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Mistreatment of Minorities: A Reprehensible Act!

Shahi Imam Syed Ahmed Bukhari warns Bangladesh Government

A few months ago, due to a public uprising, the elected government of Bangladesh and its Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajid were overthrown. She was exiled by being put on a plane, and at her personal request, the Government of India has provided her asylum. Since the establishment of Bangladesh, our national leadership, media, civil society, and influential circles have maintained close relations with Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, his daughter Sheikh Hasina Wajid, and their party, the Awami League. In terms of diplomacy and other matters related to the region, international affairs, and the Muslim world, Bangladesh has always stood by us as a close ally.

It is also a fact that there exist alternative and opposing political forces with differing ideologies having relatively adversarial stance with regard to Indo-Bangladesh relations. These forces are now in power and enjoy popular support. Where a significant segment of Bangladeshi nationalist Muslim groups had supported the Awami League, a large section of the Hindu minority community had also aligned with Sheikh Hasina's leadership.

After Sheikh Hasina's departure to India, the backlash against her saw both Muslim and non-Muslim supporters of the Awami League becoming targets of the unrest that erupted following her removal. Up to this point, it remained an internal matter of Bangladesh. However, the ongoing injustices, assaults, and unilateral actions against the Hindu minority are condemnable and must stop immediately. There is no justification for such actions.

The government there must always acknowledge the role we have played in their establishment, development process, and the unparalleled history of our support and care for millions of refugees. We are the first to stand by them in every natural disaster.

The United Nations has a universal declaration regarding the protection of equal rights for minorities, which is binding on all members of the international community and all UN member states. Wherever in the world there is any form of oppression, coercion, prejudice and hatred against minorities or issues related to their fundamental rights and participation, it is the right of every nation, under international laws and regulations, to raise questions about it. As a credible neighbour, a close ally of Bangladesh, and a custodian of shared cultural heritage, I expect the current head of Bangladesh, Muhammad Yunus, a Nobel laureate, to take immediate steps to curb any injustices against the Hindu minority. He should ensure that his international reputation remains untarnished. As a Muslim-majority country, Islam and Islamic jurisprudence inherently leave no room for any form of prejudice or injustice against minorities in Bangladesh.

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