

**Open Borders & The Hindu Holocaust: Lessons for America**  
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Why should we care if a Hindu girl is raped half way around the world when in 2016, there were almost 7,600 reported cases of rape right here in Florida alone? Why is it *important* that a remote Hindu village in Bangladesh's far north was attacked when communities in my own Chicago face continuous violence? Why are events in Bangladesh important to us anyway?

Let me give you a few reasons: Somalia, Afghanistan, and from when I was a kid, Cuba. Are we going to wake up one day to find that Bangladesh has become a threat? It's easy to get caught up in our immediate problems and lose sight of the big picture. I talked with that girl; I went to that village; and I just returned from Bangladesh a few days ago; and putting basic human decency aside, we've got a lot of reasons to be concerned.

So, today, I'm going to be talking about Bangladesh—an announcement that generally has people headed for the exits or at least looking at their watches. But it's not so much about what *Bangladeshis do*, as it is about what *we don't do*.

We focus our attention on hot wars in places like Iraq and Yemen; on countries that are obvious terror supporters like Pakistan, which sheltered Osama bin Laden and works with the Taliban, and Iran which is *really* the Great Satan; all of which makes it very convenient for us to ignore the threat from nations like Bangladesh,

where the government is not anti-American and doesn't actively engage in the things that Pakistan and Iran do. In fact, I know a lot of people in that government and for the most part, they're decent people that would rather be rid of Islamists, who tried to kill the current Prime Minister at least twice. But what's the expression? "If wishes were fishes."

Their desires have *not* stopped the carnage.

Pakistan's 1951 census found Hindus to be almost a third of East Pakistan's population. When East Pakistan became Bangladesh in 1971, they were under a fifth; 30 years later less than a tenth; and today, they are estimated to be about one in 15. Why? Simple. Throughout that time, there have been ongoing atrocities targeting them: murder, rape, child abduction, forced conversion, religious desecration, looting, land grabbing, and more. One-third, one-fifth, one-tenth, one-fifteenth. It doesn't take a math genius to know that the next number is not going to be higher. An overnight disaster 70 years in the making!

Spoils go to party loyalists, and it doesn't matter which party is in power. Authoritative studies, like the ones by Dhaka University's Abul Barkat, demonstrate that they *all* use stolen Hindu property to reward their cadres. No matter what liberal apologists and diplomatic appeasers try to tell you, the fact is that *every* Bangladeshi government has been either unable or unwilling to take effective action. Crimes go unpunished, and some government officials participate in cover-ups and even the crimes themselves with impunity. And that's important because our experts will tell you that the current party in power,

the Awami League, is our friend. And in many ways it is, but it does not mean that the experts' recommended inaction is in our national and humanitarian interests.

The lack of action by the West leaves this existential issue to the likes of people like me. So, I confronted successive Bangladeshi governments with the facts over the years, and for years they tried to explain away the evidence that was right in front of them. One former official told me that I had it all wrong, that Bangladeshi Hindu parents cannot find "suitable matches for their children, so they go to India where there are more Hindus." I asked *him* if he thought I had the word "stupid" written across my forehead, because I've interviewed hundreds of Hindu refugees in India's remote villages, abandoned train stations, and wherever else they could find shelter. Not one said they were there for "better matches."

A former Cabinet Minister even challenged my right to raise the issue, bringing up Sandy Hook and—get this one—the fact that union membership is declining in the US. We really got into it, too. I told him that his justifications for inaction show the depth of the problem and his complicity in it. He insisted that I was listening to "made up tales"; and that if I think they don't enforce the law, all I have to do is send him specifics and *he* would take care of it personally. They think *all* Americans are naïve and that we get our information from the movies or at best a Google search. But the real takeaway is that the Bangladeshis didn't feel they even had to try to come up with a credible explanation. They knew they could mollify western nations with mere words and empty assurances; and, why not, it never failed them before.

Putting aside the idiotic notion that I have better access to information about events in Bangladesh than he does, and the Minister's thinking that I wouldn't catch that; I called his bluff two days later when a very frightened Hindu family asked me to help them get back their missing daughter. They were from Barisal, only 134 miles from where the Minister and I had been sitting. The girl had been abducted by locals after the family refused to abandon their home and flee the area. The demand is not uncommon. Hindus are harassed and threatened—often for months or years—by all sorts of protected individuals. In this case, it was local officials and members of the ruling party. When they're finally frightened off their land, attacked, or even killed; the government declares their property "vested" and gives it to the very people who got rid of them. That's how things work in Bangladesh if you're Hindu. In fact, those who abducted the girl were aided by the police, so of course, the police weren't doing anything to help. By the time, they met with me, they not unexpectedly were quite willing to give up their land if it meant getting their daughter back—a trade-off I warrant all of us would make, which is why I have called Bangladesh's Vested Property Act "the economic engine of ethnic cleansing." I sent the Minister *a ton* of evidence, which he too ignored, and the girl's family never saw her again. That was five years ago, and after that the Bangladeshi government barred me from the country until recently.

