

## Hindutva And White Supremacists Play Havoc In DC

By: Dr. Aslam Abdullah

Krishna Gudipati carried the Indian flag to Capitol Hill when Trump terrorists invaded Congress on January 6, the day the House and the Senate members met to verify November 3, Presidential votes. The Indian media and public officials expressed shock at the incident.

Why are people from India in shock? The Indian flag bearers were reportedly from Hindu fascist groups such as the RSS, the VHP, and the BJP, the most ardent President Trump supporters. Why would Hindu fascists not stand for the Republican white



supremacy promoting President when Trump has been the most prominent American to back Indian Prime Minister's

dictatorial tendencies? Trump attended the Howdy Modi rally in Houston organized by the fascists. Modi hosted

Trump in Ahmedabad to return the favor. In several cities and villages controlled by fascists in  
*Cont. on page 14*



Avril Haines  
Page. 4



The Mob  
Attack  
Page. 6



First Masjid  
In India  
Page. 8

## A Pakistani-American Doctor Paid At Least \$650,000 In Debt For Cancer Patients

By: Rehan Qamar

In attempts at making their lives "a little bit easier", a Pakistani-American doctor gave nearly 200 patients a Christmas gift that changed their lives. He erased more than half a million dollars in medical debt.

The doctor, Dr. Omar Atiq, founded a cancer clinic in 1991 in Pine Bluff in Arkansas. He sent out a notice to his



patients just days before Dec. 25, noting that "the clinic has decided to forego all balances owed to the clinic by its patients," according to the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette. Atiq had closed his clinic in February after nearly 30 years of providing cancer treatments includ-

ing chemotherapy and radiation therapy.

He told ABC TV's "Good Morning America" that he had worked with a billing company for months to collect any remaining payments from patients, but

*Cont. on page 14*

## Trump Terrorists Target American Democracy

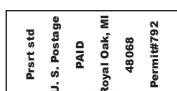


By: TMO Staff

America is in shock to see a violent Republican mob terrorizing the nation, disrupting the congressional proceedings to certify the country's election. The losing President Trump was behind the rally whose supporters had threatened violence earlier if

Congress rejected their demands to overturn the election. The violent Republicans comprising of Christian evangelists and white supremacists attacked people's representatives. America's political leaders condemned domestic terrorists.

*Cont. on page 14*





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# Trump Gets Banned On Multiple Social Media Platforms

By: Zaid Aleem

President Donald J. Trump has been permanently banned from Twitter following a history of actions that breached business laws, NPR reported.

“After close review of recent Tweets from the @realDonaldTrump account and the context around them — specifically how they are being received and interpreted on and off Twitter — we have permanently suspended the account due to the risk of further incitement of violence,” the company said in a statement.

Trump’s Twitter account, which had more than 88 million followers, was removed following the company’s warning to the president that it would



happen if he did not stop abusing the platform, including his attempts to sabotage the results of the November election by peddling false claims.

Trump used his Twitter account for a variety of reasons: regularly disparage, harass and intim-

idate his competitors. Among several other subjects, analysts suggest Trump’s comments supercharged falsehoods about social rights demonstrators, the coronavirus, and the election.

Inspired and encouraged by the president’s rhet-

oric — on and off social media — thousands of rioters attacked the U.S. Capitol on Wednesday. That marked a turning point for Twitter, but it initially stopped short of permanently banning the president and instead limited his access for several hours.

Twitter’s announcement on Friday comes after Trump was banned for at least two weeks by both Facebook and Instagram. Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg said that allowing the president to continue using the site during the presidential transition posed a risk that was “simply too great.”

Additionally, an official from Twitter said @POTUS and @WhiteHouse will not be suspended but the company “will take action to limit their use” ahead of the accounts transitioning to the Biden administration.

The final tweet from @realDonaldTrump, sent Friday, read: “To all of those who have asked, I will not be going to the Inauguration on January 20th.”

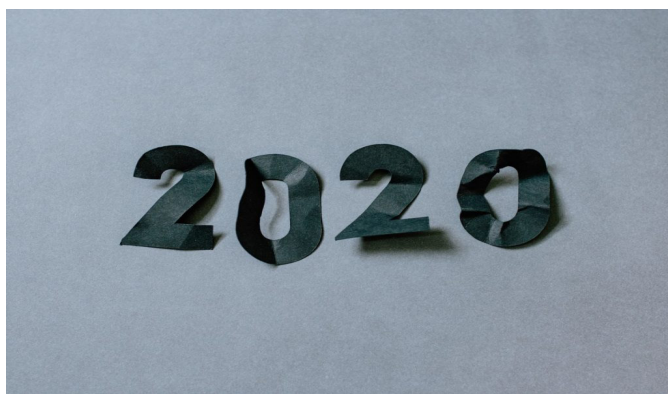
## 2020: A Year In Review For Muslims

By Yousuf Ali

Without a doubt, 2020 was an eventful year for the entire world. The whole world was essentially paralyzed by a global pandemic spread through the incompetence of many governments and the irresponsible actions of certain individuals. Furthermore, there was the American election cycle which saw the defeat of incumbent President Donald Trump. Furthermore, there were several events that had a specific impact on the Muslim world. Here are several of them along with my thoughts:

### The COVID-19 Pandemic:

There is no doubt that the Coronavirus cast a shadow over the year to the point that many other important stories almost went unnoticed. People were forced to be inside to stem the spread of this deadly disease. It also had specific implications for Muslims with the severe downsizing of the Hajj and canceling of communal aspects of Muslim practices including the jummah prayer and gatherings for Ramadan. Furthermore, Mus-



lims have been targetted as scapegoats by certain Islamophobic politicians including Trump who retweeted a False claim that mosques remained open during the pandemic while churches were forced to close. Our next story may give us hope to be more optimistic in the new year

### The 2020 American Election Cycle:

Amidst the pandemic, America also was in the middle of one of its most important election cycles. Right as it was spreading to America, it was starting off negatively with SAnders being essentially pushed out by the coalescing of the establishment around Joe Biden and Elizabeth Warren splitting the progressive vote. Luckily for Biden, and unlucky for the country, Trump’s competence was on full

display for the country by his mismanagement of the Pandemic. By tanking the economy and causing social unrest, he essentially gave up his victory in November according to the most reliable forecasting methods of Allan Lichtman. Nevertheless, Biden’s victory is definitely an improvement over Trump with him promising to do things such as the end of Trump’s travel ban implemented to placate his base wanting a Muslim ban. At the same time, Muslims cannot take anything for granted like they did in the Obama administration. They must do their best to pressure and influence the new administration to avoid the deleterious policies of the Obama administration which directly preceded Trump’s 2016 victory.

France’s Further Attacks

on Islam:

For many years, France has been actively repressing Muslim life, but this year, it has taken things to the nth degree. This was triggered when a French teacher who displayed blasphemous cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was killed. In response, France took many actions against Muslims life including the closing of mosques and the largest anti-Islamophobia organization. Before, the killing, Emmanuel Macron made a speech degrading Islam as a religion “in crisis” and saying there would be more French state intervention in Muslim institutions. The attack provided the pretext, and since then, Muslims have been suffering backlash from the French state. Furthermore, France expects Muslims to accept attacks against them while it has laws against Holocaust denial which are justified under the pretext of fighting anti-semitism. On a positive note, this cause has united the Muslim world around the #boycottFrance movement in retaliation for the disrespect for their religion

and hypocrisy.

