



MEI INDIA DIGEST

(Thematic survey of major current developments)

No. 4

3 March 2010

Qatari citizenship for M F Husain

by

Alvite N

1. M.F. Husain gets Qatar nationality, 25 February 2010

M.F. Husain, India's greatest and most celebrated artist has been conferred Qatar nationality - something that is very rarely given. The artist gave me this news from Dubai early Wednesday morning by reading out the few lines he had written on a black-and-white line drawing that he released to The Hindu.

“Honoured by Qatar nationality” but deeply saddened by his enforced exile and the need now to give up the citizenship of the land of his birth, which he has lovingly and secularly celebrated in his art covering a period of over seven decades. India does not allow dual citizenship, even though it has instituted the category of the ‘Overseas Indian Citizen.’ Mr. Husain will no doubt seek to acquire OIC status after completing the due procedures.

It is important to note that Mr. Husain did not apply for Qatar nationality and that it was conferred upon him at the instance of the modernising emirate's ruling family.

Since 2006, when the Hindutva hate campaign against him escalated, Mr. Husain has been living in Dubai, spending his summers in London. He travels freely except to India, where he faces legal harassment and physical threats, with the system impotent and not committed to enabling his return. Though the Supreme Court has intervened on the right

side, it was too little, too late. The Congress-led government, it is clear, has done no better than the preceding BJP-led governments in protecting Mr. Husain's freedom of creativity and peace of mind.

Almost 95, the artist works a long day, producing large canvasses and life-size glass sculptures. Never has he been as commercially successful as he is today. His work now is mostly towards two large projects, the history of Indian civilisation and the history of Arab civilisation. The latter was commissioned by Qatar's powerful first lady – Sheikha Mozah bints Nasser al Missned, wife of the emirate's ruler, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani. The works will be housed in a separate museum in Doha.

While being a rare honour, Mr. Husain's impending change of nationality brings to a close one of the sorriest chapters in independent India's secular history. Mr. Husain's time of troubles began in 1996, after a Hindi monthly published an inflammatory article on his paintings of Hindu deities done in the 1970s. This led to a slew of criminal cases, filed in far-flung places, which alleged in the main that the artist had hurt the feelings of Hindus through his paintings. Mr. Husain estimates that there are 900 cases against him in various courts of India. He has been harassed by fanatical mobs. Exhibitions of his work have been vandalised. All this has created a fear of exhibiting his work in India.

I have personally accompanied Mr. Husain to court proceedings in Indore and have first-hand experience of the harassment and terror he faced from bigoted mobs. I received him in Mumbai on his return from the first of his temporary exiles and saw what insecurity and uncertainty this creative genius had to endure in rising India. It is ironical that a country whose religious art often portrays nudity and even overt sexuality, as in the case of the Khajuraho sculptures and the murals and frescoes of south Indian temples, has grown so intolerant as to drive into permanent exile its most famous artist.

I know no one more genuinely and deeply committed to the composite, multi-religious, and secular values of Indian civilisation than M. F. Husain. He breathes the spirit of modernity, progress, and tolerance. The whole narrative of what forced him into exile, including the shameful failure of the executive and the legal system to enable his safe return, revolves round the issues of freedom of expression and creativity and what secular nationhood is all about.

The conferment of Qatar nationality is an honour to Mr. Husain, to his artistic genius, and to the India-rooted civilizational values he represents. Nevertheless, it is a sad day for India.

Source: The Hindu, Chennai

[http://news.google.co.in/news/url?sa=t&ct2=in%2F0_0_s_0_1_aa&ct3=MAA4AEgAUAfQAmLu&usg=AFQjCNGdgnwniI4UXPEDXWcMZpkx7yLPvg&cid=8797507803480&ei=NgyMS9D8L4Oe6QP1jYQS&rt=SEARCH&vm=STANDARD&url=http%3A%2F%2Fbeta.thehindu.com%2Fnews%2Fnational%2Farticle113018.ece%3Fhomepage%3Dtrue]

2. BJP: No objection to Qatar citizenship for MF Husain, 25 February 2010

New Delhi: The BJP today said it had no issues with controversial painter MF Husain being offered citizenship by Qatar, adding everybody had a right to reside anywhere in the world but when it came to creative pursuits one should not hurt sentiments of others.

"On this earth, every person has the right to live anywhere. So, we don't want to blame Husain if he accepts this offer of citizenship made by Qatar," deputy leader of BJP in Rajya Sabha S S Ahluwalia said.

Husain has been living in Dubai and London for the past few years since he had to flee from India when he faced opposition from some sections for his controversial paintings depicting Hindu Goddesses in the nude.

Ahluwalia said the main issue was why Husain could not live in India.

"Every painter, writer, journalist and those involved in other creative pursuits should keep in mind that while they are engaged in painting or writing... they should not do anything which hurts or harms the sentiments of others," he said.

Source: Daily News and Analysis, New Delhi

[http://www.google.co.in/url?sa=t&source=web&oi=news_result&ct=res&cd=1&ved=0CAYQqQIwAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.dnaindia.com%2Findia%2Freport_bjp-no-objection-to-qatar-citizenship-for-mf-husain_1352618&rct=j&q=bjp%3A+no+objection+to+qatar+citizenship+for+mf+husain&ei=3g2MS53fHoK0rAfByuzECg&usg=AFQjCNGO4mj7MYsbQIKI1wZ8xGbExNiH5A]

3. Artists welcome Qatar nationality to Husain, 25 February 2010

Leading artists today welcomed the conferment of Qatar nationality on M F Husain, who has been living in self-imposed exile abroad for nearly four years following a spate of legal cases in the country over his controversial paintings of Hindu goddesses.

"That's a great honour for him," painter Anjali Ila Menon said, describing 95-year-old Husain as a "true Karma Yogi".

Referring to the controversy over his work, she said all that the government had to do was assuring security to him.

Noted filmmaker Shyam Benegal said he would not blame Husain if he accepts Qatar's nationality as he has been treated "so shabbily in our country."

He is a living treasure and certainly the most celebrated Indian contemporary artist, Benegal said.

News about the Qatar nationality for the legendary artist was reported by 'The Hindu', which printed five lines written by Husain above a line sketch of a horse, his trademark.

"I, the Indian-origin painter M F Husain, at 95, have been honoured by Qatar nationality," wrote the painter, who shuttles between London and Dubai in exile.

Husain went in exile after a hate campaign ...

