

# *Indian protests continue as prime minister defends anti-Muslim Citizenship Law*

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New Delhi, December 24 (RHC)-- In India, widespread protests are continuing against the controversial new citizenship law, which many say is a major step toward the official marginalization of India's 200 million Muslims.

The law provides a path to citizenship for immigrants from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan — unless they are Muslim.

Earlier, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi tried to quell the protests by claiming the law is not aimed at marginalizing Muslims already living in India. Modi said: "The Muslims who were born on Indian soil or whose ancestors are children of Mother India, brothers and sisters, they have nothing to do with the citizenship law or the National Register of Citizens. The Muslims are not being sent to any detention centers, nor are there any detention centers."

India has launched a crackdown against the protests. At least 25 people have been killed so far, and over 1,500 people have been arrested. Many of the demonstrators say the law goes against India's secular Constitution. India's Supreme Court has agreed to hear a constitutional challenge to the law in late

January.

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