corona patients, and the vandalization, boycott and destruction of Muslim homes, stalls and shops — all under cover of the COVID-19 lockdown.*

**Keywords:** COVID-19, Hindutva, Islamophobia, Muslims, Sangh Parivar, Persecution.

## **1.0 Introduction**

Discerning readers of contemporary India smell the foul stench of xenophobic autocracy. Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Abul Kalam Azad and many other freedom fighters shaped India as a secular socialist democratic state favouring equality and absolute religious freedom. On the contrary, Savarkar, Golwalker and sundry Hindutva zealots transformed India into a despotic entity called *Hindu Rashtra*, a chauvinist creature of theoretical postulates and

---

<sup>1</sup> Dean, International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation (ISTAC) and Professor, Kulliyyah of Revealed Knowledge and Humann Sciences, International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM). Email: thameem@iium.edu.my

strange expositions that is abandoning democracy and human decency. Although globally recognized as a secular democracy with robust socialist inclinations since its 1947 independence, today's India is the epicentre of Islamophobia which is apparent from anti-Muslim sentiments generated by Hindutvawadis. Presently, authorities persecute their Muslim citizens and tacitly endorse Islamophobia by remaining silent in the face of fascist mobs who murder with impunity. Indeed, historians will record a profoundly authoritarian state that inspires and implements bloody deeds when circumstances permit, creating conditions they later justify. Despite literature and rhetoric that once attracted small numbers, over time, this chauvinistic element was ingrained in Hindus who became addicted to a deeply flawed concept of Hinduization. Their roguish ideation of a Hindu state has slowly penetrated millions over the last century. All autocrats require a tangibly convenient enemy. Hindutvawadis have systematically developed a particular focus on fabrications and indoctrinations that inculcate Islamophobia.

Hindutva zealots seek to achieve an ideological vision as the current administration who supports Hindutvawadis manages the up-scaled industry of Islamophobia. Anti-Muslim policies include ceasing appointments to public services, gradual closure of Urdu schools, interference in Muslim personal law in matters of divorce, attempts to introduce a uniform civil code, banning of beef consumption, criminalization of beef sales, re-delineation of Muslim electoral constituencies, dissemination of false claims that Muslims destroyed Hindu temples and built mosques on those sites, and rewriting India's history belittling and negatively portraying Muslims.

As envisioned by fascist founders, their abrogation of Article 370 of India's Constitution (August 2019) specifically deprived Kashmiri Muslims of special rights. The Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) soon followed in December 2019. This Act specifically discriminates Muslims in fulfilment of Savarkar's objectives. They then were planning to implement a National Register of Citizens (NRC) which requires proof of citizenship; thus, negatively affecting Muslims and other minorities. Due to the lockdown, the plan was temporarily withheld. Numerous schemes and laws that unfavourably affect Muslims have since entered bureaucratic and legislative

pipelines. All possible ways and means were and are explored to propagate the hatred of Muslims. Then came the incredible opportunity presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, a crisis that Hindutva exponents have timely exploited to stigmatize, vilify and murder Muslims.

The pandemic allowed for further abuse and segregation of Muslims. The current Government took power in 2014 and some of its leaders have repeatedly made nationalist speeches with vehement anti-Muslim content. They encourage and incite violence by supporters who assume their approbation and protection. Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh RSS-affiliated mobs freely and openly attack, murder or injure any religious minority member following the slightest rumour they might trade in sacred Hindu beef.<sup>2</sup> An especial fervour arose following declarations that many Muslims who attended a mass congregation in Delhi in March 2020 had the coronavirus. This event was organized by India's *Tablighi Jamaat*,<sup>3</sup> a non-political Islamic movement devoted to inter-religious peace and spiritual enhancement. Participants concerned themselves with matters of transcendent non-political, non-partisan sentiment and the worship of God. Some Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders took the opportunity to label this gathering as both *Corona Terrorism* and *Talibani crime*<sup>4</sup> – a unilateral assertion of pure bias without factual content. Even so, mainstream media screamed "*Corona Jihad*" while the hashtag went viral on social media.<sup>5</sup> The lie generated enormous unease among innocent Muslims, because its viral propagation advanced anti-Muslim sentiment among ignorant Hindu masses.

Qualitative content analysis is applied in this paper to writings, speeches, websites, international news bulletins and periodicals, as well as YouTube and social media reports. This paper reveals how Hindutva authorities and supporters have exploited the COVID-19 pandemic to vilify fellow Muslim citizens and cause suspicion of their patriotism and loyalty. The focus is on Hindutva Ideologues'

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/05/01/coronajihad-only-latest-manifestation-islamophobia-india-has-been-years-making>, retrieved 13 Aug 20.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

sponsored propaganda and misinformation, false-flag operations blamed on Muslims, the denial of medical treatment, the ruin of homes and shops under cover of the pandemic lockdown, calls to boycott Muslim stalls and shops, rumours that mosques are COVID-19 reservoirs and calls by doctors to murder Muslim corona patients.

## 2.0 Pioneers of Islamophobia in India

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar (1883-1966), Keshav Baliram Hedgewar (1889-1940), Madhav Sadashiv Golwalkar (1906-1973) and Bal Thackeray (1926-2012) were pioneers of Islamophobia in India in the twentieth century, noteworthy for their hate speeches and writings against Muslims throughout the period. There are others, but these were the significant players who accelerated the campaign of hate. In addition to Hindutva hate-mongers, an upscaled Islamophobic industry has been engineered by ruling BJP authorities, Hindutva's naturally sired ideological legatees. Idiocentric dogma rapidly accelerates hate with fiction, false accusations and poisonous allegations that insinuate Muslim treachery against Hindus and India. The venom spreads malignantly. Hindutva ideology engenders such profound hostility towards Islam and Muslims as they are regarded as enemies of Hindu India.<sup>6</sup> 'Hindu nationalism' is thus crudely and rudely nurtured on the heels of the cited pioneers and their sons and daughters.<sup>7</sup>

Savarkar's Hindu nationalist philosophy of Hindutva focuses on Hindu solidarity regardless of consequences.<sup>8</sup> As the Hindu Mahasabha president, he advanced the slogan "*Hinduize all politics and Militarize Hindudom*" for his anti-Muslim and anti-Christian politics during the Second World War. He sowed the Islamophobic seed. He believed "*Hindus in Hindustan are a nation, and other*

---

<sup>6</sup> J. Christophe, *Hindu Nationalism: A Reader* (Princeton University Press, 2009), 14–15, 86–93.

<sup>7</sup> R. F. McDermott, L. A. Gordon, A. T. Embree, F. W. Pritchett, and D. Dalton, eds., *Sources of Indian Traditions: Modern India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh* (Cambridge University Press, 2014), 483.

<sup>8</sup> Bipan Chandra, *India's Struggle for Independence* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 1989), 145.



people are communities and numerically, therefore, mere minorities."<sup>9</sup> Consequently, he excluded Muslims and Christians from citizenship, because they did not accept India as their "holy land." He further held that the Hindu majority alone must shape India's future by transforming secular India into a *Hindu Raj*. Hence, religious minorities must submit to the cultural and political dominion of a majority Hindu community.