The government doesn't like people who don't blithely accept their palliatives and generalities. They tell us how Bangladesh's constitution guarantees freedom of religion to everyone, as if the written law is faithfully reproduced in practice. But

that was enough for *our* government to smile and nod. Bimal Pramanik, is a demographer who fought in Bangladesh's War of Independence and later fled to India when Bangladeshi governments betrayed the ideals for which he put his life on the line. I was in his Kolkata office where he poured over papers with me that documented the decades long Hindu Holocaust. Our experts in government and media should try it before assuring us that we've nothing to worry about.

Quite the contrary, the written law means little in Bangladesh, where the International Commission of Jurists and others have noted for years that there is no rule of law. In August, I gave our State Department 23 verified incidents of targeted anti-Hindu atrocities that took place in the first seven months of 2018—and I must say that there seems to be a newfound courage at our State Department these days. That's almost one a week; and it's only the number of incidents I could verify *myself* with at least two independent witnesses. My resources are quite limited, certainly compared with those of CNN and other media giants. Imagine what they could find if they gave this serious matter just a bit of the effort they devote to royal weddings and Kim Kardashian's bottom.

It took me only one day in March to uncover two instances of Bangladeshi government complicity when I was in Dhaka, the capital. In one, a Hindu *Mandir* was under attack by local Muslims who demanded its land, continued to threaten more violence; and, when I arrived, were readying to storm the temple. Its leaders had been trying to get help from the police, who by then were refusing even to take their calls. We had to act, so we held off the immediate attack, and together with Bangladesh Minority Watch founder Rabindra Ghosh, confronted

the police, demanded, and ultimately secured armed protection for the Temple. As of last month, at least, things seem to be holding.

While that was happening, in another part of the capital, police sat by idly while a large group of Muslims attacked a Hindu home *for four and a half hours in broad daylight*. This time, they got word that we were coming and quickly sent armed men to stand guard while the family, which had fled the violence, returned to their ransacked home and tried to put their lives in order and find *any* possessions that weren't looted by the attackers. Of course, the horse was already out of the barn—there wasn't much left—and we again confronted the police. We were assured that the perpetrators would be arrested, although they couldn't explain how they were not aware of this four and a half hour attack. But the arrests only nabbed the “small fry,” as they were called, who were quietly let out with no real sanction. The leaders behind the attack enjoyed its fruits with impunity. Hello? Where are you CNN, BBC? Too busy bashing Israel?

That was one day. The next day, we secured the return of a Hindu family's land that had been seized two years earlier, contrary to law, by those who used their ties with the ruling party to claim it as their own. Prior to that, police did nothing to right that wrong; and my associates on the ground tell me that our success was a very unusual result.

So I kept asking myself if the armed protection would have been provided if I was not there; or if the land would have been returned if I remained in the comfort of my Chicago area home. Given the consistent evidence over decades, the answer

is “no.” That’s a pretty sorry state if justice is possible only because some guy from half way around the world shows up, and the government does not want to risk pissing off the United States that day. Clearly, the rule of law really *doesn’t* exist in Bangladesh. If it did, justice wouldn’t depend on who the government doesn’t want to anger, whose bribe is larger, or who can bring down the worst consequences against those people who try to follow the law.

Those promised benefits of the Bangladeshi constitution are doled out when it suits the interests of those doing the doling, and to whomever it suits their interests to reward. They might not be rewarding people for building a Caliphate, but the impact on the victims is largely the same; and in the end, they *are* building the Caliphate—not so much because of what they do but because of what we do not do. Our diplomatic and media establishment seem invested in maintaining the mantra that Bangladesh is a “moderate Muslim” nation to our detriment. For while this Hindu Holocaust is a human rights travesty, it is itself only the beginning of our concerns, the most important among them being how it strengthens our *own* enemies.

We let Bangladesh fly under the radar, which is pretty odd since Bangladesh is the *only* country in the world among the ten most populous *and* the ten most densely populated. It’s as if you took every other American and crammed them into the State of New York. Talk about social and economic problems; talk about fertile soil for our worst enemies. Add to that the neighborhood—Bangladesh is located roughly between China and India; and it has the world’s fourth largest Muslim population, after Indonesia, Pakistan, and India. Yet, the Hindu Holocaust has

been going on for decades with successive US administrations leaving things to State Departments that care more about avoiding conflict than addressing existential threats.

