

27 November 2024

Mr. Ajay Banga
President
World Bank Group
1818 H Street, N.W., MC 13-1307
Washington, DC 20433

through abanga@worldbankgroup.org

Dear President Mr. Banga,

Re: Bangladesh: Atrocities against Hindus and other religious minorities

We write as a diverse coalition of non-governmental organizations and individuals who are scholars, religious leaders, human rights advocates, and civil rights leaders to express our strong concerns regarding human rights violations and atrocities against religious minorities in Bangladesh, particularly since July 2024.

We respectfully urge you to require Bangladesh to comply with the World Bank Group's Environmental and Social Framework (ESS-1 on management of social risks including those affecting vulnerable groups such as religious minorities, and ESS-7 on Indigenous Peoples that includes religious minorities).

We also urge you to implement your "Gender strategy 2024-2030" in Bangladesh with respect to Gender-Based Violence crimes being committed against girls and women of religious minorities. In the absence of accountability of institutions to protect minorities, your specific targets, though laudable, will appear to be meaningless to the helpless girls and women of minorities in Bangladesh who are being subjected to inhuman atrocities. Human rights of religious minorities are being trampled upon with impunity. The World Bank Group should require stoppage, and rehabilitation of the victims, of such gross violations of its policies before lending to the Republic of Bangladesh.

The attached report highlights the violence, rapes, murders, destruction of homes and businesses, destruction of temples, and stopping religious minorities from observing their religious rites. Since 5th August 2024 when the former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was deposed, more than 50 Hindus have been murdered in cold blood, 12 minor girls from minorities were gang-raped, several women have reported being brutalized, homes burnt down, temples destroyed, and religious minorities forced to flee. Young children are particularly vulnerable to rape, violence, and victimization to terrorize the minorities into submission.

Bangladesh army and police have remained mute spectators allowing rampaging mobs to target religious minorities with impunity. A young man was lynched inside a police station in the presence of Bangladesh army who were complicit in persecution of religious minorities. The incidents of crimes against minorities have not stopped and the Bangladesh army

colluded with the rioters in Chittagong on 5th November 2024 from where we are receiving reports of more than 200 people held in detention by the army being tortured.

Religious minorities face systematic persecution and violence, and their religious freedom is severely restricted by the government through discriminatory laws, inaction and often complicity by the State and its institutions. The government's apathy toward large-scale anti-minority violence by radical militant organizations has allowed such groups to operate with impunity. Even the saintly monks of International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), a peaceful Hindu religious organization that has distributed aid and volunteered during every disaster in Bangladesh, are being persecuted. Persecution of Hindus, Christians, Buddhists, has been going on for over five decades since independence of Bangladesh in 1971 and their population has seen a genocidal proportion of decline from more than 20% in 1971 to less than 8% in 2020.

We are thankful to His Excellency the Secretary General Guterres for sending an OHCHR fact-finding mission to Bangladesh. The mandate of the Mission is limited to reviewing incidents of violence between 5th to 15th August 2024 which should be expanded to cover the violence until the end of October 2024. The World Bank should do its own due diligence as a part of any lending to Bangladesh. We urge you to diligently implement World Bank's ESF and Gender Strategy in Bangladesh.

Excellency, thank you for your attention to this urgent matter and to ensure inclusive and sustainable development by protecting human rights of vulnerable minorities in Bangladesh. Should you need additional information or other materials on this subject, please contact Rajesh Gooty, rajesh@indiacause.org, at your convenience. We would appreciate it if you could designate a senior official from your office to follow up with us.

Respectfully,

Mohinder Gulati

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info@scottishhindufoundation.com