According to India's historian and writer Ramachandra Guha, Golwalker who was second in command of RSS was known to see Muslims, Christians and Communists as principal threats to Hindu nation formation. He once said, "*Hindus, do not waste your time fighting the British, instead save your energy to fight our internal enemies, which are Communists, Muslims and Christians. These two religions were not born in India... akin to demons and ratshahsas... and the Hindus destined to be avenging angels who would slay them...*"<sup>10</sup> He questioned Muslim loyalty to India. He remained sceptical of their patriotism causing Hindus to doubt Muslims. He openly declared, "*No power on earth could keep Muslims in Hindustan. They shall have to quit this country.*"<sup>11</sup> Likewise, Rajeshwar Singh<sup>12</sup> a *Dharm Jagran Samiti* (DJS) functionary stated on 14 December 2014 the following:

Muslims and Christians will have to convert to Hinduism if they want to stay in this country ... Our target is to make India a *Hindu Rashtra* by 2021... The Muslims and Christians do not have the rights to stay here. So, they would be either converted to Hinduism or

---

<sup>9</sup> Savarkar, *Hindutva, Who is a Hindu?* (New Delhi: Bharati Sahitya Sadan, 1989), 3.

<sup>10</sup> Ramachandra Guha, *Makers of Modern India*, (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2013).

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.timesheadline.com/india/rss-chief-golwalker-threatened-kill-gandhi-1947-cid-report-19968.html> > Retrieved 24 June 20.

<sup>12</sup> This is a member of India's ruling party openly boasting of his government's intent to ethnically cleanse 200 million Muslims and 28 million Christians. He is known for inciteful and inflammatory statements. No action has been taken against him. He is an RSS pracharak heading the DJS See <https://sabrangindia.in/article/muslims-and-christians-will-be-wiped-out-india-december-31-2021-bjp-leader-rajeshwar-singh>.

forced to run away from here... I will ensure that India will be freed of Muslims and Christians by December 31, 2021.<sup>13</sup> This is the pledge taken by my colleagues. This is our pledge.<sup>14</sup>

While explaining the BJP's plans, Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) Secretary-General Champat Rai said 'Ghar wapsi' has been an ongoing VHP campaign in the last sixty years. They have re-inducted over six lakh people into Hinduism since 1966.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, Hindutva zealots often and openly convey the intention to declare India a *Hindu Rashtra*. Authorities move in this direction. What happens to Muslims currently bears witness that this dream is a 'work in progress'. An unprecedented trial no doubt, awaits Muslims in India.

Bal Thackeray, the founder of Shiv Sena, suggested a political model that would persecute and mass murder minorities as did Hitler's Nazis. In 2008 he wrote that Islamic terrorism was growing and Hindu terrorism was the only alternative to counter it. He called for Hindu suicide bomb squads to eliminate Muslims like the Zionist operatives in Palestine.<sup>16</sup> He demanded that Hindus unite across language barriers so that all would see "*a Hindustan for Hindus ... [that would] bring Islam in this country to its knees.*"<sup>17</sup> The pathetic wickedness and emotive provocations of Hindutva speech and literature repeatedly instigate thousands of murders and violent incidents that go unreported or unattended by tacit authorities.

The surge of Islamophobic activity during the COVID-19 pandemic is marked by an unprecedented exposure of contemporary fascism in India. Hopefully, this will open the eyes of international

---

<sup>13</sup> <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/dharm-jagran-samiti-leader-vows-to-create-hindu-rashtra-by-2021/1/407660.html> >Retrieved 24June20.

<sup>14</sup> <https://sabrangindia.in/article/muslims-and-christians-will-be-wiped-out-india-december-31-2021-bjp-leader-rajeshwar-singh>. Retrieved 22 April 2021.

<sup>15</sup> <https://archive.siasat.com/news/rajeshwar-singh-muslims-and-christians-will-have-convert-hinduism-687393/> Retrieved 31March 2021.

<sup>16</sup> See Leaders deliver hate speech with impunity. Archived 6 October 2012 at the Wayback Machine CNN-IBN 7 April 2009.

<sup>17</sup> Vinod J (2015). *Balasaheb Thackeray*. North Carolina: LP Inc. Google Bdeliver the speech books, 34. See also "Hindustan of Hindus My Dream: Thackeray," *The Indian Express*, 29 January 2007. Retrieved 20 November 2012.

human rights activists and justice-loving NGOs, who might ponder the plight of the subcontinent's Muslims. Perhaps they will initiate processes to protect them from further humiliation, stigmatization, murder, mayhem and devastation.

### 3.0 The “Love Jihad” Theory

Hindutva proponents have developed<sup>18</sup> a conspiracy theory<sup>19</sup> known as “Love Jihad” in 2009. Their publications were disseminated, calling on Hindus to protect their women from Muslim men portrayed as charming individuals, criminals and lecherous rapists. RSS, VHP and other Sangh Parivar gangs have since proliferated this propaganda whilst vigorously pursuing it today. They use this theory to invoke prejudice against Muslims. It blames Muslim men for targeting Hindu women for their conversion to Islam through seduction, deception, love, kidnapping and marriage. It is a theory without evidence that Sangh Parivar outfits peddle to claim Muslims are 'trapping' Hindu girls intending to convert them for marriage.<sup>20</sup>

The Hindu zealots and Yogi Adityanath alleged that “Love Jihad” is an international conspiracy targeting India<sup>21</sup> for Muslim domination through its population. Announcing on television, Yogi said that “*Muslims could not do what they want by force in India, so they use the “Love Jihad” method.*”<sup>22</sup> As a sign of Islamophobia

---

<sup>18</sup> Waikar, Prashant (2018). "Reading Islamophobia in Hindutva: An Analysis of Narendra Modi's Political Discourse". *Islamophobia Studies Journal*. 4 (2): 161–180. doi:10.13169/islastudj.4.2.0161. ISSN 2325-8381. JSTOR 10.13169/islastudj.4.2.0161 – via JSTOR.

<sup>19</sup> Farokhi, Zeinab (2020). "Hindu Nationalism, News Channels, and "Post-Truth" Twitter: A Case Study of "Love Jihad"". In Boler, Megan; Davis, Elizabeth (eds.). *Affective Politics of Digital Media: Propaganda by Other Means*. Routledge. pp. 226–239. ISBN 978-1-000-16917-1. pp. 226-227. Retrieved 17 February 2021 – via Google Books.

<sup>20</sup> <https://thewire.in/government/love-jihad-bjp-ashok-gehlot>. Retrieved 2 April 2021

<sup>21</sup> "Love Jihad: High Court asks UP govt, EC to file response". *India TV*. 4 September 2014. Retrieved 2 April 2021. see <https://www.indiatvnews.com/news/india/love-jihad-high-court-up-govt-ec-pil-yogi-adityanath-41383.html?ref=veng>. Retrieved 2 April 2021.

<sup>22</sup> Mandhana, Niharika (4 September 2014). "Hindu Activists in India Warn Women to Beware of 'Love Jihad'". *The Wall Street Journal*. Retrieved 2 April 2021. See:

propaganda using the theory of “Love Jihad”, he reiterated that given a chance, Muslim men would coerce a woman *"to have two or three children and then leave her or rape her or throw acid on her if she resists or murder her."*<sup>23</sup> Likewise, false propaganda is being carried out amidst Hindu women concerning “Love Jihad” which is undoubtedly imaginary. In this way, several modalities are employed to sow seeds of hatred and scepticism among the innocent and uninformed Hindu people scaring and making them believe that Muslims are evil and anti-national.

