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had been removed from their families and often placed under state care on grounds of child endangerment when families are unable to afford basic needs. The ruling stated that the families had been discriminated against on socio-economic and poverty grounds and because of their Romani ethnicity.

In July, the European Court of Human Rights ruled that Hungary had violated Article 3—prohibition of torture and inhumane and degrading treatment—of the European Convention on Human Rights in a 2014 incident when a Romani man was subjected to police brutality during an arrest. The Court awarded the Romani applicant €19,500 (around US\$19,400) in damages.

Migration and Asylum

Access to Hungary's asylum system remained virtually impossible. Pushbacks to Serbia, sometimes violent, continued. According to official police statistics between January and August, border officials had carried out over 90,000 unlawful pushbacks.

According to police data cited by the UN Refugee Agency, 28,289 people fleeing the conflict in Ukraine had registered for Temporary Protection as of August 1.

Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights Dunja Mijatovic, in a June letter to the Hungarian government, raised concerns about the long-term prospects for protection for third country nationals and stateless persons from Ukraine who are excluded from the Temporary Protection scheme and have no possibility to apply for asylum in the country.

The Court of Justice of the EU in November 2021 ruled that Hungary's law criminalizing aid to asylum seekers and restricting the right to seek asylum violates EU law. The case refers to a 2018 amendment to the Asylum Act, dubbed the "Stop Soros" law, which prevented people from applying for asylum in Hungary if they arrived from a country of origin or transit country where their life and freedom were not at risk. The bill also criminalized individuals and organizations for providing support and aid to migrants and asylum seekers.

In December 2021, Prime Minister Viktor Orban stated that "[w]e will not do anything to change the system of border protection... We will maintain the existing regime, even if the European court ordered us to change it."

India

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led government continued its systematic discrimination and stigmatization of religious and other minorities, particularly Muslims. BJP supporters increasingly committed violent attacks against targeted groups. The government's Hindu majoritarian ideology was reflected in bias in institutions, including the justice system and constitutional authorities like the National Human Rights Commission.

Authorities intensified efforts to silence civil society activists and independent journalists by using politically motivated criminal charges, including terrorism, to jail those exposing or criticizing government abuses. The government used foreign funding regulations and allegations of financial irregularities to harass rights groups, political opponents, and others.

Indian authorities intensified restrictions on free expression and peaceful assembly in Jammu and Kashmir.

In May, the Supreme Court effectively halted all use of the colonial-era sedition law in an interim ruling, a law repeatedly used by the authorities to arrest peaceful critics of the government.

The Indian government has supported humanitarian efforts in Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, and Ukraine.

Jammu and Kashmir

Three years after the government revoked Jammu and Kashmir's constitutional autonomous status and split it into two federally governed territories, violence continued with 229 reported deaths as of October, including 28 civilians, 29 security force personnel, and 172 suspected militants. Although local Kashmiris complained that some of those described as militants killed in gunfights were in fact civilians, no independent investigation was made public.

Minority Hindu and Sikh communities in the Muslim-majority Kashmir Valley came under attack. There were seven targeted killings in May, four of them of Kashmiri Hindus, known as Pandits. The other three were Muslim police officials. After gunmen shot Rahul Bhat, a Kashmiri Pandit government employee on May

12, Kashmiri Pandits employed in government jobs in Kashmir Valley went on an indefinite strike, demanding relocation.

On June 1, the Kashmiri Pandit Sangharsh Samiti, a group representing religious minorities in the province, wrote to the region's chief justice raising concerns for their safety. In September, Jammu and Kashmir administration passed orders to withhold salaries of employees still on strike in the valley. In October, militants killed a Kashmiri Pandit and two migrant workers.

In January, journalists aligned with the government and police forcibly took over the Kashmir Press Club, an independent media body, which authorities later shut.

In January, police arrested Sajad Gul, a journalist at the Kashmir-based digital news site The Kashmir Walla, on charges of criminal conspiracy after he reported a public protest. A month later, authorities arrested editor-in-chief Fahad Shah on sedition and terrorism charges after his site reported contradictory claims after a shootout in which security forces killed four people who they said were militants. Authorities rearrested both Shah and Gul under the Public Safety Act after they had been granted bail separately in cases filed against them, continuing their arbitrary detention at time of writing.

Since August 2019, at least 35 journalists in Kashmir have faced police interrogation, raids, threats, physical assault, restrictions on freedom of movement, or fabricated criminal cases for their reporting.

Impunity for Security Forces

Allegations of torture and extrajudicial killings persisted, with the National Human Rights Commission registering 147 deaths in police custody, 1,882 deaths in judicial custody, and 119 alleged extrajudicial killings in the first nine months in 2022.

In March, the Indian government reduced the number of districts under the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) in some northeast states. However, it remained in effect in Jammu and Kashmir and 43 of 90 districts in four northeastern states, providing effective immunity from prosecution to security force personnel, even for serious human rights violations.

The Border Security Force frequently used excessive force along the Bangladeshi border, targeting Indian residents and irregular immigrants and cattle traders from Bangladesh.