### Arab States; Normalization with Israel:

For a long time, Arab states have been lukewarm or downright duplicitous in their support of the Palestinian cause. That said, they at least pretended to care with most not having official relations with Israel while Palestinians were not granted their rights. This year, that trend seems to be breaking with the UAE, Sudan, Bahrain and Morocco all normalizing with Israel in quick succession. There is even talk of Saudi Arabia and Oman soon following. This is in exchange for benefits to them but nothing for the Palestinians who are the direct recipients of Israeli oppression. There are some notable holdouts like Tunisia and Kuwait which have announced their intentions not to normalize while the Palestinian issue remains unresolved. In retaliation, several public figures such as Tareq Sweden have suggested that Muslims boycott the UAE which initiated the trend of normalization.





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# Michigan Muslim And Jewish Community Members Volunteer Together On Christmas



By: M. Muhammad Ahmed

Despite sub-zero temperatures and fresh two-inch snow-fall, dozens of Muslims and Jews volunteered together on Christmas day to help low income residents of southwest Detroit enjoy Christmas morning with bags of gifts. Over 400 children received gifts as part of this multi-faith effort which has been going on for the past 9 years.

Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib, who grew up in this neighborhood, also came by to volunteer with her sons, stating: "We are going to get out there and put smiles on kids' faces!. Thank you so much for starting this incredible program... and making sure families feel loved during these difficult times."

She gave a shout out to Jim Tuman, who started the Jimmy's Kids program 32 years ago in southwest Detroit and helps organize the interfaith Christmas Day program and other social programs year round.

"It felt good giving back to the community and seeing the smiles on everybody's faces. It felt like I was Santa!" Ibrahim Elnabtity said.

Elnabtity is a 15-year-old senior in high school who drove 90 minutes from Lansing with his father to volunteer on Christmas Day. They dropped off several gift bags to families, some of whom only spoke Spanish. According to Ibrahim, one of the families they were delivering to had their house burn down recently, and had



just moved down the street. They saw the remains of the family's old house and were moved by the conditions of the neighborhood. He commented, "I wish we can do more."

In Michigan, the Michigan Muslim Community Council (MMCC) has partnered with the Jewish Federation and the Jewish Community Relations Council/American Jewish Council (JCRC/AJC) for the past nine years on a variety of community service projects, with the Christmas day project being the most popular. MMCC has an annual campaign called the Days of Ihsan during the December holiday season that encourages volunteerism in the community. The Jewish community similarly organizes Mitzvah Day (meaning "service" in Hebrew) during this time where over 1,000 volunteers come out to give people celebrating Christmas a much needed break.

The volunteering and service activities were significantly reduced in 2020 due to the pandemic. MMCC restricted

its Days of Ihsan activities to extensive food distribution, while the JCRC/AJC held some virtual events. The joint participation at the Jimmy's Kids program was also reduced, and strict protocols were in place to reduce the risk of exposure for both the families and the volunteers. Jim Tuman indicated that only 150 families could safely be served this year instead of the usual 400.

In addition to serving the needs of local residents, the goal of this event is also to create awareness Muzammil Ahmed, a board member of the Michigan Muslim Community Council (MMCC) and co-organizer of this event, told the Muslim Observer.

"It is important for us to provide opportunities for people to come into these hard hit neighborhoods, connect with the residents, and hopefully kindle that empathy and desire to serve the marginalized and less privileged."

Cont. on page 14

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# Op Ed: Why Senators Must Reject Avril Haines For Intelligence

By: Medea Benjamin and Marcy Winograd

Even before President-elect Joe Biden sets foot in the White House, the Senate Intelligence Committee may start hearings on his nomination of Avril Haines as Director of National Intelligence.

Barack Obama's top lawyer on the National Security Council from 2010 to 2013, followed by CIA Deputy Director from 2013 to 2015, Haines is the proverbial wolf in sheep's clothing. She is the affable assassin who, according to *Newsweek*, would be summoned in the middle of the night to decide if a citizen of any country, including our own, should be incinerated in a U.S. drone strike in a distant land in the greater Middle East. Haines also played a key role in covering up the U.S. torture program, known euphemistically as "enhanced interrogation techniques," which included repeated waterboarding, sexual humiliation, sleep deprivation, dousing naked prisoners with ice cold water, and rectal rehydration.

For these reasons, among others, the activist groups CODEPINK, Progressive Democrats of America, World Beyond War, and Roots Action have launched a campaign calling on the Senate to reject her confirmation.

These same groups ran successful campaigns to dissuade Biden from choosing two other warmongering candidates for critical foreign policy positions: China-hawk Michele Flournoy for Secretary of Defense and torture apologist Mike Morell for CIA Director. By hosting calling parties to Senators, launching petitions, and publishing Open Letters from DNC delegates, feminists—including Alice Walker, Jane Fonda, and Gloria Steinem—and Guantanamo torture survivors, activists, helped derail candidates who were once considered shoo-ins for Biden's cabinet.



Now activists are challenging Avril Haines.

In 2015, when Haines was CIA Deputy Director, CIA agents illegally hacked the computers of the Senate Intelligence Committee to thwart the Committee's investigation into the spy agency's detention and interrogation program. Haines overruled the CIA's own Inspector General in failing to discipline the CIA agents who violated the U.S. Constitution's separation of powers. According to former CIA whistleblower John Kiriakou, she not only shielded the hackers from accountability but even awarded them the Career Intelligence Medal.

And there's more. When the exhaustive 6,000-page Senate Intelligence Committee report on torture was finally complete, after five years of investigation and research, Haines took charge of redacting it to deny the public's right to know its full details, reducing the document to a 500-page, black-ink-smearred summary.

Page 45 of the redacted Senate Intelligence Committee report on CIA torture.

This censorship went beyond merely "protecting sources and methods"; it avoided CIA embarrassment while ensuring her own career advancement.

Moreover, Haines sup-

ported torture apologist Gina Haspel as Trump's CIA Director. Haspel ran a secret black site prison in Thailand where torture was regularly inflicted. Haspel also drafted the memo ordering the destruction of almost 100 videotapes documenting CIA torture.

As David Segal of Demand Progress told CNN, "Haines has an unfortunate record of repeatedly covering up for torture and torturers. Her push for maximalist redactions of the torture report, her refusal to discipline the CIA personnel who hacked the Senate, and her vociferous support for Gina Haspel — which was even touted by the Trump White House as Democrats stood in nearly unanimous opposition to the then-nominee to lead the CIA — should be interrogated during the

confirmation process."

This sentiment was echoed by Mark Udall, a Democratic senator on the intelligence committee, when it finished the torture report. "If our country is going to turn the page on the dark chapter of our history that was the CIA's torture program, we need to stop nominating and confirming individuals who led this terrible program and helped cover it up."

Another reason Haines's nomination should be rejected is her support for the proliferation of killer drones. There has been a concerted effort by former Obama colleagues to paint Haines as a voice of restraint that tried to protect civilians. But according to former CIA whistleblower Kiarikou, Haines regularly approved the drone bomb-

ings that killed not only suspected terrorists but entire families, including children, who died as collateral damage." It was Avril that decided whether it was legal to incinerate someone from the sky," said Kiriakou.

