**After pogrom of East-Delhi Muslims, what next?**

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At least 42 people were killed and more than 300 got injured when frenzied mob unleashed terror across the length and breadth of [Muslim](https://dailytimes.com.pk/569131/iran-slams-organized-violence-against-indian-muslims/) dominated areas in East-Delhi, apparently to diffuse anti-citizenship amendment act (CAA) demonstrations at Shaheen Bagh. It all happened when a mob, ostensibly from Right-wing Hindu organisations, laced with sharp edged weapons, pistols, rods and lathis attacked un-armed and unaware Muslims of East-Delhi colonies amid sloganeering like ‘jai Shri Ram’ and ‘Desh Ke Gaddaron Ko, Goli Marro Salon Ko’ (Shoot the traitors). The intention behind the attack was quite clear, ‘to teach a lesson to those who are against the present dispensation in India’. The attack was not at all spontaneous, as trucks loaded with bricks and stones were dropped at selective pockets, which is visible in many videos making rounds on social media. The role of ruling Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) at the centre cannot be condoned, as no steps were taken to de-escalate the simmering tension in the area, besides the presence of police as mute spectator vindicates the role of central government in Delhi riots. Pertinently, Delhi police is under the control of Union Home Ministry (equivalent of Pakistan’s interior Ministry). It all started on February 24, 2020. However, partial normalcy has returned on 29th February.

On February 24, the rioters launched their first attack on the women, protesting contentious CAA & NCR in Nehru Vihar. It was about 01.00 O’clock. The firing from the rooftop of Mohan Hospital, a two-storey private building, directed toward the women sit-in and raising slogans like marro (kill them). Simultaneously, they were rained with bricks and stones. The dharna-women disbursed in panic. Another group of rioters raided the area and without any resistance, they put on fire Muslim houses and shops. Cars were also burnt. In one of the houses that was burnt by mob, the marriage of a girl was due in a few days.

On the first day, the Muslims were caught unaware and male members mostly labourers-unskilled and skilled, employed in low paid jobs were at work. Therefore, there was not much resistance to the pogrom. Reorganised rioters re-emerged next day with more vigour and strengthen without realising that there would be resistance and counter attack of stone pelting. The stones used on the first day by rioters came handy for the Muslims who used them like missiles against the rioters. The stone-pelting and counter stone-pelting injured people from both sides and even police personnel who were providing tacit supporter to rioters were also hit and injured badly resulting into death of one Delhi police constable.

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The images of torched cars, gutted houses and shops, and plumes of smoke engulfing the Delhi sky and mob throwing petrol bombs at Muslim shrines kept on circulating on social media. There was hardly or no reaction from the Union home Minister, Amit Shah. Seventy-two-hours passed but nothing moved in the country’s national capital-New Delhi. The killings and arson continued unabated. The modus-operandi of the riots were like those of Sikh massacre in 1984, when over 3000 Sikh were killed or some were burnt alive in Delhi alone according to official figures. The total number of the Sikhs killed is said to be more than 10,000. Their houses, shops and vehicles were burnt with impunity as they had full support of Delhi police and Congress ministers and senior leaders, who led the pogrom. The recent riots were similar only protagonists and antagonists were changed. In place of Sikhs, Delhi witnessed massacre of Muslims and in place of Congress leaders, BJP leaders did the job. However, police remained unmoved in both the horrific episodes, visibly playing puppets in the hands of political bosses.

In 1984, at many places in Delhi, the Sikhs were burnt alive by spraying phosphorous on them and in some cases the unruly mob put tyres around Sikhs before setting it on fire. Onlookers cheered and clapped the shrieks of immolating Sikhs. In 2020, visuals of Muslims being cowed down by hyperactive Hindu mob replicated the scenes for those who have witnessed 1984 pogrom.

Not only 1984, some people linked this unrest with Gujrat riots of 2002 in which the Muslims were burnt to the cheer of the wild mobs. In both the cases -Delhi-1984 and Gujrat-hardly any one got justice. Thirty-five-years have passed scores of commissions submitted their reports but justice is still elusive.

Coming back on recent Delhi riot, it was not unplanned and spontaneous, in fact, it was building up since the Narendra Modi government came to power in 2014. The cow vigilantes killed many Muslims with impunity on the charge of having cow meat in their houses (the DNA report declared it Goat meat), the lynching of Muslims started, videos of Muslims tied with a tree or electric poll brutally beaten by group of Hindus and later killed and the scary videos posted on social media with the intention to scare the Muslims, open threats to Muslims. Then, new law to prevent Triple Talaq was notified after seeking approval from both the houses-Parliament and Rajya Sabha.

The Supreme Court gave judgement in Ramjanam Bhomi title case in favour of Hindus keeping in view the religious sentiments of the majority community, instead of deciding the on-law point. On all these lopsided and discriminatory rulings, the Muslim community-maintained silence, except few Muslim leaders issued statements against perpetuated discrimination.

Finding the new citizenship laws as contentious and directed against the Muslims, they demanded revocation of these laws. The Muslims pogrom of East-Delhi is the culmination of what had been building up for the over last couple of years. It won’t be perhaps wrong to say that what happened in Delhi was just a tip of the ice berg, while major developments and hatred among right wingers continue to simmer behind the scene and anti-Muslim riot appeared to be the culmination of last six years rule of BJP in India. All eyes are fixed on the next move of the promoters of the Hindutva towards minorities.

The Delhi High Court ordered sweeping measures to help riot victims after three days of horrific violence in the capital territory’s northeast. The court said it could not allow another “1984”, a reference to anti-Sikh riots that broke out in the capital in the wake of Indira Gandhi’s assassination.

However, amid all this chaos and hatred, a ray of hope to sustain the secular fabric of the country maintained when sensible Hindus and Muslims stood against all odds to save their neighbours and their religious places.

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