

Rise of hindutva Politics in India and the Future Saffronization of

WEST BENGAL



West Bengal, elections were bordering announced, which Bangladesh by more were held in April than 22,00 km and 2026, the BJP, in a with a population of landslide victory, 100 million (27% secured 207 out of Muslim), is one of 294 seats and the most important ended the 15-year states of India. On rule of Mamata 4th May 2026, it Banerjee and the saw a dramatic shift Trinamool Congress in its political (TMC) in West history since India's Bengal. Following independence. the victory of the

When the results Bharatiya Janata of the state Party (BJP) in the

West Bengal results were announced, the BJP returned to power in Assam, Congress-led UDF won the state of Kerala, and the BJP made an entry into the Kerala Assembly by winning three seats (including state president Rajeev Chandrasekhar's win in Nedom). Recently, in April 2026, state elections were held in the Indian states of West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Assam, Kerala and one union territory of Puducherry. When on May 4, 2026, the

Tamil Nadu, a major historical breakthrough was seen, as Tamilaga Vetti Kazhagam (TVK), under the leadership of film star Vijay, emerged as the largest single

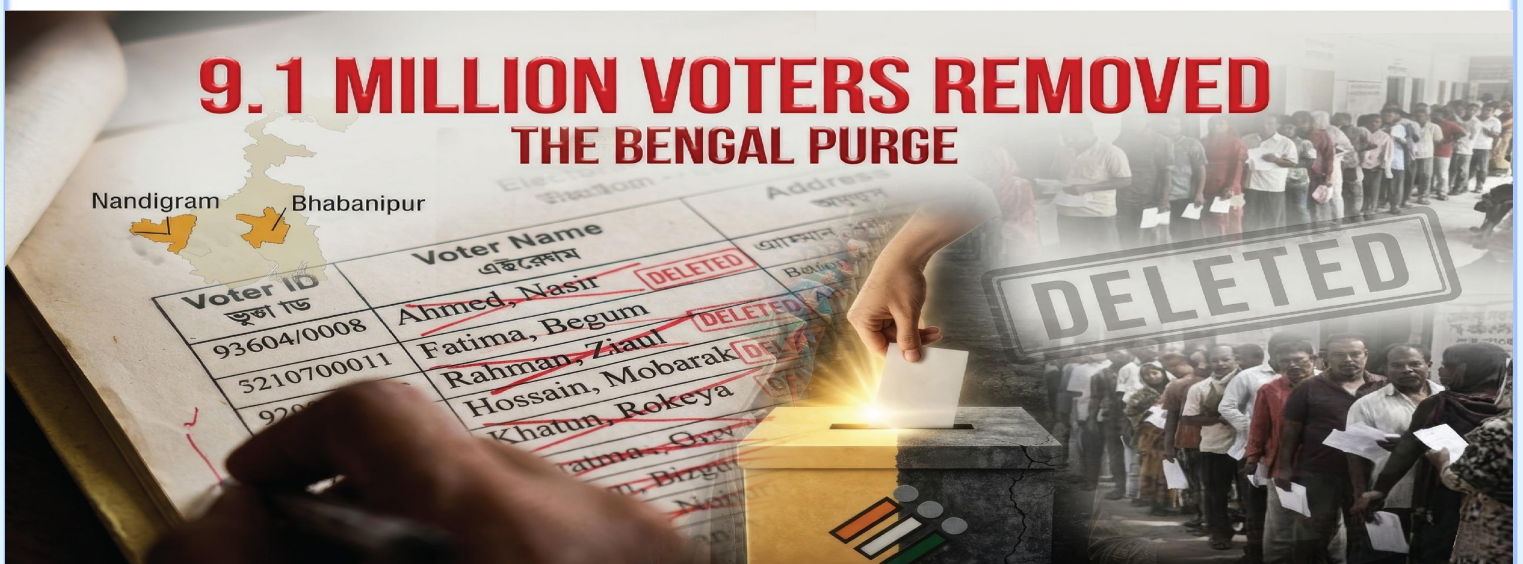


party, winning 108 seats. This effectively ended the decades-long dominance of the DMK and AIADMK. VAINRC-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) dominated the union territory of Puducherry.

