

Separating Facts from Fiction

CAA

A LIFELINE FOR RELIGIOUSLY
PERSECUTED MINORITIES



WHAT IS CAA?

A **humanitarian** law that shortens and simplifies the Indian citizenship process for persecuted minorities (Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jain, Sikh and Parsi), who fled from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan due to **systemic religion-based discrimination and existential threats**. (Approved by both houses of the Indian Parliament after discussion in Dec. 2019.)

CAA is very specific and **focused on religious refugees from three countries**, who entered India before December 31, 2014.

It does not apply to those from any other country seeking Indian citizenship (including Hindus). Nor does it impact Muslims migrating to India from any country, including the 3 specified in CAA.

CAA = a fast track that helps persecuted refugees live a life of dignity and ensures them basic human rights.

DO OTHER COUNTRIES
HAVE LAWS SIMILAR TO
CAA?

YES

The Lautenberg-Specter Amendment of the US is like India's CAA!

Enacted first in 1990 to resettle Jews and Christian minorities from the former Soviet Union. Amended in 2006 to include religious minorities facing persecution in Iran.

It expires each year and is renewed by Congress annually.

Provides special treatment to specific types of refugees from historically persecuted groups.

WHY IS CAA NEEDED - SYSTEMIC PERSECUTION IN PAKISTAN

- Each year more than 1000 minor girls from Christian, Hindu, Sikh communities targeted for abduction, rape and forced marriages to older men-in violation of local laws. Happens with **institutional support from religious clerics, police, and judicial authorities.**
- Persistent attacks on Churches and Temples. 95% places of worship of minorities taken over
- Untouchability like practices targeting Christians/Hindus
- Blasphemy laws used disproportionately religious minorities
 - Eg- Asia Bibi, Notan Lal

The New York Times

Sewer Cleaners Wanted in Pakistan: Only Christians Need Apply.

In Pakistan, descendants of lower-caste Hindus who converted to Christianity centuries ago still find themselves marginalized, relegated to dirty jobs and grim fates.



Features | Religion

In Pakistan, a shrine to murder for 'blasphemy'

As a Senate committee mulls Pakistan's blasphemy laws, thousands visit shrine to Mumtaz Qadri, killer of Salman Taseer.



- Economic barriers
- Constitutional restrictions

WHY IS CAA NEEDED - SYSTEMIC PERSECUTION

- **Afghanistan**

- Sikhs & Hindus >700,000 in the 1970s. Declined to <7000 in 2017. Today they are all but gone

- **Bangladesh**

- 1951: Hindus were 22 % of the population of (then East Pakistan). 2022: Hindus were > 8% of population in Bangladesh. Expected to fall further

“Hardest hit have been members of the Hindu community who have been robbed of their lands and shops, systematically slaughtered, and in some places, painted with yellow patches marked 'H'. All of this has been officially sanctioned, ordered and implemented under martial law from Islamabad.”



-- **Senator Edward Kennedy**
US Senate Committee
on Foreign Relations. November 1971

CAA is an overdue response to the genocide that has been underway in South Asia for several decades -- largely ignored by the world

DOES CAA AFFECT INDIAN MUSLIMS TODAY?

NO

Indian Muslims are Indian Citizens. As an immigration process, CAA does not change anything for an existing Indian citizen.

Indian citizens enjoy fundamental rights conferred on them by the Constitution of India. No statute, including the CAA, can abridge or take those away.

Despite the misinformation, **CAA does not affect any Indian citizens, including Muslim citizens.**

WILL CAA
GRADUALLY/OVER TIME
EXCLUDE INDIAN
MUSLIMS FROM
CITIZENSHIP OF INDIA?

NO

The CAA does not apply to any Indian citizen at all – irrespective of religion. All Indian citizens enjoy the fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution of India.

CAA is not a law of '**EXCLUSION.**' It is one of '**INCLUSION.**' It is a special law to enable certain migrants facing a particular systemic problem and an existential threat in three neighboring countries to get Indian citizenship.

Source: <https://pibindia.wordpress.com/2019/12/18/citizenship-amendment-act-2019/>

DOES CAA MEAN
MUSLIMS FROM
PAKISTAN,
BANGLADESH,
AFGHANISTAN CAN
NOT SEEK INDIAN
CITIZENSHIP?

NO

CAA has NO impact on the current legal process of acquiring Indian citizenship by any non-Indian, of any category. The options of Naturalization through Section 6 of the Citizenship Act, or Registration via Section 5 of the Act stay operational.

