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Minorities Crisis in Bangladesh and Concern of India.

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Abstract

With the fall of power of Sheikh Hasina, Mujib's daughter, on August 5, 2024, a significant change began in the political landscape of Bangladesh. From August 5 to 8, the lack of effective administration in the country and the inaction of the police resulted in terrible violence. We have all seen incidents of looting, extortion, one after another atrocities against the Hindu community. After the support of the army and negotiations with other political parties, an interim government was formed to fill the void in the country. Although the government has played a duplicitous role in stopping incidents like violence. During the rule of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Awami League leaders exploited Hindutva sentiments to garner India's support, but the government has largely failed to solve the systemic problems faced by the minority community. Between 2013 and 2021, there were more than 3600 attacks on minorities, unfortunately none of which have been fully prosecuted, which raises questions about the sincerity of the commitment to protecting minority communities. However, in the 2024 student revolution, the fall of Hasina, has thrown up a new challenge for India-Bangladesh relations and the Hindu minority community. The research paper basically explores and discusses the situation in Bangladesh and the protection of the Hindu community, the challenges and concerns of India. The research paper has been prepared with the help of various research papers, articles, articles, and current situation.

Keywords: political change, minorities issues, internal government, India, students' revolution

Introduction:

Today's Bangladesh was previously a part of Pakistan since the partition of India in 1947 and is known as East Pakistan. Based on that, it can be said that a 17-day war was fought with India in 1965 and in 1966, Pakistan declared India an enemy and issued an order regarding the seizure of enemy property. Although its origin is from the Land Acquisition Act issued during the Emergency of 1948. After that, over time, various laws and circulars were issued on the landlord property owned by the Hindu community, and even incidents like genocide and riots occurred. As a result, 9.3 million minority communities migrated from 1964 to 1991. The number of Hindus in Bangladesh, which was 22% in 1951, has now declined to 7.95%. The pressure of this migration has eased somewhat on India during the

liberal Awami League government. However, in today's situation, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has announced to provide shelter to the infiltrators, although the final decision on this matter lies with the central government. Incidents of persecution of minority communities in South Asian countries are not new because in countries like India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka where people of minority communities are present, they are being targeted and deprived of various rights. We have seen incidents of attacks on minority community Uyghur Muslims in developed countries like China. If we try to find the reason for this, then the responsibility lies on the political parties that believe in the various ideologies existing in the states. In today's democratic countries, politics is being focused more on the oppressed and deprived people. Looking at Bangladesh, it can be seen various roots of the crisis of minorities in Bangladesh. main roots of crisis over minorities are given in the following way:

Political Roots:

We all know that the vast territory situated across the Padma River was formerly known as East Pakistan, which emerged as the independent and sovereign state of Bangladesh following the Liberation War of 1971. Political analysts observe that India's provision of comprehensive aid and cooperation against Pakistan during this war created a global sensation in international politics; moreover, the country assumed a pivotal role in South Asia – particularly within the context of the Cold War era. On March 19, 1972, a historic Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Peace were signed between India and Bangladesh, marking the inception of a wide spectrum of relations ranging from political to other spheres between the two nations. Given that the country is bordered on three sides by India's vast territory and considering that Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman served as the leader of the Liberation War and the principal face of independent Bangladesh it is undeniable that India has historically maintained robust and steadfast ties with the Awami League, the liberal political party he founded. However, following the collapse of the elected government on August 5, 2024, diplomatic tensions led to a severe deterioration in the relationship between the two countries.

As a result of this political transition, an interim government was established, with Dr. Yunus assuming the role of its head. Amidst this shifting landscape, incidents involving the persecution of minorities began to occur frequently within the country; furthermore, activities ranging from acts of terrorism to anti-India sentiments escalated to an extreme level. Consequently, India was compelled – for the sake of national security – to restrict and suspend visa issuance for travelers from that country. Simultaneously, a crisis situation has emerged between the two nations stemming from various contentious issues: pressure exerted upon the Indian government regarding the repatriation of Bangladesh's former Prime Minister (and daughter of Mujib), Sheikh Hasina – who is currently residing in India – as well as demands for India's assistance in apprehending the killers of Hadi, a popular youth leader of the country's **Inqilab Mancha**, and concerns regarding border killings. Moreover, circumstances such as the barring of the Awami League from participating in elections and the imprisonment of Chinmoy Prabhu have left India deeply surprised and dismayed. Nevertheless, the Indian government continues to strive toward normalizing diplomatic relations.