Dalits, Tribal Groups, and Religious Minorities

In October, police in Gujarat publicly flogged Muslim men accused of disrupting a Hindu festival in a form of abusive punishment while authorities in Madhya Pradesh demolished the homes of three men accused of throwing stones at a Hindu ceremonial dance, without any legal authorization. In April, authorities in Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, and Delhi summarily demolished property mostly owned by Muslims in response to communal clashes. Although they tried to justify the demolitions by claiming the structures were illegal, the destruction appeared intended to be collective punishment for Muslims. "Houses that were involved in stone pelting will be turned into rubble," the BJP home minister in Madhya Pradesh state warned.

In June, a BJP politician's remarks against the Prophet Mohammed led to widespread protests by Muslims across the country. Police in Jharkhand allegedly used excessive force against protesters, killing two people, while authorities in Uttar Pradesh illegally demolished homes of Muslims suspected of being "key conspirators" behind protest violence.

In June, three United Nations special rapporteurs wrote to the Indian government raising serious concerns over the arbitrary home demolitions against Muslim communities and other low-income groups for alleged participation in inter-communal violence. They said that "authorities reportedly failed to investigate these incidents, including incitement to violence and acts of intimidation that contributed to the outbreak of the violence."

In August, the BJP government approved the early release of 11 men sentenced to life in prison for gang rape and murder during the 2002 anti-Muslim riots, which BJP affiliates celebrated publicly. The men were convicted after a Muslim woman, Bilkis Bano, testified in court. Opposition lawmaker Mahua Moitra filed a petition in the Supreme Court challenging the early release, which is not usually permitted in gang rape cases, saying, "This nation had better decide whether Bilkis Bano is a woman or a Muslim."

In January, photographs of over 100 Muslim women, including journalists and activists, were displayed on an app saying they were for sale, to humiliate and intimidate them.

Laws forbidding forced religious conversion were misused to target Christians, especially from Dalit and Adivasi communities. In July, six Dalit Christian women were arrested on charges of forced conversion in Uttar Pradesh, based on a complaint by a Hindu nationalist organization.

In August, the National Crime Records Bureau reported 50,900 cases of crimes against Dalits in 2021, an increase of 1.2 percent over the previous year. Crimes against Adivasi communities increased by 6.4 percent, at 8,802 cases. In September, two Dalit teenage girls were raped and killed in Uttar Pradesh, once again spotlighting that Dalit and Adivasi women and girls are at heightened risk of sexual violence.

Civil Society and Freedom of Association

Authorities harassed and threatened activists and rights groups through politically motivated prosecutions, tax raids, allegations of financial irregularities, and use of the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA), the law regulating foreign funding for nongovernmental organizations.

In September, income tax officials raided the offices of Oxfam India, Delhi-based think tank Centre for Policy Research, and Bengaluru-based Independent and Public Spirited Media Foundation, alleging FCRA violations. In January, India's national investigative agency, the Central Bureau of Investigation, searched the offices of prominent human rights organization Centre for Promotion of Social Concerns in Tamil Nadu state alleging fraud and financial irregularities under the FCRA.

In June, authorities arrested prominent human rights activist Teesta Setalvad, as well as police officers R.B. Sreekumar and Sanjeev Bhatt, in apparent reprisal for pursuing accountability for the 2002 mob violence targeting Muslims in Gujarat state. In September, police filed charges accusing them of "false and malicious criminal proceedings against innocent people," including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who was chief minister of Gujarat during the riots.

Delhi police arrested Mohammed Zubair, co-founder of an independent fact-checking website Alt News in June, accusing him of hurting Hindu sentiments in a 2018 Twitter post. Zubair's arrest appeared to be reprisal for exposing a television news network that aired controversial remarks of a BJP politician about the Prophet Mohammed, leading to criticism by several Muslim governments.

Freedom of Expression

Authorities arrested journalists critical of the government on politically motivated charges. In July, police in Jharkhand arrested independent journalist Rupesh Kumar Singh, who reports on the rights of Adivasi communities, on various charges, including under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA), a draconian counterterrorism law. Singh and his wife were petitioners in the Supreme Court on the government's alleged use of Israeli-produced spyware Pegasus to target journalists and activists, after their phone numbers were included on a list of potential targets.

In September, the Supreme Court chief justice granted bail to journalist Siddique Kappan after being held for two years on baseless charges of terrorism, sedition, and other offenses. Kappan, who was arrested in October 2020 while on his way to report on the gang rape and murder of a Dalit girl in Uttar Pradesh, remained in custody on other charges.

Authorities also continued to stop activists and journalists critical of the government, from traveling abroad.

In August, the committee of experts constituted by the Supreme Court to investigate the use of Pegasus spyware on Indian citizens submitted its report, which revealed that 5 out of 29 phones examined had malware on them, but failed to determine whether it was Pegasus. The Supreme Court noted that the government did not cooperate with the committee's investigation but did not make the report public.