Hundreds of Muslims migrating from these 3 countries have been granted Indian citizenship during the last few years.

If found eligible, all such future migrants will also get Indian citizenship, irrespective of their numbers or religion.

Source: <https://pibindia.wordpress.com/2019/12/18/citizenship-amendment-act-2019/>

DOES CAA CHANGE INDIA'S OBLIGATIONS TO TAKE CARE OF ALL REFUGEES?

NO

India continues to be a sanctuary for the persecuted of all stripes and has been for centuries. That includes:

- Over **200,000 Sri Lankan Tamils and Tibetans**
- More than **fifteen thousand Afghans**
- Est. **twenty-five thousand Rohingyas**
- Thousands of other refugees of different nationalities (Jews, Parsis, Christians etc.)

It is expected that someday these refugees will return to their homelands when conditions improve.

LIMITED REACH OF CAA

Total # of Refugees identified for being processed under CAA= 31,313

- Hindu – 25,447
- Sikh – 5,807
- Buddhist - 2
- Christians – 55
- Parsis - 2

Refugees from which countries?

- Afghanistan
- Bangladesh
- Pakistan

Timeline

- Those who entered into India on or before December 31, 2014

Source: Deccan Herald, Dec 2019. Article quoted numbers from The Joint Parliamentary Committee Report (<https://www.deccanherald.com/national/citizenship-act-will-benefit-only-31313-not-lakhs-785797.html>)

The Citizenship Amendment Bill 2019

DOES CAA IMPACT INDIA'S OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE UNITED NATIONS?

NO

India is **not a signatory** to the UN Convention of 1951 or the UN Protocol of 1967 on Refugees. Yet, India is home to hundreds of thousands of refugees, from all backgrounds and multiple countries.

Like any sovereign country, India is under no obligation to offer citizenship to every migrant. Just like the US, India has its own rules for naturalization, which are open to all irrespective of religion.

CAA does not impact these broader issues. It only shortens the citizenship process for a select set of refugees fleeing **systemic abuse** from specific countries.

IS CAA 'ANTI-DALIT'?

NO

It is often overlooked that Dalits constitute most of the small Hindu minority population in both Pakistan and Bangladesh. Thus, it is Dalits who bear the brunt of the **state sponsored discrimination** against Hindus in these countries, including abductions, rape, forced conversions, indentured labor, murder, denial of economic opportunities and more.

By default, CAA is a law that helps these marginalized groups fleeing systemic abuse and an existential threat.

MASSIVE COSTS OF DISINFORMATION AROUND CAA

North America: Impact on Hindu and Indian Origin Communities

- 8 City Councils/Counties passed resolutions censuring CAA (San Francisco (CA), Seattle (WA), St. Paul (MN), Albany (NY), Cambridge (MA), Hamtramck (MI), Milwaukee (WI) and County of Alameda, CA
- Media Depictions: Increase in Hinduphobic stories, news and narrative.
- Impact on Hindu Youth in US/Canada
 - Faulty lessons in middle school misrepresenting the laws and intent. Students of Indian background feel singled out
 - National & state high school debate forums included anti-CAA, anti-Hindu topics but not other religions or regions.
 - School textbooks and discussions around world history and geopolitics depict Hinduism and India with prejudice.

In India: months of protests and disruption

- Delhi Riots (Feb 2020): 53 dead; ~200 injured; ~2000 arrested. Massive property destruction.
- Human impact on persecuted refugees. It is both common sense and instinctive human nature to prioritize and help those in the direst of circumstances - in this case, the religious minorities from these three countries in India's neighborhood.

CAA CONCLUSIONS - KNOW THE REAL FACTS

- 31,313 persecuted religious minorities now have a path to becoming citizens with rights to a life of dignity and the freedom to practice their religions. **Thus, CAA is an inclusive, humanitarian law.**
- No Indian citizen has lost his or her citizenship in the past several months of the law being applicable. This applies to Muslims, Christians or citizens of any faith.
- Riots are inter-community conflicts, with loss of life, injuries and damage to property on BOTH sides. This has been proven by several reports and studies.
- Disinformation about CAA was created and promoted to incite Hinduphobia and further various political agendas.

Know your facts. Debate in a confident but respectful manner!

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit CoHNA: <https://cohna.org/caa>

Get Social!

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CoHNAOfficial/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/cohnaofficial/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/CoHNAOfficial>

YouTube: <https://bit.ly/3Tolya8>

Contact Us: info@cohna.org