

From: [Quan, Daisy \(BOS\)](#)
To: [BOS Legislation, \(BOS\)](#)
Cc: [Sharmin Hossain](#)
Subject: Add to File
Date: Tuesday, July 21, 2020 1:31:20 PM
Attachments: [Memo on Resolution Opposing India's CAA.pdf](#)

Can you add this memo to File No. 200771 [Opposing India's Exclusionary National Register of Citizens and Citizenship Amendment Act]? Thanks!

Daisy Quan
Legislative Aide
Supervisor Gordon Mar
415.554.7462

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TO: City and County of San Francisco Board of Supervisors and Stakeholders

FROM: Sharmin Hossain on behalf of Equality Labs
Commissioner Hala Hijazi, Human Rights Commission & SF Interfaith Council, CCSF
Community Leaders: Rabbi Pam Frydman, Dr. Nazeer Ahmed, Dr. Ejaz Naqvi, Ms. Javeria Jamil

DATE: Friday, July 10, 2020

RE: Resolution in Solidarity with San Francisco's South Asian American Community and Condemning India's Government's Racist and Islamophobic Citizenship Amendment Act

We are excited for San Francisco to join the international movement to stand with Muslims and caste oppressed communities in condemning the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). When this resolution passes, San Francisco will be the 5th major city, in addition to Seattle, Washington, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Albany, New York, and St. Paul, Minneapolis, to create global solidarity against this detrimental and racist policy.

In its 2020 report, the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom has designated India as a Country of "Particular Concern" (CPC), stating that the country is "engaging in and tolerating systematic, ongoing, and egregious religious freedom violations."

The City and County of San Francisco decision to take a stand with India's religious and cultural minorities cannot be overstated. The [Hindu nationalist ecosystem is deeply rooted in the Silicon Valley](#), and tech leaders and entrepreneurs within the Bay Area have been active proponents of the Modi Shah regime. More recently, [a landmark case of caste discrimination](#) at Cisco is exposing the complicit networks of power and caste oppression across the Silicon Valley. Passing this resolution will be a sign of assurance to the entirety of the South Asian American community that San Francisco will continue to welcome the most vulnerable, and stands in solidarity with South Asian religious and cultural minorities. As we commemorated the 1984 Sikh genocide this June, the large population of Sikhs, Dalits, and Muslims in the Bay Area are continuing to organize against the rise of [right wing nationalists](#), who are weaponizing the internet to harm advocates, influence elections, and spread disinformation on India's rise to genocide.

When genocidal campaigns begin, one important intervention is international condemnation. The Citizenship Amendment Act is terrifying - there are absolutely no grounds by which anyone of conscience can support it. The law creates an unconstitutional, religion-based criteria to grant citizenship to select immigrants and lays the legal foundation to denaturalize over 200 million of India's minorities, effectively creating the largest network of concentration camps in the world. [You can learn more about the horrifying implications of the CAA here.](#) In August of 2019, the Indian government required 33 million people in the northeastern state of Assam to prove documentary evidence of their Indian citizenship through the National Registry of Citizens (NRC), which effectively [denaturalized millions](#), majority of whom are Muslim. India has already built [mass detention camps for Muslims in Assam](#), and it is our responsibility as an international community to stop genocide before it starts.

The CAA is an integral part of the Modi government's process of creating the largest stateless population in the world. While it explicitly targets Muslims, it will impact all vulnerable communities including Dalits, queer and trans people, women, and the poor, as the severe requirements for [documentation](#) and the precarious reliance on local officials to be arbiters of citizenship make it a system ripe for corruption against the most vulnerable. International bodies like the [UNHRC say the CAA is fundamentally discriminatory](#) while the [United States Commission on International Religious Freedom](#) recommends the United States government should consider sanctions against the Home Minister and other principal leadership. The gravity is further compounded by the fact that on January 7, [Genocide Watch](#) issued a genocide alert for India.