Several cases were filed against him by people protesting his portrayal of Hindu goddesses in the nude...

Source: Hindustan Times, New Delhi

[\[http://www.google.co.in/url?sa=t&source=web&ct=res&cd=5&ved=0CA4QFjAE&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.hindustantimes.com%2Frssfeed%2Fnewdelhi%2Fartists-welcome-Qatar-nationality-to-Husain%2FArticle1-512789.aspx&rct=j&q=artists+welcome+qatar+nationality+to+husain&ei=Kw-MS4CvA8-zrAflrr2ICg&usg=AFQjCNGovhQnQvH_OmYNDt6EzEUF8tzMKg\]](http://www.google.co.in/url?sa=t&source=web&ct=res&cd=5&ved=0CA4QFjAE&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.hindustantimes.com%2Frssfeed%2Fnewdelhi%2Fartists-welcome-Qatar-nationality-to-Husain%2FArticle1-512789.aspx&rct=j&q=artists+welcome+qatar+nationality+to+husain&ei=Kw-MS4CvA8-zrAflrr2ICg&usg=AFQjCNGovhQnQvH_OmYNDt6EzEUF8tzMKg)

4. M F Husain given Qatar nationality, 25 February 2010

NEW DELHI: India's eminent artist M F Husain, who has been under attack from Hindu fundamentalists for his paintings of Hindu goddesses and has been living in Dubai and

London, has been given Qatar nationality, it was reported here on Thursday.

"I, the Indian origin painter M F Husain at 95, have been honoured by Qatar nationality," the celebrated artist wrote above a line sketch of a horse, the leitmotif of much of his work. The black and white drawing was carried by The Hindu newspaper.

In a signed article, The Hindu editor N Ram wrote that the artist had given him the news from Dubai "by reading out the few lines he had written on a black-and-white line drawing that he released to the Hindu".

According to the report, Husain did not apply for the nationality but it was conferred on ...

Photographer, designer and activist Ram Rahman, who is close to the Husain family, responded to the news by saying: "The citizenship has been offered by the Sheikha, the wife of the Sheikh of Qatar and it has several implications".

"On a personal note, I feel it is quite clear that the man who is 95 years old and cannot return to his country to die, there is no point of him remaining an Indian citizen."

"It would be a tragedy. He has not given up his Indian citizenship yet but if he decides to take up the Qatari offer, he will not remain an Indian citizen anymore. It is also a reflection of our legal system because the cases against him will drag on for 20-30 years.... so it is justified if he takes up the Qatari offer," Rahman told IANS.

Source: The Economic Times, New Delhi

[\[http://www.google.co.in/url?url=http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/news-by-industry/et-cetera/M-F-Hussain-given-Qatar-nationality/articleshow/5614868.cms&rct=j&ei=DRCMS5WzPI6-rAffhImICg&sa=X&oi=spellmeleon_result&resnum=2&ct=result&ved=0CAgQhgIwAQ&q=m+f+husuan+given+qatar+nationality&usg=AFQjCNHXifpqRUwzD386sl_Hei1vHM4ltg\]](http://www.google.co.in/url?url=http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/news-by-industry/et-cetera/M-F-Hussain-given-Qatar-nationality/articleshow/5614868.cms&rct=j&ei=DRCMS5WzPI6-rAffhImICg&sa=X&oi=spellmeleon_result&resnum=2&ct=result&ved=0CAgQhgIwAQ&q=m+f+husuan+given+qatar+nationality&usg=AFQjCNHXifpqRUwzD386sl_Hei1vHM4ltg)

5. M F Husain conferred with Qatar nationality, 25 February 2010

Eminent painter M F Husain has been conferred with Qatar nationality which touched off a major debate on Thursday with his critics slamming him but the Government said he is the "pride of India." ...

While Husain has stated he has been "honoured" by Qatar nationality it is not clear whether it is honorary citizenship and whether he is giving up Indian citizenship. India does not allow dual citizenship even though there is an Overseas Indian category.

... Apparently embarrassed by the development, the Indian government made it clear Husain was free to return to India and it was ready to provide security to the noted painter. Calling Husain as the "pride of India", Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao said, "I would like him to feel safe and secure in India."

Source: Indian Express, New Delhi

[http://www.google.co.in/url?sa=t&source=web&ct=res&cd=5&ved=0CBIQFjAE&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.indianexpress.com%2Fnews%2Fm-f-husain-conferred-with-qatar-nationality%2F584448%2F&rct=j&q=mf+hussain+conferred+qatar+nationality&i=ahqMS_qQLsjGrAfmjN2eCg&usg=AFQjCNGX28B5jMx20dE8NFbzU9HIZC5hBg]

6. Husain can come back if he wants: RSS, 25 February 2010

Thiruvananthapuram: Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) 'Sarasnghchalak' Mohan Bhagwat Thursday said the country's most celebrated painter MF Husain would face no problem from RSS if he lives in India and continuing his artistic pursuits.

Replying to questions whether the RSS would oppose the veteran's artist's return – after reports claimed that he has been conferred the nationality by Qatar, Bhagwat said "why should we oppose or welcome his return".

Clarifying that the RSS had no such opinion to oppose or welcome if Husain wanted to come back India, he said "we will welcome Husain as an Indian citizen."

However, he made it clear that "he should not hurt the country and the people, and should understand the mindset of the society as well.

Bhagwat said "all artists had their own freedom to work. But they should have some limitations as they should never hurt the sentiments of the other people in the society."

Though Husain had earlier offered apology, it failed to convince groups that oppose him for painting a Hindu goddess in an objectionable manner. He has close to 900 cases ...

However, in one of his recent interviews Husain expressed his desire to return and die in the country of his origin.

As regards to the Qatari nationality offer, reports claimed that Husain had not volunteered to get Qatar nationality himself. It was actually conferred upon him by the Royal family of the princely state in recognition of his achievements.

Photographer, designer and activist Ram Rahman, who is close to the Husain family, responded to the news by saying: "The citizenship has been offered by the Sheikha, the wife of the sheikh of Qatar, and it has several implications.

"On a personal note, I feel it is quite clear that the man who is 95 years old and cannot return to his country to die, there is no point of him remaining an Indian citizen."

"It would be a tragedy. He has not given up his Indian citizenship yet but if he decides to take up the Qatari offer, he will not remain an Indian citizen anymore. It is also a reflection of our legal system because the cases against him will drag on for 20-30 years.... so it is justified if he takes up the Qatari offer," Rahman said.