When human rights groups denounced Obama's rash use of extrajudicial killings, including the assumption that all military-age males in the strike zone were "enemy combatants" and therefore legitimate targets, Haines was enlisted to co-author a new "presidential policy guidance" to tighten the regulations. But this new "guidance," issued on May 22, 2013, continued to blur the line between civilians and combatants, normalizing targeted assassinations and effectively repudiating the "presumption of innocence" that has been the bedrock principle of civilian law for over 800 years.

The drone playbook, "PROCEDURES FOR APPROVING DIRECT ACTION AGAINST TERRORIST TARGETS LOCATED OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES AND AREAS OF ACTIVE HOSTILITIES," says on page 1 that any "direct action must be conducted lawfully and taken against lawful targets," yet the guidelines never reference international or domestic laws that define when extrajudicial killings outside of an active war zone are permitted.

*Cont. on page 13*



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# Understanding The COVID-19 Vaccine

By: TMO Staff

With significant developments in regard to the COVID-19 vaccines and availability of the vaccine in the market today, it will be important to understand what is known about each vaccine and who can take it.

Currently, one vaccine is authorized and recommended to prevent COVID-19. The vaccine developed in collaboration by Pfizer and BioNTech is already in use. Moderna’s vaccine may be authorized for use this week by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). In addition to this, there are several other vaccines in Phase 3 clinical trials, including AstraZeneca and Janssen’s COVID-19 vaccines.

According to CNN, under the emergency use authorization the vaccine was distributed from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration Friday and can be given to anyone 16-years and older. According to the



Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices it should be safe for almost everyone.

However, the FDA has put one group in the category of those who should not get the vaccine: people who have a known history of a severe allergic reactions to any component of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine.

At this time, people

with underlying medical conditions and the elderly are prioritized to get the COVID-19 vaccine. According to Dr. Peter Marks, the director of the FDA’s Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research, because there is not enough data available yet on the safety of COVID-19 vaccines in pregnant women, it is up to them to decide whether or not they would like

to get vaccinated.

“COVID-19 in a pregnant woman is not a good thing, so someone might decide that they would like to be vaccinated, but that’s not something that we’re recommending at this time,” Marks said at a news briefing Saturday. “That’s something we’re leaving up to the individual.”

The vaccine may also be

appropriate for people who have a suppressed immune system due to a condition or disease such as those going through treatments for diseases like cancer. As per Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance, whether or not someone gets the COVID-19 vaccine should be their choice.

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# Associated Press Photographers Release Terrifying Video Of 6 Outside The Capitol Gates

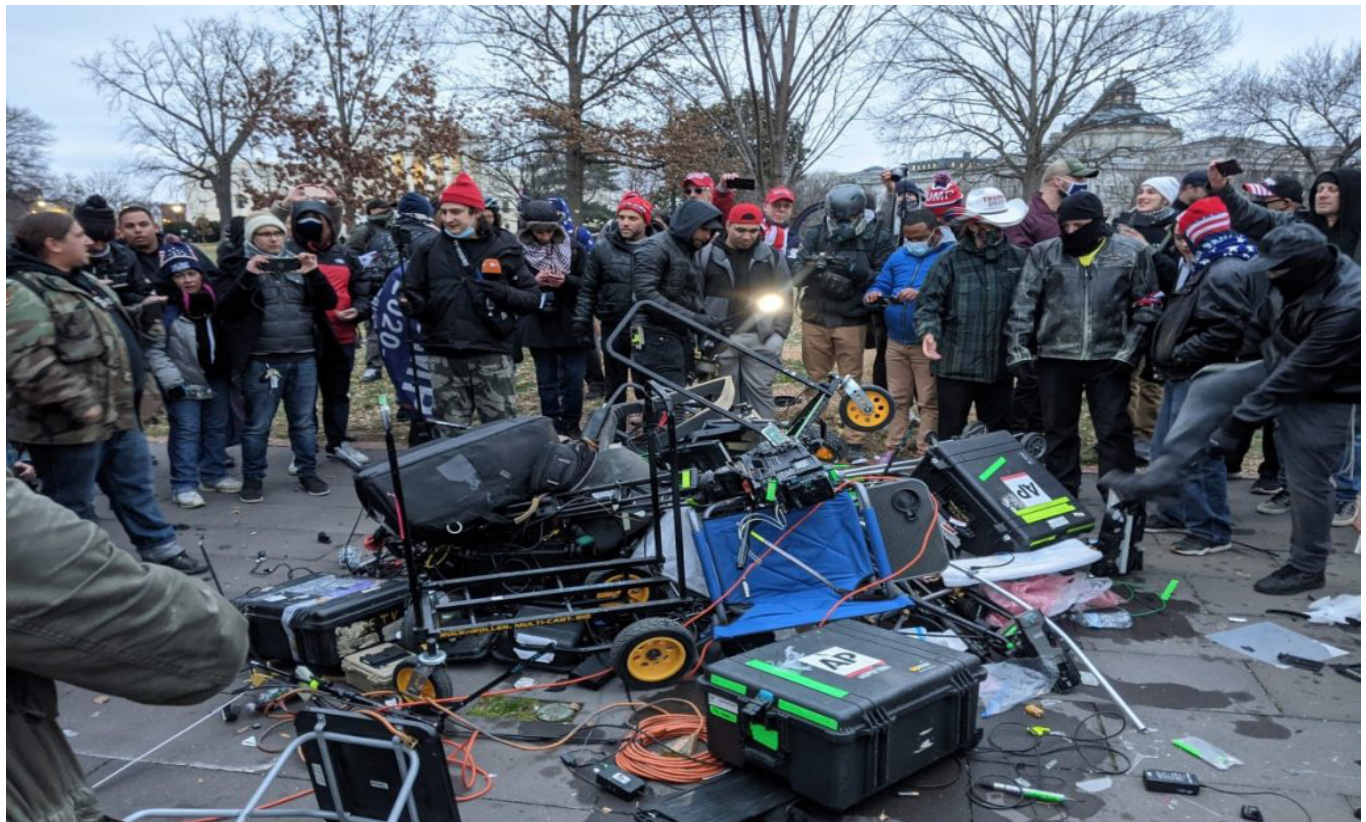
by Aysha Qamar

As violent Trump supporters terrorized the U.S. Capitol on Wednesday, members of Congress were not the only people they were looking to intimidate. These terrorists also targeted journalists and press under Donald Trump's message of declaring the news and media an "enemy of the people."

"Murder the media," was written on a door of the Capitol while terrorists took over and attacked a group of reporters. In one incident John Minchillo, a photographer of the Associated Press, was attacked by a mob of Trump supporters outside the Capitol building. The violent incident was captured on video and shared by another photographer on Twitter. Local photographers and reporters were present at the break of the horrific violence that took place Wednesday. Footage shared on social media depicts the consequences of words bigots like Trump use to incite violence on communities and spaces.

"Please use this moment to reflect on the importance of journalism as a conduit between us. We tell stories. That's our mission. We have the privilege to shepherd moments over time and space. Please subscribe to your hard working local papers, support their vocation," Minchillo replied to the video of his attack being shared on Twitter.

In a thread of photos posted on Twitter, BuzzFeed News reporter Paul McLeod captured photos of equipment left behind by the Associated press after crowds attacked reporters. According to McLeod, one man yelled "We are the news now, as a crowd damaged the equipment. McLeod also reported that a noose was fashioned from a



camera cord and hung from a tree.

The Associated Press confirmed that its equipment had been stolen and destroyed and noted that none of its staff members had been injured.