Opposition parties, especially Mamata Banerjee-led the Trinamool Congress (TMC), charged the BJP and the Modi-led central government with political operation. First, through the Election

Commission of India, by political engineering, as per Special Intensive Revision (SIR), a total of 9.1 million voters were removed from the register, more than 10% of the electorate.

This decision of ECI disproportionately targeted Muslims, migrant workers and poorer voters. Interestingly, in majority of the districts where the BJP has been struggling for decades, most



people are affected by the ECI decision. According to The Guardian, critics have described it as a “bloodless political genocide” and mass disenfranchisement of minorities.

Earlier, the BJP had tightened its grip over more than 9 states, including Bihar and West Bengal and three union territories. Data showed that districts with a Muslim majority were mostly affected by the ECI decision, which shows the trend followed by the BJP to marginalise Muslims from the political process. Analysis by the SABAR Institute

reveals a stark communal disparity in voter deletions within the key constituencies of Nandigram and Bhabanipur, both of which were contested by BJP leader Suwendu Adhikari.

Despite Muslims constituting only 25 per cent of the population in Nandigram, they accounted for over 95 per cent of all names removed from the electoral rolls; similarly, in Bhabanipur, where the community makes up 20 per cent of the population, they represented a disproportionate 40 per cent of total deletions. These

figures suggest a targeted administrative focus on minority voters in battleground areas, particularly in Bhabanipur, where Adhikari was directly challenging Mamata Banerjee.

Like other parts of India, in West Bengal Muslims and other minorities have been frequently relegated to the status of "second-class citizens," as they are forced to navigate a landscape where their national loyalty is perpetually questioned through the lens of religious identity.

There is a maximum possibility that under new set up institutionalized marginalisation will be reflected in policies, as visible in the recent administrative purges of voter rolls and the rhetoric of "outsiders," create a structural barrier that limits minority access to equal representation and social security.

Human Rights Watch, in its 2026 report, cited bias by opposition politicians and rights activists, including allegations of voter fraud and inconsistencies in electoral rolls.

Modi and the BJP leadership, during the election campaign in West Bengal, often termed the Muslims of West Bengal as “infiltrators” (ghuspethiye), a pejorative term that largely refers to so-called illegal Muslim Bangladeshi immigrants.

Home Minister Amit Shah projected this process as a means to “purify” the electoral roll. The BJP leadership framed the TMC as an “anti-Hindu” party. By highlighting isolated local skirmishes to attain Hindu sentiments, Modi termed the state as becoming a “laboratory for

radicalization” where Hindus were being systematically intimidated and forced to flee their homes.

As of May 2026, following the latest round of assembly elections, the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) has reached a peak of political dominance across India's federal structure. The BJP-led NDA Alliance currently governs 21 states out of 28 states and 1 union territory (Puducherry), covering approximately 72% of India's land area.

Now, if we turn towards indicating patterns of rise of islamophobia in

BJP-led states since 2014, we have seen a sharp rise in incidents under state sponsorship targeting Muslims through Cow Vigilantism (97% of these reported incidents occurring after May 2014), Anti-Conversion Laws (Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka legislations on Love Jihad), Bulldozer Justice, particularly in Uttar Pradesh, has been identified by Human Rights Watch as a method of punishing Muslim communities and Social and Economic Boycotts of Muslims. In these states, incidents of hate speech against

Muslim have also risen.

According to a Washington-based research group, India Hate Lab (IHL), hate speech incidents targeting religious minorities (98.5% targeting Muslims) rose from 668 in 2023 to 1,165 in 2024, a 74.4% increase. It rose by another 13% in 2025, with 1,318 instances documented. In 2024, nearly 80% (931) of documented hate speech events took place in states governed by the BJP or its allies.

The US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) has also urged the State Department to declare India a

“Country of the Hindu Particular nationalist Bharatiya Janata Concern”in its latest report of 2026. The Party (BJP), has report also called "normalized violence" and for sanctions on "systematically discriminated" India’s Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the against religious parent body of minorities, Hindu majoritarian particularly ideology Hindutva. Muslims.

USICRF Human Rights recommended that Watch Asia Director the Trump Elaine Pearson administration asserts that the freeze RSS assets Indian government and/or bar its entry has effectively into the US. The institutionalized the report further persecution of claimed that RSS is religious minorities, responsible for marginalized severe “violations of communities, and religious freedom”. political opponents.