Source: Zeenews.com, New Delhi

[http://www.google.co.in/url?sa=t&source=web&ct=res&cd=1&ved=0CAgQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.zeenews.com%2Fnews606938.html&rct=j&q=husain+can+come+back+if+he+wants+to%3Arss&ei=iROMS6_RIYqtrAe17-iPCg&usq=AFQjCNHWfZ6F9uZWRdWZHMnkiESodyF6xw]

7. Has India lost its Husain forever?, 25 February 2010

Within hours of discovering that artist Maqbool Fida Husain could give up his Indian citizenship, the government is trying to avoid what could be a gigantic embarrassment and loss. Union Home Secretary, GK Pillai, told NDTV on Thursday evening, "MF Husain is free to come back. We will provide him security if he asks for".

On Thursday morning, The Hindu reported that Husain had been offered citizenship of Qatar. Husain has been living in Dubai since 2006, after he found himself repeatedly under attack for his controversial paintings of Hindu deities in the mid 1990s. His exhibitions were vandalized, so was his house. There are still a series of court cases ...

India does not allow dual citizenship. Husain's lawyer, Akhil Sibal, points out that the artist did not apply for citizenship of Qatar, but that offer could be tempting. "There are many questions yet to be answered. Is it of an honorary nature? What would be the consequence? This brings into sharp focus the contrast between the treatment he receives around the world, and the treatment that is meted out to him right here in India, where you have a state which over for the last 15 years has in no manner come to his aid through the harassment that he has faced", says Sibal.

Other artists agree. "I don't blame him at all for this because he has been treated so shabbily in our country considering that he is probably the most well-known and certainly the most celebrated Indian contemporary artist," says film-maker Shyam Benegal.

Defying the government's position, and public opinion, the Sangh Parivar insists that Husain has to apologize if he wants to return home.

We welcome MF Husain as an Indian citizen. If he has apologised, then let him convey it to those who were hurt by his paintings. ...but every freedom in democracy has a limit," says Mohan Bhagwat, the Chief of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).

A line that's tough for many to swallow, given that different allies and members of the Sangh Parivar have repeatedly violated what's legally permissible.

Source: NDTV, New Delhi

[http://www.google.co.in/url?sa=t&source=web&ct=res&cd=5&ved=0CA4QFjAE&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ndtv.com%2Fnews%2Findia%2Fqatar_welcomes_indias_greatest_artist_m_f_husain.php&rct=j&q=hussain+can+come+back+if+he+wants+to%3Arss&ei=YheMS9z2NcuprAecnbXTCg&usg=AFQjCNEPHV2oUF6MIXTabSGFDp3ySZjtZQ]

8. Citizen Husain, come back, says India, 26 February 2010

After Qatar offers citizenship to Indian painter MF Husain, who has been living in Dubai in self-imposed exile for the last five years following threats to his life, even RSS, which had objected to his nude paintings, wants him back.

Hindu groups said they had no objections to painter MF Husain returning to India even as the government said it would provide adequate security if he did.

Husain (95) had angered Hindu groups by painting nude images of Goddess Durga and Goddess Saraswati. He has been living in Dubai in self-imposed exile for the last five years, following threats to his life. Home Secretary GK Pillai, who made this commitment on Thursday, was reacting to media reports that the artist had been offered citizenship of Qatar, an Arab state in West Asia.

In Kerala, RSS chief Mohan Bhagawat said, “We will neither oppose nor welcome his return...”

The BJP also sounded conciliatory. “Every citizen has the right to stay anywhere in the country. We don’t want to deprive him of that right,” said SS Ahluwalia, deputy leader of the opposition in the Rajya Sabha.

But Husain’s family remains concerned. “Though we really want him to return, he’s not safe here,” Salamat Husain, the painter’s grandson, told *HT*.

Added Owais Husain, the painter’s son: “You must remember that he is 95 years old. It’s not as if he’s 40 and has time on his hands”.

The Shiv Sena, however, struck a discordant note. “He has insulted the gods and goddesses of this country and should apologise,” said party spokesman Sanjay Raut.

The Congress, expectedly, stood by the painter. “As an Indian, I am very sad he has to even think about adopting an alternative nationality,” Congress spokesman Manish Tiwari said.

Source: Hindustan Times, New Delhi

[http://www.google.co.in/url?sa=t&source=web&ct=res&cd=7&ved=0CBQQFjAG&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.hindustantimes.com%2FCitizen-Husain-come-back-says-India%2FH1-Article1-513037.aspx&rct=j&q=husain+can+come+back+if+he+wants+to%3Arss&ei=iROMS6_RIYqtrAe17-iPCg&usg=AFQjCNH6dpA1F0u3wkRaJZ6xtpAcVG2ScA]

9. Centre tiptoes on Qatar offer to Husain, 26 February 2010

The Centre and the capital’s political establishment are cool to Qatar’s move to honour M.F. Husain as a national, with no formal statement on the possibility that the artist might have to give up Indian citizenship if he accepted the offer.

India does not allow dual citizenship though it has instituted a category called Overseas Indian Citizen.

Late in the evening, home secretary G.K. Pillai described Husain — who has been living in self-imposed exile in Dubai and London since 2006 — as the “pride of India” and claimed the government was willing to give him security.

But Pillai’s comment came in response to a question posed by journalists who met him.

Husain was virtually hounded out of the country after a Hindi magazine published an inflammatory article on his paintings ...

Criminal cases were filed against him in remote places, the main charge being he had “offended Hindus” by his “vulgar” depiction of their gods and goddesses. Subsequent attempts to exhibit Husain’s paintings ended in attacks by Bajrang Dal and Vishwa Hindu Parishad activists.

In Ahmadabad, a show had to be called off despite police deployment when the attackers pulled off the exhibits and damaged some.

Although it is believed that more than 900 cases are pending in different courts of the country against Husain, his lawyer Akhil Sibal says there are only three that are known. The three cases are being heard at Patiala House court in the capital. The Supreme Court quashed four cases against him in 2008.

In recent years, art exhibitors and galleries have refused to display Husain’s paintings despite assurances of security.

A senior Congress minister, who is also a connoisseur of art, put the onus on Husain. “There is no security issue. He can return to the country when he wants but obviously he doesn’t want to. He has sought a written assurance from the Centre that his life will not be harmed. How is that possible?”

