



Tarnishing India, Targeting Hindu Diaspora



The Weaponization of Transnational Repression Narrative Against India

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About Us

American Hindus Against Defamation (AHAD)

Founded in 1997, American Hindus Against Defamation (AHAD) is the world's first and most prominent Hindu organization dedicated to combating defamation. AHAD actively monitors mass media, products, public places, and other media to ensure the respectful and accurate representation of Hindu dharma, culture, images, and icons. Since the inception of AHAD, hundreds of thousands of Hindus have participated in various advocacy activities led by AHAD. AHAD AI uses purpose-built, sophisticated AI tools to detect, document, and counter Hindu hatred and Hinduphobia.

In 2024, AHAD initiated a groundbreaking AI initiatives to detect Hinduphobia.



www.ahadinfo.org

HinduPACT

The Hindu Policy Research and Advocacy Collective (HinduPACT) was established in 2020 as an initiative of the World Hindu Council of America (VHPA), dedicated to advocating for and researching issues concerning the American Hindu community. HinduPACT promotes human rights, voter education, and policies affecting American Hindus, aiming for peace and understanding through informed policy initiatives and grassroots advocacy. On January 1, 2025, HinduPACT became an independent organization. HinduPACT flagship initiatives include, HinduVote, CHINGARI, HAHRI and AHAD.



<https://hindupact.org>

Tattwa.ai



<https://tattwa.ai>

Tattwa.ai is an independent technology company specializing in applications of Artificial Intelligence for the betterment of humanity. Tattwa.ai is an initiative of Dharma Universe LLC. The Hindu Universe, the very first Hindu website is another initiative of Dharma Universe.

Get in Touch:

Email: ahad@hindupact.org **Phone:** (858) 866-9661

X: @AHADHindu **YouTube:** @HinPACTVideos

Website: <https://ahadinfo.org>

Executive Summary

Purpose and Analytical Framework

This report, authored by the American Hindus Against Defamation (AHAD), an initiative of the Hindu Policy Research and Advocacy Collective (HinduPACT), provides a comprehensive, evidence-based analysis of the transnational repression (TNR) narrative as it is constructed and promoted against India.

The UN defines transnational repression as actions by governments to silence, intimidate, or harm critics and dissidents abroad. This includes online harassment, surveillance, enforced disappearances, targeting of relatives, and physical attacks such as assassinations.

The analysis is guided by three primary objectives: to uncover the motivations and mechanisms behind the promotion of the TNR narrative targeting India, to critically evaluate the legitimacy of these allegations and to identify the actors and networks advancing them, and to assess the tangible and projected impacts of the TNR narrative on Indian and Hindu diaspora communities, particularly in Western democracies. Rooted in the experiences and concerns of Indian and Hindu diaspora communities, the report aims to restore analytical rigor, safeguard civil rights, and uphold the integrity of these communities amid increasing politicization and advocacy-driven narratives.

The Promotion of the TNR Narrative Against India

The report reveals that the TNR narrative against India has not emerged organically but has been propagated by a coalition of ideologically motivated NGOs, advocacy networks, and certain state actors. These groups seek to equate India, a constitutional democracy, with authoritarian regimes, often to serve broader geopolitical objectives, influence foreign policy, or advance separatist and anti-India agendas. The construction of this narrative is achieved through academic publications, advocacy reports, congressional testimonies, and media campaigns. It is amplified by organizations with links to separatist movements, foreign intelligence services, and advocacy groups with a history of antagonism toward India and Hindu institutions. The strategic goals of these efforts are clear: to delegitimize India's global standing and soft power, disrupt India's diplomatic and economic relationships with Western democracies, create legislative and institutional obstacles for Indian and Hindu organizations abroad, and sever the cultural and civilizational ties of the Hindu diaspora with their homeland.

Legitimacy of the TNR Narrative and Its Proponents

Upon critical examination, the report concludes that the TNR narrative, as applied to India, is largely unsupported by verifiable evidence. Most allegations rely on anecdotal claims, activist-driven narratives, and selective interpretation of lawful administrative actions such as visa denials or Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) revocations as acts of repression. The actors behind this narrative include advocacy groups such as the Indian American Muslim Council (IAMC), Hindus for Human Rights (HfHR), Sikh Coalition, and SALDEF, all of which have documented ideological or geopolitical motivations. International organizations like Freedom House, Human Rights Watch, and the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) are also cited for conflating legal, transparent actions with repressive tactics, often without corroborating evidence. The narrative is further advanced by certain political actors in host countries, sometimes for electoral gain or coalition politics, as seen in Canada. The analysis also highlights the role of Pakistani intelligence and advocacy networks in amplifying the TNR narrative as a tool of narrative warfare against India and the Hindu diaspora.

The report's comparative legal analysis demonstrates that India's diaspora engagement and counter-extremism measures are consistent with practices in other democracies and are subject to judicial oversight and due process. There is no credible evidence of extrajudicial actions, forced renditions, or systemic harassment akin to the practices of authoritarian regimes.

Impact on the Indian and Hindu Diaspora

The dissemination of the TNR narrative has had profound social, cultural, political, legal, economic, and psychological effects on Indian and Hindu diaspora communities. From a social and cultural perspective, there has been a marked increase in suspicion, hostility, and profiling directed towards Indian and Hindu organizations, temples, and community events. This has led to a chilling effect on civic participation, religious expression, and community advocacy, accompanied by a rise in hate crimes, vandalism, and targeted assaults on Hindu temples and leaders. Furthermore, the marginalization of Hindu voices within academic, political, and media spheres has become increasingly evident.

Politically and legally, legislative initiatives such as California's SB-509 pose a risk of institutionalizing suspicion and discrimination against Indian and Hindu Americans. There exists a potential for their exclusion from advisory committees, funding programs, and public forums, as well as an increased likelihood of legal scrutiny and vulnerability to investigations based on unsubstantiated allegations. Economically and professionally, barriers to advancement in sensitive sectors, decreased investment flows, and diminished business opportunities related to

India have surfaced, alongside tendencies toward self-censorship and withdrawal from public life due to fears of profiling or reprisals.

The psychological and intergenerational impact is equally significant. Community fragmentation and erosion of cultural identity, especially among youth, have increased anxiety, alienation, and identity conflict within diaspora families.

Overarching Goals and Policy Recommendations

The report advocates for the reinstatement of analytical rigor in policymaking, insisting that only independently verified instances be acknowledged as TNR. It calls for the safeguarding of the constitutional and cultural rights of Indian and Hindu diaspora communities against profiling, unwarranted scrutiny, and legislative encroachments. Transparency and accountability are underscored, with recommendations for comprehensive disclosure of funding sources and organizational affiliations associated with reports and entities promoting the TNR narrative. The document supports the enactment of TNR-related policies at the federal level to ensure consistency, due process, and protection against politicized enforcement. Additionally, it encourages proactive participation by diaspora organizations in defending civil rights, informing the public, and fostering mutual understanding with host societies.

Conclusion

In summary, the report finds that the TNR narrative against India is a product of coordinated advocacy, ideological bias, and geopolitical strategy, rather than empirical evidence. Its propagation threatens to undermine civil liberties, disrupt diaspora engagement, and erode the rights and cultural identity of Indian and Hindu communities abroad. The report calls for vigilance, transparency, and evidence-based policy to ensure that democratic values and diaspora rights are upheld, and that India and its diaspora are not unjustly equated with authoritarian regimes.

Why This Report

In recent years, allegations of “transnational repression” (TNR) against India have been propagated by a narrowly focused group of ideologically motivated non-governmental organizations, activists, and advocacy networks. These assertions, lacking verifiable evidence and grounded in political narratives, have led to legislative initiatives such as California’s SB-509¹ and notable reports from institutions including Freedom House, Human Rights Watch (HRW), and the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF). In this context, the Hindu Policy Research and Advocacy Collective (HinduPACT) has undertaken the principled and necessary step of publishing a comprehensive counter-report. Far from being partisan or nationalist, this response is essential for protecting civil rights, reinstating analytical rigor, and defending the integrity of American Hindu and Indian American communities, who increasingly become collateral victims in geopolitical conflicts.

HinduPACT’s justification primarily resides in the examination of the structural distortions present within the TNR narrative. Reports have increasingly portrayed India, despite its status as the world’s largest democracy, as morally comparable to authoritarian regimes such as China, Iran, and Russia. Such comparisons, upon closer evaluation, are unfounded. In contrast to these regimes, India functions within a framework characterized by judicial oversight, parliamentary scrutiny, and constitutional protections. Instruments such as Interpol Red Notices or the revocation of Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) are employed selectively against individuals associated with terrorism or sedition and are subject to review in Indian courts, standards that are comparable to or greater than those in the United States or the United Kingdom.

Nevertheless, the discourse promoted by organizations such as the Indian American Muslim Council (IAMC), Hindus for Human Rights (HfHR), and Khalistani front organizations deliberately obfuscates these legal distinctions. IAMC has consistently amplified fringe voices and has transformed domestic Indian political debates into U.S. congressional testimony without regard for factual accuracy. While purporting to advocate for human rights, HfHR has disproportionately concentrated on discrediting Hindu organizations within the United States—HinduPACT among them, by branding them as proxies of “Hindu extremists.” Khalistani groups, including Sikhs for Justice (SFJ), have gone further, with their U.S.-based operatives issuing threats against Hindu temples and urging Hindus to “return to India,” thereby portraying an entire community as complicit in foreign state repression.

In truth, these accusations of transnational repression are largely unrelated to India’s conduct overseas. Instead, they aim to serve a more profound ideological purpose: to detach the Hindu diaspora from its *dharmabhoomi*, its spiritual and civilizational homeland, and to sever its ties with the country of origin. The achievements of the Indian diaspora, particularly the Hindu community, in

areas such as technology, medicine, diplomacy, and entrepreneurship, have become a source of soft power and confer greater global stature upon India. Efforts to discredit these diaspora institutions undermine this influence and contribute to their alienation.

In such a setting, HinduPACT's counter-report transcends mere defense; it constitutes an act of community self-preservation. The predominant portion of Indian Americans—approximately 80 percent, according to Pew Research, identify as Hindu. Allegations of TNR are already stigmatizing India-diaspora and Hindu institutions, including temples, student associations, and cultural organizations, depicting them as adjuncts of Indian state power. This portrayal is not only factually inaccurate but also dangerously approaches ethnic profiling. Community members are apprehensive that charitable donations to Indian diaspora organizations may result in federal investigations due to misrepresentations by ideological opponents.

Furthermore, HinduPACT's intervention is timely as it addresses a significant gap in academic rigor. The majority of TNR reports depend on anonymous affidavits, hearsay, and ideological framing. Conversely, HinduPACT's analysis utilizes legal precedents, cross-national comparisons, and verifiable timelines. It differentiates lawful consular outreach from espionage, judicial proceedings from coercion, and civil diplomacy from intimidation. This contribution is vital to ensuring that the policy discourse surrounding diaspora engagement and national security remains grounded in factual evidence rather than factional interests.

In defending India against baseless allegations of transnational repression, HinduPACT defends something greater: the constitutional rights of Indian Americans, the reputation of diaspora institutions, and the fundamental distinction between democracy and despotism. Their voice deserves not only to be heard, but to be heeded.