This concept was institutionalized in India after the Bhartiya Janata Party won the elections. Pro-government television and social media campaigns are responsible for popularizing the theory. The BJP ruled states legislated against this alleged conspiracy, and the Yogi Adityanath government implements it. The moderate political analysts argue that the “Love Jihad” theory is used to oppress Muslims and instigate a crackdown on interfaith marriages. It is narrated that *"the Sangh Parivar activists used the idea of 'love jihad' to amplify the old Hindutva rhetoric that stereotypes Muslims as cow slaughterers, lustful reproductive machines, criminals and black marketers."*<sup>24</sup> The Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana and Karnataka governments have institutionalized such communal politics by bringing to light the “Love Jihad” bogey.

Referring to the “Love Jihad” theory, Chief Minister of Rajasthan Ashok Gehlot expressed his view on 20 November 2020 that the BJP had invented the term “Love Jihad”. In his tweet, he wrote, *"Love Jihad is a word manufactured by BJP to divide the nation and disturb communal harmony. Marriage is a matter of personal liberty; bringing a law to curb it is completely unconstitutional, and it will not stand in any court of law. Jihad has no place in Love."*<sup>25</sup> Many other political and community leaders

---

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/hindu-activists-in-india-warn-women-to-beware-of-love-jihad-1409874089>.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Read the article entitled ‘The History of Love Jihad’: How Sangh Parivar Spread a Dangerous, Imaginary Idea in <https://thewire.in/communalism/love-jihad-anti-muslim-history-sangh-parivar>. Retrieved 2 April 2021.

<sup>25</sup> Read the article Love Jihad Is a Word Manufacture by BJP to Divide the Nation by by Ashok Gehlot. <https://thewire.in/government/love-jihad-bjp-ashok-gehlot>

have expressed similar views. However, their opinions are disregarded for they belong to different political parties. Many NGOs too have expressed their viewpoints about it, but the zealots constantly continue to allege Muslim wrongdoings. They do not have any other business except to create discord in the community. They disseminate hatred and animosity which is on the surge during the COVID-19 pandemic era.

#### **4.0 CAA and NRC**

Before we unveil the enveloping wave of Islamophobia in India, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic era, it deems appropriate and crucial to highlight some of the critical political activities of the BJP-led Government after winning the 2019 Parliamentary elections. A few months before the rapid surge of Islamophobia, India's Parliament had passed a new Act on 9 December 2019 called the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 (CAA). It amended the 1955 Citizenship Act, providing an easy way to citizenship for Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsees and Christians who migrated to India from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan on or before 31 December 2014. The Act is so biased that it does not offer the same privilege to Muslim immigrants. Thus, it manifests that the BJP government which is dominated by Hindutva ideology has side-lined Muslims deliberately. Muslims and some social activists hold that the Act is discriminatory, unethical and unconstitutional because it contradicts Article 14 of India's Constitution which offers equal status to everyone regardless of religion.

Sangh Parivar entities and their affiliates have been propagating anti-Muslim sentiments among India's majority Hindu population for decades, leading to this Islamophobic Act. Current BJP leaders at the helm are faithful and dedicated adherents of RSS. Since they passed through the RSS training, they merely implemented fundamental Hindutva ideology propounded and preached by Savarkar during his time and after his death which were championed by his followers and admirers. Their hatred of Muslims is unambiguously expressed in their ideological fathers' writings: Savarkar, Golwalker, Thackeray and others. The Government included Buddhists, Sikhs and Jains in the CAA, because Savarkar

specifically advocated social harmony between Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains, since the last three religions have roots in Hinduism with many similarities, and this is done at the cost of excluding Muslims and Christians. Savarkar foresaw the Muslims as "misfits" in an exclusively Hindu dominion, and as people who could never be a part of his superior society.<sup>26</sup>

Another Islamophobic instrument is the National Register of Citizens (NRC). Its clandestine agenda and aim are to render millions of India's Muslims stateless, although they are citizens by birth whose ancestors have lived in India for centuries. Detention centres are under construction to house them after they are declared non-citizens. Contemporary leaders, politicians, legal experts, former judges, university professors and historians have voiced their concerns that the Indian idea of citizenship, as embodied in the Constitution and the law, is in the throes of profound and radical metamorphosis.

They have two observations: firstly, the NRC establishes a legal path to declare disfavoured groups as stateless (e.g., Muslims living in India for centuries; Christians and lower caste Hindus); secondly, the CAA grants citizenship to preferred groups. Muslims must prove citizenship by presenting documented evidence that is defined by authority. For others, particularly upper caste Hindus, different criteria and processes will be made simple as explained by those closely observing CAA and NRC developments and proposals.

According to some observers, both the CAA and NRC should be read in light of accelerating violence against minorities over the past few years. Any adequate understanding depends on appreciating the minority ecosystem in which they arise and emanate from an increasingly intolerant state and society. India is experiencing an unprecedented crisis. With the exception of Sangh Parivar, people of all religions are against the new Act. Muslims are anxious and insecure about its implementation, because the recent Hindutva programmes and activities specifically target them. Many campaigns by Sangh Parivar explicitly declare their intention to eliminate India's Muslims. In the February 2020 Delhi election speeches, it was

---

<sup>26</sup> Clarke, 2017, *Competing Fundamentalisms: Violent Extremism in Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism* Westminster John Knox Press.

announced they would demolish Delhi's mosques if BJP won state elections. The speeches of RSS devotees instigate their followers to loot wealthy Muslims and murder poor Muslims. If Muslims are injured in any protest, rally or demonstration, medical treatment is to be withheld. When Muslims report these matters to the police, their response is, "You should go to Pakistan". Numerous vicious and vulgar sentiments are expressed. Indeed, the pandemic era is a test for Muslim perseverance and steadfastness.

## 5.0 Detention Centres

Detention centres are constructed to house those who cannot prove their citizenship by furnishing documental evidence from the state authorities. India's Muslims are in a state of apprehension, because the NRC's implementation targets them though the authorities deny it. Many feel that documents required to prove their citizenship are not available, because the registration system was either absent or ineffective in the 1940s to 1970s. People did not register their births as the system was very lax and rudimentary. Consciousness to record birth, marriage and death was almost absent. Even the authorities never alerted people to register their births and deaths. Suddenly under the new interpretation of the law, they must produce evidence of their birth in India. The Government plans to implement NRC, and those who cannot provide documental evidence will be declared stateless and eventually sent to the detention centres. Life will be miserable after being thrown into such centres.

India's Today TV reported the construction of the biggest detention centre at Matia in Assam's Goalpora district. There are six detention centres in Assam.<sup>27</sup> Delhi's detention centre is spread over in three places.<sup>28</sup> Karnataka's detention centre is located forty kilometres from Bangalore.<sup>29</sup> The Union government has planned to

---

<sup>27</sup> Singh, Vijaita (29 December 2019). "Explained What is the directive on detention centres?". *The Hindu*. <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/what-is-the-directive-on-detention-centres/article30421358.ece>. Retrieved 4 April 2021.