Congress Rajya Sabha MP Satyavrat Chaturvedi said if Husain needed more security, “there is a process he will have to follow”.

A young Congress leader admitted that the “politics” involved in the “controversy” was “too hot to be handled” by the party and the government. “Let’s face it, on religious issues, we can’t take sides. At best, we can err on the side of caution and that’s what we have done.”

When pointed out that the Congress was willing to take a stand on the Shiv Sena's offensive against Shah Rukh Khan's *My Name is Khan*, a leader said: "Ah well, SRK himself took a stand, we didn't need to on his behalf. The media were fully behind him, the chattering classes and what have you."

A young avant garde artist like Bose Krishnamachari partially concurred with the Congressman just quoted.

Krishnamachari admitted to feeling "shamed" by the turn of events but added that he would blame the Centre and Husain equally. "If he is strong enough, he should come back. Look at Shah Rukh, he took a risk and life is all about taking risks. But I guess he's not a movie star." Husain is over 90 and Shah Rukh is in his early 40s.

The BJP, which swam with the pro-Shah Rukh tide, iterated its known position on Husain. "If he has hurt Hindu sentiments, he should first reflect on his wrongdoing," said Lok Sabha MP Gopinath Munde.

A known votary of cultural tolerance in the BJP was unyielding. "I challenge him to paint blasphemous portraits of the Qatar ruler's family and face the consequences," he said.

Source: The Telegraph, Kolkata

[http://news.google.co.in/news/url?sa=t&ct2=in%2F0_0_s_25_0_t&ct3=MAA4AEgZUABqAmlu&usg=AFQjCNEBq7cHKC9tMZT6i99LcK77QpLxzA&cid=8797507803480&ei=ryqMS7ngO4PQ6APM3_oR&rt=STORY&vm=STANDARD&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.telegraphindia.com%2F1100226%2Fjsp%2Ffrontpage%2Fstory_12154024.jsp]

10. Husain won't automatically lose citizenship, 26 February 2010

MUMBAI: At 95, M F Husain, India's most celebrated artist has a decision to make. Though he was conferred a Qatar nationality, the artist living in a self-imposed exile in Dubai doesn't automatically lose his Indian citizenship until he "voluntarily acquires" the foreign one.

The Citizenship Act of 1955 makes it clear that termination of Indian citizenship can be done in two ways: renunciation or acquisition of citizenship of another country. The acquisition, the law requires, has to be voluntarily. "Nothing will happen to Husain if he treads carefully," said a very highly placed law officer in Delhi.

The eminent artist who offended a section of Hindus with a work representing India as a nude Goddess attracted a series of "obscenity cases" ...

Source: The Times of India, New Delhi

[<http://www.google.co.in/url?sa=t&source=web&ct=res&cd=2&ved=0CAwQFjAB&url=http%3A%2F%2Ftimesofindia.indiatimes.com%2FIndia%2FHusain-wont-automatically-lose-citizenship-%2Farticleshow%2F5617693.cms&rct=j&q=hussain+wont+automatically+lose+citizenship&ei=jRyMS6aTEsi9rAfSyrWoCg&usg=AFQjCNGUCI1hLC8aU53Enpwfux38clCLhQ>]

11. 'Inadequate security to artists is strangulation of free Bharat', 26 February 2010

NEW DELHI: It's a palette of anger, anguish and cynicism. Senior artists and other eminent personalities reacted to Qatar's conferring citizenship on master painter M F Husain with deep regret at how the government has failed to provide protection to an artist hounded by fundamentalists. Ironically, "the only Indian painter in history who has extensively painted both Ramayana and Mahabharata," adds Lalit Kala Akademi chairman Ashok Vajpeyi.

Padma Vibhushan M F Husain was first vilified in 1996 in a Hindi journal over his depiction of Indian deities made in the 1970s. On the charge that they hurt 'Hindu sentiments', his exhibitions were targeted, his work vandalized alongside freely expressed death threats and threats of "cutting off his arms or blinding him," says Vajpeyi. With

successive governments quiet on the issue, Husain has lived in exile in Dubai and London for almost 13 years. Aged 95 now, he reportedly faces almost 900 cases...

Fellow artists said that protests are integral to democracy but when they become violent and ugly, the government must protect its citizens, which successive Indian governments have either failed to or chosen not to. "Courts are for justice. Our judicial system cannot allow itself to be used to victimize," says artist-activist Ram Rahman, of Sahmat, a civil society group that has tried "for years" to bring Husain back. "You can't use violence or threat of violence and call it protest. Its travesty of justice, absolute tragedy for democracy," he says.

Absence of any political statement that Husain should be provided security showed government endorsement of the violence. "With their silence, India's political wing and executive have endorsed the views of the fascist Right. Husain openly identified with the Congress, Nehru, Indira, Rajiv Gandhi," says Vivan Sundaram, but "he's been completely abandoned". Deeply saddened by the turn of events, filmmaker Shyam Benegal adds, "Why are we not capable of giving protection to Husain? It seems politics of intimidation has won.

Too true, and that's the single point emerging time and again. "On the one hand, government can't stop Bal Thackeray; on the other, it cannot provide security to writers and artists. It is a strangulation of free Bharat," says writer Rajendra Yadav, adding, "The government seems to be weak and open to making compromised".

Vajpeyi adds that there were "helpful signs" that home minister Chidambaram had moved to bring Husain back, but even that seemed to have been jettisoned. "He can't even come back to India to die," says friend Rahman. The helplessness of the artist community is obvious.

"We are nobody. Why ask us? Ask the home minister, ask the PMO. When they can give security to ministers, why can't they give security to one of India's greatest?" counter questions artist Jatin Das. "I met him last year. He wants to come back. But nobody's willing to give him security," he added. It's been a disappointing, at times shocking, struggle for Sahmat. A letter dated 2006 to president Kalam, asking the State to honour him with a Bharat Ratna was not even acknowledged.

Source: The Times of India, New Delhi

[\[http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Inadequate-security-to-artists-is-strangulation-of-free-Bharat/articleshow/5617699.cms\]](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Inadequate-security-to-artists-is-strangulation-of-free-Bharat/articleshow/5617699.cms)

12. Hounded out by saffron groups, M F Husain may become Qatar citizen, 26 February 2010

Hounded out by bigotry and endless court cases, India's best known artist may soon no longer be an Indian. Maqbool Fida Husain has been conferred an honorary Qatari citizenship. If he chooses to accept, he will have to surrender his Indian passport and renounce his Indian citizenship.