Indian American, American Hindu, and Global Hindu Diaspora

Diaspora Engagement as Standard Diplomatic Practice

India's engagement with its diaspora, a community of over 32 million individuals spanning six continents,^{2,3} is not a clandestine operation of control or coercion, but a transparent and constitutionally sanctioned dimension of foreign policy. This outreach is anchored in a comprehensive and public-facing "4Cs" strategy: Care, Connect, Celebrate, Contribute.⁴ This framework, first articulated by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), is designed to deepen ties between India and its overseas citizens and persons of Indian origin, comprising approximately 14 million Indian passport holders and another 18 million naturalized foreign citizens.

India's diaspora policy aligns with practices observed in other democratic nations. Similar to the United States, Israel, Ireland, and China, India establishes dedicated institutional mechanisms designed to facilitate engagement with its global community for objectives such as economic cooperation, cultural diplomacy, and consular support. These initiatives are neither coercive nor clandestine; rather, they are systematically structured, regulated, and executed through public events, digital infrastructure, and parliamentary oversight.

One of the most emblematic initiatives in this regard is the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD). First celebrated in 2003 to mark the return of Mahatma Gandhi to India on 9 January 1915, PBD is held biennially by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in collaboration with prominent industry associations such as the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).⁵ The 18th edition, conducted in Bhubaneswar in January 2025, attracted over 6,000 delegates from 75 countries.⁶ Attendees comprised diaspora entrepreneurs, scholars, technocrats, and youth leaders, who participated in policy roundtables and business forums centered on investment, digital innovation, and leadership development among young professionals of Indian origin.

India's dedication to the welfare of its diaspora is clearly exemplified through extensive emergency initiatives. The Vande Bharat Mission, conducted from 2020 to 2022 amid the COVID-19 pandemic, effectively repatriated over 1.8 million Indian nationals stranded overseas from more than 90 countries.⁷ This operation ranks among the largest government-coordinated evacuations in history and underscores India's logistical capabilities and its commitment to protecting its diaspora during times of crisis.

Another essential aspect of diaspora engagement is digital connectivity. The Global Indian Knowledge Diaspora Network, facilitated by the Overseas Indian Facilitation Centre (OIFC), provides a comprehensive platform for professionals of Indian origin to network, mentor, and invest in initiatives within their homeland. The OIFC, established in 2007 through a collaboration

between the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (subsequently integrated into the Ministry of External Affairs) and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII),⁸ functions as a centralized portal for non-resident Indians (NRIs) and persons of Indian origin (PIOs).⁹ Its offerings include legal advisory clinics, investor matchmaking services, ICT-based market linkages connecting Indian states with diaspora entrepreneurs, and a multilingual, 24/7 live facilitation desk providing consular support.

The outcomes of these initiatives are empirically verifiable. India has maintained its status as the world's largest recipient of remittances for more than twenty years. In 2023, the nation received \$120 billion in remittances,¹⁰ representing a 7.5% year-over-year increase. The primary sources of these inflows were the United States (23 percent) and the United Arab Emirates (18 percent).¹¹ During the fiscal year 2024–2025, this amount increased to \$135.46 billion, accounting for nearly 47 percent of India's merchandise trade deficit and exceeding 10 percent of the country's gross current account inflows.¹²

Diaspora investment constitutes a fundamental element of India's development diplomacy. Initiatives such as India@75, diaspora roadshows, and state-specific investor summits have facilitated the mobilization of approximately \$45 billion in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) commitments from the global Indian community between 2021 and 2024. These capital inflows not only create employment opportunities and promote innovation but also reinforce the diaspora's dedication to actively contributing to India's advancement.

Importantly, all of these programs are transparent, well-documented, and subject to inter-ministerial coordination as well as parliamentary scrutiny. Unlike coercive outreach strategies employed by authoritarian regimes, India's diaspora engagement mechanisms are neither surveillance-oriented nor intended to suppress dissent. These mechanisms serve as explicit demonstrations of cultural and diplomatic soft power, aligning with the practices of democratic nations seeking to strengthen their global connections.

Efforts to characterize this structured and advantageous engagement as “transnational repression” misrepresents India's intentions and actions.

India's Sikh Community

Efforts to characterize India's national security measures as "anti-Sikh repression" significantly distort the historical integration of Sikhs within India's democratic framework and misrepresent the nature of its legal responses to violent extremism. The Sikh community is not marginalized in Indian public life; rather, it is an integral part of India's national fabric, its national institutions, and holds a globally respected reputation for its contributions to politics, defense, economy, and civil society.

India is home to approximately 20.8 million Sikhs, accounting for 1.72 percent of its population and representing the fourth-largest religious demographic. These figures constitute 83 percent of the global Sikh community, estimated to be between 25 and 30 million individuals. The remaining diaspora is primarily located in Canada (771,790; 2.12 percent of its population), the United Kingdom (524,529; 0.85 percent), the United States (ranging from 280,000 to 500,000; approximately 0.08 percent), and Australia (210,400; 0.87 percent).¹³

Sikhs have historically held some of the highest constitutional offices in India. Giani Zail Singh served as President of India from 1982 to 1987, and Dr. Manmohan Singh, a distinguished economist and statesman of international repute, was Prime Minister from 2004 to 2014. The judiciary has also seen notable Sikh representation: Justice Jagdish Singh Khehar served as the 44th Chief Justice of India in 2017,¹⁴ while Justice Ranjit Singh Sarkaria became the first Sikh Supreme Court judge in 1973.¹⁵ In the present 18th Lok Sabha (2024–2029), twelve members identify as Sikh, representing approximately five percent of the lower house, significantly exceeding the community's national demographic proportion.

The Indian Armed Forces have historically acknowledged and esteemed the valor and discipline exhibited by Sikh soldiers. Although constituting less than 2 percent of the general population, Sikhs constitute approximately 8 percent of the Indian Army. Esteemed regiments, such as the Sikh Regiment and Sikh Light Infantry, have garnered distinctions spanning from World Wars I and II to contemporary counter-insurgency endeavors.¹⁶ Their service exemplifies the community's longstanding and ongoing loyalty to the Indian Republic.

Within civil society and diplomatic spheres, India actively engages with Sikh organizations to promote cultural outreach and ensure diaspora inclusion. Indian embassies routinely collaborate with diaspora groups, including the Sikh Coalition (United States) and the British Sikh Association, to organize cultural festivals such as Vaisakhi and Guru Nanak Gurburab, provide legal aid clinics for Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) holders, and facilitate interfaith dialogues. Diaspora cities host Pravasi Sikh Samellan conferences, paralleling the official Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, thereby emphasizing the community's vital role in India's international representation.

Economically, Sikhs exert considerable influence. In India, they lead advancements in agriculture within Punjab, the country's primary breadbasket,¹⁷ and maintain a significant presence in trade, real estate, and service sectors. Internationally, Sikh entrepreneurs and professionals are among the most accomplished ethnic groups: in Canada, they dominate sectors such as transportation, real estate, and law; in the United Kingdom, Sikh Members of Parliament are active advocates for minority rights; in the United States, Sikh Americans are prominent in technology, healthcare, academia, and government administration.

This level of integration and accomplishment markedly contrasts with the assertion that India maintains a systemic bias against its Sikh population. India's legal measures directed at organizations such as Sikhs for Justice (SFJ) or individuals like Hardeep Singh Nijjar are not indicative of hostility towards Sikhism or its community. Rather, these are targeted counterterrorism initiatives aimed at specific individuals and groups who endorse secessionism and violence, rather than at religious identity or peaceful dissent.

Attempts to characterize such law enforcement as anti-Sikh are not only factually inaccurate but also politically motivated and dangerously reductive. They eliminate the accomplishments of a vibrant, empowered community and diminish nuanced legal processes to communal defamation. This distortion becomes particularly evident in the context of California Senate Bill 509 (SB-509) as described in a subsequent section.

Framing the Transnational Repression Accusation Against India

The Brewing Storm: Transnational Repression (TNR) Narrative Against India

This section examines the coordinated network of state actors, advocacy organizations, and individuals that have progressively built TNR narrative against India. The following table shows the global built up of TNR activities since 2021.

Country	US	UK	Canada	Australia
2021 (Global)	Initial recognition; foundational reports (Freedom House); official definitions (DoJ, FBI)	Initial policy review (Integrated Review); growing state threats acknowledged	Civil society reports on foreign interference; leaked intelligence on election influence	Legislative framework on foreign interference (pre-2021 context); review of Magnitsky-style sanctions begins
2021 (India)	No specific mention.	No specific mention.	No specific mention.	No specific mention.
2022 (Global)	Increased focus on policy responses; Freedom House report on host government responses; FBI website launched	High-profile incidents (Chinese police stations, Manchester assault) ignite public debate; MI5 plots revealed	Revelations of "overseas police stations"; public debate on foreign interference intensifies	Continued review of sanctions; government outreach to multicultural communities
2022 (India)	No specific mention.	No specific mention.	No specific mention.	No specific mention.
2023 (Global)	Congressional hearings on TNR trends; CISA initiatives for high-risk communities	Increased official awareness; cross-agency task force formed; parliamentary inquiry initiated	Hogue inquiry raises awareness; TNR linked to democratic integrity;	Focus on human rights impacts; limited direct support for targeted

			classified reports limit transparency	individuals; fear of reporting
2023 (India)	No specific mention.	No specific mention.	India-related TNR discussed in Hogue inquiry, with testimonies from Indian diaspora.	No specific mention.
2024 (Global)	Continued policy development; State Department reports; focus on digital TNR & journalists	Enhanced law enforcement training; review of TNR response; specific cases highlighted	Public warnings about TNR targeting elections (SITE Task Force); legislative amendments (criminal penalties, registry)	International reports note Australia's emerging TNR policies; specific targeting of diaspora groups documented
2024 (India)	Concerns about threats from India noted in congressional hearing; India examined as a country case for TNR. DOJ unsealed indictment against Indian national for assassination plot against Sikh American.	No specific mention.	No specific mention.	No specific mention.
2025 (Global)	Leading global efforts (G7 statement); legislative proposals (HR 3654)	Continued focus on rights violations; persistent gaps in grassroots engagement	TNR becomes major election issue; G7 dialogue hosted; persistent gaps in community hotline awareness	Sanctions report published; continued focus on foreign interference vs. specific TNR victim support

2025 (India)	Lantos Commission hearing focused on India's transnational repression, assassinations, and targeting of Sikhs. California SB-509 bill advanced, aiming to train law enforcement on TNR, sparking debate within the Indian diaspora. USCIRF 2025 report recommended designating India as a Country of Particular Concern due to religious freedom violations and TNR, urging sanctions on RAW and Vikash Yadav.	No specific mention.	Candidates withdrew from election due to reports of encouraging intimidation of dissidents from China and India.	No specific mention.
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Narrative Construction

We examine the TNR Narrative construction along five dimensions. These comprise of academic publications, reports from governmental agencies and international organizations, reports from Human Rights groups and advocacy groups and finally, the individuals promoting the TNR narrative

1. Academic Publications

Here are some of the key academic publications that build the foundation of TNR charges against India.