In July, Meta, formerly Facebook, decided not to publish the pending Human Rights Impact Assessment on India, meant to independently evaluate the company's role in spreading hate speech and incitement to violence on its services in India, which led to severe criticism from civil society in India. Meta merely published some snippets from the report as part of its first annual human rights

report, an abdication of its human rights responsibilities. Meta asserted it withheld publication out of safety concerns.

Women's and Girls' Rights

Violence against women and girls continued at alarming rates, with 31,677 cases of rape registered in 2021, an average of 86 cases daily.

In September, the Supreme Court failed to deliver a verdict on whether Muslim female students can wear hijab, a headscarf, in educational institutions in BJP-led Karnataka state with two judges expressing opposing views. In February, the state government had issued a directive backing discriminatory bans at several government-run educational institutions on students wearing the hijab inside classrooms and a month later, the state high court upheld the government order.

In September, the Supreme Court delivered a progressive ruling on abortion rights, expanding access to legal abortion to all women regardless of marital status and to persons other than cisgender women. It also expanded access to rape survivors, including victims of marital rape.

Right to Education

By February, educational institutions across the country began to resume in-school classes after multiple reopening and closures since the Covid-19 pandemic struck in March 2020. The school closures caused massive disruption in the education of millions of children, disproportionately affecting girls and children from poor and marginalized communities who did not have access to online learning, putting them at increased risk of dropping out, loss of learning, child marriage, and child labor.

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

In August, in an important ruling toward advancing the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) communities and women, the Supreme Court widened the definition of family to include same-sex couples, single parent, and other households considered “atypical,” saying family benefits under the law should be extended to them.

Refugee Rights

Rohingya Muslim refugees in India face tightened restrictions, arbitrary detention, violent attacks often incited by political leaders, and a heightened risk of forced returns. In March, the Indian government forcibly returned a Rohingya woman to Myanmar despite an order by the Manipur State Human Rights Commission putting the deportation on hold.

India also failed to adequately protect the rights of refugees from Myanmar fleeing renewed fighting between the Myanmar military and armed groups.

Climate Change Policies and Impacts

India is currently the world's third-largest greenhouse gas emitter, after China and the United States. In August, the federal cabinet approved the country's updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to the Paris Agreement, which commits to reaching net-zero emissions by 2070, meet half of the country's energy needs from renewable sources by 2030, and reduce emissions intensity of the economy by 45 percent by 2030.

Climate change is expected to have a significant impact on India due to more frequent and intense heatwaves, sea level rise, drought, glacial melt, and changes in rainfall. India experienced an unusually early heatwave, beginning in March, recording the highest temperature in the month in over a century. The March heatwave was made 30 times more likely due to climate change, according to a study by the World Weather Attribution Network.

Key International Actors

The European Union and its member states held numerous high-level meetings with Indian authorities but continued to refrain from publicly expressing concerns over the Indian government's growing abuses. Rare exceptions were a tweet by the EU special representative for human rights and a statement by German Foreign Office in July.

In April, the EU and India launched a bilateral Trade and Technology Council, and in June, they officially resumed negotiations for a free trade agreement. In July,

the EU held its tenth, and largely fruitless, local human rights dialogue with India.

In April, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken publicly referred to “concerning developments in India, including a rise in human rights abuses by some government, police and prison officials.” The US Commission on International Religious Freedom stated that “religious freedom conditions in India significantly worsened” in the last year and recommended that the State Department designate India a “country of particular concern.”

The UK rushed to finalize a free trade agreement with India despite concerns raised by the House of Lords International Agreements Committee that the UK government’s negotiating objectives did not provide enough information on the importance it would give to “human, environmental and other rights and protections.”

Foreign Policy

India did not speak out against serious human rights violations in South Asia, including in Myanmar and Bangladesh. In July, India abstained on a UN Human Rights Council resolution on Syria but supported a HRC resolution in October, to renew the mandate of the special rapporteur to monitor and report on the human rights situation in Afghanistan.

Throughout the year, India abstained during votes on resolutions at the United Nations related to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, including a UN General Assembly resolution adopted in March censuring Russia for its military actions and calling on Moscow to unconditionally withdraw its troops.

India’s unwillingness to criticize Russia’s actions or join the sanctions against Russian oil and defense purchases drew criticism in the United States and EU. The Indian government defended its decision to import Russian oil, saying it must source oil from where it is cheapest. Prime Minister Modi privately and publicly criticized the war when engaging directly with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

India was the biggest provider of aid to Sri Lanka, extending nearly US\$4 billion, including credit lines for essentials such as food, fuel, and medicines, as the

country faced its worst economic crisis in decades. India also supported Sri Lanka in obtaining aid from the International Monetary Fund.

India extended aid to Afghanistan, including wheat and medical supplies, amid the ongoing humanitarian crisis, exacerbated after the Taliban takeover in August 2021.

Following clashes between British Hindus and Muslims in September in Leicester city in the UK, the Indian High Commission one-sidedly condemned the “vandalisation of premises and symbols of the Hindu religion.”

In September, India and China started pulling back troops from a disputed area along the Himalayan border to de-escalate tensions since the standoff in May 2020.