



**North American Province of
The Anglican Free Communion International -
The Episcopal Free Church**
<https://theanglicanfreecommunion.com/>

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Statement on Human Rights Violations in India May 12, 2024

Hindutva promotes an extreme form of Hindu Nationalism, where violence and coercion can be used to make all of South Asia a united Hindu nation. Hindutva promotes a radicalized, exclusionary form of Hinduism, which should not be confused with the traditional Hindu Faith.

Since 1925, the world's largest paramilitary organization, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), has worked to enforce a Hindutva ideology throughout India. Their political party, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), is the current ruling party in most states, and it is the party of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

India promotes itself as the world's largest democracy, and the Indian constitution guarantees religious freedom for all; however, the reality is quite different. Incidents of government sanctioned violence against minorities in India, including Christians, Muslims, Sikhs, Dalits, and Adivasi, has drastically increased in the past ten years; Christians and other Indian minorities live in constant fear for their livelihoods, their lives, and their freedoms, due to Government sanctioned oppression and persecution.

Violence against the Christian tribal population in Manipur India erupted in May, 2023. This religiously motivated violence has resulted in over 300 churches being burned, over 4000 homes burned or looted, over 120 people killed, and a displaced population of up to 65,000 people, most of whom are Christian. This violence was encouraged by the BJP-led Manipur State Government.

India's Central Government, led by BJP Prime Minister Narendra Modi, blocked out the internet in Manipur for two months so the world would not know what was happening, and Modi has yet to offer help or assistance to the Christians displaced by this violence. This has become a standard practice throughout India. In Chhattisgarh, for example, Adivasi like Jarnail Kaur have had their ancestral land taken by the government and thousands have been displaced or murdered.

Therefore, The North American Province of the Anglican Free Communion International makes the following declaration:

We condemn all violence against religious minorities in India, especially the recent violence against Christians in Manipur. We call on the State and Central Indian Governments to prevent this violence. Furthermore, we condemn the promotion of a Hindutva worldview and philosophy, as it leaves no room for religious pluralism, and it promotes the oppression and persecution of religious minorities.

Standing in solidarity with over thirty different human rights groups as well as our colleagues in the United Methodist Church and United Church of Christ who have made similar declarations, we call upon the United States Government to implement recommendations made to them by the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) to:

- Designate India as a 'country of particular concern,' or CPC, for engaging in systematic, ongoing, and egregious violations of religious freedom, as defined by the International Religious Freedom Act (IRFA).
- Advance human rights for all religious communities in India and promote religious freedom, dignity, and interfaith dialogue through bilateral engagement and in multilateral forums.
- Condemn ongoing religious freedom violations and support religious organizations and human rights groups targeted for their advocacy of religious freedom.
- To hold Indian government agencies and officials responsible for severe violations of religious freedom by freezing those individuals' assets and/ or barring their entry into the United States under human rights related financial and visa authorities, citing specific religious freedom violations."

We encourage all members of The American Province of the Anglican Free Communion International to educate themselves on issues concerning India. And if they feel so called by their conscience to contact their Congressional representatives and ask them to take action, which includes bringing the issues to the attention of the both the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the State Department.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Edward T. Vaughan". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored background.

Reverend Edward T. Vaughan, Provincial Archbishop of North America

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