News of Husain's new nationality created ripples in the art world and triggered anger over the government's failure to bring home the artist who was forced to flee India in 2006 and flit between Dubai and London as criminal cases -- filed by fringe Hindu extremist groups alleging he had defiled deities by depicting them obscenely -- piled up in Indian courts. Last year, the Supreme Court clubbed all nine cases against Husain and transferred it to a Delhi magistrate's court in a bid to clear the mess. But no hearing was held and no clear order absolving him came. He felt he was still liable for arrest on Indian soil and never came back.

Sources close to Husain confirmed the news report, carried on Thursday by The Hindu daily, but there was no response from Husain to queries; calls to his phones in Dubai went unanswered.

The report said Husain had not applied for nationality of Qatar but the citizenship of the tiny, oil-soaked emirate was conferred on him by the ruling family after he started work on sculptures commissioned by the powerful first lady Shiekha Mozah bin Nasser al Misned, wife of Qatar ruler Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al Thani.

The daily also carries an image of a fax in which Husain wrote in his own hand: "I, the Indian origin painter, M.F. Husain at 95, have been honoured by Qatar nationality."

Caught off-guard by the news that Husain was no longer an Indian, the government claimed the Supreme Court had quashed cases against the artist and he would be protected if he returned.

The Congress saw in it a chance to badger the saffron brigade and blame it. "If he decides to come back, it is the responsibility of the government ...

Fielding criticism, RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat said the artist ...

But for most of Husain's friends and well-wishers, the government was clearly to blame for the nation losing its finest artist. "We believe that he has made a signal contribution in reworking the aesthetic traditions of India, including especially the tradition of iconographic innovation. He is among those few modern artists who have focused on mythological and epic narratives, and, for over half a century, he has painted," said a

statement signed by eminent artists Tyeb Mehta, Vivan Sundaram, Krishen Khanna and filmmaker Shyam Benegal among others.

Source: The Times of India, New Delhi

[http://www.google.co.in/url?sa=t&source=web&oi=news_result&ct=res&cd=1&ved=0CAYQqQIwAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Ftimesofindia.indiatimes.com%2FIndia%2FHounded-out-by-saffron-groups-M-F-Husain-may-become-Qatar-citizen%2Farticleshow%2F5617428.cms&rct=j&q=Hounded+out+by+saffron+groups%2C+M+F+Husain+may+become+Qatar+citizen&ei=OzCMS5_LK4qA7QPevrCzDQ&usg=AFQjCNH0iVfdwiU62oWkK-goJq38sqRacg]

13. Not opposed to Husain living in India: RSS chief, 26 February 2010

Thiruvananthapuram: Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh chief Mohan Bhagwat on Thursday said his organisation had no opposition to the noted painter M.F. Husain living in India.

Replying to questions by journalists at the Thiruvananthapuram Press Club here, Mr. Bhagwat pointed out that the grant of Qatar citizenship to Mr. Husain was not connected to his complaint that he could not live in India. “Why should we oppose or welcome him? He is an Indian citizen. He can come any day. The decision to grant citizenship is that of the Qatar government,” he said. The RSS was not against artistic freedom, but like any other freedom it too had a limit, he said....

Source: The Hindu, Chennai

[http://www.google.co.in/url?sa=t&source=web&ct=res&cd=3&ved=0CA4QFjAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.thehindu.com%2F2010%2F02%2F26%2Fstories%2F2010022661451100.htm&rct=j&q=not+opposed+to+mf+hussain+living+in+india&ei=th-MS5bpEdO6rAemlo2NCg&usg=AFQjCNEWCXz2ksv_yApTigcvPuIzWkIk9QJ]

14. M F Husain would no longer be an Indian, 26 February 2010

DUBAI: M F Husain, revered by many as India's Picasso, would no longer be an Indian, his son said today, confirming that he had accepted Qatar's offer to confer its nationality on him.

Husain, who has been living in self-imposed exile for nearly four years following a spate of cases in India over his controversial paintings of Hindu goddesses, has accepted the offer and it is under process, Husain's son Owais Husain told PTI here today. He said the Qatari nationality was not something he asked for, but it is the truth now. "I respect his individual decision because somewhere as a son you have witnessed a range of emotions he is going through".

"Since Indian laws don't allow dual citizenship, accepting this offer would automatically mean giving up Indian nationality. There is no option for him", he said.

Owais also said the 95-year-old painter was in Doha currently and would return to Dubai next month.

"He (Husain) got a lot of calls, some provocative ones... but he didn't succumb to it and that goes to show his resilience at the age of 95".

"After all he is older than independent India," Owais said, noting that Husain was born in "one of the most holy places (Pandharpur — a pilgrimage site) of Maharashtra."

However, he said one cannot take away the Indianness that defined his father. "You can take a man out of the country but you cannot take the country out of the man."

Owais, who is also working on a documentary on the life of Husain, said his father has been become very prolific as a painter in the last few years.

"Since he (Husain) is not a man of words but a man of images, he has poured it all out on the canvas. He has painted the Ramayana; he has painted on India and a whole lot of series in the past few years he has been away from India.

"He has travelled to a lot of places but he has a thing about painting a series of 100 paintings on the history of India. He is working like never before and he just wants to work," Owais said.

Husain, who shuttles between Dubai and London, went in exile after a hate campaign was launched against him in 2006 over his controversial paintings.

Several cases were filed against him by people protesting his portrayal of Hindu goddesses in the nude. His house was attacked and art works vandalised by fundamentalists in India.

Husain's son, however, refused to comment on statements from India yesterday that he was welcome to come back.

"I don't know much about those comments. He is the best person to answer that question," Owais said.

Indian government yesterday described Husain as "pride of India" and said it was willing to provide security to him.

"There is no case against M F Husain. The Supreme Court has quashed all the cases against him," Union Home Secretary G K Pillai said in New Delhi. He said the government ...

"He (Husain) is the pride of India," Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao said adding, "I would like him to feel safe and secure in India".

