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**Press Release**

**Sakshi Maharaj only chanted BJP/Sangh Parivar's 3-decade old anti-Muslim mantra**

Indian Muslims for Secular Democracy (IMSD) strongly condemns the BJP's and the sangh parivar's insidious attempt to communalise the polity in Uttar Pradesh on the eve of Assembly elections.

The BJP MP Sakshi Maharaj's venom-spewing against Muslims, and the pathetic attempt of Union Minister for Minority Affairs, Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, to distance the Modi-led government and the BJP party from Maharaj's hate speech is yet another example of the BJP's and the sangh parivar's consistent double-speak.

"If the population is growing alarmingly, if the problems are rising, let me tell you that the Hindus are not responsible for it... The people responsible are those who talk of having four wives and 40 children," said Sakshi Maharaj at a public gathering in Meerut last Friday.

The offensive remark has come within days of the Supreme Court's January 2 verdict barring candidates from seeking votes in the name of religion.

With the Chief Election Commission (CEC) having directed the filing of an FIR against Sakshi Maharaj, and the possible fallout of Maharaj's speech on the fate of BJP candidates in the coming polls, Naqvi has attempted to distance his government and party from the hate speech: "His statement (Maharaj's), I believe, is not the government's view and also not of the BJP."

**IMSD hopes that the CEC will not stop at the mere ritual of directing the filing of an FIR, as it has done in the past in such cases but ensures necessary follow-up on the part of the UP administration and police.**

Naqvi's statement is quite telling. He is free to believe what he wishes just as Sakshi Maharaj along with other MPs and even ministers along with sadhus and sadhvis, in the BJP-Sangh Parviar pantheon are free to continue believing to the contrary.

The fact remains that the canard of Indian Muslims breeding like rabbits as part of their "population jihad" against India's Hindu majority has been an integral part of the myth of

“Muslim appeasement” systematically propagated by the sangh parivar for the past three decades.

The catchy “*Hum (Hindu) do, hamare do*” vs. “*Hum paanch, hamare pachees*” slogan was coined at the height of the Ram Janambhoomi campaign in the 1980s by the BJP to create and widen the communal divide between monogamous Hindu families who produce only two children and supposedly polygamous Muslim men who marry four wives, with each wife producing five children.

Sakshi Maharaj is by no means the only person to keep this canard alive, as may be seen from a few other examples:

***Mohan Bhagwat addressing teachers in Agra on August 21, 2016:*** “Which law says that the population of Hindus should not rise? What is stopping them when population of others is rising? The issue is not related to the system. It is because the social environment is like this.”

***VHP Working President, Pravin Togadia on ‘Population jihad’ in an article in RSS mouthpiece, Organiser in September 2015:*** “A serious extinction seems to be on the anvil. And it is of Hindus. There is method in the systematic growth of Muslims... Now, if we do not stand up against the ‘Population Jihad’, Bharat will soon be an Islamic state.”

***CM Narendra Modi at his ‘Gaurav Yatra’ rally in Becharji, Gujarat in September 9, 2002:*** “Should we run relief camps? Open baby producing centres? We want to firmly implement family planning. *Hum paanch, humare pachees* (We five, our 25) (laughs). Who will benefit from this development? Is family planning not necessary in Gujarat? Where does religion come in its way? Where does community come in its way?”



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