27 November 2024

Ms. Zainab S. Ahmed
Executive Director
World Bank Group
1818 H Street, N.W., MC 13-1307
Washington, DC 20433

through zahmed5@worldbank.org

Dear Executive Director Ms. Ahmed,

Re: Bangladesh: Atrocities against Hindus and other religious minorities

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27 November 2024

Mr. Abdelhak Bedjaoui
Executive Director
World Bank Group
1818 H Street, N.W., MC 13-1307
Washington, DC 20433

through abedjaoui@worldbank.org

Dear Executive Director Mr. Bedjaoui,

Re: Bangladesh: Atrocities against Hindus and other religious minorities

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27 November 2024

Mr. Matteo Bugamelli
Executive Director
World Bank Group
1818 H Street, N.W., MC 13-1307
Washington, DC 20433

through mbugamelli@worldbank.org

Dear Executive Director Mr. Bugamelli,

Re: Bangladesh: Atrocities against Hindus and other religious minorities

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27 November 2024

Mr. Arnaud Buissé
Executive Director
World Bank Group
1818 H Street, N.W., MC 13-1307
Washington, DC 20433

through abuisse@worldbank.org

Dear Executive Director Mr. Buisse,

Re: Bangladesh: Atrocities against Hindus and other religious minorities

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Mr. Junhong Chang
Executive Director
World Bank Group
1818 H Street, N.W., MC 13-1307
Washington, DC 20433

through jchang5@worldbank.org

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Mr. Marcos V. Chiliatto
Executive Director
World Bank Group
1818 H Street, N.W., MC 13-1307
Washington, DC 20433

through chiliatto@worldbank.org

Dear Executive Director Mr. Chiliatto,

Re: Bangladesh: Atrocities against Hindus and other religious minorities

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Ms. Nathalie Francken
Executive Director
World Bank Group
1818 H Street, N.W., MC 13-1307
Washington, DC 20433

through nfrancken@worldbank.org

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Executive Director
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1818 H Street, N.W., MC 13-1307
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through ofuentes@worldbank.org

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We also urge you to implement your "Gender strategy 2024-2030" in Bangladesh with respect to Gender-Based Violence crimes being committed against girls and women of religious minorities. In the absence of accountability of institutions to protect minorities, your specific targets, though laudable, will appear to be meaningless to the helpless girls and women of minorities in Bangladesh who are being subjected to inhuman atrocities. Human rights of religious minorities are being trampled upon with impunity. The World Bank Group should require stoppage, and rehabilitation of the victims, of such gross violations of its policies before lending to the Republic of Bangladesh.

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Bangladesh army and police have remained mute spectators allowing rampaging mobs to target religious minorities with impunity. A young man was lynched inside a police station in the presence of Bangladesh army who were complicit in persecution of religious minorities. The incidents of crimes against minorities have not stopped and the Bangladesh army colluded with the rioters in Chittagong on 5th November 2024 from where we are receiving reports of more than 200 people held in detention by the army being tortured.

Religious minorities face systematic persecution and violence, and their religious freedom is severely restricted by the government through discriminatory laws, inaction and often complicity by the State and its institutions. The government's apathy toward large-scale anti-minority violence by radical militant organizations has allowed such groups to operate with impunity. Even the saintly monks of International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), a peaceful Hindu religious organization that has distributed aid and volunteered during every disaster in Bangladesh, are being persecuted. Persecution of Hindus, Christians, Buddhists, has been going on for over five decades since independence of Bangladesh in 1971 and their population has seen a genocidal proportion of decline from more than 20% in 1971 to less than 8% in 2020.

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Excellency, thank you for your attention to this urgent matter and to ensure inclusive and sustainable development by protecting human rights of vulnerable minorities in Bangladesh. Should you need additional information or other materials on this subject, please contact Rajesh Gooty, rajesh@indiacause.org, at your convenience. We would appreciate it if you could designate a senior official from your office to follow up with us.

27 November 2024

Mr. Vel Gnanendran
Executive Director
World Bank Group
1818 H Street, N.W., MC 13-1307
Washington, DC 20433

through vgnanendran@worldbank.org

Dear Executive Director Mr. Gnanendran,

Re: Bangladesh: Atrocities against Hindus and other religious minorities

We write as a diverse coalition of non-governmental organizations and individuals who are scholars, religious leaders, human rights advocates, and civil rights leaders to express our strong concerns regarding human rights violations and atrocities against religious minorities in Bangladesh, particularly since July 2024.