Title	Authors	Year	Source
Transnational Repression: International Cooperation in Silencing Dissent¹⁸	R. Cordell & K. Medhi	2024	International Studies Quarterly
India's Transnational Repression and the Theatre of Khalistan¹⁹	N. Nawaz	2023	IRS Spotlight
Transnational Repression and International Human Rights Enforcement²⁰	M. Tinubu & B. Zagaris	2024	IELR Journal
Transnational Repression and International Law²¹	L. van den Herik & S. Anstis	2025	Nomos eLibrary
Digital Transnational Repression and Host States' Obligation to Protect²²	S. Anstis & S. Barnett	2022	Journal of Human Rights Practice
Constraining Tamil Transnational Political Action²³	C. R. Craven	2022	Journal of Global Security Studies
Digital Transnational Repression²⁴	N. Al-Jizawi et al.	2021	Citizen Lab
The International Dimensions of the New Transnational Repression²⁵	A. A. Cooley	2019	Columbia University
Gender-Based Digital Transnational Repression²⁶	M. Michaelsen & S. Anstis	2025	Democratization
Defending Dissidents: Reforming the US Criminal Response to Transnational Repression²⁷	C. G. Cooper	2024	Columbia J. of Law & Social Problems

2. Reports From Governmental Agencies and International Organizations

Organization	Report Title	Year	Type	Focus
UN Human Rights Committee	<u>Concluding Observations on India's Fourth Periodic Report</u> ²⁸	2024	UN Review	Human Rights Violations
European Parliament	<u>Resolution on EU-India Relations</u> ²⁹	2024	Parliamentary Resolution	Human Rights and Democratic Values
Canadian Foreign Interference Commission	<u>Public Inquiry into Foreign Interference in Federal Electoral Processes</u> ³⁰	2024	Government Commission Report	Foreign Interference
U.S. Department of State	<u>2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: India</u> ³¹	2023	Country Report	Human Rights and Transnational Repression
United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF)	<u>2025 Annual Report</u> ⁷⁸	2025	Country Report	Transnational Repression

3. Research Reports From Human Rights Groups

Reports by Human Rights groups, think tanks, and other research bodies have worked extensively to promote the TNR narrative against India.

Organization	Report Title	Year	Type	Focus
Freedom House	<u>Out of Sight, Not Out of Reach</u> ⁷³	2021	Research Report	Transnational Repression
Human Rights Watch (HRW)	<u>India: Authorities Revoke Visa Privileges of Diaspora Critics</u> ³²	2024	Country Report	Transnational Repression

Amnesty International	<u>Authorities must end repression of dissent in Jammu and Kashmir</u> ³³	2024	Country Report	Human Rights Violations
Freedom House	<u>No Way In or Out: Authoritarian Controls on the Freedom of Movement</u> ³⁴	2024	Research Report	Transnational Repression

4. Reports by Advocacy Entities

Organization	Report Title	Year	Type	Focus
Indian American Muslim Council (IAMC)	<u>Transnational Repression: Modi Regime's Targeting of Critics in the United States</u>	2025	Research Report	Transnational Repression
The Sikh Coalition	<u>So Many Targets: Contextualizing Modern Indian Transnational Repression Against the Sikh Community</u>	2024	Research Report	Transnational Repression
Hindus for Human Rights (HfHR)	<u>Congressional Testimony on Transnational Repression</u>	2025	Congressional Testimony	Transnational Repression
World Sikh Organization of Canada (WSO)	<u>India's Disinformation Campaign Against Canada's Sikhs and this</u>	2021	Research Report	Disinformation and Foreign Interference
SALDEF, Equality Labs, HfHR and IAMC	<u>Virtually Vulnerable: Exposing The Human Cost Of Digital Harassment</u>	2024	Report	Digital aspect of TNR

5. Individuals promoting the TNR Narrative

Next, we look at the individuals who have been promoting the TNR narrative against India

Name	Organizational Affiliation	Position	TNR Issue Reference	Government of India's Justification and Ref
Nitasha Kaul	University of Westminster	Professor of Politics and International Studies	The Quint	OCI status canceled due to alleged anti-India activities and criticism of government policies
Ashok Swain	Uppsala University	Professor of Peace and Conflict Research	The Wire	OCI status canceled citing anti-India activities and spreading propaganda
Rana Ayyub	Independent Journalist	Investigative Journalist and Author	Time	Investigated for alleged financial irregularities and spreading anti-India sentiments
Anand Teltumbde	Goa Institute of Management	Professor and Human Rights Activist	Wikipedia	Arrested under UAPA for alleged involvement in Bhima Koregaon violence
Gautam Navlakha	People's Union for Democratic Rights	Human Rights Activist and Journalist	Wikipedia	Arrested under UAPA for alleged Maoist links and involvement in Bhima Koregaon case
Aakar Patel	Amnesty International India	Former Executive Director	Amnesty International	Travel ban imposed due to alleged financial irregularities during tenure at Amnesty India
Arundhati Roy	Independent Author and Activist	Writer and Political Activist	Time	Prosecuted under UAPA for comments made in 2010 regarding Kashmir
Sabrina Siddiqui	The Wall Street Journal	Journalist	Human Rights Watch	Faced online harassment after questioning PM Modi; no official government action reported

Nandini Sundar	Delhi School of Economics	Professor of Sociology	<u>Wikipedia</u>	<u>Faced legal challenges for alleged involvement in a murder case; later cleared</u>
Masrat Zahra	Freelance Photojournalist	Photojournalist	<u>Maktoob Media</u>	<u>Charged under UAPA for allegedly uploading anti-national posts</u>
Elaine Pearson	Human Rights Watch	Asia Director	<u>Reset DOC</u>	Criticized Indian government's actions; no official action reported

Ecosystem of Organizations supporting these narratives

Over the past four years, numerous organizations across the globe have strived to develop the TNR narrative. Although early reports did not mention India, the narrative, once embraced and propagated by Pakistan-sponsored entities via Khalistani organizations, resulted in subsequent reports by the organizations listed below to overtly spread this false narrative.

1. International Human Rights and Advocacy Organizations

Name	Primary Focus	TNR Connection
Internet Freedom Foundation	Digital rights	Anti-India advocacy; Legal aid to anti-India activists, TNR narrative
Digital Empowerment Foundation	Technology policy	Joint declarations, digital aspect of transnational repression
Freedom House	Human Rights	U.S.-based NGO producing annual democracy and freedom indices; author of "Out of Sight, Not Out of Reach" report which discusses TNR globally.
Human Rights Watch (HRW)	Human Rights	International watchdog organization whose annual reports have criticized India's security and diaspora policies, often conflating administrative enforcement with repression.

2. Organizations endorsing the India-specific TNR Narrative

Organization	Primary Focus	TNR Connection
SALDEF	Sikh advocacy	California SB-509 support
Hindus for Human Rights	Congressional testimony	U.S.-based advocacy group which has been called out for consistently taking anti-Hindu positions and sharing stage with organizations that are hostile to Indians and Hindus. Has ideological overlaps with radical critiques of India.
Indian American Muslim Council	Published a report on TNR	A US Based Muslim advocacy group. It has consistently taken anti-Hindu and anti-India positions. Generally promotes pro-Pakistan views.
Sikhs for Justice (SFJ)	Khalistan advocacy, TNR claims	A banned UAPA-listed secessionist group advocating Khalistan; involved in global referendums and incitement of violence against Indian institutions.
Khalistan Tiger Force, Babbar Khalsa International	Pro-Khalistan, anti-India activism	
USIPI (U.S.-India Policy Institute)	Anti-India lobbying	DEF partnership , TNR narrative
Khalistan Zindabad Force (KZF)	Khalistan Advocacy	Proscribed terrorist organization listed under UAPA for its role in violent secessionism
Equality Labs	“Caste” Advocacy	History of maligning Hindus through unfounded allegations of 'caste' discrimination, including advocating for legislation such as California’s SB-40

Activities Pertaining to TNR

1. US TNR Hearings

The TNR narrative against India has found reception in the US Congress. Engineered by the advocacy organizations and individuals listed above, four Hearings have taken place in less than two years.

Date	Committee/Commission	Topic
Multiple hearings	USCIRF (U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom) ⁷⁸	Transnational Repression of Freedom of Religion and Belief
Feb 15, 2024	Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission	Transnational Repression and the U.S. Response
Jun 26, 2025	Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission	Transnational Repression: Trends and Policy Approaches
Mar 2024	House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee	Human Rights in South Asia
Sep 2023	Senate Foreign Relations Committee	U.S.-India Relations and Human Rights

2. United Nations

The United Nations has issued formal guidance on transnational repression (TNR). In June 2025, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) published its first-ever guidance paper specifically addressing TNR. This guidance is now available and represents a significant step in the international response to the growing phenomenon of states targeting critics, dissidents, and journalists beyond their borders^{35,36,37}.

Key Elements of the UN Guidance

- **Definition and Scope:**

The UN defines transnational repression as actions by governments to silence, intimidate, or harm critics and dissidents abroad. This includes online harassment, surveillance, enforced disappearances, targeting of relatives, and physical attacks such as assassinations.^{35,37}

- **State Responsibilities:**

The guidance reminds states of their duty to respect and protect human rights and to refrain from committing, enabling, or condoning acts of transnational repression. It calls for a “zero-tolerance policy” towards such practices.^{35,37}

- **Recommendations for Governments:**

- Establish mechanisms for remedies and reparations for victims.
- Issue a moratorium on the export of surveillance and “spyware” tools that facilitate TNR.
- Ensure robust protection for those at risk, including emergency visas and support for journalists and human rights defenders in exile.
- Strengthen international cooperation and information sharing to prevent and respond to TNR.^{35,37,38}

- **Accountability and Protection Gaps:**

The UN guidance highlights that victims of TNR often face barriers to protection and justice, and that some host countries have even facilitated foreign repression. It urges all states to ensure accountability and to support those targeted.^{35,37,39,40}

Ongoing Work and International Response

- **UN Human Rights Council:**

The issue of TNR is now regularly referenced in Human Rights Council sessions, with resolutions under negotiation on the protection of journalists and civil society space. Dozens of countries have issued joint statements condemning TNR and committing to coordinated action.^{38,39,41}

- **Special Rapporteur Reports:**

In 2024 and 2025, the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of opinion and expression released landmark reports on TNR, especially regarding attacks on journalists. These reports provide clear guidance and have prompted further international attention and policy development^{38,42}.

- **Regional and Multilateral Efforts:**

The European Union and other regional bodies are also working to codify definitions and responses to TNR, often referencing UN guidance as a benchmark⁴³.

Summary Table: UN Guidance on TNR

Guidance Element	Status (2025)
Official UN guidance published	Yes (June 2025) ^{35,36,37}
Special Rapporteur reports	Ongoing (2024–2025) ^{38,40}
Human Rights Council action	Active resolutions ^{39,40}
International coordination	Joint statements, EU ^{40,42}

This analysis reveals a complex ecosystem in which the intelligence services of Pakistan amplify narratives originating from Western and anti-India and anti-Hindu advocacy groups. This amplification creates an echo chamber that significantly influences international perceptions of India's diaspora policies.

