



## Genocide Watch: India

In India, all the global religions are represented: Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism and Jainism. Besides religious diversity, there are also indigenous regional tribes recognized under the Constitution. India is thus an extremely diverse country, but because of its pervasive caste system, the nation struggles with polarization based upon religious, regional, caste and economic background.

In August 1947, British India became independent. Colonial India was partitioned into two independent countries according to religious demography, namely the Republic of India and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Pakistan was composed of two territories a thousand miles apart, divided by Indian territory, with different ethnicities and languages. This partition led to continuous tensions between India and Pakistan. It resulted in the displacement of 12.5 million people, the greatest migration in history. Muslims migrated to either West or East Pakistan. Hindus fled from Pakistan into India. Genocidal massacres by organized mobs of Muslims and Hindus went unpunished by the departing British authorities. During this migration, communal violence resulted in approximately one million Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs being slaughtered.

After West Pakistan inflicted genocide upon East Pakistan in 1971, costing up to three million lives, East Pakistan declared independence as the People's Republic of Bangladesh. Hindus and Sikhs migrated to India. They were afraid of being discriminated against by Muslims in Bangladesh.

Serious political tensions between India and Pakistan remain, especially regarding the Kashmir region. India controls the central and southern part of the former Kashmir state, namely the Kashmir, Jammu and Ladakh regions. The majority of the people living in these regions are Muslim. The Kashmir and Jammu state enjoys a particular statute under the Indian Constitution, but since 1990 control by the Indian security forces has tightened. The result is increased government repression in the Kashmir regions governed by India. Thousands of Kashmiris have been forcibly disappeared and mass graves with 2,730 bodies were discovered in 2011.

India is plagued by religious and regional tensions. In 2002, hundreds of Muslims and Hindus were killed in interreligious violence in the state of Gujarat. Many thousands more fled their homes. Dozens of worship places and houses were destroyed. Some government officials were involved in the riots as they purposely refused to intervene and stop the killings, and even supplied weapons and planned attacks by Hindu mobs. Even children were killed brutally. Gujarat authorities, including Chief Minister Modi, obstructed justice and refused to pursue perpetrators. Recently, however, an Indian Parliamentary Commission has laid blame squarely at the feet of Modi, and several Hindus were convicted for killing Muslims during these riots. Genocide Watch calls for the arrest and prosecution of Modi and others who participated in the Gujarat massacres.

Since the outburst of violence in Gujarat, tensions between Hindus and Muslims have remained. In general Muslims are economically disadvantaged in comparison with Hindus. Hindu police are brutal towards Muslims in many places, especially in Kashmir. Muslim terrorists from Pakistan most recently attacked Mumbai on November 26, 2008.

Besides religious polarization, there are also tensions due to the system of social stratification in India. Notwithstanding major improvements for so-called "untouchables", due to affirmative action authorized by the Indian Constitution, the Indian caste system is still pervasive in social life. The groups belonging to the lowest castes remain socially disadvantaged, although some members climb the social ladder through entry into the professions and the modernizing economy. There are groups claiming to fight for the rights of these lower castes and tribes, such as the Maoist insurgents or Naxalites. In practice, however, the Naxalites kidnap tourists, engage in corruption and kill and extort money from civilians and government officials.

Because of its religious, caste and economic discrimination, India is at Stage 5: polarization.