



## Note on recent home demolitions targeting the Muslim community in Gujarat, for the Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing

2 June 2025

This note by South Asia Justice Campaign is in response to the Special Rapporteur's request for information relating to the recent mass demolitions in multiple localities in Gujarat state capital, Ahmedabad, in April 2025. Since the SR's mail, another major demolition drive was reported from Ahmedabad's Bapunagar area, targeting over 500 houses.

This note seeks to respond to the issues raised in the request for information, covering all reported recent demolitions in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. The note also provides an update on recent mass demolitions reported from other parts of the country.

Overall, the picture that emerges is of Muslims being singled out for arbitrary demolitions, under encroachment-clearing campaigns by authorities, or Muslims having their houses demolished, as summary punishment for alleged crimes. This was the case in the mass demolitions recently in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. The terror attacks against tourists in Kashmir earlier in April 2025, and the ensuing anti-Muslim frenzy across the country fuelled by politicians and TV channels, also on account of the India-Pakistan clashes, provided the pretext and the enabling context for this latest episode of mass demolitions, impacting the lives of thousands of the most vulnerable individuals and families.

It is noteworthy that though these most recent demolitions are in violation of the Indian Supreme Court's due process guidelines<sup>1</sup>, issued in November 2024, courts themselves (Gujarat High Court and the Supreme Court of India) have failed to come to the rescue of victims, seeking urgent intervention.

Section A of this note contains responses to the Special Rapporteur's questions, collated from published news reports and some witness testimonies. Section B highlights reports of pending mass evictions/demolitions in Delhi's Okhla area. Section C contains information relating to other major demolition drives in 2024-2025 that have targeted Muslims in other parts of India, often punitively.

### A. Responses to the Special Rapporteur's questions<sup>2</sup>

Timeline of developments in Ahmedabad, Gujarat
<b>29 April 2025:</b> Phase 1 of demolition drive begins in the Chandola Lake area of Ahmedabad. Gujarat High Court <a href="#">rejects</a> emergency petitions seeking stay. Around 2000 structures removed.
<b>20-21 May 2025:</b> Phase 2 of Chandola Lake demolition. ~8500 structures razed, 250,000 sqm cleared

<sup>1</sup> Judgement available [here](#). See [here](#), another write-up on how authorities in BJP-governed states have circumvented the SC's directives and continued carrying out punitive demolitions.

<sup>2</sup> Collated from the following media reports: [The Wire](#) (22 May 2025), [The Quint](#) (23 May 2025), [Maktoob Media](#) (20 May 2025), [The Observer Post](#) (22 May 2025), [Indian Express](#) (30 May 2025), [Indian Express](#) (28 March 2025).

**29 May 2025:** Demolition of ~450 more structures in Bapunagar area of Ahmedabad, continuing the wider campaign.

## 1. Reason behind the recent demolition wave in Ahmedabad, Gujarat

- According to multiple media reports, the Gujarat government has claimed that the recent demolitions in Gujarat are part of a ‘national security’ crackdown to remove alleged Bangladeshi immigrants and ‘anti-national elements’ from areas like Chandola Lake and the nearby Siyasat Nagar in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. Officially, authorities have also cited ecological restoration of water bodies as a rationale for the demolitions.
- Since the [terror attack](#) on tourists in Pahalgam (Kashmir) on 22 April 2025, there has been an escalation in state-led targeting and harassment of alleged illegal immigrants, mostly Rohingya refugees and alleged Bangladeshis, but also the wider Muslim population of the country. Such targeting has been reported mostly in BJP-ruled states like Gujarat and [Assam](#).
- In Gujarat, On 27<sup>th</sup> April, days before the mass demolitions on 29<sup>th</sup> April, police [reportedly](#) detained over 1000 allegedly illegal Bangladeshi immigrants, from across the state. 890 were detained from Chandola lake area in Ahmedabad alone, all on allegations of being illegal Bangladeshi migrants. 650 of these were released subsequently, confirming to their Indian citizenship.
- The recent round of mass demolitions in Ahmedabad, that first took place on 29<sup>th</sup> April, mostly targeted Muslims, overwhelmingly Indian citizens, most of whom have lived in these areas for decades.
- Media reports and testimonies indicate those from the dominant Hindu group, in the same areas and similar situation, were accorded due process, including serving of notices well in time and other procedural protection.<sup>3</sup> Most either escaped demolitions totally, or if their houses were pulled down, were provided alternative accommodation, under different government social housing schemes.<sup>4</sup> Procedure was either not provided to the Muslims targeted, and little relief.