EVALUATING THE TNR NARRATIVE AGAINST INDIA

Since 2022, a surge of policy briefings, congressional testimonies, and NGO reports has made sweeping allegations against the Republic of India, accusing it of using tactics associated with “transnational repression.” These accusations claim that Indian authorities have surveilled, intimidated, revoked travel documents of, or plotted against dissenters living abroad. Some reports go further, placing India in the same league as authoritarian regimes like China, Russia, Iran, and Turkey, countries with well-documented records of abducting, assassinating, or coercing critics overseas through covert, extrajudicial means.⁴⁴

This report systematically refutes that narrative. It argues that India’s overseas actions are not only legally authorized and procedurally proper but are fundamentally misrepresented when categorized as repression.⁴⁵ Instead, they are measured responses to violent extremism, secessionism, and transnational militancy, threats that are real, persistent, and historically confirmed. These actions are guided by constitutional safeguards, administrative protocols, and judicial oversight mechanisms that clearly set India apart from undemocratic regimes it is unfairly compared to.

To establish this argument, this report triangulates four lines of evidence:

- a. The architecture of India’s domestic legislation relevant to overseas legal actions
- b. Comparative frameworks analyzing the nature and scope of transnational repression by other states
- c. Indian administrative and judicial records demonstrating procedural regularity and,
- d. Public domain evidence, including government notifications, Interpol alerts, and media investigations.

The findings demonstrate that Indian institutions operate within clearly defined legal limits when acting against diaspora-linked actors accused of fomenting violence, not suppressing dissent.

India’s domestic legislations

India’s strategies for addressing diaspora-related extremism and transnational criminal activities are firmly grounded in an evolving framework of constitutional mandates and legislative precision. Contrary to assertions of authoritarian overreach, India’s legal system upholds the principles of procedural fairness, judicial accountability, and statutory limitations, fundamental tenets that sharply contrast with the opaque and often severe mechanisms employed by authoritarian regimes.

It is crucial to contextualize India’s legal frameworks within the broader context of its national security experience. Since the 1980s, India has confronted persistent and multifaceted threats

from both internal and cross-border sources. Militant insurgencies in Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, and the Northeastern states have resulted in over 42,000 civilian and military deaths between 1990 and 2020.⁴⁶ This protracted exposure to terrorism has necessitated the development of a legislative framework that extends beyond Indian borders, not to criminalize political opinions, but to disrupt networks that support, finance, or promote violent extremism.

Three principal legislative instruments constitute the backbone of India's approach to such threats. These are:

The Citizenship Act and the Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI)

The Citizenship Act of 1955, particularly Section 7D, enacted in 2005 during the establishment of the Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) regime, authorizes the revocation of OCI status when individuals engage in activities detrimental to the sovereignty or integrity of the Indian state. The provision includes fraud, misrepresentation, and violations of national security as grounds for cancellation. These standards are consistent with international practices; for example, the United States has revoked naturalization on grounds of national security, and the United Kingdom has rescinded citizenship, citing provisions of the British Nationality Act related to national security.⁴⁷

These criteria are neither subjective nor politically flexible. They reflect international standards of conditional residency and naturalization, such as the United States statute (8 U.S.C. § 1451), which permits denaturalization on grounds of fraud or terrorism connections. Between 2014 and 2023, India invoked Section 7D to revoke 122 OCI registrations, 57 of which occurred in 2024 alone.⁴⁸ Importantly, all such decisions are subject to judicial review by Indian High Courts, underscoring that these administrative actions are governed by constitutional guarantees rather than arbitrary discretion. This appellate system fundamentally opposes the practices of authoritarian regimes, where similar measures are carried out without transparency or legal recourse.

Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA)

India's counterterrorism legislation, the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), originally enacted in 1967 and substantially amended in 2004, 2008, and 2019, provides mechanisms to designate both organizations and individuals as terrorists based on evidentiary grounds of their involvement in secessionist propaganda, terrorist financing, and extremist mobilization. Such designations are made exclusively through a legally mandated procedure that involves the issuance of a government notification and confers upon the accused the right to petition for de-listing before an impartial tribunal.

Notably, in 2019, the Indian government designated “Sikhs for Justice” (SFJ), a diaspora-based Khalistani separatist group, as a terrorist organization.⁴⁹ SFJ had engaged in global campaigns inciting violence, including calls to attack Indian diplomats and symbols of statehood. The designation was accompanied by a judicially reviewable notification, in line with the requirements set forth in UAPA itself. The application of the UAPA has consistently involved engagement with Interpol and the initiation of formal extradition processes, thereby underscoring reliance on international law rather than clandestine actions. In January 2025, the UAPA tribunal confirmed the SJF as a unlawful outfit.⁵⁰

This application of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) contrasts markedly with the conduct of authoritarian regimes that employ anti-terrorism legislation as an instrument of internal political repression. In the context of India, judicial review authorities consistently examine whether the designations under UAPA are both procedurally and substantively justified. This exemplifies a liberal democratic dedication to maintaining a balance between national security and civil liberties.

Passports Act of 1967

Complementing this statutory framework is the Passports Act of 1967, which authorizes Indian authorities to deny or revoke passports based on grounds such as fraud, misrepresentation, or actions prejudicial to the sovereignty and integrity of India, conduct detrimental to India’s sovereignty or foreign relations; criminal convictions involving moral turpitude with a minimum sentence of two years; or in cases where criminal proceedings are currently underway against the holder.⁵¹

Such provisions are consistent with international standards. Under 22 U.S.C. § 212, American authorities may deny passports for similar national security reasons. The revocation process under the Indian statute adheres to an administrative procedure, including notification to the individual and the right to appeal either through tribunals or directly in the High Courts. The legality of revocation must be substantiated by documented evidence, and judicial oversight guarantees that national security considerations are not misused as a pretext for political retaliation. Unlike authoritarian regimes, such as China’s notorious exit bans, which are frequently enforced without prior notice, India’s system is transparent, open to challenge, and subject to public scrutiny.

India’s exercise of this authority remains legally distinct from the clandestine and extralegal practices often associated with transnational repression by authoritarian regimes.

Constraints on Coercive Powers of the State

At the constitutional level, Indian jurisprudence imposes additional constraints on the coercive powers of the state. The landmark judgment by the Supreme Court in *Maneka Gandhi v. Union of India* (1978) established that actions by the state impacting personal liberty, including the revocation of passports, must adhere to the principles of justice, fairness, and reasonableness as articulated in Article 21.⁵² Furthermore, the fundamental right to freedom of speech under Article 19 extends to all Indian citizens, including those residing abroad.⁵³ While reasonable restrictions may be imposed in cases involving speech that incites violence or threatens public order, peaceful political criticism of the Indian government does not warrant punitive measures under Indian law.

Comparative Assessment Against Democratic and Authoritarian Benchmarks

Comparison with Peer Democracies

When evaluated in comparison with peer democracies, India's sovereign actions are consistent with established global standards. Numerous prominent democracies hold comparable legal authorities to revoke citizenship, deny passports, or extradite individuals involved in national security violations. These powers are exercised within clearly delineated procedural frameworks. Consider the following:

1. *United Kingdom*

Under the *British Nationality Act (1981)*, the Home Secretary possesses the authority to revoke an individual's British citizenship if such action is considered "conducive to the public good." These determinations are subject to independent review by the Special Immigration Appeals Commission (SIAC). Furthermore, the *Passport Act (1989)* allows for the revocation of passports on national security grounds, providing mechanisms for judicial redress.

2. *United States*

Federal legislation (8 U.S.C. § 1451) authorizes the denaturalization of individuals who obtained citizenship through deliberate misrepresentation or who are found to have participated in acts of terrorism. The *Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004* facilitates the revocation of passports for individuals providing material support to designated terrorist organizations. These administrative measures are subject to internal appeal procedures within the Department of State and may be contested in federal courts.

3. **Canada:**

Under the *Citizenship Act (1985)*, citizenship may be revoked if obtained through misrepresentation, and individuals retain the right to seek judicial review before the Federal Court. Additionally, Canada's *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (2002)* includes provisions for declaring individuals inadmissible on national security grounds, with the opportunity to challenge such designations before the Immigration Appeal Division.

4. **Australia:**

The *Australian Citizenship Amendment Act (2015)* authorizes the revocation of citizenship for individuals involved in terrorism-related offenses, provided that the individual holds dual nationality. Decisions are subject to review by the Administrative Appeals Tribunal to ensure adherence to due process.^{54,55}

Each of these systems is distinguished by procedural safeguards that encompass obligatory notice, written justification, and access to appeal. India's analogous mechanisms, such as passport revocation under the Passports Act (1967), OCI cancellation pursuant to Section 7D of the Citizenship Act (1955), and specific designations under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, reflect these democratic principles. In all instances, affected individuals are duly notified, provided with reasons, and afforded the opportunity to challenge the decision through appellate bodies or judicial proceedings.

Transnational Repression and Comparison with Autocratic Regimes

Transnational repression is broadly defined as the extraterritorial coercion of political dissenters and critics by a state, encompassing a range of illicit actions including targeted violence, surveillance, forced rendition, and retaliatory measures against family members of dissidents. Contemporary scholarship identifies four core modalities of such repression:

1. Assassinations and physical attacks on foreign soil.
2. Forced repatriations or unlawful deportations, often in violation of international asylum norms.
3. Digital or in-person surveillance and intimidation, and
4. Proxy punishment frequently involves targeting relatives of exiles through measures such as harassment, travel bans, or state-sanctioned discrimination.

Not all international actions undertaken by states are encompassed within this classification. Legal instruments such as Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties (MLATs), Interpol Red Notices,

extradition agreements, and statutes for the revocation of citizenship are internationally acknowledged tools of sovereign law enforcement. These mechanisms maintain their legitimacy when exercised in accordance with the rule of law and are subject to procedural safeguards. The distinction between coercive authoritarian repression and lawful democratic enforcement does not reside in the existence of transnational actions but in the manner, transparency, and reviewability of such actions.

Alexander Cooley and Daniel Nexon have emphasized that liberal democracies must be able to respond to violent extremism without being accused of repression.⁵⁶ Edward Lemon and Dana Moss's six-category typology provides a valuable analytical benchmark by distinguishing between lawful interstate enforcement and covert repression. Central to this distinction is Interpol's Constitution, Article 3, which prohibits any intervention or activity of a political, military, religious, or racial character. Democratic governments' requests for Red Notices or deportation are thus filtered through a layer of institutional scrutiny not available to authoritarian regimes operating extrajudicially.

The characterization of India's law enforcement actions as "transnational repression" collapses under comparative scrutiny when benchmarked against the established patterns observed in authoritarian regimes. Unlike the covert, extrajudicial, and systematically implemented strategies employed by states such as China, Russia, Iran, and Turkey, India's measures pertaining to its diaspora—including passport revocations, Interpol Red Notices, and extradition requests—are exercised within the bounds of statutory authority, subject to judicial review, and influenced by institutional transparency. These practices are emblematic of a democratic legal system rather than manifestations of repression.