In another video posted on Twitter, the terrorists again attempted to target individuals they thought were from CNN. While it is unclear whether the journalist was from CNN, the fact that these journalists were assaulted is not okay.

But the violent Trump allies were not the only ones after journalists on Wednesday. Reporters for The Washington Post were shortly detained by police while reporting on Tuesday night, following a pattern of law enforcement officials arresting reporters for doing their work throughout this year.

The reporters arrested were identified as Zoeann Murphy and Whitney Leaming. The two shared on Twitter that they were safe after quickly being released. "I have heard from so many journalist friends/colleagues who were at or around the

Capitol today that they are 'fine'. This is a lie," Leaming tweeted. "They are not fine but they push aside their physical safety and mental health to focus on the story at hand [because] one of the most important rules of journalism is that the story is not about you. Just please remember that and maybe not threaten their life, I beg you."

According to The New York Times, media officials were threatened and surrounded for hours, those inside the Capitol building were forced to find shelter in secure locations to avoid assault. A reporter with The Los Angeles Times recalled her experience hiding in the House gallery during an armed standoff.

Sarah D. Wire of The Los Angeles Times wrote:

I heard a ruckus behind me and turned and saw a dozen reporters being ushered into the gallery from press offices. Then police shut and locked the doors. Police interrupted the proceedings to announce that tear gas had been deployed in the rotunda.

A staff member handed me an evacuation hood, a cumbersome plastic bag that filters out tear gas and chemicals. She told me to pass it and others down the row until everyone had one. Reporters were not the only ones in the gallery. Staff members were monitoring the proceedings. More than a dozen lawmakers had also taken seats in the public galleries overlooking the House floor. Now we were locked in the room together.

The rioters driven by Trump's hate clearly had no fear of police involvement. CBS News reporter Chip Reid, who has worn protective gear he last wore while covering conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, noted that a rioter told him law enforcement officials would not protect journalists. "There were no police around us—we were on our own," Reid said. "We high-tailed it out of there."

Of course, Trump later addressed the crowd in a video statement Wednesday but continued on his claims that the election has been "stolen." The video removed by many social media outlets

including Facebook and Twitter is predicted to incite further violence. As Trump continues to target anyone who calls out his lies, his zombies continue to ready for battle.

"Rioters at the Capitol called for violence against members of the news media, destroyed news equipment and verbally harassed journalists as the 'enemy of the people's—actions that not only pose a dire threat to those working tirelessly to bring information to our communities, but also to the press freedom that is a bedrock value of our nation," Bruce Brown, the executive director of the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, said in a statement.

"These actions are the direct result of years of this language stoking fear and hate for one of our most vital institutions. Our free press is crucial to democracy, and indeed, one of the pillars that will help keep it standing beyond this moment."

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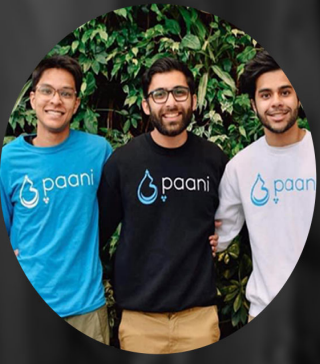
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# Ghoga Town In Gujarat, India Has The Distinction Of Having First Masjid In India

By: Dr. A. S. Nakadar

A few months back, a Muslim gathering of the Middle Eastern countries had invited me to speak on India's current situation. They had heard about the atrocities against Muslims and about attempts to subjugate Muslims in India. The audience had heard, seen, and listened to these on social media. They were also perplexed about the demonstrations in Shaheen Bagh in Delhi and across the country against India's draconian CAA law.

To better understand the current situation, it was necessary to educate the audience about Islam's history in India, from Muslims' arrival in the early 7th century to the current status. And that Muslims have made outstanding contributions in religious, social, political, and science to the world. The audience gasped when I mentioned the Muslim population of over 120 million, the second-largest globally and is larger than the population of most Arab Countries combined.

Islam arrived in India in the early 7th century through maritime traders. This maritime trade between the Arabian Peninsula and India existed in the pre-Christian era. Islam was born in Hejaz (modern-day Saudi Arabia) in the late 6th century. Islam came to India in the early 7th century through maritime traders.

If one looks at the map, it becomes evident that the distance between the East Coast of the Arabian Peninsula and India's West Coast on the Arabian sea is not an impassable space. The shortest distance between these two countries is the West Coast of Gujarat than India's other coastline.

These traders in Dhows and Proas made it a dynamic interaction zone between peoples, cultures, and civilizations between these two countries.

During the research, I was astounded to find that the oldest and the

Barawada –Juni masjid-Ghogha-Gujarat-India  
623 AD-Qibla faces Baitul Muqaddus (Jerusalem)



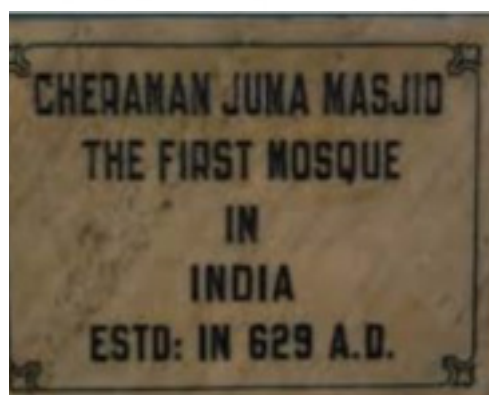
first Masjid built in India was in Ghoga – Kathiawar-Gujarat (623-624 A. D.). And not the Cheraman Juma Masjid in Kerala (629 A. D.) as widely and commonly believed.

Ghogha was an essential historic port and a thriving trading center on the Arabian sea from the 5th Century C.E. until the development of Bhavnagar in the 19th century.

Ghogha is a census town with a population of 12208, according to 2011 India's census. It is strategically located on the bay of Khambhat (Cambay) in the Kathiawar/Saurashtra region on Gujarat. It is about 122 Miles (196KM) from Ahmedabad-Gujarat.

Some Muslim Arab traders who landed at Ghoga around the early 7th century built a mosque around 624-625 A.D. It was the time when Qibla faced Masjid-E-Aqsa or Baitul Muqaddus-Jerusalem-instead of Kaaba Sharif in Mecca. Prophet Muhammed (PBUH) received "Wahi," commanding him to change the Qibla from Jerusalem (in the North) to Mecca-(in the South) in around 624-625 A.D. This ancient Masjid, in Ghoga, locally known as the Barwada Masjid or the Juni (old) Masjid, still has its original Qibla facing Jerusalem.

Thus, this Masjid, therefore, predates the pre-



viously believed oldest Masjid, the Cheraman Juma Masjid in Kerala, built-in 628 -629A.D.with its Qibla facing Mecca as mandated at that time. It is further collaborated by its inscriptions in Old Arabic on its Mihrab.

Since the Qibla is facing Jerusalem, later, the Muslims abandoned the Masjid, and thus the Masjid remains dilapidated. What is surprising is the unawareness, neglect, and abandonment of such a significant Islamic monument, especially by those interested in early Islamic history.

Even before recognizing this oldest-first

built Ghoga Masjid in India, the American Federation of Muslims of Indian Origin (AFMI) was concerned about the documentation and preservation of these Islamic heritages. About a year ago, they formed a committee to evaluate and preserve all Islamic heritages in India to be kept in the digital format. AFMI also approved payment of fees, stipends, miscellaneous, and other expenses of these students interested in doing Ph. D. They will work under the guidance and direction of an Islamic AFMI scholar.