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/since-2009-states-asked-by-mha-to-set-up-detention-centres/article30382427.ece>

<sup>29</sup> Shankar, B. V. Shiva (7 December 2019). "Karnataka's first detention centre for illegal immigrants to open in January". *The Times of India*. <https://timesofindia>.

establish detention centres in all states before introducing the NRC and Citizenship Bill across the country by 2024.<sup>30</sup> Goa detention centre at Mapusa was opened for foreigners in 2019.<sup>31</sup> Maharashtra detention centre is being constructed at Nerul in Navi Mumbai.<sup>32</sup> The Punjab detention centre was built in Goindwal Sahib in Tarn Taran district and was supposed to be completed in May 2020.<sup>33</sup> The Rajasthan detention centre is located on the campus of the Central Jail in Alwar.<sup>34</sup> Before implementing the NRC project, detention centres are constructed so that people, mainly Muslims who cannot prove their citizenship can be relocated there.

## 6.0 The Surge in Islamophobia During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Social and public media tirelessly discuss the possibility or likelihood of Muslim responsibility for the COVID-19 spread in India. Sangh Parivar agents led by the RSS disseminate false news reports regarding the annual *Tablighi Jamaat* in Delhi (March 2020), claiming Muslims spread the pandemic from there. This propaganda caused unprecedented panic and accelerated alarm among Muslims who were baselessly accused despite their numerous acts of charity among the poor and needy during the crisis. According to political analysts, Muslim donations to those affected by the disease regardless of religion or caste were remarkable. In addition to biased propaganda, Sangh Parivar's volunteers frequented villages where they frightened Hindus into isolating Muslims to avoid infection and death. Since the Delhi event, conspirators generated so much fear that they caused repetitive surges of grievous anti-Muslim insults and violence.

---

[indiatimes.com/city/bengaluru/karnatakas-first-detention-centre-for-illegal-immigrants-to-open-in-january/articleshow/72409585](https://indiatimes.com/city/bengaluru/karnatakas-first-detention-centre-for-illegal-immigrants-to-open-in-january/articleshow/72409585). Retrieved 4 April 2021.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/cm-pramod-sawant-inaugurates-detention-centre-for-foreigners-in-go-1537836-2019-05-29>. Retrieved 4 April 2021.

<sup>32</sup> <https://frontline.thehindu.com/cover-story/article29499066.ece>. Retrieved 4 April 2021.

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/what-is-the-directive-on-detention-centre-s/article30421358.ece>. Retrieved 4 April 2021.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.



Sadly, false accusations were ignored by the authorities all across India. Sitting parliament members from the BJP and local leaders actively spread the slander. Although initiated by Hindu fanatics, India's supposedly neutral Tamil TV channels spread complete lies without proper investigative journalism. They brazenly accused Muslims of spreading COVID-19, endlessly repeating the lie to brainwash the Hindu masses and purposely foster belief and suspicion. Media participation undoubtedly affected the unknowing uneducated masses and caused them to segregate Muslims reactively. False-flag videos even fabricated images of members of the *Tablighi Jamaat* spitting on police. These went viral on social media to exacerbate an already dangerous atmosphere.<sup>35</sup> Undoubtedly, many media channels were under pressure and feared the cancellation of broadcasting licenses should they oppose Sangh Parivar, the most influential and powerful force in contemporary Indian politics.

Some Muslims who attended the *Tablighi Jamaat* event in Delhi were indeed infected and they cooperated willingly when called by the authorities to undergo medical tests. Those diagnosed as positive followed proper guidelines and procedures, and were subsequently quarantined. Amir Ali, Assistant Professor of Political Science at the Jawaharlal Nehru University in Delhi, wrote that "*Islamophobia has been transposed onto the coronavirus issue.*"<sup>36</sup> The BJP has increasingly attacked Muslims, particularly after their re-election in April 2019. The coronavirus provided "*one more opportunity to cast the Muslim as 'the other', as dangerous,*" argued Ali.<sup>37</sup> India's ruling elite remains silent. Instead of sternly warning hate-mongers, this conspiracy of silence endorses a new and flourishing industry of Muslim hatred in what appears to be burgeoning Neo-Nazi India.<sup>38</sup>

---

<sup>35</sup> See: "It Was Already Dangerous to Be Muslim in India. Then Came the Coronavirus". <https://time.com/5815264/coronavirus-india-islamophobia-coronajihad/>

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> See: "Is India's honeymoon with the Gulf countries getting over?" *Muslim Mirror* <http://muslimmirror.com/eng/is-indias-honeymoon-with-the-gulf-countries-getting-over/> Retrieved 30Apr20.

Ashok Swain, Professor of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University, says:

Islamophobia has reached its peak in India with the increasing rise of the Coronavirus crisis. This is not just a primordial reaction of society but a very well planned and finely executed political project of the ruling elite.<sup>39</sup>

Arjun Appadurai, Professor of Media, Culture and Communication at New York University who studies Indian politics writes:

There is a kind of affinity between this long-standing image and the new anxieties surrounding coronavirus<sup>40</sup>  
... One of the key features of anti-Muslim sentiment in India for quite a long time has been the idea that Muslims themselves are a kind of infection in the body politic.<sup>41</sup>

We know that Sangh Parivar supporters have been responsible for inciting Islamophobia for decades. However, their efforts have mushroomed after India's independence. Indian graduates in all disciplines have gone to Arab countries to work since the 1970s. They commonly focus solely on developing their family's economic base and status back home, so much so little else concerns them. These last two decades have seen the number of Indians in the Gulf Countries dramatically increase. It became increasingly evident that Arab countries significantly contribute to India's economy by literally employing millions of Indians. Nonetheless, Sangh Parivar began spreading Islamophobic propaganda in these same venues, far from home.

India's social media recently reported (13 March 2020) on a man from Bangalore, working for Steward Harrison in the UAE, who criticized Muslims in general particularly Indian Muslims. He even uploaded a YouTube video. He stated that Muslims who attended the *Tablighi Jamaat event* were responsible for the spread of COVID-19 in India, saying that Muslims are pigs while ridiculing Islam's

---

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

obligatory prayers. This man who earned many lakhs in US dollars was arrested by the UAE government and imprisoned.<sup>42</sup>

## 7.0 Government is Islamophobic

Islamophobia is not limited to the followers of Sangh Parivar. The Indian government also seems to embrace this same fear and loathing. The City of Saint Paul, the state capital of Minnesota in the USA, recently passed a resolution declaring Hindu nationalists of the BJP-led Indian government "Islamophobic".<sup>43</sup> Saint Paul authorities also criticized India's National Register of Citizens (NRC) and the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) as a combined exercise designed to deprive many Indian Muslims of their rights as citizens.<sup>44</sup> Saint Paul's City Council deemed these laws "*discriminatory to Muslims*." Indeed the Act which claims to aid refugees fleeing religious persecution in neighbouring countries, in reality, discriminates against millions of Muslims who fled to India because of wars in Afghanistan, Bangladesh and other Muslim countries. Saint Paul's City Council argued ordinary people have to oppose this dangerous upsurge in racist, nationalist, and authoritarian despots the world over and specifically condemned the Islamophobic authoritarianism of India's regime, which openly discriminates against its 200 million Muslim citizens and refugees.<sup>45</sup>

## 8.0 Transmission of Misinformation

Although the pandemic threatens everyone irrespective of faith, class or gender, Muslims have been especially victimized. In India, they have been solely blamed for the contagion's spread. Misinformation regarding them as viral vectors is the order of the day. Sangh Parivar and influential individuals offer this insult,<sup>46</sup> even as the Government is criticized for allowing the libel.