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27 November 2024

Mr. L. Felice Gorordo
Alternate Executive Director
World Bank Group
1818 H Street, N.W., MC 13-1307
Washington, DC 20433

through fgorordo@worldbank.org

Dear Alternate Executive Director Mr. Gorordo,

Re: Bangladesh: Atrocities against Hindus and other religious minorities

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27 November 2024

Mr. Hideaki Imamura
Executive Director
World Bank Group
1818 H Street, N.W., MC 13-1307
Washington, DC 20433

through himamura1@worldbank.org

Dear Executive Director Mr. Imamura,

Re: Bangladesh: Atrocities against Hindus and other religious minorities

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27 November 2024

Mr. Parameswaran Iyer
Executive Director
World Bank Group
1818 H Street, N.W., MC 13-1307
Washington, DC 20433

through piyer@worldbank.org

Dear Executive Director Mr. Iyer,

Re: Bangladesh: Atrocities against Hindus and other religious minorities

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27 November 2024

Mr. Zarau Kibwe
Executive Director
World Bank Group
1818 H Street, N.W., MC 13-1307
Washington, DC 20433

through zkibwe@worldbank.org

Dear Executive Director Mr. Kibwe,

Re: Bangladesh: Atrocities against Hindus and other religious minorities

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27 November 2024

Mr. Michael Krake
Executive Director
World Bank Group
1818 H Street, N.W., MC 13-1307
Washington, DC 20433

through mkrake@worldbank.org

Dear Executive Director Mr. Krake

Re: Bangladesh: Atrocities against Hindus and other religious minorities

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27 November 2024

Ms. Beatrice Maser
Executive Director
World Bank Group
1818 H Street, N.W., MC 13-1307
Washington, DC 20433

through bmaser@worldbank.org

Dear Executive Director Ms. Maser,

Re: Bangladesh: Atrocities against Hindus and other religious minorities

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27 November 2024

Mr. Alexey Morozov
Executive Director
World Bank Group
1818 H Street, N.W., MC 13-1307
Washington, DC 20433

through amorozov@worldbank.org

Dear Executive Director Mr. Morozov,

Re: Bangladesh: Atrocities against Hindus and other religious minorities

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27 November 2024

Mr. Abdulaziz Al Mulla
Executive Director
World Bank Group
1818 H Street, N.W., MC 13-1307
Washington, DC 20433

through aalmulla@worldbank.org

Dear Executive Director Mr. Mulla

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27 November 2024

Mr. Robert Bruce Nicholl
Executive Director
World Bank Group
1818 H Street, N.W., MC 13-1307
Washington, DC 20433

through rnicholl@worldbank.org

Dear Executive Director Mr. Nicholl,

Re: Bangladesh: Atrocities against Hindus and other religious minorities

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27 November 2024

Mr. Sigrún Rawet
Executive Director
World Bank Group
1818 H Street, N.W., MC 13-1307
Washington, DC 20433

through srawet@worldbank.org

Dear Executive Director Mr. Rawet,

Re: Bangladesh: Atrocities against Hindus and other religious minorities

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27 November 2024

Ms. Katharine Rechico
Executive Director
World Bank Group
1818 H Street, N.W., MC 13-1307
Washington, DC 20433

through krechico@worldbank.org

Dear Executive Director Ms. Rechico,

Re: Bangladesh: Atrocities against Hindus and other religious minorities

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27 November 2024

Mr. Eugene Rhuggenaath
Executive Director
World Bank Group
1818 H Street, N.W., MC 13-1307
Washington, DC 20433

through erhuggenaath@worldbank.org

Dear Executive Director Mr. Rhuggenaath,

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27 November 2024

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Executive Director
World Bank Group
1818 H Street, N.W., MC 13-1307
Washington, DC 20433

through susaeed@worldbank.org

Dear Executive Director Mr. Saeed,

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27 November 2024

Mr. Wempi Saputra
Executive Director
World Bank Group
1818 H Street, N.W., MC 13-1307
Washington, DC 20433

through wsaputra@worldbank.org

Dear Executive Director Mr. Saputra,

Re: Bangladesh: Atrocities against Hindus and other religious minorities

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27 November 2024

Ms. Teresa Solbes
Executive Director
World Bank Group
1818 H Street, N.W., MC 13-1307
Washington, DC 20433

through tsolbes@worldbank.org

Dear Executive Director Ms. Solbes,

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27 November 2024

Mr. Harold Tavares
Executive Director
World Bank Group
1818 H Street, N.W., MC 13-1307
Washington, DC 20433

through htavares@worldbank.org

Dear Executive Director Mr. Tavares

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