I also request India's intellectuals, especially

archeologists and those interested in preserving such a significant Islamic monument, reflecting early Islamic history in India.

Preserving and restoring old buildings is also essential because those ancient monuments reflect our history. They help us to understand and respect people who lived in different eras with different habits and traditions.

*AFMI invites all interested people to come and join hands in these noble projects. If you are interested, please send the information at [info@afmi.org](mailto:info@afmi.org)*



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# 'R' Is For Rohingya: Sesame Street Creates Muppets For Refugee Children

By: TMO Staff

From creating programming to comfort traumatized and displaced children to encouraging parents to include their children in the census count, Sesame Workshop has continued to play its part in keeping parents and young children aware of social issues. Earlier this year in light of national protests and movements against racial injustice, Sesame Street teamed up with CNN to host a special 60-minute town hall on racism. Now, as part of Sesame Workshop's Play to Learn humanitarian program, the show has partnered with nonprofit organizations to feature new characters to shed light on the ongoing Rohingya refugee crisis.

Sesame Workshop announced the addition of two new muppets to the cast of Sesame Street on Dec. 16. The characters, 6-year-old twins Noor and Aziz, live in the largest refugee camp in the world, located in Bangladesh. According to the news release, Cox's Bazar, the camp where the children live, is home to more than 800,000 Rohingya refugees. Cre-



ated to support children and families impacted by the Rohingya refugee crisis, the muppets are Rohingya Muslims who escaped ethnic cleansing in Myanmar. The muppet twins will appear alongside popular muppets, including Elmo, in educational programs about math, science, health, and other topics in the camps. They are expected to appear in all 150 countries that broadcast Sesame Street.

The muppet children will create awareness of the ongoing refugee crisis by not only speaking a language banned by Myanmar authorities, Rohingya, but by sharing their culture and ethnicity. The two are described by Sesame Workshop as curious and confident children who love to play, solve problems, and

learn. According to The New York Times, Sesame Workshop partnered with the LEGO Foundation, the International Rescue Committee, and BRAC, a Bangladesh-founded charity, to create this new curriculum.

"Investing in learning through play is even more crucial now, where thousands of children affected by the Rohingya refugee crisis, now face the additional unforeseen challenges posed by the global pandemic," said Sarah Bouchie, chief impact officer at the LEGO Foundation.

"Noor and Aziz not only share similar experiences with many of the children who find themselves in this crisis, they will also help these young children to overcome trauma and stress, and build resilience, while en-

gaging in fun play-based learning activities.

"Learning through play also helps children to develop the holistic skills, including creativity and social-emotional skills, which are vital to survive and thrive in this rapidly changing world," Bouchie said.

Earlier this year, the United Nations classified the Rohingya community as one of the most persecuted communities in the world. Such representation not only sheds light on the violence the community has faced and the conditions in which they now live, but allows children impacted by this violence to have both educational and emotional resources from characters like them.

"They are among the most marginalized

children on earth," said Sherrie Westin, the president of social impact for Sesame Workshop. Westin traveled several times to the Rohingya refugee camps to help formulate the muppet twins' characters and storylines.

"These are two very special Sesame Muppets — for most Rohingya children, Noor and Aziz will be the very first time that characters in media who look and sound like them," Westin said. "Rooted in the rich Rohingya culture and informed by extensive research and input from Rohingya families, Noor and Aziz will bring the transformative power of playful learning to families at a time when it's needed more than ever before."

While the show will not and cannot completely depict the harsh realities that refugees live in today, it hopes to create more awareness of the ongoing Rohingya refugee crisis and create a bridge between different cultures through learning.

First published on Daily Kos

## Becky Hammon Makes NBA History, Paves Way For Other Female Athletes To Coach

By: Zain Ahmed

History was made when the Los Angeles Lakers faced the San Antonio Spurs in San Antonio on Dec. 30. To start off, LeBron James celebrated his thirty-sixth birthday by becoming the first player in NBA history to score double digits in points for 1,000 consecutive games according to the National Basketball Association.

But that wasn't the only big news of the game, Becky Hammon became the first woman to coach a game in NBA history, after Spurs Head Coach Gregg Popovich was ejected from the game for having an argument with a referee, according to ESPN.

Hammon has been part of the Spurs organization since 2014. She also



played 16 seasons in the WNBA while also becoming a six-time all-star in the league according to Basketball-Reference.

Despite losing to the defending champions 121-107, Hammon's presence still impacted the Spurs positively. In an interview with

ESPN Popovich stated: "We didn't hire Becky to make history, she earned it. She is qualified. She's wonderful at what she does. I wanted her on my staff because of the work that she does. And she happens to be a woman, which basically should be irrelevant but it's not in

our world, as we've seen it's been so difficult for women to obtain certain positions. It was business as usual for us."

To Popovich, who is known to be one of the elite coaches in NBA history, gender doesn't matter. He brought Hammon onto his coach-

ing staff solely based on her on basketball, not her gender.

While Hammon was the first, she might not be the only woman to coach an NBA team moving forward. To date, there have been a total of 14 females who have been on the coaching staff of an NBA team, according to the National Basketball Association. Her historical achievements could pave a path for more coaching opportunities for women in not just basketball, but other sports as well. Additionally, this could pave a path for the NBA to have its first official full-time head female coach in the future. The NBA has proven that gender does not matter when it comes to job opportunities.



# Violence Against Muslim Women By Muslims

By: TMO Staff

Violence is real and impacts millions in every religious and ethnic community. It's a broad term that includes physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, spiritual, cultural, verbal, financial, and violence through neglect.

The statistics are mind-blowing. But stories behind these staggering statistics are unimaginable. Behind every data, there are real people, real families, and tangible experiences. People like us live them daily and die, hoping that no one goes through their experiences ever.

They prove the inadequacy of religious, secular, or legal ethics in men and women's relationships.

Statistics

40% of women worldwide have experienced physical and sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence.

Most of this violence is intimate partner violence. Almost one third (30%) of all women in a relationship have experienced it. In some regions, 38% of women have experienced intimate partner violence;

Globally, intimate partners commit as many as 38% of all murders of

women;

Globally, 7% of women suffered sexual assault by someone other than a partner.

How many of these victims of violence are Muslims? We should not divide sufferings based on religious tags we put, but it deserves our attention even if there is one.

The real story of a Muslim woman

Here is the story of a real Muslim woman with a name, identity, and character. She is not alone. Why her story. Because she was married to one who she regarded as a pillar of Islam.

I was married to someone high up in (Name of the national organization withheld). He was also a khateeb and a "pillar in the Islamic community." Very active with the youth. At home- he was mentally, verbally, sexually, and financially abusive. I had a horrific marriage. I even attempted suicide. He spread throughout the Muslim community that I was "a bad, disrespectful wife." I had all sorts of women come to "advise me" on being a "good Muslim wife."

I covered all of his sins that were occurring in our home. We have been divorced now for x num-

ber of years. I have still never revealed his sins. He was one of the most horrible people I have ever met.

I reverted to Islam in (year not mentioned to maintain her privacy). I married this "brother" seven years after reverting to Islam. He came very highly recommended. He had a good job and was so very well respected in the Muslim community.

I thought I was so very blessed to have found such a "good match." I was so excited to learn much more about my Islam from him. It turned out to be so much the opposite. He showed me everything that Islam should not be. By the blessing and grace of Allah SWT, I had such a strong belief in Islam that this marriage disaster did not push me away from Islam in any way.

