

Punitive demolitions and attachment of property

Continuing punitive demolition and attachment of Muslim-owned property by authorities in BJP-governed states

During the period under review, authorities in BJP-governed states—particularly Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh—continued the trend of collectively punishing Muslims through arbitrary demolitions of their property, as well as arbitrary attachment of their property.

Cases reported included:

- 14 June ([Ratlam](#), Madhya Pradesh): Authorities razed homes of two Muslim man following allegations that they threw a cow's head outside a temple.
- 15 June ([Mandla](#), Madhya Pradesh): Authorities razed 11 houses owned by Muslims, claiming that beef had been recovered from them, and that the houses were illegally built on government land. 16 other supposedly 'illegal' houses in the same neighbourhood were reportedly left untouched, as beef was apparently not recovered from them. Police confirmed that the National Security Act (NSA) would be invoked against the owners of five of the razed houses, claiming they were 'repeat offenders'.
- 24 June, 2024 ([Seoni](#), Madhya Pradesh): Homes belonging to two Muslim men bulldozed following allegations that they were involved in cow slaughter.
- 27 June, 2024 ([Morena](#), Madhya Pradesh): Authorities demolished houses belonging to two Muslim men following allegations that they had stored beef in their houses.
- 28 June, 2024 ([Gonda](#), Uttar Pradesh): Authorities confiscated properties of five Muslim men for their alleged involvement in cattle slaughter.
- 28 June, 2024 ([Moradabad](#), Uttar Pradesh): Local authorities demolished six houses belonging to Muslim families who were accused of attempting to kidnap and convert a Hindu woman to Islam. The woman and a member of one of the Muslim families had reportedly been in a relationship. The woman had initially claimed that the relationship was consensual, but subsequently changed her statement, alleging that she was 'forcibly' converted.
- 5 July, 2024 ([Jaunpur](#), Uttar Pradesh): Authorities confiscated property belonging to a Muslim man over allegations that he was involved in cattle smuggling.
- 5 July, 2024 ([Pilibhit](#), Uttar Pradesh): Authorities confiscated a house and other property belonging to a Muslim man over allegations that he sold beef.
- 31 July, 2024 ([Bhilwara](#), Rajasthan): Authorities demolished the property of a Muslim man who was accused of harming a cow.
- 11 August, 2024 ([Gonda](#), Uttar Pradesh): Police confiscated a house belonging to an alleged 'cattle smuggler'.
- 18 August, 2024 ([Udaipur](#), Rajasthan): Municipal authorities razed the rented house inhabited by the family of a Muslim school boy who had been accused of stabbing his Hindu classmate. Four other families—all

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Muslims—were also living in the same house. Authorities alleged that the structure was illegally built on government land.

- 23 August, 2024 ([Chhatarpur](#), Madhya Pradesh): Authorities demolished the house of Haji Shahzad Ali, a leader of the opposition Congress Party, and damaged his vehicles. Ali had been accused of leading a protest following an anti-Muslim hate speech made by a local Hindu monk. Ali [claimed](#) that he was, in fact, trying to stop and disperse an angry crowd upon the request of police officers. A viral video had shown police parading Muslim men who had been arrested during the protest.

The President of the Congress Party condemned the demolition as ‘inhumane and unjust’.

In a [report](#) published in February, Amnesty International had investigated similar punitive demolitions of 128 properties belong to Muslims that had been carried out in Assam, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi between April and June 2022, all in Muslim-concentration localities. The report found that at least 617 people, including men, women, and children, were adversely impacted by these demolitions, being either rendered homeless or deprived of their sole livelihood. The investigation further concluded that there was an ‘absolute failure of the state authorities to ensure that the survivors of these demolitions were afforded due process protections, including an opportunity for genuine consultation, adequate and reasonable notice, and provision of legal remedies and access to legal aid.’

The cases listed above were in addition to other ‘anti-encroachment’ drives that also disproportionately impacted Muslims and other marginalised groups. Some of these included:

- 11 June ([Lucknow](#), UP): Authorities completed a demolition drive in the Muslim-concentration Akbarnagar locality in Lucknow, razing each of the 1800+ structures that had stood in the area, including around 1200 houses. The demolition drive, which had begun in December last year, is reported to have impacted around 40,000 residents. A mosque in the area was left standing, to be demolished in the end, with a [drone video](#) of the operation circulated widely in media/social media.

The Supreme Court had, earlier this year, approved the demolitions, which were carried as part of a plan to develop the region as a riverfront.

- 24 June, 2024 ([Morigaon](#), Assam): Hundreds of residential buildings inhabited by Muslims were demolished by local authorities, ostensibly as part of an ‘anti-encroachment drive’. Around 1500 families were reportedly rendered homeless. The residents alleged that they had been living on the land for generations, and that buildings inhabited by Hindus were left untouched by authorities. The demolitions were carried out even after a stay order issued by the state High Court earlier in the morning. Officials claimed that they halted the demolitions as soon as they received a hard copy of the order in the afternoon.

In September, while hearing pleas from two Muslim men seeking remedy for the punitive demolition of their homes, the Supreme Court [announced](#) its intention to frame uniform, pan-India guidelines for demolitions of ‘illegal constructions’.