An objective assessment utilizing Dana Moss's six-category schema and Freedom House's Transnational Repression (TNR) dataset reveals significant disparities as described below:

1. Documented Extraterritorial Killings

India has not recorded any confirmed instances of state-sponsored extraterritorial assassinations or poisonings of diaspora critics. Conversely, China has forcibly repatriated and, in certain cases, assassinated dissidents abroad, including Uyghur Muslims who were repatriated under duress from nations such as Turkey and Thailand. Russia's history encompasses well-documented poisonings of Alexander Litvinenko (2006) and Sergei Skripal (2018), as well as the attempted assassination of Alexei Navalny (2020). Iran has carried out multiple assassinations targeting Arab and Kurdish dissidents in Europe and the Middle East, while Turkey has deported over 100 members of the Gulen movement from Asia and Africa without due legal process. The absence of such actions by India highlights its operational restraint.

2. Forced Renditions and Covert Abductions

India's approach to diaspora-related law enforcement is grounded in treaties, not covert action. All extradition efforts are processed via Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties (MLATs) and subject to judicial review in host countries. There is no record of Indian operatives engaging in unauthorized renditions. This stands in stark contrast to China's "Operation Fox Hunt", which is notorious for repatriating suspects without host-country judicial involvement. Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) has been implicated in abductions across Europe, including the Paris disappearance of Masoud Molavi Vardanjani.

Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) has conducted kidnappings of Chechen activists from abroad, and Turkey's intelligence agency (MIT) has orchestrated renditions bypassing host-country consent. India's reliance on legal frameworks instead of clandestine operations marks a categorical divergence.

3. Interpol Red Notice Abuse

In 2023, India issued over 100 Interpol Red Notices, and 412 Red Notices between 2018 and 2023. These Red Notices serve as provisional requests for the arrest of fugitives, pending formal extradition procedures. Of these, merely 16 were rejected, primarily due to concerns related to evidentiary insufficiency or perceived political motivations.

In comparison, more than 70 percent of China's Red Notices have been flagged by Western judicial authorities for political motivation. Russia has also issued over 200 politically influenced notices, many of which have been contested or annulled. Iran and Turkey frequently attract diplomatic protests regarding alleged misuse.

This notably low rejection rate underscores that the overwhelming majority of India's requests meet the standards of neutrality and legal compliance mandated by Article 3 of the Interpol Constitution, which explicitly forbids politically motivated interventions.

4. Judicial and Media Independence

India's judiciary, particularly its High Courts and the Supreme Court, consistently adjudicates challenges to adverse government actions, including those involving passport cancellations, OCI revocations, and extradition matters. Landmark cases such as *Singh v. Union of India* (2021) have established the legal obligation to provide reasoned administrative orders, thereby ensuring that government decisions are not arbitrary.

India's press, represented by outlets such as The Hindu, The Indian Express, and others, actively investigates and critiques state conduct, including issues pertaining to the diaspora.⁵⁷ In contrast, China's judiciary functions under the directives of the Central Political and Legal Affairs Commission; Russia's courts are directly influenced by the Kremlin; and Iran's Revolutionary Courts report to the Supreme Leader. Following the 2016 coup attempt, Turkey's judiciary has undergone a purge, resulting in the closure of over 150 media outlets. India's institutional ecosystem fosters accountability; its counterparts tend to suppress it.

5. Scope and Scale of Non-Judicial Coercion

India's actions are narrowly targeted at individuals or organizations with documented links to extremism, such as Sikhs for Justice (SFJ) or the Khalistan Zindabad Force. These cases are supported by judicial filings and public notifications. There is no credible evidence of systematic intimidation of broader Sikh or Muslim diaspora communities. By contrast, China, Iran, Russia, and Turkey conduct large-scale operations targeting entire ethnic or ideological groups, often including relatives and associates of dissidents. These abuses are comprehensively documented in Freedom House and United Nations reports. India's focus on individual accountability reflects rule-of-law governance.

6. Transparency and Appeals

India's legal and administrative measures, including OCI revocations, passport impoundments, and extradition filings, are officially documented through the Official Gazette, consular advisories, or court orders. Affected individuals are entitled to receive formal notices, explanations for the actions taken, and the opportunity to pursue judicial review. Conversely, authoritarian regimes often do not provide such protections. Families frequently become aware of punitive measures only after incidents of abduction or disappearance have occurred. In India, judicial review is not merely a theoretical concept; it is a routine, accessible, and enforceable component of the legal system.

These findings are corroborated by India's standing on international indices. According to the Freedom House's TNR Index, despite unverified and anecdotal data, India has a score of 1.2 out of 5.0,⁵⁸ positioning it towards the lower end of the global repression rankings. If the unverified data is excluded, India's TRI score would be closer to zero. Conversely, China, Iran, Russia, and Turkey consistently occupy the upper tiers.⁵⁹ This metric validates that India's legal assertions, although assertive, are not indicative of repressive tendencies. Rather, they originate from a functional democracy's response to violence, rather than from authoritarian paranoia.

Legal Norms and Precedents: Case-Based Validation

India's democratic institutions ensure that its security and legal practices are subject to public oversight. These structural safeguards, common to liberal democracies, include:

- **Multi-Agency Approvals:** Issuing an Interpol Red Notice necessitates approval from India's Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of External Affairs, and coordination with Interpol's General Secretariat. Each step is documented and open to appeal. In contrast, China's Fox Hunt operations do not require such procedures, instead depending on directives issued by the Communist Party.
- **Parliamentary Oversight:** India's Standing Committee on Home Affairs examines national security legislation, encompassing amendments to the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and the Passports Act. Dissenting opinions are documented, serving as an accountability mechanism which is not present in Iran and Turkey.
- **The judiciary operates independently,** as evidenced by courts consistently overturning administrative excesses. A notable example is the *Singh v. Union of India* (2021) case, wherein the court invalidated an OCI cancellation due to the absence of articulated reasons.⁶⁰
- **Free Press and Civil Society:** India's civil society watchdogs and independent media routinely challenge executive overreach, offering an organic accountability mechanism impossible in authoritarian regimes.

Indian courts have also implemented autonomous measures to prevent excessive government intervention. In *Singh v. Union of India* (2021), the Delhi High Court invalidated the revocation of an OCI card on the grounds that the government failed to provide a clear legal rationale or notification to the affected individual. This ruling reaffirmed the principle of transparent and accountable governance, an outcome that would be difficult to envisage in jurisdictions where repression is enacted through unchecked executive orders.

There are no equivalent oversight mechanisms within states that participate in transnational repression.

Case Studies: Lawful Enforcement vs. Coercion

Assessing allegations of transnational repression directed at India requires a thorough examination of particular cases cited in recent policy analyses and media investigations. From a legal and procedural standpoint, these cases demonstrate a pattern not of covert state coercion but of lawful, rights-respecting enforcement procedures. Contrary to extralegal authoritarian practices, India's measures in these instances adhere to international treaties, domestic laws, and judicial review.

1. *Gurpatwant Singh Pannun*

Consider the case of Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, the United States-based leader of the organization Sikhs for Justice (SFJ), which is officially banned. SFJ has openly promoted the establishment of Khalistan, a secessionist state separated from Indian territory, and has called for violence against Indian diplomats and governmental institutions. In June 2023, the United States Department of Justice revealed an indictment accusing Nikhil Gupta, a private intermediary, of conspiring to assassinate Mr. Pannun. Notably, the charging documents do not allege any involvement by Indian government officials. India has unequivocally denied any role in the purported plot and has requested complete access to evidence through established legal channels under the India–United States Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT). This official stance, denial accompanied by formal legal cooperation, contrasts with authoritarian methods of denial and obstruction, and demonstrates India's commitment to engage through lawful instruments and not through covert force.

2. *Hardeep Singh Nijjar*

A comparable pattern of legal compliance is observable in the controversy involving Hardeep Singh Nijjar, a self-identified Khalistani militant residing in Canada. Nijjar was the subject of multiple extradition requests submitted by India under the Extradition Act of 1962, supported by evidence of his purported participation in terrorist training camps and incitement to violence under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. In September 2023, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau publicly alleged potential involvement of “Indian agents” in Nijjar’s death, yet did not provide forensic or judicial evidence to substantiate these claims.⁶¹ Canada has yet to disclose verifiable material or permit an impartial legal review. Conversely, India has consistently maintained that its interactions with Canada were conducted solely through treaty-based legal mechanisms. These facts highlight that India engaged in a formal counterterrorism procedure, rather than employing clandestine or extrajudicial measures.

3. David Barsamian

Armenian-American journalist David Barsamian, recognized for his criticism of India's Kashmir policy, was denied entry upon arrival in 2016, due to violations of visa regulations during a prior visit. The Ministry of Home Affairs stated that the denial was in accordance with the Foreigners Act, 1946, which permits entry restrictions for individuals who misuse visa categories.

4. Ashok Swain

India's domestic legal framework is equally constrained by constitutional protections, particularly concerning the revocation of citizenship privileges such as the Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI). The case of Ashok Swain, a Sweden-based academic renowned for provocative commentary, exemplifies this principle. Swain's OCI was revoked in 2020 under Section 7D of the Citizenship Act, 1955, due to social media posts containing unverified allegations of genocide. He subsequently filed a writ petition challenging this decision, which was accepted by the Delhi High Court. This case unequivocally affirms that such revocations are not final or immune to appeal; rather, they are subject to judicial review, with the judiciary possessing the authority to annul arbitrary actions. Unlike authoritarian regimes that exploit citizenship revocation as a political tool, India's courts function as vigilant guardians of legal rights.

5. Ashish Taseer

In a separate instance, in 2014, journalist Aatish Taseer's OCI (Overseas Citizen of India) card was revoked due to the nondisclosure of his Pakistani parentage, which is an explicitly disqualifying criterion for OCI eligibility. The revocation was not related to Taseer's editorial opinions or published work. Administratively, the action was grounded in statutory regulations. Taseer was duly notified of the reasons and retained the right to challenge the decision. Such fact-based, legally justifiable administrative actions, especially when subject to contestation, should not be credibly equated with acts of repression.

6. Christine Mehta

An additional instance is Christine Mehta, a researcher affiliated with Amnesty International based in the United States, who was deported in 2019 for engaging in journalistic research whilst possessing a tourist visa, thereby contravening the provisions of the Foreigners Act, 1946. Nations worldwide, including Western democracies, uphold rigorous enforcement of visa regulations and regularly expel individuals who breach entry protocols. Mehta's deportation was grounded in explicit statutory violations rather than political retaliation.

7. Vanessa Dournac

In the realm of visa regulations and media accreditation, the case of Vanessa Dournac, a French journalist, stands out as particularly noteworthy. In 2019, Dournac received a formal show-cause notice from the Ministry of Home Affairs concerning the repeated publication of purportedly "negative and biased" coverage. This action was taken in response to a documented pattern of reporting that raised concerns under the Foreigners Order of 1948, which regulates the conduct of foreign journalists in India. No evidence has been presented to substantiate claims of extrajudicial harassment or interference. Instead, the notice was issued within the framework of regulatory norms analogous to inquiries conducted under the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA) in the United States or visa assessments carried out by the Department of Homeland Security.