Source: The Economic Times, New Delhi

[<http://www.google.co.in/url?sa=t&source=web&ct=res&cd=1&ved=0CAYQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Feconomictimes.indiatimes.com%2Fnews%2Fnews-by-industry%2Fet-cetera%2FM-F-Husain-would-no-longer-be-an-Indian%2Farticleshow%2F5620396.cms&rct=j&q=mf+hussain+would+no+longer+be+an+indian&ei=LCOMS7HYL47u7AO0vdCzDQ&usg=AFQjCNGefLtlSbef5mmYjBpxFQ597VjnMw>]

15. Husain has accepted Qatar citizenship, says son, 27 February 2010

MUMBAI: India's most celebrated artist Maqbool Fida Husain, who has been under attack from sections of the Hindu right, has accepted Qatar's offer of an honorary citizenship as having a "sense of belonging" was important at this stage of his life, said his son Owais Husain, who added that his father "missed home in India terribly".

M.F. Husain, 95, has dozens of lawsuits against him across the country for his paintings of goddesses that some Hindus find sacrilegious. The artist has been living abroad as a fugitive since 2006.

The celebrated painter left Dubai for Qatar Friday, his son filmmaker-writer-painter Owais Husain told IANS on phone from Dubai.

"Yes, he has left for Qatar where he was warmly received by a large welcoming committee. I was supposed to accompany him from here in Dubai to Qatar. But at the last minute I couldn't go. He travelled alone, as he has all his life, to his new home.

"My father has definitely accepted their offer (of Qatari citizenship). After years of being away from his real home (in India) this sense of belonging, albeit in an adopted country, was I think, very important at this stage of his life," said Owais, who shuttles between Dubai and Mumbai.

After Qatar made the citizenship offer to Husain and people in India got know about it, his fans and noted artists demanded that his return to India be facilitated.

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) said Husain was free to live anywhere in the country, and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) stressed that the artist "did not face danger to his life". But he still faces threats from fringe groups in the Hindu right, apart from the court cases.

Owais in Dubai seemed unaware of the sudden interest in India to get the artist back.

"Do they really want him back now? Isn't it a bit late? My father has been a nomad all his life. But he has been rendered homeless in recent years. He stayed close to me in Dubai and I tried to make him feel at home. But I had my own work too. I know he missed home in India terribly," said Owais, who is now completing a documentary on his father's life.

"I've titled it 'Letters to My Son about My Father'. My son is four years old. When he grows up he should know what a luminous legacy he has to uphold. My father is older than modern independent India. As a child he struggled to make ends meet. During British India he painted slogans against the rulers. In independent India he painted pictures that sold for astronomical sums of money. He didn't plan any of this. He didn't plan his exile in Dubai and now his citizenship in Qatar."

In Qatar, Husain has big plans, include a new feature film, revealed his proud son.

"I plan to fly down to Qatar and we will be discussing projects together. I don't know how to end my documentary on my father. There're no full stops to his life. His life has been charted by destiny."

As Husain makes Qatar his adopted home during his final years, his son said "He will continue to miss his real home wherever he is. You can take M.F. Husain out of India. But you can't take India out of M.F. Husain."

Source: New Indian Express, Chennai

[http://www.google.co.in/url?url=http://www.expressbuzz.com/edition/story.aspx%3FTitle%3DHusain%2Bhas%2Baccepted%2BQatar%2Bcitizenship,%2Bsays%2Bson%26article%3DEpFroh34caU%3D%26SectionID%3DoHSKVfNWYm0%3D%26MainSectionID%3DoHSKVfNWYm0%3D%26SectionName%3DVfE7I/VI8os%3D%26SEO%3DMF,%2520HUSSAIN,%2520QATAR&rct=j&ei=myCMS76DMMKwrAfH9o2mCg&sa=X&oi=spellmeleon_result&resnum=1&ct=result&ved=0CAYQhgIwAA&q=hussian+has+accepted+Qatar+nationality&usg=AFQjCNH-_HtN26AzkXYM0fKOSLnaoqJvQ]

16. I won't blame my father if he accepts Qatar offer, 27 February 2010

Firing a salvo and then disappearing into the lanes of Qatar is typical MF Husain. When you call his phone, a polite voice in Arabic tells you this number has been switched off. Meanwhile, the news of the maverick Bombay Progressives painter having accepted the citizenship offered upon him by the Qatar royal family has made its way around the globe. His little sketch of a horse and the cryptic note says it all: "I am an Indian citizen who has been offered Qatar citizenship."

His eldest son, Shamshad, is fighting a brave battle with a serious illness in hospital in Delhi while his youngest son, Owais, is immersed in his new film. In Dubai, Owais awaits the moment his dad will switch on his phone. "My father has always taken his own decisions. There is no ulterior motive in his accepting the citizenship offered to him by Qatar. Of course, giving up citizenship of India saddens him but they say that you can take a man out of the country but you cannot take the country out of a man," says Owais. His father, he adds, was born in the holy city of Pandharpur, and made posters of anti-British slogans in the late 1930s. "He went mad with joy when India achieved Independence. He remains as Indian as the next man on the street," adds Owais.

Husain's youngest son confirms that friends and well-wishers have been urging the painter to wait it out since the Supreme Court has intervened, saying he should be allowed back in India. "While a foreign country is bestowing the honour of citizenship on him, we have done nothing to provide him with security," says Akhil Sibal, MF Husain's lawyer. "The government has been a silent spectator."

Mumbai's Pundole Art Gallery held Husain's first solo-show way back in the 1960s. "India's loss is Qatar's gain," says Dadiba Pundole, son of Kali, who first discovered the artist when he was living on the pavement and painting film hoardings. The Pundoles last met Husain in November 2009, and, though Dadiba is in Dubai, he is one those waiting for the painter to turn on his cell.

Arun Vadehra, Director, Vadehra Art Gallery, says, "I had spoken with Husain earlier this week and we discussed the citizenship offered by Qatar. It is an honour because Qatar does not offer citizenship easily, but it is also sad news. I hope Husain retains his Indian citizenship and comes back." Kiran Nadar, a Delhi-based collector, has a party planned if the painter returns. "He is the pioneer of post-Independence Indian modern art and he would like to return," she says.

Source: Indian Express, New Delhi

[http://www.google.co.in/url?sa=t&source=web&ct=res&cd=1&ved=0CAYQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.indianexpress.com%2Fnews%2Fi-wont-blame-my-father-if-he-accepts-qatar-offer%2F585009%2F&rct=j&q=i+wont+blame+my+father+if+he+accepts+qatar+offer&ei=-CGMS7CzPI3U7AO3ssCzDQ&usg=AFQjCNG8VPaKrQgXudG-yhq_6zheYnwlsQ]

17. Husain accepts Qatari offer, 27 February 2010

DUBAI: After living in self-imposed exile for four years following a spate of litigation against him for his paintings of Hindu goddesses, India's iconic artist M.F. Husain has accepted the offer by Qatar to confer its nationality on him.