More than a decade ago, one of my Bangladeshi informants warned me that radicals there had for some time been sending operatives to the UK. Bangladesh, like Pakistan, is part of the British Commonwealth, which creates almost an open borders situation by which Islamists have become British citizens. Their British passport gives them easy access to the United States, which their Bangladeshi or Pakistani passport would not. I tried to pass this along at the time, but there was no interest. Don't worry, I was told, 'Bangladesh is a moderate Muslim nation.'

Given the direction of the UK, we might want to re-think decisions like that because it's precisely that approach which enables our enemies to use nations like Bangladesh to do their dirty business.

And recall that my informant said that Islamists had been doing this for some time. Today, their children are British born and Islamist raised. That should give us a whole new perspective on Britain's "home grown terrorists."

This deliberate ignorance also has put India's eastern flank at risk; and if India ceases to be freedom's bulwark in the region, we're really in trouble. First, we need to understand India—whose strength is also its weakness in this case. Like the United States, India is built on a federal-type system. There is a strong central government and 29 states with a good deal of local autonomy; a strength,

especially when you're trying to manage a nation of over 1.3 billion people. Do you know that just under one in every four human beings lives in what was once known as British India (India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh)? On the other hand, India's federalism has allowed West Bengal and its strongwoman, Mamata Banerjee, to operate independently of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his initiatives and maintain a 1,378 mile open border with Bangladesh. Three other states share the remaining 1,200 miles of the India-Bangladesh open border; but West Bengal is the driver with more than two and a half times the population of the other three combined.

I've been traveling through West Bengal's villages for well over a decade. Each year, there are fewer and fewer Hindus; roadside Temples I passed in previous years are either shuttered and unused, or gone, especially in the districts closest to the border. It's not the demographic change itself that should bother us. The same economic pressures that send Mexicans to the US and Palestinians to Israel operate here. But along with people just looking for work, who are crossing the border simply to feed their families, there are others with more sinister agendas; and that is the real threat posed by open border policies. It gets worse.

We pat ourselves on the back for defeating ISIS in the Middle East, while not addressing ISIS in its new South Asian home, where there are about two and a half times as many Muslims. In 2015, I gave information to an intelligence operative and others with the location of an ersatz ISIS headquarters in the Bangladeshi capital. They called me an alarmist. But in the three years since they failed to act on that information, ISIS has developed a following there and has

claimed credit for or has been implicated in the murder of a blogger and other free thinkers, a Hindu priest, journalists, police; and in a terrorist attack in a café that killed at least 20. By 2016, the previously dormant State Department began including ISIS in advisories about Bangladesh; but the damage was done already.

And getting worse. Several months later, I began hearing about ISIS cadres in India and was able to investigate the matter. I found the center in Kolkata, a city with as many people as Chicago and Houston put together and the capital of West Bengal, which borders Bangladesh. I mapped out entry points, security, and even snapped some photos. Again, I was called an alarmist, but when I returned a year later, ISIS was even more firmly entrenched in the city. Officially, the region's major intelligence agencies (India's Research and Analysis Wing or RAW; Bangladesh's Directorate General of Forces Intelligence or DGFI, and Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence or ISI) deny any ISIS presence; however, those public denials do not comport with their private statements.

If you've ever been to Kolkata or seen pictures of it, you've seen the mass of humanity trying to get around on foot or in vehicles. That day, it took me less than five minutes to walk with that mass of humanity from ISIS to the office of *Jamaat e-Islami*, a radical religious party that has been *banned in Bangladesh* and which now operates *openly* in Kolkata. Its Chief Minister (roughly equivalent to a US Governor) has even appeared publicly with *Jamaat*, cementing a position that has allowed her to thumb her nose at Indian Prime Minister Modi and run West Bengal as her independent fiefdom with open borders to increase her voter base, which might sound familiar to some of you.

Mamata Banerjee did not open the gates for Islamist activity from Bangladesh flowing across the open border to India. For 30 years before she took power, West Bengal's communist rulers enforced an open border; but Mamata, as she's known, was supposed to change things. Whether she was an open border advocate before her ascension, Mamata she certainly became one after taking power refusing to plug gaping holes in the border, allowing agents to smooth the illegals' merger into West Bengal society, and sitting by idly while the process has led to marked demographic change in the state; all in exchange for political support and muscle. Demographer Bimal Pramanik's warnings about this seismic shift are documented in my book, *A Quiet Case of Ethnic Cleansing: the Murder of Bangladesh's Hindus*.