What's more alarming, is the growing relationship between Hindu nationalism and American politics, where [Trump and Modi](#), both authoritarian leaders who have had a devastating response to COVID, have committed to unequivocal support of anti-democratic and Islamophobic policies. In addition to securing a [\\$3B arms deal](#), Indian American networks that support the CAA, are [also](#) Trump's largest immigrant donor base.

We look forward to San Francisco becoming the 5th city to pass a resolution, and express our deep felt concern over India's brazen violations of human rights and religious freedom, including its brutal suppression of popular and peaceful protests. The time to pass this resolution is now. We have activists at Equality Labs, Alliance of South Asians Taking Action, Alliance for Justice and Accountability, Indian American Muslim Council and Council on American Islamic Relations who are looking forward to supporting this resolution.

Resolutions:

- [Cambridge, MA Resolution](#) ([portal link here](#))
- [Seattle, Washington Resolution](#)
- [Albany, NY Resolution](#) (page 12)
- [St. Paul, Minnesota Resolution](#)

Additional Information:

- [The Network of Hindu Nationalist Groups Behind Modi's "Diaspora Diplomacy"](#) - The Intercept
- [Hindu Fascism: An All American Threat](#) - Common Dreams
- [United Nations High Commission for Refugees](#): "UN High Commissioner for Refugees expresses alarm at statelessness risk in India's Assam", dated, September 1, 2019, United Nations High Commission on Refugees Filippo Grandi stated, "Any process that could leave large numbers of people without a nationality would be an enormous blow to global efforts to eradicate statelessness," High Commissioner Grandi said. "I appeal to India to ensure that no one is rendered stateless by this action, including by ensuring adequate access to information, legal aid, and legal recourse in accordance with the highest standards of due process."
- [Amnesty International Report](#): "'Shoot the Traitors': Discrimination Against Muslims Under India's New Citizenship Policy", April 9, 2020, it states, "A video emerged from India in February 2020 showing five grievously injured men lying on the street being beaten by several policemen and forced to sing the Indian national anthem. The video was filmed on February 24 in Kardampuri, a neighborhood in northeast Delhi. One of the men, Faizan, a 23-year-old Muslim, died from his injuries two days later. At least 52 more people were killed in the three days of communal violence that broke out in India's capital. Over 200 were injured, properties destroyed, and communities displaced in targeted attacks by Hindu mobs. While a policeman and some Hindus were also killed, the majority of victims were Muslim."
- [United States Commission on International Religious Freedom \(USCIRF\)](#): April 2020 Annual Report it states that the USCIRF recommends the U.S. State Department that India be designated as one of the "countries of particular concern" (CPCs). Below is an excerpt:

"USCIRF's independence and bipartisanship enables it to unflinchingly identify threats to religious freedom around the world. In the 2020 Annual Report, USCIRF recommends 14 countries to the State Department for designation as "countries of particular concern" (CPCs) because their governments engage in or tolerate "systematic, ongoing, egregious violations." These include nine that the State Department designated as CPCs in December 2019—Burma, China, Eritrea, Iran, North Korea, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan—as well as five others—**India**, Nigeria, Russia, Syria, and Vietnam."

From: [Hala Hijazi](#)
To: [BOS Legislation, \(BOS\)](#)
Cc: achatterji@berkeley.edu; [Quan, Daisy \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: Fwd: Support of Resolution #200771_Opposing India's National Register of Citizens & Citizenship Amendment Act
Date: Tuesday, July 21, 2020 12:46:59 PM
Attachments: [Support of Resolution #200771_AChatterji.pdf](#)

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Hello Daisy, I would like to forward a letter by Dr. Angana Chatterji in support of Supervisor Mar's resolution #200771 on today's agenda.

Thank you!

