



THE KHALSA TODAY

August 22, 2021

His Excellency Narendra Modi
Prime Minister
Republic of India
7, Lok Kalyan Marg
New Delhi, India

Dear Prime Minister Modi:

We are writing to you today regarding the dire situation facing all the people of Afghanistan, particularly religious minorities such as Hindus and Sikhs who are the most vulnerable to persecution by the Taliban and other extremists. First, we want to thank you and your administration for welcoming to India all Afghans who are fleeing the violence as the Taliban take control over the country.

Like you, our top priority is to ensure the safe evacuation of any Afghan Hindus, Sikhs or other religious minorities who wish to leave Afghanistan because they have a history of being targeted for persecution by the Taliban, ISIS, and other religious extremists. While we are encouraged by your Government's response, we respectfully urge you to take further action to alleviate the dire situation of religious minorities in Afghanistan who look to the secular Republic of India as the only safe haven in the region.

Second, as part of that evacuation, we ask that India provide the necessary base of operations required in order to efficiently process Afghan refugees who seek refuge, whether they wish to stay in India or go on to a third country of their choice. When it comes to ensuring the safety and security of people fleeing physical violence India, the largest democracy in the world, is the most logical choice.

Third, we wish to thank the government of India for granting the visas issued to date. We recognize the fact that approximately 15,000 Afghan Hindus and Sikhs have relocated to India in the last ten years and are now living in peace, safety in India.

Lastly, we urge your government to grant legal entry and political asylum to any Hindus, Sikhs, Christians, and other persecuted religious minorities currently fleeing Afghanistan with residency visas that last no less than five (5) years and with the option of applying



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for expedited citizenship; ensure that these religious minorities are eligible for government benefits such as physical and mental healthcare, education, economic or business loans, grants and other employment opportunities; and provide temporary housing to the refugees.

The humanitarian response by the Government of India to the chaos unfolding in Afghanistan has been welcomed and appreciated by millions of Indian Americans — Sikhs and Hindus alike.

We recognize that the resettlement of Afghanistan's persecuted religious minorities in India is the most practical and likely outcome. Moreover, not only do many Hindus and Sikhs in Afghanistan have familial ties in India, they also consider India to be their sacred homeland.

As such, we believe that your government should take the steps above to immediately alleviate their pain and suffering and to assist them wherever they wish to ultimately seek refuge, whether it be India or anywhere in the world.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

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