However, my teenage son that I brought into the marriage (I had him for before my conversion to Islam) witnessed so much of what went on in our home that it pushed him so far away from Islam that he is now an adult and has nothing good to say about Islam. May Allah SWT soften his heart and guide him to the perfect Islam. Ameen.

Here are examples of each of my experiences:

**Financial:** He had to move to another state for work, and I stayed behind to let my son finish his last year of high school. The plan was for me to join him after my son's graduation. This "brother" earned almost \$300,000 a year, mashaallah. While I stayed behind, he gave me \$1000 a month- that was for everything-rent, food, utilities, personal care, etc. I would need to get a job to make money to support my son and me. But, this "brother" forbid me from working. He told me to obey him. I had to beg for money from other people to live, while he bought a brand new Mercedes at the same time.

**Emotional & Verbal:** He would regularly tell me that I was "lucky" that he even married me because I was uneducated (I had no degree at that time. I have gone on to earn a BA and a MA). I didn't "deserve" a well-stationed man like himself, so I should be "thankful." That I was "going to Jahannam" (hellfire) because my husband went to bed angry at me (after he had been abusive all day long). He always told me that I could never be a good Muslim because I was an American convert. He always told me

I was fat and undesirable (I was 5'7 and 160 pounds). So on, so forth.

**Sexual:** He demanded sex at least three times a day, every day. He was very abusive sexually. I am traumatized to this day. He would hurt me, and I would tell him he was hurting me, and he didn't care. He told me it was my responsibility as his wife to fulfill every one of his needs and desires. So, I did."

No Muslim married woman would come out to describe her ordeal. She suffers silently at home with no one to share her agony. How long will we continue to live this silent agony, and how long our religious leaders traumatize our community to suffer? How long would we allow violence against women in our homes and community?

We do not want to address the issue. We do not want to name the perpetrators who hide behind God and his messenger. The hypocrisy must come to an end. How? We know how to eliminate it but too timid to say it loudly. Do something, whatever you can to fight this menace in your community.

## Crowds Fill Streets In Wuhan, China To Celebrate New Year

By: TMO Staff

According to CNN, crowds in massive numbers took to the streets in the central Chinese town of Wuhan at midnight on Friday, celebrating the arrival of 2021. The celebration took place after a year marred by a deadly pandemic that killed thousands in the country and forced the town to be locked down between the end of January and the beginning of April.

Hundreds of people gathered as per tradition, in front of the old Hankow Customs House building, one of the most famous New Year's Eve spots in the region. When the old clock of the building reached midnight, many people released balloons into the air, cheered and called out "Happy New



Year."

A strong police presence and tight monitoring of the crowd continued for most of the night. Many security officers were seen telling the few people without masks that if they wanted to stay, they would have to put one on. It was overall a comfort-

able environment and the countdown seemed to continue peacefully.

The celebrations came 12 months after the World Health Organization (WHO) announced that it had first learned of cases of pneumonia of an unexplained origin in Wuhan, which later

became known as the first COVID-19 epidemic in the world.

In January 2021, a team of WHO experts is expected to arrive in China to study the source of the pandemic.

Wuhan has been relatively free from viruses for months, though several

particular classes of the local population have been vaccinated in recent days. However, a recent slight uptick in cases in different Chinese cities, including Beijing, has reminded people in Wuhan that the pandemic is not yet over.

China approved its first homegrown coronavirus vaccine for general public use on Thursday, with officials promising to provide the general public with free inoculations, according to this CNN report. The approval comes a day after its manufacturer, state-owned pharmaceutical giant Sinopharm, said the vaccine is 79.34 percent effective, citing interim analysis of Phase 3 clinical trials.



# Investigations In Regards To Nashville's Christmas Suicide Bombing Continue

By TMO STAFF

An explosion erupted in Nashville, Tennessee on Dec. 25, resulting in no civilian casualties outside the death of the suicide bomber in question. Initially, there were many unanswered questions about what exactly happened in addition to the motive behind the attack. Since then, we have learned a great deal about the attack and the perpetrator. For one, it was a suicide bombing by Anthony Q. Warner aged 63. This was verified through DNA testing of remains at the scene. While no one was killed in the blast multiple injuries nearby and serious damage to surrounding infrastructure was reported. The motive remains unclear.

The attack has many puzzled regarding why someone like Warner would do such a thing. According to NPR, "The investigation into the bombing has brought hundreds of law enforcement personnel — including agents from the FBI and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives — into the Tennessee cap-



ital to comb through the wreckage and investigate more than 500 leads."

Furthermore, one survivor's account went as follows: "It just felt like something out of a movie," Wells recalled. Another officer was yelling at him, asking him to do something — but he had temporary hearing loss from the blast. An ambulance wanted to take him to the hospital, but when Wells learned that three people were injured, he told the paramedics to check on the civilians

first."

According to the BBC, "But a motive is yet to be established. Warner's criminal record only consisted of an 1978 marijuana-related charge.

Investigators have searched Warner's home and visited a company where he worked but one investigator said he was "not on our radar". 'We are all taking pieces of the puzzle, working to determine what the motivation was for this individual.'

Some commentators have said this story exemplifies double-standards in the way the media covers attacks by non-Muslim white people vs Muslim people of color. To begin, there is not automatically an assumed motive without any information. This amount of professionalism is hardly practiced in the case of Muslim perpetrators.

According to an ISPU study, "This empirical analysis compares media coverage, law enforcement tactics, charges,

and eventual sentencing when the perpetrator of an act of ideologically motivated violence is perceived to be Muslim and acting in the name of Islam vs. not perceived to be Muslim and motivated by another ideology, such as white supremacy." To be clear, the media did the right thing by not jumping to conclusions without evidence, but it should make sure to be more consistent in that when it comes to Muslims and people of color.

## COVID-19 Updates: India Crosses 10 Million

By TMO STAFF

India becomes the second country in the world to cross the grim 10 million confirmed coronavirus cases milestone. However, new infections are dipping to their lowest levels in three months. The Health Ministry on Saturday also reported 347 deaths in the past 24 hours, taking the total numbers of fatalities to 145,136, according to the Associated Press.

In the past 24 hours, additional cases have fallen to 25,152 from a high of nearly 100,000 in mid-September. Almost 1 percent of India's more than 1.3 billion people have been affected by the disease, second to the worst-hit United States. Compared to the trend in the United States, where the winter months have wreaked havoc in some of



the most populous states and overburdened the healthcare systems, this is a sharp contrast.

India also aims to lift itself out of the crisis with a huge vaccination campaign in the coming months — covering almost as many people as the entire U.S. population in its first stage. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government has identified 300 million individuals to

obtain the first doses of the vaccines, according to CNN. The priority group is made up of 30 million health care workers, policemen, soldiers and volunteers, and 270 million vulnerable people — mostly citizens above the age of 50 and 10 million others with serious comorbidities.

Producers of three leading candidates for coronavirus vaccines have applied for an emer-

gency use authorization, both of which require two doses in order to provide appropriate immunity. That adds up to a total of 600 million shots, a target the government of Modi would like to achieve by August.

This is an extremely ambitious undertaking, especially in the case of a developing world with weak rural infrastructure and an insufficient public health system,

which is already buckling under tremendous coronavirus pressure.

