

FREEDOM OF RELIGION IN DIVIDED SOCIETIES OF ASIA: LAW, POLITICS AND RIGHTS

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International Centre for Ethnic Studies
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Freedom of religion is highly contested in Asia, particularly in countries with long-standing ethnic and religious divisions. Often, constitutional privileging of the dominant religion is accompanied by judicial interpretations, laws and policies that restrict religious beliefs and practices in ways that reinforce majority-minority animosities. This is complicated by insecurities about the survival of minority communities, driven by various social, economic and political concerns. In addition, the rise of religious extremism and radical mobilization are major challenges developing Asian countries face, despite significant economic growth.

This Workshop seeks to unpack the evolving landscape of religious freedom and conflict, to map flashpoints and patterns, and to explore the political, legal and societal responses to these issues in selected Asian countries.

Workshop Speakers:

Radhika Coomaraswamy, UN Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar

Gehan Gunatilleke, University of Oxford

Farah Haniffa, University of Colombo

Nyi Nyi Kyaw, National University of Singapore

Matthew Nelson, SOAS University of London

Dian A. H. Shah, National University of Singapore

Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu, Centre for Policy Alternatives, Sri Lanka

Henri Tiphange, People's Watch, India

Ruki Fernando, Activist, Sri Lanka

M. Sumanthiran, Member of Parliament, Sri Lanka

Siti Musdah Mulia, Indonesian Conference on Religion and Peace

Hasini Haputhanthri, International Centre for Ethnic Studies, Sri Lanka

Aung Myo Min, Equality Myanmar

Samson Salamat, Centre for Human Rights Education, Pakistan

Shreen Saroor, Women's Action Network & Mannar Women's Development Federation, Sri Lanka

Omaid Sharifi, ArtLords, Afghanistan