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# GLOBAL KIRTAN PROTEST

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Coming together to protest the attacks on Hindus and minorities in Bangladesh

23<sup>rd</sup> October 2021 (Saturday)

## **WHY ARE WE HAVING THE PROTEST?**

in the last ten days, the Hindu community has come under attack in Bangladesh. Temples of ISKCON and other organizations were vandalized, Deities were smashed, Puja pandals of Durga Devi were burnt. The fanatic mob also killed many people during their attacks including Prantha Chandra Das and Jatan Chandra Saha of ISKCON in Noakhali. Many houses and business establishments of Hindus were systematically targeted and burnt down.

Such attacks on the Hindus and other minority groups in Bangladesh have been going on for decades. This needs to stop. The Global Kirtan Protest is a worldwide peaceful demonstration of pain and grief of the global Hindu community which stands in solidarity with the Hindus of Bangladesh and it is also a demand for justice and safety from the Government of Bangladesh for the minorities in the country.

This protest is not against any religious community or the state of Bangladesh. It is for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all the minorities of the country.

## **WHAT ARE WE EXPECTING THE GOVERNMENT TO DO?**

While the long-term goal is to see that the Hindus and other minorities are able to freely practice their faith without any fear of attacks or threats, the immediate goals of our protests are:

1. Government of Bangladesh should immediately put an end to the violence by using all legitimate means at its disposal.

2. Arrest those guilty of these crimes and punish them to the full extent of law.
3. Take tangible actions aimed at ensuring the safety of the Hindu and other minority communities including the provision of round-the-clock security for temples and residential areas of these communities.

#### **WHEN IS THE GLOBAL KIRTAN PROTEST?**

23<sup>rd</sup> October 2021 (Saturday)

#### **WHO CAN PARTICIPATE IN THIS PROTEST?**

Anyone who feels for the Hindus and the minorities of Bangladesh and is concerned about their wellbeing. ISKCON devotees, well-wishers, friends, Hindu and other interfaith leaders, government officials, media can be called for this.

#### **WHAT TIME IS THE GLOBAL KIRTAN PROTEST?**

Due to varying time zones and ground realities in different parts of the world, we recommend that you choose the best time of the day for maximum participation.

#### **MESSAGE FOR SIGNAGES AND POSTERS**

Recommended Messages/Signage to be carried at events:

- Protect Bangladesh Hindus
- Justice for Bangladesh Minorities
- Protect our Temples in Bangladesh
- God Loves Minorities Too
- Stop Violence Against Hindus

## **STEPS ON ORGANIZING KIRTAN PROTESTS**

1. Meet with the leaders of your temple and devotee community to inform them about the current situation and Global Kirtan Protest.
2. Work with the leadership and the community in selecting the time and location for the protest. The venue should be a major public spot or landmark of your city. If not possible, the temple premises would also be okay.
3. Approach the relevant government authorities and inform them about this peaceful gathering and seek any necessary permissions.
4. Once the permissions are secured, inform the devotee community and well-wishers about the date, time and location. Do remember to abide by all the government rules including the number of people allowed to gather.
5. Design posters and banners based on the messages given in the previous section. These are to be carried during the kirtan protest. Some photographs are attached along with this file for the use of the temples. Participants need to be informed that all banners/posters have to be as per the guidelines given here and prepared by the temple leadership.
6. Invite local leaders of other Hindu organizations and spiritual leaders of other religions to come together on this occasion.
7. Invite the media (TV and Print) to cover the event and share the press release with them in advance. A global template of media release is forthcoming.
8. Assign a single spokesperson for handling all the public queries. This person is ideally someone who is trained in addressing the media and is well informed of the background and the reasons for having this Global Kirtan Protest. All queries before and during the event should be redirected to this person. Media should also be made aware of who is the official spokesperson.
9. Organizers should arrange for all necessary items such as portable sound system, mridanga, kartal, placards and banners.
10. The protests could be a combination of kirtan and short speeches by senior devotees, faith leaders of Hindu organization and other religion and government officials.

11. It is very important to remember and remind everyone that this protest should not have any provocative item/speeches/slogans/banners attached to it.

### **DO'S: WHAT SHOULD BE DONE**

1. **Stay in touch with your nearest ISKCON Communications officer** to plan the event and the messaging.
2. **Devotees and temple communities should offer special prayers** to their Deities in the mornings to please protect our devotees in Bangladesh.
3. **Follow all the Covid health guidelines** during the kirtan protest such as wearing masks, etc.
4. **Remind all the participants at the beginning of event of the peaceful mood and purpose of the gathering.**
5. **It is a peaceful protest asking for justice and safety.** All the messages and activities of participants should reflect that.
6. **Follow the government regulations about the venue, timing, number of people allowed.** We want to set an example of a peaceful protest.
7. Because of the sensitivity of this situation, **we strongly recommend that ISKCON devotees do not make any public statements against the Government of Bangladesh or any religion, including in social media posts.**
8. **Any signs and public comments must be carefully monitored—or else our statements as ISKCON members could further inflame the tensions.**

9. **Please know these attacks are not representative of a general conflict between faithful Muslims and Hindus.** ISKCON Bangladesh leaders tell us that many Muslim leaders in Bangladesh have spoken out strongly in support of the Hindu minority. The root of these attacks are extremists who misinterpret Islam to persecute and attack minority faiths in Bangladesh.

**DO NOT’S: WHAT SHOULD BE NOT DONE**

1. **No signage or spoken messages should criticize Muslims, or Islam, or the Bangladesh government.** This is the explicit request of the Bangladesh leaders and ISKCON Communications. No one incapable of following this mandate should communicate in any fashion on behalf of ISKCON.
2. Do not randomly organize program/events without coordinating with the leadership of your center.
3. Do not post any derogatory or insensitive posts. Better to authenticate the news and photos from the Communications team before posting.
4. Do not violate any law of the state/city during the demonstration.

**Social Media Account to Tag**

Account	Facebook	Twitter
Official ISKCON	@iskconglobal	@iskcon
ISKCON News	@iskconnews	@iskconnews
Bangladesh Foreign Ministry	@mofadhaka	@BDMOFA
Deputy Foreign Minister	@ShahriarAlamMp	@mdshahriaralam
Local Bangladesh Embassy	As per the local accounts	As per the local accounts

**Social Media Hashtags**

#SaveHindusinBangladesh

#iskconforbangladesh

#globalkirtanprotest

You can also send your post-event reports and photos to [gkp@iskcon.org](mailto:gkp@iskcon.org)