## 2. Adequate notice and possibility of consultation

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<sup>3</sup> See [here](#) a copy of an eviction notice issued by the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation to a Hindu temple in the area on 24 January 2025, noting an unauthorised structure that allegedly violates urban development and town planning regulations. The notice directs the occupants to remove the encroachment within 12 days of receiving the notice. Such notices were reportedly not issued to Muslim houses or mosques.

<sup>4</sup> See [here](#) a video interview conducted by our contact in Ahmedabad, with a Hindu resident of the Chandola Lake area. The interviewee acknowledges that most demolitions so far have impacted Muslim houses and that no notices were given in his (Hindu-majority) neighbourhood. The interviewee also states that alternative housing has been offered only to some displaced people (like in Vatva) but that these areas are unsafe and unsanitary, and that Muslims alone have been excluded from those being allocated new homes under government housing schemes.

- Maktoob Media (20 May 2025) and The Quint (23 May 2025) reported that many residents said they received only verbal notices or no formal notices at all, with some citing night-time raids and sudden bulldozer actions.
- According to The Observer Post (22 May 2025), residents said they were given just 4 days' notice in some areas.
- The Gujarat High Court, on 29 April 2025, rejected urgent pleas to halt the demolitions, with the court asserting that illegal structures cannot be regularised.
- Residents and lawyers quoted in multiple news reports (like The Quint) argued that the demolitions violated the Supreme Court's due process requirements, which include proper notice and an opportunity to be heard.
- According to witness testimonies, Hindu temples in Chandola lake area were served notice of eviction well in advance (24 January 2025), whereas no notices were served on Muslim mosques and shrines that were demolished.<sup>5</sup> While all mosques and Muslim shrines were destroyed, some Hindu temples were left standing.

### **3. Alternative housing and living conditions**

- The Quint (23 May 2025) and Maktoob Media (20 May 2025) reported that authorities have made no adequate alternative housing arrangements for most residents.
- According to The Observer Post (22 May 2025), Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) officials told some residents that they would be rehoused, but later demanded hefty deposits of INR 300,000 to 350,000 (~ USD 3500 to 4000) to secure new homes. Such amounts are beyond the reach of daily wage earners.
- According to The Quint (23 May 2025), only 33 displaced people are currently living in a shelter (in Vasna, Ahmedabad) where they have been provided food, water, and bedding.
- According to The Quint (23 May 2025), many families are homeless, facing extreme heat and rising rents (rents have reportedly doubled in surrounding areas) and experiencing discrimination due to being labelled as 'Bangladeshis'.

### **4. Use of excessive force and harm**

- There are no reports of deaths or serious injuries from the evictions themselves, but forced evictions under police guard have caused severe psychological harm and stress, according to multiple reports.
- The Quint (23 May 2025) and Maktoob Media (20 May 2025) reported midnight raids, detentions, and rounding up of hundreds of people, including minors.
- According to The Indian Express, families described children being more scared than during the COVID-time lockdowns, with fear, trauma, and separation of families.

### **5. Who are the people impacted?**

- Those impacted are reported to have been predominantly Muslim families who have lived in these areas for decades.
- Many are also reported to be migrant workers from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, and Madhya Pradesh – some had previously lived in relief camps after the 2002 anti-Muslim pogrom in Gujarat.

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<sup>5</sup> See footnote #3.

- While the government claims that these areas housed ‘Bangladeshi infiltrators’, multiple sources have highlighted that most residents had Indian citizenship documents. This is confirmed by testimonies, as well as the fact that the police released 650 of the 890 alleged Bangladeshis they detained in Ahmedabad on 27<sup>th</sup> April.