India still has its own benefits, however. As a global vaccine manufacturing center, its mass production lines will manufacture coronavirus vaccines faster and cheaper than most other countries — produced either by Western pharmaceutical companies or domestically.

When it comes to the actual vaccination process, India already has a vast, established network under its Universal Immunization Program, which inoculates about 55 million people per year.

"Every single Indian who needs to be vaccinated will be vaccinated," Indian Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said at a news conference on Dec. 8.



Cont. from page 4.  
Reject Avril Haines

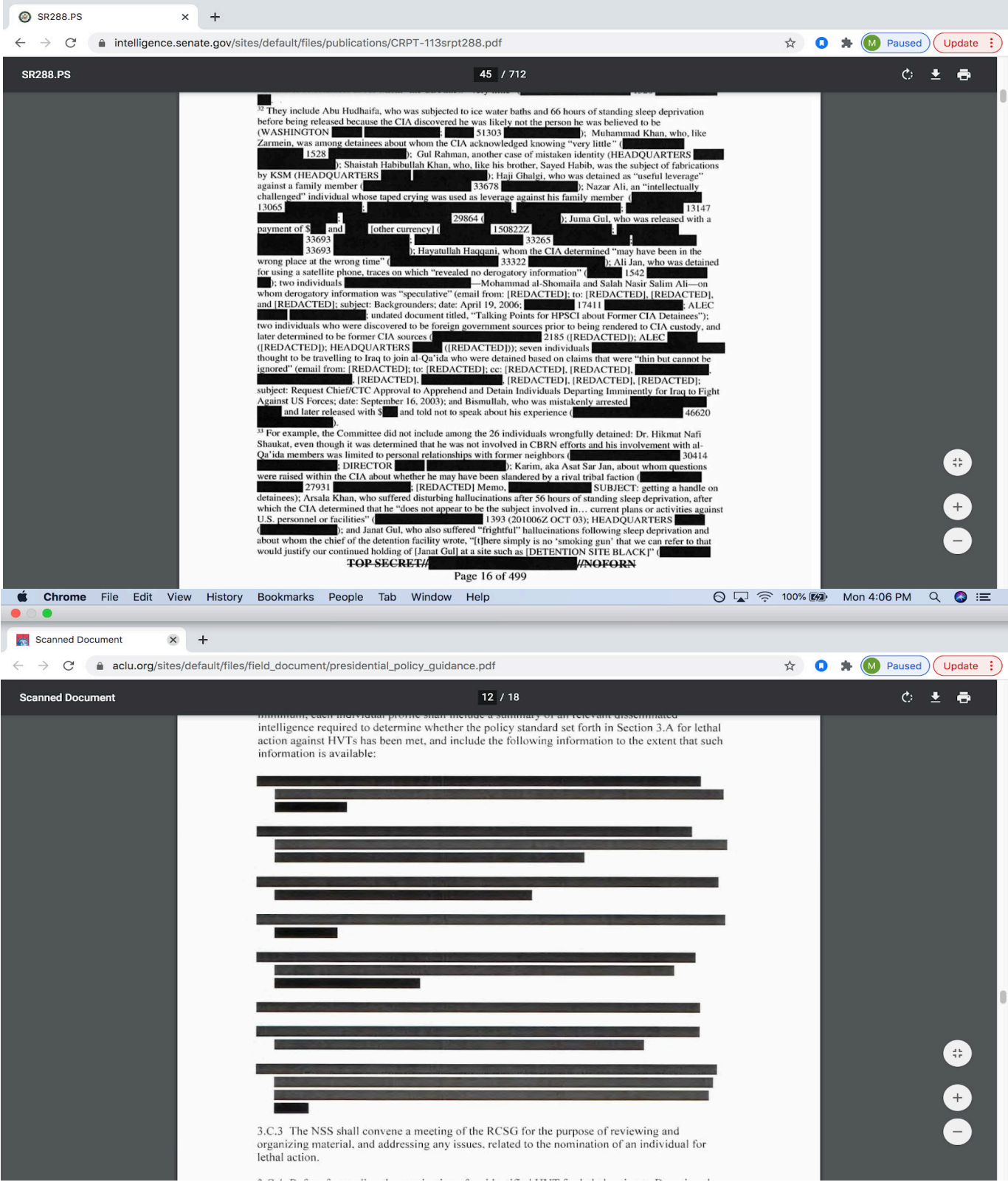
On page 4, the guidelines for drone strikes allow for lethal action against those who are not “high-value targets,” without explaining the criteria the CIA would use to identify someone as an imminent threat to the security of the United States. On page 12, the co-authors, Haines among them, redacted the minimum profile requirements for an individual “nominated” for lethal action. The very term “nominated” suggests an effort to sugarcoat targeted assassination, as though the bombing target is recommended for a U.S. presidential cabinet position. [NOTE: You might (somewhat sarcastically) want to put “[sic]” after the first use of the word “nominated”]

the Page 12 of Haines’s guidelines for extrajudicial killings. Required generic profile entries for individuals “nominated” for lethal action are redacted.

Moreover, the guidelines themselves were often totally disregarded. The policy states, for example, that the U.S. “prioritizes, as a matter of policy, the capture of terrorist suspects as a preferred option over lethal action” and that lethal action should be taken “only when the capture of an individual is not feasible.” But the Obama administration did nothing of the sort. Under George Bush, at least 780 terrorist suspects were captured and thrown into the U.S.-run gulag in Guantanamo. Haines’s guidelines prohibit transfer to Guantanamo, so, instead, suspects were simply incinerated.

The guidelines required “near certainty that non-combatants will not be killed or injured,” but this requirement was routinely violated, as documented by the Bureau of Investigative Journalism.

Haines’s policy guidance also states that the U.S. would respect other states’ sovereignty, only undertaking lethal action when other governments “cannot or will not” address a threat to the



U.S. This, too, became simply empty words on paper. The U.S. barely even consulted with the governments in whose territory it was dropping bombs and, in the case of Pakistan, openly defied the government. In December 2013, the National Assembly of Pakistan unanimously approved a resolution against U.S. drone strikes in Pakistan, calling them a violation of “the charter of the United Nations, international laws and humanitarian norms” and Pakistan’s former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif stated: “The use of drones is not only a continual violation of our territorial integrity but also detrimental to our resolve and efforts at eliminating terrorism from our country.” But the U.S. ignored the pleas of Pakistan’s elected government.

The proliferation of drone killings under Obama, from Yemen to Somalia, also violated U.S. law, which gives Congress the sole authority to authorize military conflict. But Obama’s legal team, which included Haines, circumvented the law by insisting that these military interventions fell under the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF), the law Congress passed to target Afghanistan in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. This specious argument provided fodder for the out-of-control misuse of that 2001 AUMF which, according to the Congressional Research Service, has been relied on to justify U.S. military action at least 41 times in 19 countries. In addition, the guidelines don’t even require the CIA and other agencies participating

in the drone program to notify the President, the Commander-in-Chief, as to who is to be killed in a drone strike, except when a targeted individual is a U.S. citizen or when the agencies in charge cannot agree on the target. There are many other reasons to reject Haines. She advocates intensifying crippling economic sanctions on North Korea that undermine a negotiated peace, and “regime change”—hypothetically engineered by a U.S. ally—that could leave a collapsed North Korea vulnerable to terrorist theft of its nuclear material; she was a consultant at WestExec Advisors, a firm that exploits insider government connections to help companies secure plum Pentagon contracts; and she was a consultant with Palantir, a data-mining company that facilitated Trump’s mass

deportations of immigrants. But Haines’s record on torture and drones, alone, should be enough for Senators to reject her nomination. The unassuming spy—who got her start at the White House as a legal adviser in the Bush State Department in 2003, the year the U.S. invaded Iraq—might look and sound more like your favorite college professor than someone who enabled murder by remote control or wielded a thick black pen to cover-up CIA torture, but a clear examination of her past should convince the Senate that Haines is unfit for high office in an administration that promises to restore transparency, integrity, and respect for international law.