---

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WnrOJw60ZOA>

<sup>43</sup> <http://muslimmirror.com/eng/us-city-council-declares-indian-government-as-islamophobic-opposes-caa-nrc/> Retrieved 13Aug20.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2020/04/06/islamophobia-taints-indias-response-coronavirus/> Retrieved 26Jul20.

Surprisingly, Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, a BJP Muslim member who is also the Union Muslim Minority Affairs Minister in Modi's cabinet, actually called the *Tablighi Jamaat* a "*Talibani crime*".<sup>47</sup> The Washington Post reported that "*According to Time magazine, tweets with the hashtag' #CoronaJihad' appeared nearly 300,000 times and were potentially seen by 165 million people. Other hashtags included #BioJihad.*"<sup>48</sup> Numerous fabrications were concocted including "*Muslims spitting on people to spread the virus*"<sup>49</sup> or "*flashing naked bodies at female staff in hospitals.*" By the time these lies were debunked they had been shared by millions.<sup>50</sup> India's judiciary is also mentally unbalanced by bias: "*The high court of the western state of Gujarat, on 3 April 2020, cited the Muslim congregation as the reason for the exponential growth of the pandemic in the country.*"<sup>51</sup> Sangeet Som, a BJP MLA, called Delhi's Nizamuddin Markaz Mosque a centre of "*pure corona terrorism*".<sup>52</sup> Ordinary Indian Muslim citizens are thereby equated with bio-terrorists.

## 9.0 Meat Thrown outside Hindu Temples

Hindu militants have strange approaches to the disruption of communal harmony. One such strategy has been to throw cow meat on the threshold of Hindu temples and blame it on the Muslims. Hariram Prakash, a Hindu civil engineering graduate, was arrested for doing this at Venugopal Krishnaswamy and Sri Raghavendra temples with the specific intent to disturb civil order in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu.<sup>53</sup> Likewise in 2017, two Hindu boys were arrested in Uttar Pradesh for beheading a cow just before the Muharram festival and trying to blame it on Muslims. In 2020, a man was arrested in Kerala for desecrating a Hindu temple to incite violence between

---

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> <https://news.abplive.com/videos/news/india-this-is-corona-terrorism-says-bjps-sangeet-som-over-nizamuddin-markaz-1186833>. Retrieved 26Jul20.

<sup>53</sup> <http://muslimmirror.com/eng/engineering-graduate-throws-meat-outside-temples-to-create-communal-tension/> Retrieved 03Jun20.

Hindus and Muslims.

### 10.0 Medical Treatment Denied

India's social media reports reveal disturbing incidents of Muslim patients being denied medical treatment at private and public hospitals as well as clinics throughout India. We cite these examples.

A pregnant Muslim woman was denied treatment at a private hospital in Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu. Medics assumed she had the coronavirus. She was from a village in Rajagiri and had an appointment but due to the lockdown, had arrived a bit late. She waited in the lobby for a consultation with the doctor on duty but was denied entry to the examination rooms. The staff told her that because she was a Muslim, she might carry the virus. She appealed but was chased out of the facility without a medical examination or advice. The current state of India's medical ethics is dismal and perhaps also influenced by Hindutva ideology which, much like the Israeli creed, considers non-Hindus non-human entities unworthy of life on Indian soil. Muslims who consult doctors for any ailment are told they are 'corona positive' even though they are not. It happens according to India's social media.

The example from Tamil Nadu is not an isolated case. The Telegraph reports (19 April 2020) that two newborn babies died after hospitals refused to admit their Muslim mothers due to COVID-related Islamophobia.<sup>54</sup> A Muslim woman, Rizwana Khatun aged 30 miscarried after being barred from treatment at MGM Hospital in Jamshedpur, Jharkhand.<sup>55</sup> She had rushed to the hospital after she began bleeding but on arrival was accused of spreading the coronavirus, beaten and then forced to clean up her blood.<sup>56</sup> Asaduddin Owaisi claims the radicalization in India's hospitals is brazen because authorities and a large section of Hindu society support discrimination and abuse.<sup>57</sup>

---

<sup>54</sup> <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2020/04/19/indian-hospitals-refuse-admit-muslims-coronavirus-causes-islamophobia/> > Retrieved 07Aug20.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/rajasthan-doctor-refuses-to-admit-pregnant-woman-because-she-s-muslim-her-child-dies-after-delivery-1663352-2020-04-04> >

India Today says (4 April 2020) another pregnant Muslim woman in Rajasthan's Bharatpur district was denied admission to deliver in a hospital and her baby died in the ambulance whilst on route to another hospital. According to her husband, Irfan Khan:

My pregnant wife had to deliver a child. She was referred from Sikri to Janana Hospital in the district headquarters, but doctors said we should go to Jaipur because we are Muslims. As I was taking her in the ambulance, she delivered. The baby died. I hold the administration responsible for my child's death.<sup>58</sup>

The Rajasthan tourism minister said, "Just because *Tablighi Jamaat* was linked to a surge of coronavirus cases, it does not mean Muslim citizens will be treated in the same manner as this pregnant lady."<sup>59</sup> It is, according to numerous reports, a bald-faced lie.

### **11.0 The Vandalization of Muslim Homes and Shops under Cover of Lockdown**

The current surge in Islamophobia includes a series of tragedies, most of which go unreported. Hindu fascists began attacking Muslims and destroying their homes during the COVID-19 lockdown. In Telinipara, West Bengal, The Guardian reported, "...armed with petrol bombs, acid bombs, gas cylinders, Molotov cocktails and explosives, the men, numbering 100, piled stealthily into small boats to cross over the Ganges river."<sup>60</sup> They destroyed Muslim homes and shops, then vandalized two mosques and a Muslim shrine. They also exposed themselves to Muslim women and made rape threats. All told, forty-five buildings belonging to Muslims were destroyed.<sup>61</sup> Rubina Khatun, aged 22, was with her

---

Retrieved 07Aug20.

<sup>58</sup> <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/rajasthan-doctor-refuses-to-admit-pregnant-woman-because-she-s-muslim-her-child-dies-after-delivery-1663352> > Retrieved 29Jul20.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jun/08/how-lives-were-destroyed-under-cover-of-lockdown-in-a-small-indian-town> > Retrieved 17Jun20.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

four-year-old son when her home was attacked on 12 May 2020. She said:

We are ruined, they reduced everything to ashes, they threw petrol bombs into our room and set it on fire. All nine Muslim houses in our row were attacked, and four of them, including ours, were burned completely."<sup>62</sup> Speaking through shuddering sobs, she continued: "The attackers stood on the roof next door and started shouting unthinkably vulgar abuses at me. 'Are you having sex with your son? He cannot satisfy you. Wait, I am coming to your room...' one said and then pulled down his shorts. Another shouted, 'We will rape all the Muslim women here'." "Why are Hindus attacking us so cruelly? Do we have no right to live in India just because we are Muslims?"<sup>63</sup>

Since BJP came to power in 2014, India's Muslims have faced increasing persecution and troubles that are often state-sponsored. Add to this discrimination, boycotts and murder by lynching. All can be attributed to BJP's nationalist agenda to make India a Hindu state. Similar difficulties and violence had preceded their 2019 re-election, after which they escalated. Nationalist leaders and politicians brazenly advocate anti-Muslim activities and use every opportunity to undermine Muslim dignity and stability. It has reached crusade status. As coronavirus spreads, BJP politicians fanned Islamophobic furies by saying it was a "*Muslim virus*" and "*corona jihad*" to infect innocent Hindus.<sup>64</sup>