Hala

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Angana CHATTERJI** <achatterji@berkeley.edu>
Date: Tue, Jul 21, 2020 at 9:00 AM
Subject: Re: Support of Resolution #200771_Opposing India's National Register of Citizens & Citizenship Amendment Act
To: Commissioner Hala Hijazi <commissioner.hijazi@gmail.com>
Cc: Hala K. Hijazi <hkhijazi@gmail.com>, Manzoor Ghorri <Manzoorg46@gmail.com>, Ahsan Khan <ahsan@iamc.co>, Nazeer Ahmed <nazeer.ahmed@delixus.com>

Dear Commissioner Hala Hijazi,

I am a resident of San Francisco and write in support of Resolution #200771. Enclosed, as attachment, please find a statement outlining the reasons for my support. Thank you ever so much for your work.

Please accept my well wishes.

My best regards,
Angana

<https://www.crg.berkeley.edu/angana-chatterji/>

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To: San Francisco Board of Supervisors

From:

Dr. Angana Chatterji
Co-chair, Political Conflict, Gender and People's Rights Initiative
Center for Race and Gender
University of California, Berkeley

July 21, 2020

Re: Supporting Resolution #200771 Opposing India's National Register of Citizens & Citizenship Amendment Act

Dear Members of the SF Board of Supervisors:

I am a resident of San Francisco and write in support of Resolution #200771. Please allow me to elaborate on the reasons for my support.

The Hindu Right's popular re-election in May 2019 has brought about the reign of majoritarian fascists in India today. Following the elections, the Narendra Modi-led Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) national government sought to aggressively further the ascendance of the majority population and the relegation of non-Hindus as secondary subjects. Inherently Brahmanical and hetero-patriarchal, this illiberal new order incorporates four features: populism, nationalism, authoritarianism, and majoritarianism. There is abject disregard for social facts, secular institutions, and the rule of law. Heightened Islamophobia and the targeting of reasoned dissent as 'anti-national' have eroded India's already conflicted democracy.

The actions of government, judiciary, state forces, and Hindu Right mobs and militia have fractured the identity and community, material culture, psychosocial well-being, livelihood and belonging of religious minorities and other marginalized communities. Muslims in India, numbering over 160 million, are rendered exceedingly vulnerable through systemic mistreatment, social and economic boycott, massified violence, gendered and sexualized violence, and lynching, and the reordering of citizenship laws.

The advance of majoritarianism in India has correspondingly impacted Kashmir. On August 5, 2019, the Indian state lay siege on Kashmir, nullifying Article 370 and revoking Article 35A of the Indian Constitution, to disestablish the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Article 35A, the Permanent Residents Law, defined Kashmiri rights over land, critical to Kashmiri self-professed struggles for self-determination.

Injurious Citizenship Laws

Reordering citizenship, commenced in Assam, is scheduled for implementation across India. These laws fortify legal discrimination on the basis of religion. "Citizenship" laws in India today aim to determine to whom political and civil rights may be accorded. They are akin to the Nuremberg Laws instituted in September 1935 in Nazi Germany. The Nuremberg Laws had paralyzing and devastating impact on the social, cultural, political and economic life of the Jewish community. Germans overwhelmingly acquiesced to Nazi propaganda legitimating the laws. The popularization of Jews as a separate and inferior race had far-reaching impact. Further, to oppose or resist the Nazis inevitably incurred the rage of the Gestapo, the German secret police during Nazi rule.

On August 31, 2019, the National Register of Citizens (NRC) was "updated" in Assam. It excluded 1.9 million persons, placing their citizenship rights and protections at risk, and may render such persons stateless. While those excluded can appeal to the Foreigners Tribunal, the process is complex. Of those excluded, reportedly, 486,000 are Muslims, 500,000-690,000 are Bengalis of Hindu descent, along with tribal (indigenous), ethnic and minority communities. Reports evidence how valid documentation of

residency was rejected. Reportedly, immigration detention centers (also spoken of as labor and concentration camps) are being constructed to imprison those deemed “illegal immigrants.”