"He has accepted Qatar's offer for citizenship and the formalities are under process," Owais Husain, the legendary artist's son living in Dubai told *The Hindu*.

In an exclusive write-up on Thursday, the paper had reported that Mr. Husain had been offered Qatari citizenship.

Asked whether his father could still change his mind and return to India, Mr. Owais Husain said: "I don't know. These are all decisions that he takes on his own, which we respectfully accept."

He said that notwithstanding his decision to move out of his homeland, India permeated every part of his father's consciousness. "My father is too strongly rooted to India. You can take him to any part of the world, but he would still remain an Indian personified."

Mr. Owais Husain said the painter's early years, when he lost his mother followed by his migration to Mumbai, had significantly shaped his artistic and political consciousness. "For some time my father virtually lived on the steps of the Vithobha temple in Pandharpur, the place of his birth. Later he moved to Mumbai, during a time when the political atmosphere around him was also surcharged on account of the freedom struggle. I think these experiences influenced his mental make-up and impacted his innate sense of secularism."

Asked how exile and the unhappy events surrounding his exit from India had affected Mr. Husain, Mr. Owais Husain said that it generated in his father, an extraordinary torrent of creativity.

A man who expressed himself more through brush, paint and canvas, rather than the spoken word, he has painted a riot of images during this phase. Mr. Husain has been prolific in painting images out of the Ramayana, and is involved in painting 100 images on the history of India.

"I suppose this happens when trauma of exile blocks some part of your senses, but energetically opens out other creative senses."

Source: The Hindu, Chennai

[http://www.google.co.in/url?sa=t&source=web&oi=news_result&ct=res&cd=1&ved=0CAkQqQIwAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.hindu.com%2F2010%2F02%2F27%2Fstories%2F2010022761901200.htm&rct=j&q=hussain+accepts+qatar+offer&ei=giWMS6j3K5Di7AP64IG0DQ&usg=AFQjCNFrqtOoD0cX_nkzd7aQVwXV7BAfpw]

18. Plea in SC to withdraw cases against Husain, 27 February 2010

A petition has been filed in the Supreme to withdraw all criminal cases against noted painter M F Husain in a bid to dissuade him from accepting the nationality of Qatar, the Middle-East nation where the 95-year-old artist is living in self-imposed exile.

The public interest litigation, filed in the Supreme Court on Thursday (February 25), immediately after the news broke out that Husain had been conferred the foreign nationality, said the artist “deserves a dignified return” with no threats of criminal action against him.

The petition by Supreme Court advocate Bhim Singh said: “While being a rare honour, Mr Husain’s impending change of nationality brings to close one of the sorriest chapters in independent India’s secular history.”

Seeking that the Centre ensures the return of “India's legendary artist back to his homeland”, Singh stated that denial of freedom to Husain infringed on his Fundamental Rights.

Source: Indian Express, New Delhi

[\[http://www.indianexpress.com/news/plea-in-sc-to-withdraw-cases-against-husain/585020/\]](http://www.indianexpress.com/news/plea-in-sc-to-withdraw-cases-against-husain/585020/)

19. 'Picasso of India' is now Qatari citizen, 28 February 2010

NEW DELHI: India's best-known painter M F HUSAIN has accepted Qatar's offer of citizenship, his son said yesterday.

Husain, 94, known as the "Picasso of India," angered hardliner Hindus by portraying Hindu deities in a sexually suggestive manner.

"He has accepted Qatar's offer for citizenship and the formalities are under process," Owais Husain, the artist's son living in Dubai said.

M F Husain went into self-imposed exile in 2006 after a Hindu group offered a reward of \$11.5 million for his death over his controversial paintings.

Owais Husain said that despite his father's decision to leave his homeland, India permeated every part of his consciousness.

"My father is too strongly rooted to India. You can take him to any part of the world, but he would still remain an Indian personified," he said.

Nothing could take away the Indian-ness that defined his father, he said.

The artist had said earlier in the week that he had been granted nationality by the emirate's royal family ...

Obtaining Qatari nationality could mean that M F Husain would have to give up his Indian passport ...

M F Husain is one of India's wealthiest painters. One of his works fetched \$1.6m at a Christie's auction in New York in 2008.

Source: Gulf Daily News, Bahrain

[http://www.google.co.in/url?sa=t&source=web&ct=res&cd=1&ved=0CAYQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.gulf-daily-news.com%2FNewsDetails.aspx%3Fstoryid%3D271893&rct=j&q=picasso+of+India+is+now+qatari+citizen&ei=sS2MS9krkOrsA_6ljLMN&usg=AFQjCNGrafFTHrFHVFLqtWTOX57dtnsyiw]

20. 'M F Husain denigrated Indian culture', 01 March 2010

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Bharatiya Vichara Kendra director P. Parameswaran has criticised painter M.F. Husain for consistently denigrating Indian culture.

In a press release issued on Sunday in the background of the news that Husain had accepted Qatar nationality, Parameswaran said that in the name of artistic freedom Husain had painted Hindu gods and goddesses and even Bharat Matha in a manner, which deeply hurt the sentiments and sensibilities of patriotic Indians.

That M.F. Husain has accepted Qatar nationality is good news, good for him and good for India. He got what he desired and lost what he hardly deserved, the statement said.

He had to leave India because of the intense anger of his misusing artistic freedom. Now, he is free to utilise his newly-won nationality to make full commercial benefit of his negative artistic talents while staying abroad, the statement said. A number of human right activists are raising a hue and cry against the denial of M.F. Husain's fundamental right to live in India. Their argument is that he has done only what has already been in vogue in India a long time back.

In many Hindu temples, figures have been painted in an obscene manner. But it must be remembered that great Indian patriots like Swami Vivekananda have openly condemned

such paintings and described such paintings as degenerate and not representing true Indian art. Nobody now admires them and no artist reproduces such paintings except Husain, the statement said. It was against such paintings that the great Indian artists Raja Ravi Varma produced hundreds of portraits of Hindu gods and goddesses and won worldwide acclaim, the statement said. It was an act of sheer arrogance on the part of the Kerala Government that it recently decided to honour M.F. Husain by giving him Raja Ravi Varma award.

