

ముందుతరం జాబ్లల్లో సహజంగా భాగస్వామి కావాలని కోరుకుంటున్న ముస్లిం యువకులు

భారతదేశంలోని అన్ని ప్రాంతాలలోనూ ముస్లిం యువకులు ఉద్యోగాల కోసం పోటీపడతారు.

ప్రపంచ తెలుగు సభలకు పట్టయొత్తున సన్మానాలు

25 డిసెంబర్, 2012

ఇండియా టుడే

కట్కటాల వెనుక పెరుగుతున్న ముస్లింలు

కారాగారాలల్లో ముస్లింల సంఖ్య ఎక్కువవుతోంది. దేశంలోని సహజ జనాభా నిష్పత్తిలో వేరేలా ఉండటం వల్ల ముస్లింల సంఖ్య పెరుగుతోంది.

గెనెలాల్ మజిద్ హుస్సేన్, భారత్ మాజీ సైన్యంలోని ఉన్నత స్థాయి కమాండర్

ముస్లింలకు అన్వితం ఏమిటి?

ముస్లింలకు అన్వితం ఏమిటి? అనే ప్రశ్నకు సమాధానం చెప్పేందుకు మజిద్ హుస్సేన్ ఈ కథను చెబుతున్నారు. ముస్లింలకు అన్వితం ఏమిటి? అనే ప్రశ్నకు సమాధానం చెప్పేందుకు మజిద్ హుస్సేన్ ఈ కథను చెబుతున్నారు. ముస్లింలకు అన్వితం ఏమిటి? అనే ప్రశ్నకు సమాధానం చెప్పేందుకు మజిద్ హుస్సేన్ ఈ కథను చెబుతున్నారు.

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Muslims Discriminated Everywhere: Imprisoned for an Image
Mazher Hussain

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A headline that 36% of the prison population in Maharashtra is Muslim when they constitute only 10.6% of the population may not evoke any disbelief given the overriding criminal image that the community seems to have acquired. This perception increased with the Mumbai bomb blasts of 1993 and acquired global dimensions with 9/11 to make Muslims the new demons to be dealt with. But the question remains: how many Muslims are in jails because of the crimes committed and how many for just being Muslims?

This question may have appeared blasphemous before a Study published by TISS in June 2012 that points to clear bias against the community amongst the police force that falsely implicates Muslims in different cases slapping multiple and serious charges (including Acts like TADA, MCOCA and Official Secrets Act without any evidence), when a majority of the incidents involving Muslims relate to conflicts in family relationships, disputes over money or property matters, love affairs and petty crimes. The Study also indicates that corruption in the legal system along with a biased police force could be the key reasons for more percentage of Muslim prisoners.

India is not the only country that seems to be treating its minorities unjustly. We are in "distinguished" company with US and UK. Blacks comprise 40% of prisoners in US when they are just 12% of the population and 2.2% of black population in UK supplies 15% of their prison inmates. Interestingly, post 9/11, even Muslims make up 12% of the prison population in England and Wales.

Investigation of the link between such over representation in the custodial system with underrepresentation in judiciary and police forces needs serious study and deliberation.

Implications for the Community and Country

The TISS Study shows that a majority of the Muslim prisoners are young (between 18-30 years), 89.6% are illiterate or semiliterate, poor (with 25% unable to afford a lawyer) and 75% arrested for the first time. Studies have shown that three fourth of innocents arrested take to crime and become repeaters. The implication is that more and more Muslim youth, especially from poor backgrounds, may be forced into a life of crime. America is imprisoning 3% of its black population and if we are not careful then 3% of Muslims of India (or about 68 Lakhs equivalent to the population of Himachal Pradesh or of Hyderabad city) may soon be in prisons as hardened criminals due to communal profiling by the police and the judicial system. This is no good news either for the community or the country.

Accountability of Police and Judiciary

Police officials and judges also come from society and are affected by general prejudices. A Study in US published in October 2012 has “[demonstrated conclusively](#)” that racial bias affects all parts of the criminal justice system. This study has shown that blacks are far more likely to be arrested than whites, received 18% more convictions for similar offences and get longer prison sentences. Similar discrimination is certainly possible against the Muslim community in India and should be studied systematically before it can be discounted or dismissed.

Apart from being booked for petty crimes and interned for long periods, Muslims are routinely arrested on charges of terrorism and in majority of cases they were honorably discharged by the courts but only after years of internment, stigma, social boycott and economic ruin for the entire family. In the case of Mecca Masjid blast case of 2007, 100 Muslim youth were arrested, brutally tortured and interned for years before the court discharged them honourably and awarded damages. But one fails to understand why the court did not take the next logical step to impose punishment for the police officers involved. The police are the most punished department in India, but no action is ever taken against them for any wrongs done to the Muslim community - be it wrong charges of terrorism, use of unjustified force during communal conflicts or booking Muslims in false criminal cases.

There is a need to bring even the judiciary into the ambit of accountability and devise foolproof procedures to monitor and penalise both the police and judiciary for booking false cases, delayed investigations and biased judgments. It is only then that we will be able to fulfill the constitutional commitment to equal protection of law not only for Muslims but also for dalits, tribals and the poor of this country who face similar illegal actions and injustices from our institutions of law and justice.

Mazher Hussain is the Director of COVA (Confederation of Voluntary Associations), a National network working for communal harmony in India and Peace in South Asia.