

SITUATION OF HATE SPEECH AND FORB VIOLATIONS

Introduction

As of 2025, Cambodia's population is estimated at around 17.3 million people, with its religious landscape predominantly Buddhist (as a state religion). Over 90% of the population is Buddhist. Other prominent minority religious groups include Muslims (~2%) and Christians (~1%). Indigenous Peoples in Cambodia make up around 1.5% and follow ancestral or animist belief systems closely tied to nature, land and spiritual traditions.

Hate Speech Incidents

Hate-fueled Religious Rituals

Cambodian shamans conducted a ritual against a Thai military commander during the peak of the Cambodian-Thai border conflict – representing hate speech framed in a religious context.

Derogatory Narratives Amid Border Tensions

Public discourse during the Cambodian-Thai border conflict contained inflammatory remarks portraying Thai forces as enemies of Buddhism, heightening animosity and religious intolerance.

FoRB Violations

Scrutiny of Monks for Political Involvement

Restrictions and scrutiny against monks expressing political views amount to discrimination that limits their freedom of expression, as it prevents them from participating equally in civic life and undermines pluralism within the monastic community.

Threats to Cultural and Spiritual Survival

Loss of access to forests, sacred sites and natural resources through extractive business practices disrupts the religious, spiritual and cultural identities of Indigenous communities across the country.