In its World She argues that the Report 2026, BJP administration Human Rights achieves this Watch (HRW) states through a that the Indian combination of government, led by biased legislation,

inflammatory rhetoric, and the tactical use of the legal system.

Pearson concludes that by failing to dismantle these oppressive structures, the government is not only neglecting its human rights obligations but is also actively damaging India's international reputation as a democratic leader.

The consolidation of the BJP-led Hindutva power across 21 states, punctuated by the tactical "saffronization" of West Bengal, does not represent a sudden shift from a genuinely pluralistic past, but

rather the ultimate unveiling of India's long-standing majoritarian and expansionist tendencies.

For decades, New Delhi maintained a carefully crafted facade of constitutional secularism, yet the foundational structures of the state consistently harboured systemic anti-Minorities, especially anti-Muslim biases; these very realities historically validated the necessity of Pakistan and the Two-Nation Theory by the Founders of Pakistan.

What the world observes today is not the emergence

of a new prejudice, but the aggressive institutionalisation and escalation of a historical continuum; the traditional political elite, like Congress, and the current regime are merely two sides of the same coin, with the latter simply abandoning past pretences to openly enforce an authoritarian, Hindu-majoritarian agenda.

Consequently, the current political climate in states like West Bengal reveals a stage where state-approved Islamophobia is no longer hidden behind the guise of liberal democracy, but is instead used

as a weapon to remove the last remnants of minority protections. By turning administrative purges such as the “Bengal Purge” into a direct means of disenfranchisement, the present regime is effectively carrying out a long-term plan of erasing minorities.

This clear shift from secret marginalisation to open sectarian manipulation does not only threaten the immediate existence of India’s 200 million Muslims; it also destroys the global perception of India as a diverse democracy,

replacing it with an openly exclusionary government that sacrifices regional stability to maintain complete ideological dominance.

As seen in the 2026 elections, the strategic use of the “Special Intensive Revision” to remove millions of minority voters from the rolls marks a frightening evolution in Hindutva tactics: first, the community is excluded from the democratic process, and later, they are targeted for physical and administrative removal from the country itself.

This “Bengal Purge” reflects the

aggressive rhetoric of the campaign trail, where the Prime Minister and state leaders depicted Muslims as “infiltrators” to justify systemic disenfranchisement.

The recent political developments in West Bengal are not isolated incidents; rather, they are a natural extension of the majoritarian and extremist policies that the BJP-led government has consistently implemented against Muslims over recent years.

From the enactment of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and the proposals for a

National Register of Citizens (NRC) to discriminatory anti-conversion laws and state-supported punitive demolitions, the Indian state has spent years constructing a structural framework aimed at the legal and social marginalisation of its Muslim population.

The mass disenfranchisement seen during the 2026 “Bengal Purge” is simply the next strategic phase of this long-standing ideological conflict, turning legislative bias into tangible, algorithmic expulsion.

The immediate rise in post-election violence across districts like Murshidabad and Kolkata further confirms that under this new mandate, state-backed intimidation has become a normalised tool of political control. This domestic change poses serious risks for regional stability, especially the already fragile relationship between New Delhi and Dhaka.

The official Facebook page of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) published a statement from Khalilur Rahman, warning,

“Bangladesh will take action if push-in incidents occur amid the change of power in West Bengal”.

This diplomatic posture was further reinforced by Humayun Kabir, the foreign affairs adviser to Bangladesh’s Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, who explicitly informed journalists.

*“If people are killed and pushed across the border...we will not sit and watch.”
(Humayun Kabir)*

By framing Bengali-speaking Muslims as “aliens” and utilising administrative

machinery to strip them of citizenship, the BJP government risks creating a major humanitarian and diplomatic crisis on the eastern border.

Any move towards mass deportation or the formation of a large “stateless” population will be seen as a hostile act not only by the Islamic world but also any civilised nation in the world, potentially destabilising the entire South Asian security framework.

Ultimately, the erosion of India’s secular identity and its replacement with a deeply authoritarian

Hindutva grip extremist regime
not only threatens that values
the 200 million ideological purity
Muslims within its over regional peace
borders; it also and democratic
signals the end of principles.
India's role as a
pluralistic global
voice, replacing it
with a localised,

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