India's Muslim Exclusion: Need for an Inclusive Policy

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Abstract*: India has made a pledge six decades ago to build an inclusive, plural and secular society which would equitably integrate its religious minorities while respecting their distinct identities and honoring difference. This is particularly true of sour largest minority community, Muslims, who constitute 18.4 per cent of the population and also socially economically and educationally backward. Muslim exclusion can be seen in the form of segregation socially, politically, economically, culturally, educationally in Indian society. The main objective of this article is to study the complexities and nuances of exclusion of Muslims, a dominant minority group in India. It is an exploration of how Muslims, a religious minority in India, are facing exclusion in different spheres of life, namely socio-economic and physical spaces. It offers an account of the fact that Muslims stand on the periphery in social and secular spheres of life and how this is closely related to their identity. Finally suggests for the inclusiveness of the Muslim minorities in the development agenda of the Government.*

Keywords: Religion, Identity, Exclusion and Muslims

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