It is another matter that they could not succeed in this nefarious attempt due to public protest and judicial intervention, the statement said.

The “righteous indignation!” of the human rights activists in the case of Husain is to be seen in comparison to their silent acquiescence of the Tibetan spiritual leader Dalai Lama half-a- century-old exile in India. Husain had to leave India for denigrating Indian culture, whereas Dalai Lama was forced to leave Tibet in order to protect and practise the millennium-old tradition and culture of Tibet.

It will indeed be interesting to watch if Husain utilises his freedom as a Qatar national to produce paintings of Islamic symbols in the manner in which he has been painting Hindu icons and symbols. That would also show how genuine is his secularism and the independence of his vociferous supporters in India, he said.

Source: Express Buzz, Chennai

[http://news.google.co.in/news/url?sa=t&ct2=in%2F0_0_s_0_0_t&ct3=MAA4AEgAUABqAmlu&usg=AFQjCNExmQwqo9gJJTw6DbjxO_KAZWZkDg&cid=0&ei=4CiMS-juMYmM7APywIwS&rt=SEARCH&vm=STANDARD&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.expressbuzz.com%2Fedition%2Fstory.aspx%3Ftitle%3D%25E2%2580%2598M%2BF%2BHussain%2Bdenigrated%2BIndian%2Bculture%25E2%2580%2599%26artid%3DLqQPDQ%257C0kAQ%3D%26SectionID%3DIMx%2Fb5mt1kU%3D%26MainSectionID%3DIMx%2Fb5mt1kU%3D%26SEO%3D%26SectionName%3Dtm2kh5uDhixGIQvAG42A%2F07OVZOOEmts]

21. Hounding out Husain, 1 March 2010

With reports suggesting that M F Husain has accepted the offer of honorary citizenship from Qatar and, given India’s rules on not allowing dual citizenship, we will have to face the patently absurd and shameful predicament of arguably our most celebrated artist

literally being forced to renounce Indian citizenship. The way to make the best of a bad situation, if the government genuinely feels as embarrassed as vast sections of civil society, would be to persuade the 95-year-old artist to return home with adequate security, or even use this instance to re-examine the grounds for disallowing dual citizenship. But then, it's our very polity that's the root of the problem. Given that communal identity management is part and parcel of politics, the state has consistently prevaricated on obscurantist individuals and groups abrogating the right to be offended on sundry issues, whether Husain's art or Rushdie's Satanic Verses. Allowing or sustaining such forms of communalism while claiming, or aspiring to, high democratic ideals is sheer hypocrisy. Thus, the absurdity of a situation where a Taslima Nasreen, fleeing from persecution in her own country, is allowed a form of refuge in India, while MF Husain is hounded out

The Congress-led government can hardly express regret with a straight face. There is an abysmal record of failing to provide security to artists like Husain, with, say, even a handful of hooligans being allowed to threaten or attack art exhibitions. Or willy-nilly contributing to a scenario where the supposedly leading light of Indian art is even elided out of exhibitions. This, even as the Delhi High Court and the Supreme Court in 2008 quashed some of the obscenity cases filed against Husain. The point isn't even that, given the rich history of sensuality within Indian art and iconography, Husain has clearly been unfairly targeted. The politics of targeting the minorities perverts democracy itself. As does week-kneed surrender before the forces of coercion and exclusion. Rule of law, culture and artistic freedom too turn casualties.

Source: Editorial, The Economic Times, New Delhi

[http://news.google.co.in/news/url?sa=t&ct2=in%2F0_0_s_5_0_t&ct3=MAA4AEgFUABqAmlu&usg=AFQjCNEYoBWBBnGWmTqP52kfIhTkpENwGw&cid=8797507803480&ei=4CmMS_C5JoPQ6APM3_oR&rt=STORY&vm=STANDARD&url=http%3A%2F%2Feconomictimes.indiatimes.com%2FEditorial%2FHounding-out-Husain%2Farticleshow%2F5629673.cms]

22. Will not allow any threat to MF Husain: Chidambaram, 2 March 2010

New Delhi. Days after M F Husain was given Qatari citizenship, Government today said it would be very happy to see the eminent painter return to India and that it would not allow any threat to him.

"We would be very happy if M F Husain returns to India," Home Minister P Chidambaram said in reply to a question at a press conference.

He said that Husain's family had been informed that full security would be provided to him if the 95 years old artist decides to come back to the country.

"There is no danger to him and we will not allow any threat to him," Chidambaram said noting that there were some cases against the painter in lower courts and lawyers can find a way to put an end to those.

Source: Press Trust of India, New Delhi

[http://news.google.co.in/news/url?sa=t&ct2=in%2F0_0_s_0_0_t&ct3=MAA4AEgAUABqAmlu&usg=AFQjCNER4aP7PoIP02Z2nwritDtBccRt9w&cid=8797510412766&ei=uFyNS9HIDYPQ6APM3_oR&rt=STORY&vm=STANDARD&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ptinews.com%2Fnews%2F544405_Will-not-allow-any-threat-to-M-F-Husain—Chidambaram]

Chronology of Events

- **1996:** Paintings of nude deities creates controversy. He had created these paintings in the 1970s.
- **1996:** Hindi magazine publishes article on Husain calling him "painter or butcher".
- Eight criminal complaints filed against Husain following the article.
- **1998:** Husain's house attacked by Bajrang Dal. Shiv Sena endorses attack
- **1999:** London exhibition cancelled after controversy gains steam in India.
- **2006:** Charged with hurting sentiments of people because of nude portraits of Hindu Gods and Goddesses.
- **2006:** Non-bailable arrest warrant issued.

25 February 2010- Media announces Qatari citizenship being conferred upon M F Husain.

26 February 2010- Centre tiptoes on Qatar offer to Husain; senior artists and other eminent personalities reacted to Qatar's conferring citizenship; RSS for the second time says they are not opposed to Husain's return to India;

27 February 2010 - Husain's son announced the acceptance of Qatari citizenship by his father; Plea in SC to withdraw cases against Husain.

28 February 2010- India's best-known painter M F Husain has accepted Qatar's offer of citizenship.

02 March 2010- Union Minister of Home Affairs P. Chidambaram says he wants to have Husain back home and assures full security for the artist.

N Alvite is pursuing his M Phil degree in the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

The views expressed here are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views/position of the MEI@ND.

Editor, MEI Digest: P R Kumaraswamy