

## India's Home Minister Amit Shah takes the lead in “Who plays tough against the Muslims!”

On 28 Sep 2022, the Indian BJP Government banned Popular Front of India and 8 other related registered organizations for 5 years. The government claimed it has banned the PFI and its associate groups for allegedly undertaking “unlawful activities” which are “prejudicial to the integrity, sovereignty and security of the country”. It has cited the group’s alleged links with banned Islamist groups – the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) and Jamat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) – as well as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). Further the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) stated, “The PFI and its associates or affiliates or fronts operate openly as a socio-economic, educational and political organization but, they have been pursuing a secret agenda to radicalize a particular section of the society working towards undermining the concept of democracy”. (Source: [BBC](#))

The ban and the associated simultaneous arrests of over 275 people across 15 states, carried prior to the ban, saw maximum collaboration of the BJP Union Government & National Investigation Agency (NIA) at the center and various State governments (some claiming as anti BJP even), State Police Departments & Judiciary, and in some cases even the paramilitary, to undertake the midnight-predawn raids. The arrested were charged with the draconian laws related to Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA). Protests by the activists of PFI against the arrests would see further arrests and registration of over 1400 cases in a matter of 1 week. The unprecedented actions by the MHA drew criticism from leaders, politicians and journalists across the country (muslims & non-muslims) who saw the arrests even as “undemocratic” and with some extending their support to the government.

India is witnessing the paradigm of “who is more loyal (to Hindutva) than the king”!. The previous term of BJP (2014-2019) saw brutal attacks on Muslims by various organizations garbed as Anti conversion, Anti Beef Consumption, Anti Adhan and the like. The current term (since 2019) saw attacks on Muslims by government institutions themselves. With the current term coming to its tenure, it seems that various BJP leaders are trying to show who is tough against Muslims in the hope of becoming the next PM candidate. We see this in Uttar Pradesh state by Chief Minister (CM) Yogi Adityanath bulldozing houses of activists and proscribing salaah in public places. We see this in Assam state by CM Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma bulldozing houses of madarassas on spurious claims of “terrorist links”. We see this in Karnataka state by CM Basavaraj Bommai proscribing Hijab in educational institutions. And now, Home Minister Amit Shah throwing his hat in the ring by locking up activists in hundreds, trying to demonstrate who can be toughest. This alarming trend is similar to the events of Nazi Germany wherein military generals were credited with medals for maximizing extermination techniques of their own people!

Few months ago Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi and Chief Justice of India (CJI) N V Ramana shared a public podium wherein PM urged the CJI to expedite court cases. Perhaps, it is more appropriate for Modi’s own Home Minister to pay heed to the PM’s advice by not locking people unnecessarily in the first place. As per India’s Prison Statistics 2021 data, of the total 554,034 prisoners in Indian prisons, only 122,852 (23%) are total convicts and 427,165 (77%) are under-trials with few thousands even serving more than 5 to 10 years as under-trials without a conviction. Over 85% of the under-trials are Muslims & Dalits coming from economically under privileged conditions. Despite India claiming to be the largest democracy and abundant talent, 35% of the Judicial postings are held vacant. No wonder that over 40 million cases are pending in various courts throughout the country. A case course may take anything between 1 to 7 years progressing from District Sessions courts to the State High courts to the top Supreme Courts. Given the economic demography of the under-trials, they have serious challenges to spend prohibitive legal costs of 5x, 25x, 100x times their average monthly salary in the Sessions, High & Supreme courts respectively, if at all fortunate to do so. Judicial Corruption & Incompetence is a further negative force multiplier in the agony of the detainee, their families and communities. Ironically the detailed PSI-2021 report that runs over 500 pages fails to showcase data related to UAPA that is now so infamous in the country. Given such alarming realities of India’s courts, one wonders the rationale of the government’s approach to delineate over 250 million of its own people instead of leveraging their productivity and capabilities. The muslim population of India is far from being minority, rather a formidable one comparable to the population of Russia or United States.

Since Sep 11, 2001 it has become a situation, especially in the “democratic world”, wherein any muslim can be alleged to be “linked” to groups (such as ISIS or SIMI) or individuals by the authorities

and people become satisfied with trials & verdicts by the media. Incriminating evidences of “terror” claimed by NIA are often nothing more than Books, Documents, Pen/Hard drives or SIM cards. The draconian UAPA laws imposed mostly on Muslims & Dalits are already an exception by definition to the well established principles of justice. Critics of UAPA have repeatedly pointed out these exceptions wherein, an individual is presumed guilty and the burden of proof of innocence is on the accused, bail is denied as routine and awarded as exception, the government officials cannot be accounted by judicial process without prior clearance from the MHA and more. The government continues to lock protesters and activists, despite the fact that less than 3% of UAPA cases result in convictions as they fail judicial scrutiny. One of the allegation MHA made against the arrested was that they were erstwhile SIMI members. This being the case, in Mar 2021, a District court in the state of Gujarat **acquitted** 126 Muslim activists who were arrested in 2001 as alleged members of SIMI, soon after BJP PM Vajpayee banned SIMI in 2001. The arrested mostly comprising Authors, Teachers, Scholars & Religious leaders were picked while attending the 8<sup>th</sup> seminar organized by All India Minority Educational Board on the topic “Constitutional Provisions for Minorities’ Educational Rights.” They were arrested and held for 2 years in prison under the UAPA laws only to be acquitted for lack of robust evidence after a prolonged trial over 20 years during which seriously disrupting their regular lives and livelihoods.

Surely, MHA and its overarching powers can do wonders where there is a serious need of transformation such as eradicating crime, rape, drugs and corruption where India stands higher than most Asian & European countries. India’s capital Delhi had crimes 4 times more than the country’s average of 385 per 100,000 in 2019. Crimes against women rose higher from 54 per 100,000 in 2015 to 62 (per 100k) in 2019. The National Crime Records Bureau reveals that a crime against a woman is committed every 3 minutes, a woman is raped every 29 minutes, a dowry death occurs every 77 minutes, and one case of cruelty committed by either the husband or relative of the husband occurs every 9 minutes. In 2021 over 121,351 children went missing with the females in them mostly becoming victims of human trafficking ending up in brothels. Illegal arms in circulation within India amounts to nearly half of those in illegal circulation in the world (at over 75 million). As of 2018 India had about 40 million abusers of illegal drugs and the situation is only getting worse by the year, with much of ports being privatized in the hands of Adani, Gujarat’s business tycoon. In 2021, India ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> globally in cyber crimes with over 52k and one that grows by nearly 5% every year in the last few years. India’s corruption index stood at 78 out of 180 countries.

Muslims in India and the world shall note that it is far too evident to see the outcome of the absence of Khilafah in the Muslim world. Actions like that of the democratic Indian government are not borne out of will to protect democracy as they claim. Rather it is pure hatred for Islam and Muslims. Despite the gross human right violations of India on Muslims and its own people, America or Europe do not intend to restrain her, clearly demonstrating that UN or other such bodies are invoked only when it suits the interests of the colonial powers. Rather they thump-up India with contracts and council / convention chairs. The Khilafah, unlike the UN, will truly stand for the well being of the sons of Adam (as) for indeed it is the shade of Allah on earth. The Khilafah is bound to exhaust all options – diplomatic, economical and military means to ensure peoples lives and property are not devoured by the wolves of Taghut. Indeed Allah (swt) says ﴿وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُصْلِحُونَ﴾

**“When they are told, “Do not spread corruption in the land,” they reply, “We are only reformers!” [TMQ Surah Al-Baqarah: 11].**

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