**Rising Islamophobia**

[**Mohsin Saleem Ullah**](https://nation.com.pk/Reporter/mohsin-saleem-ullah)

March 09, 2021

From France banning Islamic veiling, and far-right extremists targeting Muslims in Europe; Rohingya terrorised and kicked out of Myanmar to Indians setting Muslims on fire for slaughtering cows, Islamophobia is rising. Now, Sri Lanka recently made news by banning the burial of virus victims of minority Muslims, disregarding their funeral rites, and practices.

Anti-Muslim feeling has sporadically existed from the days when colonial governments had classified the Indian-subcontinent population in religious terms and further bifurcated it into sects of their choice to strengthen the British Raj through the divide and rule policy. During the process of globalisation—economic, cultural, and political—Muslim sentiments were deeply hurt, and a worldwide surge in series of Islamophobic events tells us how disconnected nationalities have come together against Muslims, and their religion, Islam. The current portrayal of Muslims is a part of the new racist discourse spread in the post-9/11 era by Islamophobic governments that used the fear of Islam to fuel anti-Islamic rhetoric for their ends.

[Govt to start vaccination of senior citizens from today](https://nation.com.pk/10-Mar-2021/govt-to-start-vaccination-of-senior-citizens-from-today)

Despite having roots in the region from the past millennium, a new form of Islamophobia is on the rise both in India and Sri Lanka. Earlier last year, the incumbent Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) had initially singled out the Tablighi Jamaat congregation as the main source of coronavirus spread in Delhi. The congregation became the ultimate punching bag of the hardline Hindu extremists of BJP, who deliberately made racial comments on Muslims.

The Indian government has invested more time, money, and energies in blaming the Muslims and putting them in jail for reasons they might not know themselves. Since BJP taking over the reins in 2014, there has been a rise in racial and incited violence against the Indian-Muslim community. Before the pandemic, mobs under the instruction of BJP, and RSS beat Muslim men to death on the pretext of eating cow meat and converting Hindu girls to Islam. The BJP’s tyrannical rule has further strengthened since it got re-elected for a second term in 2019 from the support it garnered through the implementation of the Hindutva agenda.

[Russia, China to sign agreement on joint moon base project within one year](https://nation.com.pk/10-Mar-2021/russia-china-to-sign-agreement-on-joint-moon-base-project-within-one-year)

It has infamous nationalistic policies, from the criminalisation of Triple talaq, Implementation of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam, the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), revoking Article 377 in Indian Illegally Occupied Kashmir. Now, due to the Covid-19 crisis the racial profiling and abuse have reached an unprecedented level including separating Muslim patients from other religions, refusal to admit Muslims, and even those admitted are left on their own.

Social media was swamped with anti-Muslim comments by the Indian Hindu chauvinists, who tagged Muslims as ‘corona jihad’, and some pro-government media agencies ran an anti-sentimental campaign, and television hosts fabricated false news that promoted their narrative, including anchor Arnab Goswami who falsely reported that Tablighi Jamaat Muslims were spitting on doctors to avoid getting tested for the virus. Disseminating irresponsible and biased discourse has infringed the constitutional right of the minority Muslims in India and has fuelled hatred for Muslims in society.

[Iran set to unveil domestically manufactured military hovercraft](https://nation.com.pk/09-Mar-2021/iran-set-to-unveil-domestically-manufactured-military-hovercraft)

In the wake of the pandemic, the spread, and severity of the virus has raised questions over the capabilities of governments and their failure to curb the virus. This has eventually shifted the blame on a minority ethnic group, as the “spreader” of the virus due to its Islamic practices in India.

New forms of Islamophobia emerging in parts of the world are tarnishing Muslims’ image globally and could have far-reaching implications. There is a need to shun anti-Muslim bigotry with an effective counter-narrative, and all Muslim countries should come up with a resolution against countries, promoting an anti-racial narrative against Muslims.