

BENGAL, BENGALIS, BENGALI MUSLIMS, BENGALI HINDUS, and More to Think About

With all the news, one sees and hears about Bengalis again and again. And, almost always it is linked with a religion - Bengali Muslims - so much so, that nearly every person, whether educated or not, would assume that nearly all Bengalis are, indeed, Muslim. And, that is true - in Bangladesh. However there is a State in India, next to Bangladesh, called West Bengal - which is populated by the majority Bengal Hindus.

Bengal is is a geopolitical, cultural and historical region in Asia, with a people - Bengalis - united by Bengali language, customs, literature, but sharply divided concerning religion.

The Bengali Pala Empire was the last major Buddhist imperial power in the subcontinent, founded in 750 and becoming the dominant power in the northern Indian subcontinent by the 9th century, before being replaced by the Hindu Sena Dynasty in the 12th century. As Islam arrived, Bengal was becoming divided as the Bengali Muslims and the Bengali Hindus could not get along. The British, in the 1800s, finally had to divide the Bengal province into East Bengal (mostly Muslim, and which eventually became East Pakistan in 1947, and then in 1971 became Bangladesh) and West Bengal in India (mostly Bengali Hindu, with about 20% Bengali Muslim). All told, there are about 75 million Bengali Hindus in the world, and about 175 million Bengali Muslims.

But, where are the stories in the news of Bengali Hindus rampaging, slaughtering, angrily protesting, issuing statements to kill all others?

Similarly, there are about 6 million Christians in Egypt - the Coptic Christians, 10% of the population - who have had a presence there centuries before Islam was even invented. Why do we never hear of atrocities and destruction committed by the Coptic Christians?

And what about the Assyrian Christians, Maronite Christians, and Chaldean Christians in Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon, also deeply rooted in their homelands well before Islam happened?

And, Zoroasterians, Mandeans, and Bahai living in Iran (or in exile outside of Iran)?

Don't all these other people kill, destroy, threaten, and massacre?

The common thread here is that all of the non-Muslims peoples are targeted, slaughtered, and destroyed by Muslims - they have been again and again, they are now, and they will be again and again.