8. Sabrina Siddiqui

Perhaps the weakest example cited by critics is that of Sabrina Siddiqui, a Wall Street Journal journalist who received online trolling following her question to Prime Minister Modi during a 2023 press briefing. While regrettable, digital backlash from anonymous users on social media does not constitute state repression, unless forensic evidence exists directly linking the conduct to government agencies or their proxies. As of June 2024, no such evidence has emerged. Diaspora social media is a contested and often polarized space; online reactions, however heated, cannot be conflated with state-orchestrated repression without technical proof. India's digital regulations and data laws do not endorse or support coordinated harassment, and the burden of proof must rest with the accusers.

These case studies, when placed in context and subjected to rigorous legal scrutiny, demonstrate the fundamental error in labeling India's actions as transnational repression. In each instance, the state's engagement followed statutory processes, was subject to review, and allowed for procedural redress. There is no demonstrable evidence of forced abductions, clandestine renditions, or extrajudicial killings carried out by Indian state agents abroad. On the contrary, India's reliance on Red Notices, extradition treaties, legal deportation mechanisms, and regulatory frameworks for OCI and visas reveals a commitment to lawful sovereign action.

To conflate such actions with the practices of regimes such as China, Iran, or Russia, whose operatives have carried out poisonings, kidnappings, and extrajudicial executions on foreign soil, constitutes not only analytical laziness but also a distortion of the global human rights agenda. India's democratic infrastructure, independent judiciary, and procedural transparency disqualify it from the category of repressive state actors. The evidence, when assessed impartially, supports the conclusion that India's international legal engagements reflect legitimate counterterrorism enforcement, not coercive suppression.

Conclusion

This distinction between advocacy for violent separatism and peaceful political dissent is not merely theoretical; it is enshrined in statutory language, reaffirmed through judicial precedent, and implemented via formal administrative orders. By aggregating all forms of diaspora-related actions, whether legal, diplomatic, or criminal enforcement, under the term “transnational repression,” such narratives obscure the fundamental distinction between coercive authoritarian practices and democratic law enforcement.

Placing India within a comparative global context reveals an analytical flaw in categorizing its diaspora-related legal actions as transnational repression. India’s processes are characterized by their deliberative, lawful, and transparent nature; judicial orders are formally documented rather than whispered, enforcement is precise rather than broad, and diplomatic efforts are conducted openly instead of covertly. To equate India’s lawful enforcement mechanisms with the violent coercion typical of authoritarian regimes constitutes a mischaracterization that undermines both scholarly integrity and the human rights discourse it seeks to uphold.

Critical Review of Reports and Testimonies on India and TNR

The subsequent analysis of the most frequently cited sources demonstrates that these narratives frequently rely on anecdotal evidence, conjectural assertions, and interpretive inconsistencies to achieve political objectives.

Case Study: IAMC Report

The report titled “Transnational Repression - Modi Regime’s Targeting of Critics in the United States,” published by the Indian American Muslim Council (IAMC), alleges that Indian authorities employ various “transnational repression” tactics against critics within the diaspora. Each assertion is subsequently scrutinized with pertinent legal and evidentiary context.

Rebuttal of the Allegations Presented in the IAMC Report

1. *“TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION LINKED TO THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT HAS DIRECTLY RESULTED IN VIOLENT ATTACKS IN THE US”*

This claim is profoundly misleading, lacks substantiation, and is irresponsibly speculative.

a) Khalistani Extremism and Internal Sikh Rivalries Ignored

The IAMC appears to deliberately overlook the internal factional dynamics within pro-Khalistan groups. Numerous instances of violence or threats, documented in media reports and law enforcement statements, have been attributed to conflicts among rival Khalistani factions, gang-related activities, or local organized crime.

The violent incidents in 2023 regarding Gurdwara governance in California have been reported by mainstream media as disputes within the Sikh community over leadership and financial authority, rather than as manifestations of foreign repression.⁶²

Moreover, attacks on properties such as temples or community centers have, in certain instances, been claimed or attributed to Khalistani-aligned individuals themselves, who seek to cultivate a perception of victimhood in order to rationalize extremist agitation.

b) Distortion of Context: Trolling vs. State Action

The Indian American Muslim Council (IAMC) conflates online trolling, anonymous hate speech, and legitimate diplomatic protests with acts of state violence. For instance, when members of the Indian diaspora criticize Khalistani separatist organizations or advocate for accountability concerning the open threats made by the Sikhs for Justice (SFJ) against Indian diplomats, such expressions are often

recharacterized as “violence” or “incitement.” This conflation obscures the critical distinction between diaspora free speech and community pushback vs. actual targeted violence.

The IAMC’s framing inadvertently stigmatizes legitimate pro-India and Hindu voices within the diaspora, rendering them culpable or suspect solely for their rejection of Khalistani sentiments.

c) US Authorities Do Not Support IAMC’s Claims; No Verified Link to Indian Government Link to Violent Attacks in the US

Neither the U.S. Department of State, the Department of Justice, nor local law enforcement agencies have issued any official policy statements, indictments, or press releases that corroborate the assertions made by the Indian American Muslim Council (IAMC) regarding India-directed attacks on U.S. territory.⁶³ In the case of Nikhil Gupta–Pannun, the indictment issued by the Department of Justice does not implicate the Indian government but rather refers to an “unnamed Indian official” without providing additional substantiation or evidence.⁶⁴

The report issued by IAMC advances conclusions that extend beyond the assertions made by the U.S. government itself and is chiefly founded on activist conjecture and media speculation rather than on validated legal findings or investigative results. Moreover, the affiliations of IAMC evoke substantial concerns regarding its credibility. The organization’s reporting and framing consistently correspond with a Pakistani agenda, as demonstrated by previous appearances of its leaders on Pakistani state television, participation in U.S. Congressional briefings alongside Khalistani separatists, and a propensity to minimize terrorism in Kashmir.

IAMC’s efforts to associate American Hindu advocacy and the Indian government with incidents of violence in the diaspora are more reflective of Islamist lobbying interests than of any objective human rights standards. Additionally, IAMC cites vandalism of Sikh gurdwaras and threats to Khalistani activists as evidence of a state-sponsored campaign. However, this vandalism of Gurudwaras, has not been linked to Hindus. IAMC fails to address the attacks on Hindu temples in North America, many of which have been explicitly claimed by Khalistani extremists and related groups. Such omissions demonstrate a lack of thoroughness and objectivity in IAMC’s analysis.

d) Conclusion

The “violent attacks” narrative in the IAMC report is an evidence-free smear that weaponizes isolated incidents and activist rhetoric to build a false perception of Indian authoritarianism. It maligns the Indian and Hindu diaspora, discredits federal law enforcement, and cheapens the concept of transnational repression by converting it into a geopolitical lobbying tool. This section of the IAMC report must be rejected for its lack of substantiation, ideological bias, and selective indignation.

2. *Surveillance and Harassment by Indian Officials Abroad*

The Indian American Muslim Council (IAMC) asserts that Indian consular personnel are involved in protests, photograph attendees, and engage in intimidation against individuals or their family members within India.

Diplomatic missions regularly monitor public events to offer consular assistance and to strengthen community engagement. This practice is exemplified by the missions of the United States, the United Kingdom, and the European Union globally.

It is noteworthy that Indian consulates in London and San Francisco have been subjected to violent attacks.⁶⁵ The documentation of such incidents is a standard procedure for security purposes.

There are currently no court orders, diplomatic protests, or law enforcement referrals that substantiate allegations of harassment or threats linked to Indian officials.⁶⁶

The claims published in various reports are primarily based on unnamed sources and politically motivated non-governmental organizations, lacking adequate documentary evidence to corroborate their assertions.

3. *Passport Revocations and OCI Card Denials*

The issuance and revocation of Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cards and passports constitute sovereign functions that are governed by the Citizenship Act of 1955 and the Passports Act of 1967, respectively. These powers are exercised in circumstances involving fraud, threats to national security, or the promotion of secession.⁶⁷

Decisions related to revocation are subject to administrative and judicial processes, providing affected individuals with the right to appeal to High Courts. This framework ensures the protection of due process, which is frequently absent in authoritarian regimes characterized by "exit bans."

Public disclosures indicate that the targeted revocations appear to be associated with extremist ideologies, such as Khalistani propaganda, rather than with expressions of peaceful dissent.^[1]

4. *DEPORTATION REQUESTS, Abuse of MLAT and INTERPOL RED NOTICES*

Interpol's Constitution, particularly Article 3, expressly prohibits the issuance of notices that are driven by political motives. In the year 2023, India submitted a total of 100 requests, all of which underwent scrutiny in accordance with Article 3. Only a limited number of these requests were denied, with rejections being based solely on evidentiary considerations.⁶⁸

Extradition requests made pursuant to bilateral treaties are subject to rigorous judicial reviews conducted by the host country. There is no substantiated evidence indicating the occurrence of extrajudicial renditions or threats.

Moreover, the characterization of criminal charges such as terrorism and secessionism as acts of repression serves to obscure the legitimate efforts undertaken in the realm of counterterrorism cooperation.

5. Threats to CRITICS' Families IN INDIA

Contact with family members occurs solely within the context of formal investigations in which relatives possess information relevant to terrorism or secessionist offenses. There is an absence of independent verification, court filings, arrest warrants, or human rights reports that document instances of family intimidation, which would constitute a violation of the right to due process (TNR). Verified cases are limited to actions associated with due process, such as summons and questioning, related to criminal investigations, as opposed to occurrences of coercive intimidation.

6. Attempted Assassination Plots

The indictment issued by the United States Department of Justice against Nikhil Gupta in June 2023 alleges involvement in a conspiracy to murder Gurpatwant Singh Pannun. Notably, the indictment specifies Gupta as the sole individual implicated; there are no formal charges or credible allegations against Indian officials.⁶⁹

Furthermore, Canada's claim regarding Indian involvement in the death of Hardeep Singh Nijjar in 2023 lacks support from publicly available evidence, and no diplomatic personnel have been apprehended or prosecuted in relation to this matter.⁷⁰ In response, India has officially denied any operational participation and has cooperated with ongoing investigations via requests made under the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT).

7. Misuse of digital platforms, misinformation campaigns and online harassment

Anonymous online abuse remains a pervasive issue across democratic nations. Technical investigations have consistently failed to establish any connection between such activities and official Indian agencies or diaspora organizations. The social media backlash directed at critics frequently arises from within the diaspora civil society, reflecting contested narratives rather than directives from state authorities. Additionally, no credible cybersecurity audits have substantiated claims of state-sponsored digital repression.⁷¹

Truth Behind the “Illustrative Cases” in the IAMC Report

This section presents the specific case studies cited in the IAMC’s TNR report within the authentic procedural context.