This latter problem as cited, began after five Muslims tested positive for coronavirus in Telinipara. However, at any given moment and in any population, 20% to 30% or more can test positive but results are completely unreliable.<sup>65</sup> Nevertheless, when Hindus

---

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> "Serologic test results should not be used to make decisions about grouping persons residing in or being admitted to congregate settings, such as schools,

discovered this fact—which is true of any flu virus, as they are all corona viruses—Hindu residents set up blockades to bar Muslims from entering their neighbourhoods within a matter of hours. According to Mohammad Hashim, a local municipality councillor, *"Muslims were banned from using public toilets and from collecting food from ration shops."*<sup>66</sup> Authorities in nearby towns even used loudspeakers to instruct Hindus not to let Muslims from Telinipara enter the area. Hindu youths threatened to attack Hindu shopkeepers who sold anything to Muslims.<sup>67</sup>

## 12.0 Destruction of Plants and Crops by Locusts

Injurious and determined, Sangh Parivar gangs explore every way possible to invent lies against Muslims. Following their godfather's steps, they poison the airwaves via satellite and TV channels using debates that focus solely on Muslims. The plan is to undermine Muslim dignity and cast suspicion on their loyalty. Recently, they claimed that Pakistani laboratories had produced millions of locusts then explicitly sent them to India. Unbelievably, Indian news anchor Arnab Goswami announced that Pakistan sent *"terrorist locusts"* to India on a mission of crop destruction.<sup>68</sup> Indeed, a plague of locusts had flown from Africa to Pakistan and then to India. Instead of reporting the facts, Hindustani TV channels fabricated a monstrous lie. Being funded by fascists, they naturally say what is dictated. Fanatics presently direct continuous mental anguish and psychological disorder at Muslims, while constantly goading their Hindu majority to hate Muslims and treat them as India's most permanent and paramount national enemy. Hindus had commonly and comfortably lived in peaceful harmony with their Muslim neighbours, as did Jews in Palestine before the Zionist ascension.

## 13.0 Boycotting Muslim Stalls

---

dormitories, or correctional facilities. Test results should not be used to make decisions about returning persons to the workplace. It's a disaster. These tests are not worth anything or have very little use." *Business Insider* (28May20)

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Su4C7P4sWEE> > Retrieved 07Aug20.



Influenced by Sangh Parivar's rhetoric, fanatics also call on all Hindus to boycott Muslim businesses. In the past, this sentiment was propagated with some trepidation because they were not politically potent. However, since the BJP's rise to power they grew more brazen, confident and vocal, revealing their true colours. These calls to boycott contemporaneously involve the Hitlerian hoisting of an RSS flag or the Sangh Parivar pennant, enabling everyone to differentiate between Hindu and Muslim shops and stalls. As they follow the same pattern, one imagines wearing a yellow 'star and crescent' will soon follow – to be reasonably expected under the present regime. Hindu merchants now display signboards showing their stalls belong to Hindus, especially mutton stalls in various locales implying Hindus should buy only from Hindus.<sup>69</sup> A member of Vishwa Hindu Parishad opened a mutton stall in Hoshur, Tamil Nadu and named it 'Hindu Mutton Stall'.<sup>70</sup> Such actions were unheard of in the past before the onset of the fascist plague.

#### 14.0 Distribution of Saffron Flags to Hindu Vendors

Muslim vendors are also accused of infecting vegetables with their saliva. Suresh Tiwari, a legislator from Barhaj, Deoria in Uttar Pradesh, is quoted as publicly saying, *"Keep one thing in mind. I am telling everyone openly. There is no need to buy vegetables from miyans (Muslims)."*<sup>71</sup> Hindutva zealots also force politically non-aligned vegetable vendors to hoist saffron flags that differentiate them from Muslim vendors to honour the boycott. Far-right groups distribute saffron flags to Hindu vendors everywhere.<sup>72</sup> Moreover in New Delhi, Karnataka, Telangana and Madhya Pradesh neighbourhoods, posters are placed to warn off Muslims from entering Hindu shops.<sup>73</sup> Brij Bhushan Sharan, a BJP MLA from

---

<sup>69</sup> Sundaravalli Speech,VHP Mutton Stall: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QI1cH5nZ0as> > 06Jun20.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> [https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/04/buy-muslims-bjp-leader-india-calls-boycott-200429034119722.html?utm\\_source=website&utm\\_medium=article\\_page&utm\\_campaign=read\\_more\\_links](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/04/buy-muslims-bjp-leader-india-calls-boycott-200429034119722.html?utm_source=website&utm_medium=article_page&utm_campaign=read_more_links) > Retrieved 29Jul20.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

Charkhari in Uttar Pradesh, Mahoba district, was seen harassing a poor vegetable seller and boy in full gangland-style, forcing both to reveal their names or else be beaten.<sup>74</sup>

### 15.0 Mosques are COVID-19 Reservoirs

Mosques are considered coronavirus reservoirs by ardent supporters of Sangh Parivar.<sup>75</sup> This belief is held by people ruled by Yogi Adityanath, the BJP Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh. Furthermore, Hindus also object to the *adhan*, the Muslim call for prayer. A medical doctor who supports BJP recently called on the Tamil Nadu government to refuse allocations of rice to mosques during Ramadan, as previously implemented by the state government when Jayalalitha was the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu.<sup>76</sup> Since his association with BJP, he takes the party line to please his new masters; thus, issuing the anti-Muslim statement. Likewise, politicians who were previously non-aligned have mostly re-aligned with BJP after the 2019 general election to maintain their perquisites.

### 16.0 Killing Muslim Corona Patients

Aarti Lal Chandani, a medical doctor at a government hospital and Principal of the Kanpur Medical College, generated heated controversy after calling *Tablighi Jamaat* people "terrorists" who do not deserve medical treatment for coronavirus.<sup>77</sup> She advocated sending Muslim patients to isolation wards or solitary confinement, even to jails, jungles or dungeons instead of hospitals. She also called for beating and killing infected Muslims by lethal injection.<sup>78</sup> What mindset is this? Where do such medical ethics originate?! Who taught her such vicious cruelty then granted her the license and authority to maintain its propagation? Indeed, the medical education system and college of professionals are responsible. Can patients trust such doctors? If others follow suit, what will be the

---

<sup>74</sup> <https://www.thequint.com/news/india/dont-be-seen-here-another-bjp-mla-harasses-muslim-vendor> Retrieved 29Jul20.

<sup>75</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5wJtx5KPTqk> > Retrieved 07May20.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PfvsnMZ3A> > Accessed 06Jun20.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

consequences?

