

As Trump embraces Modi, communal violence convulses India's capital

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US President Donald Trump has been feting Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi during a two-day visit to India, even as the vile consequences of the fascistic, communalist policies pursued by Modi and his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government are being bloodily spelled out on the streets of Delhi.

Just hours before Trump arrived in India's capital Monday, local BJP leaders instigated anti-Muslim violence in northeast Delhi that has continued today and at the time of writing (8 p.m. local Delhi time) has resulted in at least 10 deaths.

Delhi has been a centre of the nationwide mass protests against the BJP government's anti-Muslim Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and its plans to bully and ostracize Muslims in the name of a crackdown on "illegal immigrants." Since the law was rushed through parliament last December, hundreds of Muslim women have been staging an around-the-clock sit-down protest in the Shaheen Bagh neighbourhood of South Delhi, blocking a major road to all but emergency traffic.

The CAA is itself only the latest in an ever-escalating series of anti-democratic, communalist actions taken by the Modi government. In August, it stripped Jammu and Kashmir, India's lone Muslim majority state, of its semi-autonomous constitutional status and has placed the region under a massive security lockdown ever-since.

During the just completed campaign for the Delhi National Capital Territory assembly election, BJP leaders celebrated the violent suppression of anti-CAA protests in Uttar Pradesh and other BJP-led states and led crowds in calling for the shooting down of "traitors" and "anti-nationals." (See: "Shoot them down"—India's government incites violence against opponents of its anti-Muslim citizenship law)

From all reports, Delhi BJP leader Kapil Mishra initiated the violence currently convulsing India's capital. On Sunday, he launched a pro-CAA counter-protest, involving the occupation of a street in northeast Delhi by hundreds of his Hindu communalist supporters and issued an "ultimatum" to Delhi police. Mishra vowed that his supporters would clear Delhi's street of anti-CAA protesters, if the police didn't do it within "three days."

Incidents of rock-pelting, between pro- and anti-CAA protesters, soon followed. But the violence escalated dramatically on Monday, when, according to the Chennai-based Hindu newspaper, mobs began singling out Muslims "whether they were on foot or in vehicles" and began thrashing them.

Despite what the Modi government, which controls the police forces in the Delhi Territory, says is a massive police mobilization, the violence continued to escalate Monday and today.

The Wire reports Muslim shops have been vandalized and torched by communalist mobs shouting, "Jai Shri Ram" or "Long Live the (Hindu God) Ram."

There is a long and bloody history of the BJP, the RSS and their Hindu supremacist allies inciting and organizing horrific communal violence. Modi himself first came to national prominence because of his role, as Gujarat's chief minister, in presiding over the 2002 anti-Muslim Gujarat pogrom, which resulted in as many as 2,000 deaths.

Trump began his trip to India with a speech before a 100,000-strong crowd of Modi supporters in Ahmedabad, Gujarat's state capital. He hailed the "Indo-US global strategic partnership," and lavished praise on Modi, calling him "an exceptional leader, a great champion of India, a man who works night and day for his country, and a man I am proud to call my

true friend.”

The Pentagon and the US political establishment (Democrat and Republican) alike, view India as crucial to American imperialism’s military-strategic offensive against China. Under Modi, India has integrated itself ever more completely into this offensive, transforming India into a veritable frontline state in Washington’s war drive against Beijing.

Trump’s effusive praise for Modi is also rooted in the profound political affinity between the fascistic billionaire anti-immigrant US president and the Hindu supremacist Modi.

At their joint Delhi press conference early Tuesday evening, Trump said he had not discussed with Modi the communal violence raging in the streets of India’s capital, then quickly came to his host’s defence. “We did talk about religious freedom,” said Trump, who has imposed discriminatory travel bans on more than a half-dozen predominantly Muslim countries. “The prime minister said he wants people to have religious freedom. They have worked really hard on it.”

The lethal communal violence that has rocked Delhi for the past two days underscores the fraudulent and cynical character of the claims promoted by Washington and New Delhi and parroted by the Western media that the anti-China Indo-US alliance strategic alliance is based on “shared values” of democracy and tolerance.

In reality, as personified by Trump and Modi, the alliance between US imperialism and the Indian bourgeoisie is an alliance of reaction, authoritarianism and war.



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