Name	Affiliation	Position on India	TNR Accusations	Accusation Evidence	Rationale for Action
Prof. Masrat Zahra	Journalist, Professor	Critical of India in Kashmir	Visa denial = repression Visa revoked	Visa letter only	Lawful denial per Foreigners Act due to security category
Satinder Pal S. Raju	Diaspora protestor	Khalistan supporter	Surveillance at protests Claims consular intimidation	Testimonial, no legal claim	Lawful consular presence; no coercion involved
Sam Khan	Actor, influencer	Anti-CAA stance	Surveillance claim Online/intimidation	Anecdotal only	No direct action traceable to Indian govt
Raqib Naik	Hindutva Watch	Strongly anti-Hindutva & India	Says India targets his work Trolls, digital threats	No subpoenas or notices	Free speech exists; no official state action
Angad Singh	Vice journalist	Critical documentaries on Indian politics	Deportation = repression Denied entry	Entered on incorrect visa	Visa revoked per Foreigners Act for breach of conditions
Pieter Friedrich	OFMI-linked, anti-RSS activist	Equates RSS with fascism, defends SFJ (designated terrorist organization)	Says surveillance = persecution Speech monitoring	No legal case or process	Monitored due to extremist ties, not silenced

Sunita Viswanath	Hindus for Human Rights	Opposes Hindutva policy, aligned with Indian separatists	Claims smear campaign Delegitimization by officials	Indirect criticism	NGO's policy views controversial, not criminalized
Purnima Dhavan	University of Washington	Highlights caste/communal issues in India	Says scholars surveilled Academic targeting	No legal complaint, general narrative	Scholarly criticism ≠ persecution; no official interference
Gurpatwant Singh Pannun	SFJ Founder	Khalistan advocate, designated terrorist in India	Alleges assassination plot Target of Red Notice	DOJ charges against Nikhil Gupta	India denies state involvement; follows MLAT norms
Hardeep Singh Nijjar	Khalistani leader	Pro-secession, designated terrorist	Alleged Indian plot (Canada) Killed in Canada	Canada's statement, no proof yet	India issued formal extradition requests, denies link to killing
Ashok Swain	Academic (Sweden)	Critical of Indian govt, genocide claims	OCI revocation = repression OCI cancelled	Delhi HC challenge	Revoked for incitement; reviewable by judiciary
Aatish Taseer	Journalist	Critical of Modi govt	OCI revoked = retaliation OCI cancelled	Failed to disclose Pakistani parent	Administrative decision; Lied on application. Unrelated to political work
Christine Mehta	Amnesty researcher	Critical of India's HR record	Deportation = targeting Visa cancelled	Worked on tourist visa	Foreigners Act violation; standard enforcement
Vanessa Dougnac	French Journalist	Reported on NE India	Received notice Show-cause notice	Accreditation warning	Press accreditation matter, no coercion

Sabrina Siddiqui	WSJ Reporter	Neutral	Faced trolling post-press conf with Modi Online harassment	No govt link established	Trolling ≠ state action; no forensic proof
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Civil Society and Diaspora Organizations

The IAMC report insinuates that Hindu diaspora organizations are engaged in transnational repression at the behest of the Indian government. This unfounded allegation is vehemently refuted by American Hindu organizations.

Diaspora organizations, including HinduPACT, HAF, and CoHNA, operate as autonomous nonprofit entities under U.S. IRS Section 501(c)(3), complying with transparency audits and financial disclosure requirements. No legal filings or forensic audits have validated assertions that diaspora NGOs receive clandestine funding from Indian intelligence; all publicly accessible grant records demonstrate donor transparency and comprehensive project reporting.

Response to IAMC Demands

1. *Implement the Bipartisan Transnational Repression Reporting Act*

IAMC claims that the Act would establish a U.S. Attorney General-led annual reporting process cataloging instances of transnational repression (TNR), including those allegedly perpetrated by the Indian government.

HinduPACT Position:

While transparency in addressing TNR is commendable, citing India as an example and equating India's lawful diplomatic and anti-terror activities with repressive tactics lacks substantiation. The IAMC report itself is evidence of how an extremist advocacy organization with a supporting ecosystem can potentially politicize a well-intentioned act and undermines the credibility of genuine TNR concerns.

2. *Sanction Indian Officials Under the Global Magnitsky Act*

The report urges sanctions against Indian officials, including Home Minister Amit Shah and National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, alleging their involvement in TNR activities.

HinduPACT Position:

The Global Magnitsky Act sanctions individuals implicated in substantial human rights violations or corruption. The accusations directed at Indian officials are mainly founded on unverified allegations by activist organizations with a malignant agenda rather than judicial determinations. Enacting sanctions without proper due process or substantive evidence contravenes fundamental principles of justice and has the potential to jeopardize diplomatic relations between the democratic strategic allies, the United States and India.

3. *Prevent Intimidation, Surveillance, and Harassment by Indian Consulates in the U.S.*

The report alleges that Indian consulates engage in surveillance and harassment of diaspora communities in the U.S.

HinduPACT Position:

No credible evidence has been provided to support allegations of unlawful surveillance or harassment by Indian consulates in the United States. Diplomatic missions across the globe oversee diaspora activities to sustain consular relations and promote community welfare. India's consular operations, encompassing engagement with its diaspora, are carried out in accordance with the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations.

4. *Designate India as a Country of Particular Concern (CPC)*

HinduPACT Position:

IAMC significantly mischaracterizes India's secular and democratic principles. India is not only the world's largest democracy but also among the most religiously diverse nations, home to over 200 million Muslims, the second-largest Muslim population worldwide, with full rights to political, legal, and religious participation.

The call for CPC designation is a well-documented and recurring demand by fringe lobbying groups, primarily backed by Pakistan-origin outfits and Islamist-aligned entities. These include organizations such as IAMC, HfHR, and proxies of Jamaat-e-Islami. Their recommendations consistently reflect the talking points of separatist Khalistani and anti-India networks, and lacking objectivity

The USCIRF recommendations frequently influence this CPC rhetoric. USCIRF has encountered bipartisan criticism for its perceived lack of academic rigor, the presence of bias, and the promotion of agendas aligned with particular interest groups. The United States Department of State has consistently refused to accept the USCIRF's CPC recommendation concerning India over the years, recognizing the intricate and self-correcting nature of India's democratic institutions.⁷²

Designating India as a “CPC” comparable to nations such as North Korea, Saudi Arabia, or Iran—where state-sanctioned religious persecution is systemic and violent—is not merely analytically flawed; it is diplomatically imprudent and morally unjustifiable.

5. Invoke the Arms Export Control Act (AECA) to Restrict Military Cooperation with India

HinduPACT Position:

This recommendation is both unsubstantiated and dangerously irresponsible. It exposes the underlying geopolitical agenda that supports much of IAMC’s pro-Pakistan advocacy, representing a deliberate effort to undermine the strategic partnership between the United States and India. This effort appears to be motivated not by concerns for civil rights but by ideological opposition to India’s increasing international influence and an attempt to advance Pakistan’s geopolitical objectives.

The appeal to invoke AECA reflects a recognized disinformation tactic—originating from Pakistani state-aligned platforms that seeks to marginalize India within international forums, particularly in contexts where military, security, and intelligence cooperation are crucial. No credible evidence has ever been presented linking Indian defense authorities to any extrajudicial repression abroad.

India stands as a significant defense partner of the United States, actively collaborating in regional security, Indo-Pacific stabilization, counterterrorism initiatives, and technological advancement. Undermining this relationship due to politically motivated advocacy jeopardizes American strategic interests, alienates the Indian diaspora, and emboldens hostile actors such as China and Pakistan.

Utilizing the AECA as a tool against India, grounded in a fabricated narrative of transnational repression, is neither prudent nor responsible. It signifies an abdication of rational foreign policy in favor of activism driven by agendas linked to anti-Hindu and anti-India platforms. The United States Congress should refrain from permitting itself to become a venue for such propaganda.

Conclusion:

The IAMC recommendations are based on assertions that lack substantial evidence. They predominantly echo separatist and Pakistani agendas directed against the Indian diaspora. India's democratic institutions, legal frameworks, and commitment to pluralism reinforce its status as a dependable partner. Engagement through dialogue and mutual respect remains the most effective strategy for addressing concerns and fortifying bilateral relations. The IAMC report should exemplify how the TNR narrative can be manipulated by state actors who effectively utilize advocacy groups to malign legitimate organizations and undermine democratic principles in pursuit of an extremist agenda.

Freedom House’s “Out of Sight, Not Out of Reach” (2021)

One of the seminal reports on global transnational repression (TNR) is Freedom House’s “Out of Sight, Not Out of Reach,”⁷³ which documents 850 incidents spanning three decades. Notably, the dataset does not include a single verified case of extrajudicial violence or covert coercion associated with Indian state actors targeting members of the diaspora.^{74,75}

Nevertheless, the report subsequently implicates India by name alongside China, Russia, Iran, and Turkey, countries with extensively documented histories of assassinations, renditions, and clandestine surveillance. This inconsistency between the data and the narrative framing compromises the report’s analytical coherence and raises questions regarding the objectivity of its conclusions.⁷⁶

Human Rights Watch World Report

Similarly, the Human Rights Watch World Report 2024⁷⁷ presents assertions of diaspora “harassment” without distinguishing between administrative immigration actions and illegal repression. Actions such as OCI card revocations, visa cancellations, or non-renewal of permits are framed as “intimidation” despite falling well within the bounds of national law, both in India and in comparable Western democracies.

The report fails to provide legal counter-analysis or procedural documentation, instead relying on testimonials and speculative interpretations, effectively collapsing lawful enforcement into the category of coercion.

2025 USCIRF Country Report

The 2025 Country Report issued by the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF)⁷⁸ similarly undermines its case against India by presenting evidentiary deficiencies. While the report recognizes the lack of judicial findings implicating Indian officials in TNR-related offenses, it nevertheless advocates for punitive measures such as visa restrictions and economic sanctions. Its recommendations are founded predominantly on affidavits from activists,⁷⁹ many of whom are associated with prohibited separatist organizations such as Sikhs for Justice (SFJ), without corroboration through judicial or law enforcement records.

The discrepancy between USCIRF’s stated conclusions and its suggested actions highlights a tendency toward normative activism rather than an objective evaluation.

Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission Hearings (2025)

More notably, testimonies before the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission,⁸⁰ a significant platform influencing U.S. legislative discourse, have predominantly relied on assumptions and ideological framing rather than substantive evidence. Ria Chakrabarty, representing Hindus for Human Rights, testified in June 2025 that Indian state agents orchestrated surveillance, intimidation, and even assassination plots against critics within the diaspora. However, her assertions were not corroborated by any U.S. investigative agency.

During cross-examination, Chakrabarty acknowledged that none of the “case studies” presented, particularly those involving Gurpatwant Singh Pannun and Hardeep Singh Nijjar, demonstrated confirmed involvement by the state.⁸¹ In both instances, actions were either legally contested or associated with intermediaries, rather than directly linked to Indian government officials.

Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission Hearings (2024)

John Sifton of Human Rights Watch testified during the Lantos Commission Hearings in 2024,⁸² presenting a misleading characterization by providing a false equivalence by grouping India with authoritarian regimes such as China and Russia.

His testimony failed to mention that both Pannun and Nijjar had been designated as terrorists under India’s Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), a legislation modeled after international counterterrorism statutes. Additionally, he did not acknowledge that India’s measures, including Interpol Red Notices and extradition requests, were conducted through recognized legal channels. By omitting these critical distinctions, the testimony not only misled policymakers but also undermined the conceptual clarity regarding the nature of transnational repression.

