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US Commission on International Religious Freedom Welcomes SC Decision on Assam Detention Centres

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NESSUN COMMENTO

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Link to <https://www.news18.com/news/world/us-commission-on-international-religious-freedom-welcomes-sc-decision-on-assam-detention-centres-2578043.html> (<https://www.news18.com/news/world/us-commission-on-international-religious-freedom-welcomes-sc-decision-on-assam-detention-centres-2578043.html>)

Washington: The US Commission on International Religious Freedom on Tuesday welcomed the decision of India's Supreme Court to relax conditions for the release of individuals detained as "foreigners" in Assam due to concerns over the spread of COVID-19.

"We welcome this decision as a first step," said USCIRF Chair Tony Perkins.

On an application submitted by the Justice for Liberty Initiative, the Supreme Court on Monday ordered the release of detainees held for at least two years and lowered the personal bond amount necessary to secure release from Rs 1,00,000 to Rs 5,000.

Perkins, in a statement, urged the Supreme Court to continue on this promising path and order the release of all those detained in the detention centres on humanitarian grounds.

“Even two years as a minimum time for release is unreasonable given the threat of detention centres becoming a breeding ground for the spread of COVID-19, he said.

USCIRF claimed that nearly 1,000 people under suspicion of being a “foreigner” are currently housed in six detention centres in Assam as they await deportation. Some individuals have been detained for as long as 10 years without being sentenced to a crime, it said.

“It is encouraging that India’s Supreme Court recognized the vulnerability of detainees in the detention centres, said USCIRF Commissioner Anurima Bhargava.

“We remain concerned, however, that these individuals were wrongfully labeled as foreigners’ and detained in the first place. Moving forward, we hope the government ends the practice of detaining individuals within these centres, especially given the overriding concerns with COVID-19, she said.

India has recorded over 11,000 COVID-19 infections with at least 353 deaths.

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