CONTINUED STORY

Cont. from page 1.  
Havoc In DC

India, people worship Trump's idol and consider him a reincarnation of Vishnu. Trump and Modi share their hatred against Islam.

The Hindutva fascists in India and the US believed that a Muslim-free India was a possibility as long as Trump remained a Mody ally. The 2019 Houston rally was an exercise to consolidate relations with white supremacists and earn Trump's trust for India's fascist policies. As advised by his foreign minister Jay Shankar and India's RAW, Modi was confident that Trump would win a second term and be his partner in crimes against humanity he was

eager to commit. Gujarat's butcher had many more genocides like the one he engineered in the state, in mind but reluctant to repeat it unless a world leader like Trump backs him.

Modi's US contacts had assured him that Trump would pull a miracle and recapture the White House through staging an anti-constitutional coup.

The Hindutva in the US believes in fascist ideas and aligns with white supremacists and Zionist extremists. It views Democrats as untrustworthy to help them in their anti-Muslim policies in India. Its presence in the Democratic ranks is to create favorable conditions for India's Modi

government and promote anti-Muslim policies in the US.

It is for these reasons the Hindutva supporters waved India's flag instead of VHP or RSS flags. It was reassuring to Trump and the Republican white supremacists that Hindus were behind them and India would remain an ally as long as it backs the Modi government.

The Hindutva population in the US and Europe is on the rise. Delaware, Arizona, Illinois, Texas, New York, and Michigan have become major Hindutva centers, and their medical, real estate, IT, and motel industry have given them enormous monetary power. They have established over

200 Temples, with many serving as the breeding ground for RSS and VHS ideology, and their increased participation in public affairs is evident. They plan to turn India into a Hindu state with the money they earn in the US and the political power they secure through their influence. They are not shy about spelling out their plans. They believe that without developing alliances with white supremacists and Zionist extremists and identifying Islam and Muslims as the common enemy of three, they would not succeed in their project.

The Indian flag's waving at the Trump terrorist rally was a statement that Hindutva would

not hesitate to promote terror to serve its purpose. The events in India are a living testimony. Hindutva forces in the US have not openly condemned Trump or the Republicans for the terror they displayed in Washington on January 6. Even if they do, it would be out of political expediency because they are no different from white extremists in their lives and actions. Like white supremacists, they believe in the supremacy of upper castes and regard the other profane. In their views, the world exists to glorify the Brahmins, the purest of the pure Aryans, a belief Nazism and supremacists hold.

Cont. from page 1.  
Debt For Cancer Patients

eventually decided to stop contacting them. As of December, the clinic still had a total of nearly US\$650,000 in outstanding patient bills, according to Atiq, who is also a professor at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences in Little Rock. "Over time I realized that there

are people who just are unable to pay," Atiq said, adding that he and his wife, Mehreen, thought about it and looked at forgiving all the debt.

"We saw that we could do it and then just went ahead and did it," he added.

"You add to it the absolute devastation that the [coronavirus] pandemic has wrought, and you

think thank God that we're fairly comfortable and this was something we could at least do to help the community."

In the notice to his patients, Atiq wrote that "Although various health insurances pay most of the bills for the majority of patients, even the deductibles and co-pays can be burdensome."

"Unfortunately, that is

the way our health care system currently works," Atiq continued, before surprising his patients that all remaining debts would be forgiven. "Happy Holidays," he added.

Bea Cheesman, president of RMC of America, the billing company that worked with Atiq, said that Atiq's decision to forgive all remaining debts was a "very kind gesture." "Atiq is a very

caring individual and he's always been extremely easy to work with as a client," Cheesman said.

"I think personally that it's just a wonderful thing that he and his family did in forgiving this debt because the people with oncology bills do have more challenges than the bulk of the population."

Cont. from page 1.  
American Democracy

Before we can identify those domestic terrorists, let us look at the pretentious statements expressing shock at the terror. During the last 70 years, America suppressed democratic movements worldwide, removed democratically elected governments, promoted violence, and even plotted to kill foreign government leaders. We facilitated a culture of violence as long as it is outside our shores. We taught our citizens that to serve our national interests, we can go to

any length and destroy anyone.

On January 6, a group of people claiming to be patriots stormed Congress reflecting the philosophy our successive administrations have taught the nation during the last 70 years.

Why there is shock? We are promoting violence and disorder to serve interest. When a US president played it in his own country, instigated his party members to destroy the other responsible for their defeat, why should they express grief and surprise?

America has to stop

this double standard if it wants to survive as a democratic country. Unless America stands for the interests of others, its own will never be safe.

Domestic terrorists in America are well known. They include white supremacists, Christian evangelists, extreme Zionists, and Hindutva nationalists. All these four racially and ideologically motivated groups want to exploit America, and its might to serve its interests.

White supremacists want to divide the country based on color and promote a culture

that treats non-white less than humans. Extreme Zionists aim to use America's power and image to benefit the apartheid policies of the Zionist state of Israel. Christian evangelists are keen to destroy the human rights of all those who are not like them and who do not see the Bible as the word of God. Hindutva Zealots want to use America's resources to strengthen an organization responsible for Gandhi's assassination and a hateful ideology that does not view non-upper-caste Hindus as humans.

All these four ideologies

were present in person or in spirit in the group that invaded Congress. Sheer shock and condemnation would not eliminate the dangers of violent and hateful ideologies in destroying the democratic fabric.

Are we ready for that? When those who believe in the equality of all humans and all nations' interests and dignity come together to challenge hate, America can win. The first step towards that is the identification of terrorists invading Congress and their prosecution as traitors.

Cont. from page 3.  
Michigan Muslim And Jewish

MMCC has been providing free food boxes to residents in this Detroit neighborhood and across metro Detroit since the onset of the pandemic. MMCC obtained a food grant from the USDA's Farmers to Families Program, and distributed over 2,000 tons of food

since April.

Mahmoud Alhadidi, chairperson of MMCC noted: "In these difficult times it is important to spread love and put a smile on faces. It is part of our faith and our humanity to care for each other."

Many local Muslim nonprofits and mosques have also been providing food

aid and support to local residents affected by the pandemic.

Several community voices have objected to Muslims celebrating Christmas. Imam Mohammed Alasmari who is chairperson of the Imam's Council of Michigan has cautioned Muslims from celebrating Christmas. However, he said Muslims "should support the

Days of Ihsan... We are doing it to bring relief to people."

Naazir Hamzavi, a college sophomore who volunteered, also denied he is celebrating Christmas. "During Ramadan, some of my friends who were Christian, Buddhist or Jewish, would wish me a happy Ramadan... some even made me iftar treats. They were helping

me celebrate Ramadan just like I am helping these kids celebrate their Christmas. It's what we do when we are part of a diverse community!"

M. Muhammad Ahmed is a staff writer for the Muslim Observer





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