Enacted in December 2019, the Citizenship (Amendment) Act of 2019 (CAA) establishes new naturalization and citizenship procedures for undocumented immigrants, including from Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jain, Parsi, and Sikh communities. Muslims, Adivasis (tribal) and Tamils are excluded. Home Minister Amit Shah has stated that the NRC would be implemented to expel those deemed illegal immigrants, using the pejorative term “infiltrators.” The National Population Register (NPR) is a database of all “usual residents,” citizen and non-citizen. In December 2019, the Indian Cabinet approved funds for “updating the National Population Register (NPR) across [India], beyond Assam.” The mandatory update is scheduled between April-September 2020. The National Population Register is the first step to creating a National Register of Citizens. The CAA, NPR, NRC and other existing laws such as the Enemy Property Act (1968) are utilized with impunity to privilege Hindus in defining citizenship.

Since December 2019, peaceful civil society protests (with few exceptions) have swept across India, dissenting the citizenship laws. In authoritarian display, state forces and Hindu Right activists perpetrated violence against the protesters (at Shaheen Bagh, Jamia Milia University, Jawaharlal Nehru University). As of December 27, 2019, 27 civilians had been killed across India and criminal charges were brought against 1,200 persons for participating in a candlelight march in Aligarh. Muslim communities, students, media persons, scholars, public intellectuals, lawyers, artists are being targeted. Free speech protesting the state’s actions is deemed seditious, and indiscriminately held actionable.

Between February 24-28, 2020, Muslims in Delhi were beset by violence. Armed Hindutva mobs surrounded Muslim homes, torched property with people inside, attacking Muslims and allies. As in Gujarat 2002, mobs in Delhi knew which houses to target. News media reported on the inaction and complicity of the police and the participation of BJP leaders in inciting violence. Some reportage used fictive equivalencies in outlining the impact on “Hindus and Muslims,” failing to underscore vast disparities in relations of power between them. As of March 6, 53 persons had died. Politically and purposively, Delhi 2020 is perhaps the continuation of the pogrom in Gujarat in 2002 under Mr. Modi’s chief minister-ship. This prolonged persecution was routed through episodic violence in Odisha, 2007-2008, against Christians, Dalits, and Adivasis, and in Muzaffarnagar, 2013, against Muslims.

On June 28, 2020, United Nations human rights experts made a statement on the arrest of 11 anti-CAA protesters, noting that: “their arrest seems clearly designed to send a chilling message to India’s vibrant civil society that criticism of government policies will not be tolerated.” On July 1, 2020, invoking the Recovery of Damages to Public and Private Property Ordinance (2020), Uttar Pradesh witnessed the seizure of property of persons participating in anti-CAA protests, who were accused of vandalizing public property.

The rage and arrogance that fuel the Modi-state draws lifeblood from weaponizing religion and demonizing difference. The partisan state unfolds in varying registers, constitutive of states of exception without-end. In Mr. Modi’s book, *Jyotipunj* (2008), the essay, ‘Pujniya Shri Gurujii’ (guru worthy of worship), extols early Hindu Right ideologue, Madhav Sadashiv Golwalkar’s vision. In 2017, the BJP-led government used state bodies to generate public praise for Golwalkar, whereby he was positioned as a “champion of robust nationalism.” Golwalkar professed admiration for Nazi Germany: “To keep up the purity of the Race and its culture, Germany shocked the world by her purging the country of the semitic [sic] Races – the Jews. Race pride at its highest has been manifested here,” continuing, “the non-Hindu...may stay in the country, wholly subordinated to the Hindu nation, claiming nothing, deserving no privileges... not even citizen’s rights.”

The prolific power and deep relevance of the Black Lives Matter movement in the United States is inspiring and its call to dismantle foundational racism in the U.S. must evoke the solidarity of allies. It calls for mindfulness as well to injustices elsewhere, as demonstrated by the SF Board of Supervisors Resolution #200771 Opposing India's National Register of Citizens & Citizenship Amendment Act.