According to analysts, Dr Chandani was raised by Hindutva heretics. BJP supporters hold similar views and have assaulted 'others' with even greater vigour after forming the present Government. Neither is this a spontaneous or isolated authoritarian sentiment. It is representative of a growing neo-Nazi-like culture teeming with hate for non-Hindus, especially Muslims. A young RSS *Shakha* is trained to be hostile to Muslims and to operate as an anti-Islamic automaton. The mentality originates with upper caste Hindus and is now animated by their recent empowerment.<sup>79</sup> The deplorable ethics just cited signify a far reaching and deeply seated vein of social venom. An astute analyst said the doctor disgraces the entire medical community, suffers mental derangement and requires treatment: "*It is she who should be sent into isolation as she does not deserve to practise the profession.*"<sup>80</sup> Following her declaration, many Muslims say they will never go to the hospital even if it means certain death.<sup>81</sup>

## 17.0 Hate Speeches during the April 2021 Elections

Known as the 'Periyar Land' that manifests social justice as the fundamental ideology, Tamil Nadu, India's Southern state, went for the state legislative elections on 6 April 2021. Historically, it is recognized for peaceful religious coexistence, tolerance, unchallengeable social cohesion and Hindu-Muslim fraternity. For almost a century, Hindu fascists could not find a place in it. However, suddenly during the April elections it faced severe communal tension caused by the Hindu zealots and Hindutva exponents who vehemently delivered hate speeches against Muslims, thus making Hindus turn against them. For the first time in Tamil Nadu's history, it is no exaggeration to say that these fascist mobs freely moved towards the interior with the ruling party's help and operated against Muslims. When the state was under partial lockdown during the coronavirus surge, anti-Muslim campaigns accelerated. A retired Indian Police Service (IPS) officer hailing from

---

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

Karnataka, who was a candidate in the election had delivered hate speeches and threatened the Muslims.<sup>82</sup>

Besides him, several Hindu fascists constantly engaged in such propaganda. This time, they rudely declared that they were not interested in Muslim votes as they did in other Indian provinces in the recent past elections. To consolidate Hindu votes, they were vocal in making the uninformed rural Hindu population operate against Muslims. Such RSS-VHP led fascists, by associating with the local Hindu Front, distributed pamphlets calling on Hindus to boycott Muslim candidates. Even though the Muslims were peaceful, yet they were provoked and incited. But this strategy failed. Unable to enter the state for a few decades due to their mischievous agenda of Hindutva and India's Hinduization, they formed an electoral alliance with the 'All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazham,' a party that was governing the state for ten years (May 2011 - May 2021). When the party's charismatic leader cum Chief Minister Selvi Jayalalitha was alive, she never endorsed this plan. She declared that she would never allow this gang to ally with her party, as she had a soft spot for Muslims as claimed by some observers. However, after her death in 2016, her successors emerged as ardent and blind supporters of the Hindutva ideology, thus clandestinely campaigning against Muslims and poisoning Hindu voters' minds. Even after such tactics, Muslims did not realize their archetypes and schemes, which is evident from the ground.

## 18.0 Love Muslim Girls Campaign

When the country is under lockdown due to the rise of COVID-19, the current headline in India's social media is that Sangh Parivar zealots gather and propagate new things focussing on Muslims manifesting the highest order of Islamophobia. They urged Hindu teenage boys to pretend to love and marry young Muslim girls in the name of "Love Jihad" and "Dance Jihad", to stay and live with them, and finally destroy them, bringing them to ruin. They use slogans such as "Sing Jihad" and "Food Jihad". They say that if Hindu adults

---

<sup>82</sup> <https://youtu.be/W8MXgQfp6p4>, Retrieved 10 April 2021; See also <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BAmwD4sYZxs>, Retrieve 10 April 2021.

do this, they will get a lot of money.<sup>83</sup> In this way, Muslim girls are targeted to devastate their lives. This is the new development during the pandemic era.

## 19.0 Kashi after Ayodhya

Alarming developments are taking place in India affecting the Muslims. Hindutva zealots have become active during the COVID-19 surge in pursuing their agenda of ridding Muslims. They proceed to achieve their aim, confident in their assumption that the authorities are their allies. They often emerge with new schemes. One example is of a Sangh Parivar functionary who filed a case in the Varanasi district court claiming that Emperor Aurangzeb had built a Gyanvapi mosque after demolishing the Siva temple.<sup>84</sup> The petitioner had accused the Emperor of desecrating the Kashi Viswanath temple and constructing a mosque over the site in 1669. After the hearing, the civil court in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, ordered on 8 April 2021 to organize an archaeological survey by ASI and submit a report.<sup>85</sup> Many Muslim leaders feel that this is another attempt to rid Muslims of their place of worship. The Sunni Waqf Board stated that this decision would be challenged in the High Court. It is worth mentioning that when the demolition of the Babri mosque was going on in December 1992, the Hindutva zealots shouted a slogan, "Babri is just the beginning, Kashi and Mathura are next."<sup>86</sup> Nowadays, they also propagate the misinformation that 60,000 temples were destroyed and mosques were built instead. They sow seeds of hatred and animosity by degree amidst ordinary Hindus who become anti-Muslims, in belief of such rumour-mongering.

## 20.0 Conclusion

The paper has documented how fascist zealots have exploited the COVID-19 pandemic to stigmatize, vilify and persecute Muslims in

<sup>83</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vA8bClSkMQk>, Retrieved 13 April 2021.

<sup>84</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5pqQ\\_nbTduo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5pqQ_nbTduo). Retrieved 13 April 2021.

<sup>85</sup> [https://www.newsclick.in/gyanvapi-mosque-yet-another-headlong-march-unknown-ble-past?fbclid=IwAR0KhgP6sINQF3\\_-8wBV0zdRkgOIN0eC0JHtjC4eP6-g1qXySHibkBedNv8](https://www.newsclick.in/gyanvapi-mosque-yet-another-headlong-march-unknown-ble-past?fbclid=IwAR0KhgP6sINQF3_-8wBV0zdRkgOIN0eC0JHtjC4eP6-g1qXySHibkBedNv8). Retrieved 21 April 2021.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

India. They purposely place Muslim patriotism and loyalty in doubt while government authorities endorse Islamophobia and remain silent as Muslims are persecuted, murdered and their properties plundered by mobs of Hindu zealots. Islamophobic propaganda is rampant with fabricated lies, deliberate misinformation, discriminatory boycotts, common mistreatment, medical neglect tantamount to negligence, 'heroic' vandals; when even the locust plague was blamed on Muslims by mainstream media with official approbation; all under the COVID-19 pretext!

Sangh Parivar's Hindutva ideology inspires this manic rancour. Having been seeded and spread by pioneers for decades, organizations like Hindu Mahasabha, Rashtriya Swayam Sevak, Bajrang Dal, Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Hindu Front, Shiv Sena and others have all sprouted hate-mongering wings by subscribing to this cruelty and vileness. All have established institutions propounding Hindutva venom, directly or indirectly. The net result is the unbridled spread of deadly Islamophobia with devastating consequences. Muslims now living in India question their survival in a country where their ancestors have lived for centuries.

Many are provoked to react and retaliate as victims of the Sangh Parivar intrigues. In nearly every village across the land, Muslims are under pressure to respond. What is essential is for them to remain patient and seek God's help. They must make supplication for His protection and not weaken or lose their reserve. Sangh Parivar mentors purposely coerce reactionary responses to obtain any pretext to justify full-scale communal riots and bloody mayhem. Regardless of consequences and casualties, Muslims must not retaliate but follow the Prophet's examples and face these challenges with wisdom, peacefully and harmoniously via proper means. Otherwise, they will suffer even more significant losses due to their fragile disunity and political instability. Indeed, they cannot protect themselves and neither will the government step in on their behalf.

