

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Stop killing Hindus: condemnation of atrocities on Hindus in Bangladesh**

While Bangladeshis are celebrating the Durga Puja, the biggest festival of Hindus, the horror of violence and atrocities committed by the Islamic Extremists has overshadowed the festivity.

The Islamic Extremists unleashed terror on Hindus throughout this festival. This includes killing Hindus, raping women, burning houses and businesses of Hindus, vandalising the Goddess' idols and desecrating temples as reported by both local and international media [1-14]. We, the undersigned Australians, express our strongest condemnation and protest against these atrocities on Hindus in Bangladesh.

Rampant vandalism of Goddess' idols started as early as September 22nd in Kushtia, followed by repeated attacks in Joypurhat, Chittagong and even in capital Dhaka [12]. On October 13th 2021, based on allegations of defaming the Holy Quran in Cumilla on a puja mandap through circulating a morphed video on social media [1], the extremist groups and their supporting mobs carried out large-scale attacks on Hindus, temples, houses, and businesses in many parts of the country. Reports of attacks on the temples, houses, and shops of the Hindu minority and killings were documented in at least a dozen districts of Bangladesh, mostly in the southern area, including Cumilla, Chandpur, Noakhali, Chattagram, Bandarban, Cox's Bazar, Narshingdi, Gazipur and Rangpur [1].

Bangladesh Government and security forces have also called this out as a "planned event" and mobilised Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) to 22 of 64 administrative districts, later expanding to 34 districts. Whilst we appreciate the assurance of the Prime Minister to take stern action against the perpetrators [5, 9], we have not observed any visible actions to bring the perpetrators to justice and against any law enforcing personnel for the negligence of duties.

We are also flabbergasted by learning that the local leaders and activists of the ruling party (Awami League) were involved in such attacks against Hindus. It is undeniable that the Government has failed to protect Hindus despite the administration and law enforcing authorities were informed about such possible attacks beforehand.

It is imperative to take immediate and decisive action by Bangladesh Government to protect Hindus in Bangladesh. We, therefore, request the Bangladesh Government to take appropriate measures to protect the Hindus. We demand the following:

1. Initiate a full, impartial and independent investigation of the attacks and make the result of this investigation public.
2. Set up a special tribunal to try the perpetrators who committed atrocities and violence against the Hindus.
3. Bring to justice all perpetrators of the attacks regardless of their position in society or political affiliation.
4. Provide appropriate compensation to all victims and rebuild all affected religious places, houses and businesses.
5. Enact special legislation for the protection of Hindus.

6. Form a special law enforcing authority to prevent recurrence of such situation of which at least 40% of the members will be Hindus.
7. Take appropriate action against any police or relevant law enforcement personnel who have failed to protect the Hindus.
8. Establish a separate ministry for the religious minorities in Bangladesh

The following signatory organisations are listed in the statement:

1. Agamoni Australia Inc.
2. Australia Bangladesh Buddhist Society Inc.
3. Australian Bengali Hindu Association (ABHA)
4. Australian Forum for Minorities in Bangladesh (AFMB)
5. Bangali Society for Puja and Culture Inc. Western Australia
6. Bangladesh Christian Fellowship of Australia
7. Bangladesh Puja and Cultural Society Inc. Brisbane
8. Bangladesh Puja and Cultural Society of South Australia Inc. (BPCSSA)
9. Bangladesh Puja and Cultural Society of Victoria (BPCSV)
10. Bangladesh Puja Association Inc, Australia (BPA)
11. Bangladesh Society for Puja & Culture (BSPC)
12. Bengal Buddhist Association Australia
13. Bengali Society of Melbourne (BSM)
14. Ind club Inc.
15. Jagannath Hall Alumni Association Australia (JHAAA)
16. Lokenath Brahmachari Mission Sydney Inc.
17. Noborup Sydney
18. Puja and Cultural Association of NT(PACANT)
19. Raddha Krishna Gouriya Mandir
20. Sarbojanin Puja Utsav of Victoria Inc. (SPUVIC)
21. Shankhanaad Inc.
22. Shree Shakti Association, Victoria (SSAV)
23. Utsav Melbourne Association (UMA)
24. Vakta Mandir Sydney Inc.

## References:

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<https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/2021/10/15/durga-puja-ends-amid-tension-violence-across-the-country>
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- [4] Goons attack Hindu temples in Bangladesh during Durga Puja, 4 killed; paramilitary force called in  
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- [6] Durga Puja celebrations conclude in Bangladesh amidst communal unrest; another devotee found dead  
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- [9] Police detain 74 attackers of Hindu temples in Bangladesh  
<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/police-detain-74-attackers-of-hindu-temples-in-bangladesh/2392809>
- [10] Decoding why minorities in Bangladesh and Pakistan continue to face persecution  
<https://www.firstpost.com/world/decoding-why-minorities-in-bangladesh-and-pakistan-continue-to-face-persecution-10058331.html>
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- [12] Durga Puja 2021: 'Black Day' for Bangladeshi Hindus  
<https://www.eastmojo.com/neighbourhood-watch/2021/10/15/durga-puja-2021-black-day-for-hindus-bangladesh-minority-council/>
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<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=720979165540675>