## 6. Number of people impacted and further plans.

- Community leaders reported total of 10,000 homes being affected, some 2500 on 29<sup>th</sup> April, and 7000 at the demolition on 20-21 May. Another 517 hopuses were demolished on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2025.
- The Wire (22 May 2025) reported that 8000 homes were demolished in Siyasat Nagar alone.
- The Quint (23 May 2025) reported that 10000 structures were demolished in Chandola Lake area by 20 May 2025.
- Maktoob Media (20 May 2025) mentioned 7000 Muslim homes being targeted.
- There are no exact figures for the total number of people impacted, but estimates suggest tens of thousands displaced.
- Demolition operations have continued in Gujarat, with around 450 structures reportedly demolished in the Bapunagar area of Ahmedabad, Gujarat on 29 May 2025, according to Indian Express (30 May 2025). Testimonies claim the total figure is 517 houses, (from Akbarnagar area) of whom 509 belonged to Muslims. The adjoining Jamunanagar, a Hindu habitation, also marked as ‘encroachment’, was left untouched.

## 7. Other major demolitions in Gujarat in 2025

- **March 2025 (Vastral, Ahmedabad, Gujarat):** Following reports of gang violence in the Vastral area of Ahmedabad on 13 March 2025, Gujarat’s Director General of Police had ordered police stations to compile lists of ‘anti-social elements’ and coordinate with municipal authorities to demolish their ‘illegal’ constructions, cut power, and cancel bail where applicable. This ‘whole of government’ approach had paved the way for immediate demolitions of the accused in Vastral, with authorities apparently providing a 1-2-day notice period instead of the usual 15 days. The AMC subsequently [demolished](#) the homes of six Muslims arrested in connection with the Vastral violence.
- **February 2025 (Gomtipur, Ahmedabad, Gujarat):** On 22 February 2025, municipal authorities had demolished around 160 structures in a predominantly Muslim neighbourhood, citing road widening. A local councillor stated that no prior notices were given, and that those protesting were detained.
- **January 2025 (Bet Dwarka, Gujarat):** Over 300 structures, including 12 religious sites, were demolished in Balapar village. The government framed it as clearing illegal encroachments, but Muslim properties are reported to have been disproportionately affected

## B. Further planned demolitions in other states

According to multiple news reports, authorities in Delhi are planning mass evictions in the predominantly-Muslim areas of Jamia Nagar, Taimoor Nagar, Batla House and Muradi Road in Okhla, Delhi. Notices were marked on 22 May, with the deadline set for June 7 (the day of upcoming Muslim festival of Eid-ul-Baqr).

Residents have alleged that they have not been given adequate explanation or alternate housing arrangements, and that they fear mass homelessness during religious celebrations.

This action is connected to a May 8 2025 Supreme Court order directing the Delhi Development Authority to remove encroachments on land allegedly owned by the Uttar Pradesh Irrigation Department.

An application in the Supreme Court on claims that the 15-day notice period was not properly followed, has been turned down by the court, leaving potential victims with no redress.

### **C. Information on other demolitions across India in 2024 and 2025**

Throughout 2025, authorities in several BJP-governed states have continued to carry out demolitions and evictions that either explicitly punished Muslims accused of wrongdoing or disproportionately impacted Muslim communities. These actions have continued despite [Supreme Court guidelines](#) issued in November 2024, which required that all demolitions follow due process, including advance notice, opportunity for hearing, and legal justification.

A February 2025 report by [Frontline](#) found that over 7,400 homes were demolished across India in 2024, rendering more than 41,000 people homeless. Nationally, 37% of demolitions reportedly targeted Muslims. Around 75% were carried out in the name of ‘redevelopment’, often targeting Muslim-majority slums, while Hindu-majority areas were more likely to receive in-situ upgrades, according to the report. The report also found that at least 25% of all demolitions were explicitly punitive in nature, and that almost 100% punitive demolitions were targeted at Muslims.