Cultural Roots:

Prior to 1947, neither Bangladesh nor Pakistan existed; there was a single, undivided nation known as India. Within this entity, the people of what are now the Indian state of West Bengal and present-day Bangladesh shared an identical language, literature, and cultural heritage—a bond that has served to forge an exceptionally strong relationship between the two nations. The tangible manifestation of this bond is most evident in the literary and cultural festivals held in Kolkata and Dhaka, where people from both sides participate with equal enthusiasm. For instance, just as Bangladeshi films, television programs, plays, and musical artists have garnered immense popularity in India, Bollywood and Tollywood movies enjoy a massive viewership across the border in Bangladesh as well. Furthermore, it has become customary for artists from both nations to be honored and felicitated at various award ceremonies. Moreover, the collaborative investment and support extended by both governments—channeled through their respective Ministries of Culture—towards the fields of arts and education represent a positive initiative that has further solidified these bilateral ties. However, the current geopolitical climate appears to have thrown everything into disarray; a case in point is the 2026 Kolkata International Book Fair, where Bangladeshi bookstalls were conspicuously absent. Nevertheless, the decisions taken by the newly elected Prime Minister—and President of the BNP—Tarique Rahman will be of paramount significance in determining the future trajectory of this relationship.

Economical Roots:

Here also is given that Bangladesh is inextricably linked to India's landmass and shares the Bay of Bengal—both nations hold significant commercial importance for one another. The proximity facilitates the easy transportation of goods for import and export, thereby contributing favorably to the national income of both countries. In the 2021–2022 fiscal year, bilateral trade volume surged to a noteworthy US\$ 18.2 billion. Furthermore, to support Bangladesh's infrastructure development, the Indian government extended loan assistance of US\$ 750 million in 2011 and US\$ 1 billion in 2014. Additionally, India pledged investments totaling US\$ 10 million across various small-scale projects. It is undeniable that, with the objective of countering China's growing influence, India continues to assist Bangladesh through the sharing of nuclear technology, expertise in artificial intelligence, modern agricultural techniques, and flood-related data. In this context, it is crucial to note that the livelihoods and incomes of countless ordinary citizens in both nations depend on this trade and commerce—a sector that currently faces significant threats due to the prevailing circumstances. Bilateral discord—stemming particularly from Bangladesh's increasingly close ties with Pakistan and a growing anti-India sentiment—has become a source of concern for India. Consequently, the suspension of import and export activities between the two nations has caused trade volumes to plummet to rock bottom.

Legal and administrative Roots:

Minorities specially the people of Hindu community are deprived of more than 1 lakh 1.64 million acres of land. It is also claimed that Awami League has seized 17%, BNP 20%, Muslim League 44% of land mainly from this community, besides there are isolated groups. According to the information of the NGO Association for Land Reforms and Development, 10,48,390 families have been affected under the Transferred Property Act. Due to this situation, Hindus of Bangladesh are mainly taking refuge in neighboring states, which is

very worrying for India. The situation in Bangladesh today has shown the world that despite incidents occurring year after year, the majority community's attitude towards the minority community has not changed. Awami League and other political parties like BNP or Jamaat I Islami, exaggerated fundamentalist parties almost ignored the concerns of minorities. Because it cannot be denied that most of the heinous incidents of oppression, attacks, land grabbing, temple vandalism from houses, murder and extortion have been committed in the presence of leaders.

Psychological Roots:

Although Bangladesh is a predominantly Muslim country, it is a country of many religions and cultures. Apart from the Muslim majority, Hindus, Buddhists, Christians and various indigenous communities live here. The psychological condition of these minority groups is deeply related to their social position, security, historical experience and cultural identity. A major psychological characteristic among minorities is the feeling of insecurity. Various communal conflicts in the past have left a lingering effect of fear in their minds. This fear increases especially during times of political unrest. A person's identity is formed through the development of his personality. But the critical situation creates an identity crisis among the minorities. As a result, there is a conflict between national identity and religious/ethnic identity. Minorities in Bangladesh feel socially isolated in many ways. This results in inferiority, limited social interaction and emotional distance from the majority. In addition, minorities may face discrimination in some cases. Difficulties in education, employment or property and uncertainty about legal and social security create frustration among them. As a result, many people tend to emigrate. Minorities are often targeted by political forces. Opposition parties or local influential groups also send political messages by attacking them. The psychological condition of minorities in Bangladesh is not one-sided; It is about fear, uncertainty and social challenges.