Given rising communal tensions throughout India particularly after 2019, the author suggests that India's Muslim community must develop concrete strategies to face unprecedented challenges presented by Hindu fascists. It is time to draw on the covenants made by the Prophet with the 'others' who confronted him, specifically

the Hidaybiyyah Treaty. A wise strategy is to form joint action committees of Muslims and Hindus in every village with the purpose of promoting communal harmony and peaceful coexistence for all religions and castes via inter-religious, cultural and social activities and programmes. Committees should focus on creating peaceful coexistence.

It is suggested that regular meetings be organized to address crucial matters of importance to every villager with a common agenda that promotes social harmony for and by villagers to exclude outside agitators with "special interests." Such efforts can yield positive results because villagers are naturally fraternal, especially where biased elements have not taken root, despite Sangh Parivar's sedulous efforts. Villagers are no strangers to each other regardless of religious beliefs. They have flocked and schooled together for years; thus calling them to collectively uphold peace is no great difficulty. Muslim youth can also take the lead. Peacekeeping must become the central focus and everyone should be encouraged to perform righteous deeds that ensure benefits for all. The entire village should experience a collective feeling that permeates all thought and activity despite their religious differences.

Gradually, this model can be extended to towns and cities. Instead of spending efforts on futile televised debates and public talks, priority should be given to peace building processes, beginning at the micro-level and slowly working outwards, achieving the intended goal of establishing peace and harmony. People of all religions and castes will appreciate such a move and will extend their full support and cooperation. Weekends can be used for mobilization. India's people are compassionate and undoubtedly amenable to the reestablishment and invigoration of peaceful coexistence because it is naturally inherent to their cultural norms. If thoughtfully implemented with dedication and commitment, history will witness remarkable success.

If Muslims in India wish to solve this problem and prevent further humiliation, they must unconditionally unite under Allah's word, because the actual state of Muslim disunity and lack of solidarity is a more significant challenge than Islamophobia. When Muslims are in public places, Sangh Parivar gangs would murmur

'corona is coming'; disunited leaderless Muslims are then defencelessly ridiculed by former friendly neighbours. Both animosity and helplessness spread with disturbing psychological and material effects, as Muslims live in fear and terror. At the same time, hatred prospers wherever there is a lack of continuity and social integrity.

Muslims need to remember how the Prophet (ﷺ) managed his affairs in challenging times in both in Mecca and Medina. This knowledge alone would enable Muslims to face all unprecedented challenges and impediments by drawing on the lessons from his standing firm on ethics when facing 'others'. His wise leadership and governance show how we can interact with other religions, and deal with disaster and calamity, be they natural or human-made. His is an exemplary guide to problem-solving in crisis times, even when war is declared against Muslims. However, it is worth remembering that in all situations the Prophet's top priority was securing peace and preserving it. Hence, it is an imperative for Muslims to find ways and means to solve problems peacefully without resorting to violence. The Qur'ān states, "... Allah is with those who patiently persevere (Qur'an, *al-Baqarah*: 153); "... Kind words and the covering of faults are better than charity followed by injury. Allah is free of all wants, and He is Most Forbearing." (Qur'an, *al-Baqarah*: 263)." Resorting to patience and kindness will result in peace. Indeed, peace and tranquillity are the primary goals of Islam!



## TRANSLITERATION TABLE

### CONSONANTS

Ar=Arabic, Pr=Persian, OT=Ottoman Turkish, Ur=Urdu

Ar	Pr	OT	UR	Ar	Pr	OT	UR	Ar	Pr	OT	UR
ء	‘	‘	‘	ز	z	z	z	گ	—	g	g
ب	b	b	b	ژ	—	—	ʀ	ل	l	l	l
پ	—	p	p	ژ	—	zh	j	م	m	m	m
ت	t	t	t	س	s	s	s	ن	n	n	n
ٹ	—	—	ṭ	ش	sh	sh	ʃ	ه	h	h	h <sup>1</sup>
ث	th	th	th	ص	ṣ	ṣ	ṣ	و	w	v/u	v
ج	j	j	c	ض	ḍ	ḍ	ḍ	ی	y	y	y
چ	—	ch	çh	ط	ṭ	ṭ	ṭ	ة	-ah	—	-a <sup>2</sup>
ح	ḥ	ḥ	ḥ	ظ	ẓ	ẓ	ẓ	ال	al <sup>3</sup>	—	—
خ	kh	kh	kh	ع	‘	‘	‘	<div style="text-align: right;"> <sup>1</sup> – when not final  <sup>2</sup> – at in construct state  <sup>3</sup> – (article) al - or l- </div>			
د	d	d	d	غ	gh	gh	ğ				
ڈ	—	—	—	ف	f	f	f				
ذ	dh	dh	dh	ق	q	q	k				
ر	r	r	r	ك	k	k/g	k/ñ	k			

### VOWELS

		Arabic and Persian	Urdu	Ottoman Turkish
Long	ا	ā	ā	ā
	آ	Ā	Ā	—
	و	ū	ū	ū
	ي	ī	ī	ī
Doubled	ي	iiy (final form ī)	iy (final form ī)	iiy (final form ī)
	و	uww (final form ū)	uv	uvv
	و	uvv (for Persian)	—	—
Diphthongs	و	au or aw	au	ev
	ی	ai or ay	ay	ey
Short	ا	a	a	a or e
	ا	u	u	u or ū
	ا	i	i	o or ö
	ا	—	—	ī

### URDU ASPIRATED SOUNDS

For aspirated sounds not used in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish add h after the letter and underline both the letters e.g. چھ jh گھ gh

For Ottoman Turkish, modern Turkish orthography may be used.

# AL-SHAJARA

Vol. 26, No. 1, 2021

## Contents

### ARTICLES

- THE PERSONIFICATION OF HOSPITALITY (DIYĀFAH) 1  
IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ITS INFLUENCE  
ON SOCIAL SOLIDARITY (TAKĀFUL IJTIMĀ'Ī) THROUGH  
THE PROPHETIC TRADITION (SUNNAH)

*Ahmad Hassan Mohamed, Mohamed Aslam Akbar,  
and Hassanuddeen Abd. Aziz*

- IBN AL-‘ARABĪ’S CONCEPT OF DREAMS 27

*Megawati Moris*

- SYED AHMAD KHAN’S TWIN OBJECTIVES 49  
OF EDUCATIONAL REFORMS IN BRITISH INDIA:

MUSLIM ADVANCEMENT AND HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

*Md Yousuf Ali and Osman Bakar*

- ISLAMOPHOBIA IN INDIA DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS: 71

A SURGE OF STIGMATIZATION, VILIFICATION AND MURDER

*Thameem Ushama*

### REVIEW ESSAYS

- SYED MUHAMMAD NAQUIB AL-ATTAS AND THE DIALOGIC 99  
OF OCCIDENTAL KNOWLEDGE: A PASSING GLANCE TO  
THE STUDY OF SOCIETY IN THE MALAY ARCHIPELAGO

*Ahmad Murad Merican*

- ALBERT CAMUS, THE ABSURD AND MARTYRDOM 111

*Arief S. Arman*

- BOOK REVIEWS 121

WoS-Indexed under Arts & Humanities Citation Index, Current Contents/Arts and Humanities and Scopus

ISSN 1394-6870



9 771394 687009