Apparently punitive demolitions of property in the first quarter of 2025 included:

- 20-21 February, 2025 ([Bijaynagar](#), Rajasthan): Following the arrest of 10 Muslims, including three minors, for allegedly sexually assaulting and blackmailing five Hindu schoolgirls, municipal authorities issued demolition-related notices to the families of the accused, a local mosque, and a graveyard. Hindutva groups had called for ‘bulldozer action’ and framed the case as ‘love jihad.’ On 6 March, the Rajasthan High Court ordered a status quo, barring the municipality from carrying out demolitions linked to the case and citing non-compliance with SC guidelines.
- 24 February, 2025 ([Malvan](#), Maharashtra): Authorities demolished the home and business of a Muslim family after their son was accused of chanting ‘anti-national’ slogans after an India-Pakistan cricket match. According to a contempt petition filed in the Supreme Court, the demolition was carried out without prior notice and under political pressure, directly violating the SC’s guidelines. The petitioner alleged that the FIR against the family was based on false claims and that the demolition followed a letter from a local BJP MLA demanding action.
- 7-11 March, 2025 ([Damoh](#), Madhya Pradesh): Following allegations of cow slaughter, authorities demolished several structures belonging to members of the Muslim Qasai (butcher) community in the Sitabaoli area and announced plans to bulldoze over 300 more homes before Holi. The demolitions were reportedly carried out under pressure from Hindutva groups, who demanded action after communal tensions escalated. Notices were served to residents, giving them only three days to vacate. Officials described the targeted structures as encroachments, and stated that the demolition drive would continue.

- 25 March, 2025 (Nagpur, Maharashtra): In the aftermath of communal violence in Nagpur on 17 March, the home of Fahim Khan, a Muslim political leader accused by police of sedition and misinformation, was bulldozed by municipal authorities. The Bombay High Court stayed further demolitions the same day, criticising the civic body's 'high-handedness' and observing prima facie violation of SC guidelines. Notices had also been issued to another accused, whose family alleged the demolition was retaliatory despite possessing legal ownership documents.

Other demolition drives that seemed to disproportionately impact Muslims included:

- 13 January, 2025 (Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh): As part of a temple corridor expansion, authorities demolished the Takiya mosque and 257 homes in Nizamuddin Colony, a predominantly Muslim area. Residents reported receiving less than 12 hours' notice before the demolition began at dawn under heavy police deployment. While officials claimed compensation had been offered, displaced families expressed distress over the abrupt and forceful evictions.
- 22 January, 2025 (Surguja, Chhattisgarh): Around 60 homes belonging to Muslim migrant workers were demolished forest authorities on allegations of encroachment, three days after the state's Forest Minister called for their removal. Locals alleged that while the area housed people from multiple communities, only Muslim homes were targeted, leaving dozens of families homeless in the winter.
- 8 February onwards, 2025 (Pune, Maharashtra): In a sweeping 'anti-encroachment' drive, municipal authorities demolished over 5,000 shops and warehouses across several neighbourhoods. Many of the affected business owners, reportedly from the Muslim community, alleged they received no prior notice, and that the drive has left thousands of Muslims jobless.
- 21 March, 2025 (Kushinagar, Uttar Pradesh): Authorities issued an eviction notice ordering the demolition of the Gadhiya Masjid, its adjoining madrasa, and an idgah, citing alleged encroachment. The notice, based on a 27 January local Court order, directed removal by 8 April, warning of bulldozer action if not complied with. While the local administration claimed it was acting per legal orders, community leaders questioned why only Muslim structures were being targeted.
- 25 March, 2025 (Gurugram, Haryana): Authorities demolished around 300 makeshift homes of Bengali-speaking migrant workers in Sector-39, allegedly without prior notice. Many of the affected workers, originally from districts in West Bengal, claimed they were targeted on suspicions of being 'Bangladeshi' due to their language. While officials cited illegal encroachment and court orders, displaced residents denied receiving any formal notice and said they had been renting the land. The demolitions left hundreds homeless just days before the Muslim festival of Eid ul Fitr.

These cases, while not exhaustive, underscore the continued defiance by BJP-governed states of the SC's November 2024 directives. On 5 March, the Court strongly condemned the Uttar Pradesh government's illegal demolition of six homes in Prayagraj without following due process, and ordered it to pay ₹10 lakh (~\$11,900) each in compensation to the house owners. Calling the action 'shocking' and 'high-handed', the bench also ordered that the structures be rebuilt and refused to send the matter back to the state High Court. Yet, despite this clear judicial reprimand, similar demolitions and threats of eviction continue with impunity, highlighting the limited deterrent effect of the Court's interventions to date.