On December 18, 2025, a 27-year-old Hindu garment worker named Dipuchandra Das was hanged from a tree by a gathering of people and his body was set on fire in Bhaluka Upazila of Mymensingh district on charges of rape. The police later said that no evidence was found for the allegations. There was no evidence of blasphemy against him. At the same time this incident was widely condemned at the social and international level. This incident is one of the most horrific incidents of violence against minorities in recent times. Again, on 15 September 2024, an under-construction Durga idol was vandalized in a temple in Bandapur upazila of Faridpur district. At the same time, there was an incident of destruction of Durga temple idols in Kishoreganj area of Rajbari. These incidents are an example of violence against idols and installations of minority religions during Durga Puja. vandalized and set it on fire. 10 September 2025 In Jolhai village of Panchagarh, religious symbols were also vandalized in the Kali temple. These incidents describe the non-violent behavior of some minority communities. Attack on ISKCON (International Society for Krishna Consciousness) Temple in December 2024, unidentified miscreants set fire to ISKCON in Dhaur village under Turag Thana, Dhaka. In this incident, the Radha Krishna and Lakshmi Narayan idols of the temple and the contents of the temple were destroyed. No one was injured, but such a fire at a religious place was alarming. The killing of Dipu Chandra Das created an atmosphere of fear among minorities, with many families starting to curtail temple visits or social events. The fire at the ISKCON temple symbolized the growing fear of the minority community's spiritual activities and religious practices.

In 2025, violence against religious and ethnic minorities in Bangladesh increased, including killings, destruction of temples, attacks and threats. The Government of India has expressed deep concern and demanded exemplary justice for the culprits. Indian political leaders have emphasized human rights and the rule of law. The news of this incident has caused concern especially among the people of West Bengal, Tripura and North-east India. Religious freedom, security of minorities and rule of law have gained importance in social and political discussions. In some cases, this situation has also created an opportunity to use it for political purposes. In general, this phenomenon is not limited to Bangladesh; It is a major discussion point in regional human rights, political and social uncertainty and international relations.

External Roots:

Nevertheless, prioritizing its national interests, the Indian government is actively striving to normalize the situation. Meanwhile, the global geopolitical landscape has also been thrown into disarray, primarily due to the United States and Israel becoming embroiled in a conflict with Iran. The resulting crisis in oil and natural gas supplies has severely afflicted the nations of South Asia – a predicament from which neither India nor Bangladesh is exempt. Despite these challenges, the Indian government has demonstrated its humanitarian spirit by continuing to supply oil to Bangladesh.

According to the information of USCIRF, the situation of religious minorities in Bangladesh is not encouraging even after the change of government, but rather the situation has worsened. The wave of attacks has come down on a specific community, although the interim government has dismissed the attacks as political revenge. An organization called Islamic Movement Bangladesh forced women to cancel football games, which is a sign of religious intolerance. In this situation, it is clear that Bangladesh's image is taking a big hit at the international level. According to experts, not only political change is needed to ensure the security and fundamental rights of religious minorities in the country, but also administrative responsibility and legal reforms. The president of the Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council, Manindra Nath, told Deutsche Welle, except for the Media Reform Commission, the Election Commission, the Constitution Amendment Commission, etc., the minority community has not been given a place in the commissions related to this. This government has even ignored any of their demands. It is clear that there are many shortcomings in the current government, although it is undeniable that the government is thinking about the problems as much as possible and trying to solve them. The Bangladesh government must uphold the rights of minorities, establish justice for the recent violence, political parties must refrain from exploiting the issues of minority communities for electoral gains, and above all, I believe that the ruling party, as well as other political parties, should work towards the goals of this community for the sake of impartial progress.

However, India has given asylum to Sheikh Hasina for the sake of humanity, which is a matter of disagreement with the interim government of Bangladesh, on the other hand, India has suspended its visa policy considering its security, trade and commerce between the two countries have reached a low point, and all kinds of political and diplomatic relations seem to be waiting for a distant future. However, India has not remained silent about the recent violence and hatred and has issued strong statements to the interim government, while Bangladesh has also issued statements on various issues. Pulled by the pulse of language and culture, from Indian public leaders to ordinary people, everyone has joined the protest

march, regardless of religion or caste. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has spoken to Yunus Saheb on the phone. India's External Affairs Minister, S. Jaishankar, attended the funeral ceremony for former Bangladeshi Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and held a courtesy meeting with BNP leader Tarique Rahman. Furthermore, the country's general election was conducted peacefully on February 12, 2026, resulting in a two-thirds majority victory for the BNP – an outcome that offered India a measure of relief. Against this backdrop, Om Prakash Mishra, the Speaker of India's Lok Sabha, attended the swearing-in ceremony of the Prime Minister and the Cabinet as the chief guest representing India. Additionally, the exchange of greetings between Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Mr. Tarique Rahman served to solidify the historic ties between the two nations. This lends strength to the historical ties between the two countries and conveys a positive message in global politics. It must be admitted that India has been maintaining a strategic relationship lately.

Nevertheless, the situation in the country has brought a storm of desire to India. Because foreign powers are constantly trying to destabilize India's neighbours. Who can say that the recent incidents like the recent Sri Lankan incident of seizing the residence of the head of state of Bangladesh and looting of property will not happen in Nepal or other neighboring countries? Rather, India should continue to communicate and discuss the future consequences with the governments, military personnel, and other stakeholders of neighboring countries.

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