The danger is serious and growing. South Asia has about 2.5 times the Muslims as the Middle East, which means a greater pool for radicalization, and we already are seeing the consequences in attacks on Hindus and Hinduism in eastern India, and the expanded reach of Islamists. Yet, we do have opportunities to stop it, if we put survival over diplomatic niceties and reality over fantasies about what we expect from those we call friends—or in this case “moderate.”

I was educated as a social *scientist*, which means that I learned a long time ago not to ignore patterns of behavior. So we have to ask why US and other western nation placed troops in harm's way in Bosnia after 6,000 Muslims were brutally murdered, when, as former President Bill Clinton admitted, the west could have saved hundreds of thousands among the 800,000 Africans brutally murdered in

Rwanda, had we acted when we could have? Why has the West given an incalculable amount of money to Palestinian Arabs and a comparative pittance to Middle Eastern Christians who face a true genocide? Or why are the same actors focused on around a million Rohingya but silent about more than ten times that many Bangladeshi Hindus?

Now I want to be clear when I ask these questions. I do not sit with those who see Islam itself as the enemy or consider all Muslims open or stealth *jihadis*. That's bad policy in addition to being morally wrong. Some of our bravest and best allies are Muslim—like my friends the Pashtun, who attacked the Taliban in February, sacking their offices and stealing their arms despite the presence of the Taliban's allies in the Pakistani military and intelligence. Or my Muslim allies in Bangladesh who have been beaten for fighting to save Hindus. Remember, this is not about what others *do*, but about what we *don't do*. And we don't seem to know how to act in our own interests. We empower and fund those who would see us DEAD, see our children DEAD, see our way of life DEAD; and ignore those who see the United States and its values as a model to emulate. We have to empower those true Muslim allies so they can do what's right; and that does not happen when we're stupid about whom we call our friend in the Muslim world; specifically, those who condemn Islamists with their words but strengthen them with their action. My book, *What is Moderate Islam*, helps us get a handle on how to distinguish friend from foe, ally from adversary and why; and western governments should take heed.

And we can start by telling both adversaries and those who enable them and believe we don't notice that we will not allow them to persecute and ultimately eliminate Hindus from Bangladesh; and demand *action*, as opposed to the mere words for which we have settled in the past.

1. Prosecute crimes against Hindus to the fullest extent of the law regardless of the criminals' influence, or Islamist threats.
2. Immediately sack and *publicly* prosecute government officials who participate in the crimes, their cover up, or do not punish the criminals.
3. Repeal the "Vested Property Act," which allows Hindus to be forced off their land with the spoils going to those who forced them to leave.
4. *Decriminalize* blasphemy, which is a capital offense in Bangladesh, and *criminalize* forced conversion to Islam, which goes on with impunity.
5. Cooperate with India's central government on border control that whatever it ultimately looks like, stops the movement of radicals and terrorists.

The Bangladeshis will listen to us, because their economy and the ruling party's political fortunes depend on it. We can give them the option of continued economic growth (and the political fortunes that come with it) or stagnation, because their economy is inordinately dependent on garment exports. We're their best customer, and our current administration has shown that the United States will use trade as a negotiating tool. Don't think that the Bangladeshi's haven't noticed. Bangladesh also depends on being one of the world's top suppliers of UN peacekeeping troops, and the threat of losing that triggered a military coup when I was there in 2007. Who funds that? That's right, you and

me, more than anyone else. Perhaps we begin by sending some of those home to keep the peace in Bangladesh, especially as elections and expected violence against Hindus draw near.

It's impossible to say how many Bangladeshi Hindus, Buddhists, Christians, and animists have been killed by Islamists and those complicit in this atrocity. In July 2011, however, former Congressman Bob Dold, using vetted information I gave him to the US Congress that "since 1947, 49 million Hindus in Bangladesh have gone missing." Some were killed outright, some were forced to flee, others forced to convert to Islam, and many, many more minorities were never born because their potential parents did not survive to have them. It's a chilling number that should tell us what our adversaries are capable of doing if they ever make it here in larger numbers. And they will if we don't stop them.

I learned that if you can get one or two good ideas from an address, it was worth your time. Here's four:

- Hindus in Bangladesh are being killed, forcibly converted, or forcibly pushed out to the point of eventual extinction.
- Open borders and our studied inaction empowers *our* enemies.
- There *is* something we can do about it.
- And we ignore this at *our* own risk.

Thank you. I'm available to help anyone who wants to take action with me.