Sikh Coalition Report “So Many Targets”

The December 2024 report by the Sikh Coalition, entitled “*So Many Targets*,”⁸³ exemplifies the perils of conflating identity with ideology. It relies on anonymous testimonials, unverified claims, and speculative interpretations to portray India’s routine consular outreach as “spying.” Cultural festivals, legal aid clinics, and diplomatic dialogues are reimagined as surveillance mechanisms without presenting forensic or documentary evidence.⁸⁴ Furthermore, the report risks stigmatizing the entire Sikh diaspora by suggesting that scrutiny of violent separatist groups constitutes religious persecution.

This portrayal is not only analytically flawed but also ethically irresponsible, as it blurs the line between legitimate community engagement and threats to national security.

Freedom House UK, “Combating Transnational Repression in the UK”

in the May 2025 publication by Freedom House UK.⁸⁵ Although the report credibly documents abuses by regimes such as China and Russia, its references to India lack any documented incidents of coercion occurring on British soil. Neither the UK Parliament’s Intelligence and Security Committee nor MI5 has confirmed the existence of Indian covert operations targeting diaspora communities. Consequently, the report’s inclusion of India is speculative and undermines its overall credibility findings.^{86, 87}

Virtually Vulnerable: Exposing The Human Cost of Digital Harassment

The following organizations collaborated on the report “*Virtually Vulnerable: Exposing the Human Cost of Digital Harassment*,”⁸⁸

- Sikh American Legal Defence and Education Fund (SALDEF)
- Equality Labs
- Hindus for Human Rights (HfHR) and
- Indian American Muslim Council (IAMC)

This report elucidates the collusion among organizations that promote hostility towards Hindus and India in constructing a shared narrative. These groups consistently leverage U.S. policy instruments (such as California SB-403 and TNR-related bills) to advocate against India's alleged repression. Their coordination amplifies political pressure on legislators, tech companies, and media platforms, reinforcing the portrayal of India as engaging in systemic oppression. The collaboration thus serves mutual reinforcement of policy advocacy, media campaigns, and lobbying efforts.

Their collaborative campaigns have led to heightened stigmatization and hostility directed towards Indian Americans and American Hindus. Reports such as this one from the TNR represent an attempt to characterize legitimate diaspora advocacy as extremism or foreign interference.

The allegations outlined in the “Virtually Vulnerable” report, which accuses India and Hindu groups of engaging in systematic online censorship and harassment, predominantly rest on anecdotal claims and narratives driven by political motives. India, recognized as the world's largest democracy, adheres to constitutional rights, including the freedoms of speech and expression, as

long as such rights do not jeopardize national security, incite violence, or propagate misinformation.

Claims of censorship concerning Sikh diaspora voices regarding the Khalistan issue overlook essential historical and security considerations. The Khalistan movement has been linked to acts of violence and terrorism, most notably the 1985 Air India bombing, which resulted in the deaths of 329 innocent civilians, predominantly Canadians of Indian descent.

The opposition to California's SB-403 was based on valid concerns regarding ambiguous language, the potential for profiling Indian Americans, and the discriminatory effects specifically targeting Hindu-Americans. Allegations associating anti-SB-403 advocacy with extremism or transnational repression are efforts to suppress civic participation by Hindu and Indian diaspora communities in the United States through fear and intimidation.

The moderation procedures employed by technology corporations frequently lack transparency and exhibit inconsistency, affecting a broad range of groups across various ideological spectrums, not solely minority groups that are critical of India. Indeed, there exist credible grounds to assert that historically, Hindu advocacy organizations have encountered censorship on social media platforms, potentially at the behest of the very entities now alleging victimization in this report.

In conclusion, the report's broad accusations and selective anecdotes overlook India's constitutional protections, transparent legal procedures, and valid security concerns. Such narratives unjustly tarnish Hindu organizations, undermine authentic diaspora involvement, and pose the risk of cultivating divisive narratives that are detrimental to social harmony within diaspora communities worldwide. Additionally, the mischaracterization of all pro-India digital interactions as "harassment" intentionally conflates lawful political expression with coordinated cyberbullying.

No Way In or Out (Freedom House, 2024)

The overall assertions presented in this report³⁴ are aligned with those documented in other analyses previously evaluated by our organization. This report specifically focuses on Kashmir and the Indian diaspora originating from the Kashmiri region. It is relevant to note that, although the report highlights instances where sympathizers of Kashmiri militancy are denied visas, it fails to address the issue of terrorism in Kashmir and the activities of Pakistan-sponsored operatives such as Gulam Nabi Fay, a convicted ISI spy who received significant funding from Pakistan to promote the Kashmiri separatist narrative within the United States. Fay utilized Pakistani funds to establish a network comprising distinguished academics and journalists to further his objectives.

The example of Ghulam Nabi Fay serves as a cautionary tale for India, and the alleged TNR repression incidents in Kashmir should be examined through the perspective of that experience. Lacking specific context, the report vigorously cites advocacy groups opposing India and anonymous sources to criticize India regarding mobility restrictions imposed on select Kashmiri journalists, activists, and academics. For instance, the report explores the revocation of OCI cards, which are primarily rescinded due to security threats, fraud, or actions that harm national integrity. India's measures are consistent with practices observed in democratic nations such as the United Kingdom and the United States, where revocations of citizenship or residency for national security reasons are standard legal procedures, subject to judicial review and appeal.

The report explicitly references the confiscation and cancellation of passports for Kashmiri journalists and activists, describing these measures as means of suppression. Historically, passport restrictions in Kashmir have been associated with documented instances of involvement or credible suspicions of involvement in activities perceived to threaten India's national security, such as links to separatist or militant groups like that of Fay.

The report's dependence on anecdotal narratives overlooks the broader context of terrorism and militancy confronting India in Kashmir, disregarding the significant loss of civilian and military lives over several decades.

The report underscores instances such as Kashmiri photojournalist Sanna Irshad Mattoo being prevented from international travel, implying the existence of an unofficial no-fly list targeting government critics. The deployment of travel restrictions in specific individual cases constitutes administrative actions subject to judicial review, rather than informal prohibitions. Additionally, the report fails to present credible evidence of systemic abuse or extrajudicial procedures, thereby casting doubt on the validity of assertions regarding an "unofficial no-fly list."

The report concerns the case of British Indian scholar Nitasha Kaul, who was denied entry into India and faces the potential revocation of her OCI due to alleged anti-India activities. The United States government has recently emphasized that obtaining a visa to visit the United States is a privilege rather than a right. It is appropriate to apply the same standard to India. Ms. Kaul's extensive history of public statements, writings, and appearances advocating for the pro-separatist Kashmir cause provides legitimate grounds under Indian law for scrutinizing her visa and OCI status.

This report also positions India's actions in relation to those of authoritarian states such as Saudi Arabia and Belarus, without acknowledging the fundamental distinctions between democratic and authoritarian legal systems. Unlike these nations, India's legal framework, including the Supreme Court, provides a robust mechanism for challenging any purported arbitrary application of OCI or visa-related issues.

Finally, the assertions made by advocacy-oriented organizations cited within this report lack forensic substantiation, and their financial support trends frequently suggest ideological predispositions against India's current governance framework.

Hate Against Diaspora as TNR Narrative Takes Hold

The Emboldening of Extremists

TNR narrative has provided protection to extremists such as Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, who have amplified their rhetoric of hostility against Hindus. It is not solely speech; as demonstrated by subsequent statements from Mr. Pannun, these constitute threats of physical violence.

Meanwhile, he asserts that he is a victim of TNR. The following table enumerates a few of Pannun's invectives over the past two years.⁸⁹

Date	Statement / Threat	Target	Context / Source
Sep 2023	"Indo-Canadian Hindus... your destination is India. Leave Canada, go to India." ⁹⁰	Hindu Canadians	Pannun accused Hindus in Canada of disloyalty, urging them to return to India.
Nov 2024	"We will shake the foundations of Ayodhya, the birthplace of Hindutva." ⁹¹	Ram Mandir and Hindu temples	Threatened attacks on Hindu temples, including Ayodhya's Ram Mandir, on Nov 16–17.
Dec 2024	"I will seek revenge for the encounter of three Punjab separatist terrorists in Pilibhit." ⁹²	Indian government	Threatened revenge during the 2025 Kumbh Mela for alleged fake encounters.
Jul 2024	Threatened bomb attacks on Parliament and the Red Fort. ⁹³	Indian government	Sent pre-recorded messages threatening bomb attacks to Indian Defence Minister and MPs.
Jan 2024	Urged gangsters to target Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann and police officials. ⁹⁴	Punjab government	Called on gangsters to join SFJ and prevent CM Mann from attending Republic Day parade.
Oct 2024	Warned of potential attacks on Air India flights between Nov 1–19. ⁹⁵	Air India passengers	Cited the 40th anniversary of the 1984 Sikh genocide as the reason for the threat.
Aug 2024	Threatened to bomb Himachal Pradesh CM's Independence Day event. ⁹⁶	Himachal Pradesh government	Warned of explosions if the Tricolor flag was hoisted on August 15.

Mar 2024	Issued death threat against India's Ambassador to Canada, Sanjay Verma. ⁹⁷	Indian diplomats	Accused India of being responsible for Nijjar's death and threatened the diplomat.
Jan 2024	Declared that Punjabis are not part of India and should not hoist the Tricolor. ⁹⁸	Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann	Offered a reward for anyone preventing Mann from hoisting the flag on August 15.
Jul 2024	Warned of attacks on Indian Parliament and Red Fort. ⁹⁹	Indian government	Threatened MPs to stay home to avoid being involved in the Punjab separatist referendum.
Sep 2023	Called for "Death to India" and "Balkanisation of India." ¹⁰⁰	Indian state	Issued intimidatory warnings to Indian missions in Ottawa, Toronto, and Vancouver.
Oct 2023	Threatened to disrupt the G20 summit in Delhi. ¹⁰¹	Indian government	Sent operatives to deface Metro stations with pro-Khalistan graffiti during the G20 summit.
Jul 2023	Called on Canadian Hindus to return to India. ¹⁰²	Hindu Canadians	Specifically targeted Indian-origin Hindu Canadian MP Chandra Arya.
Oct 2024	Asked China to "take back" Arunachal Pradesh. ¹⁰³	Indian sovereignty	Issued a threat to India's territorial integrity with his campaign "SFJ 2024 ONE India To 2047 NONE India."
Nov 2024	Threatened to disrupt the All India Conference of DGPs/IGPs ¹⁰⁴ .	Indian police officials	Called the event a "terror conference" and accused Indian leaders of orchestrating violence.

Diaspora-Targeted Hate Crimes and Institutional Attacks (2020–2025)

As the TNR narrative against India grew, so did the hate crimes against the Indian and Hindu diaspora as the following table shows.¹⁰⁵

Year	Country	Incident Description	Primary Target	Alleged or Attributed Perpetrator(s)
2020	UK	Mahatma Gandhi statue in Leicester defaced with anti-India graffiti	Cultural Symbol	Unknown; widely believed to be pro-Khalistan vandals
2021	Canada	Ram Mandir in Mississauga vandalized; slogans praising Khalistan	Hindu Temple	Khalistani extremists
2021	USA	Repeated online threats to Hindu groups during farmers' protest rallies	Hindu organizations	Pro-Khalistan social media agitators
2022	UK	Hindu families attacked during Leicester riots following India-Pakistan match	Indian diaspora	Islamist youth gangs with ideological motives
2022	Australia	ISKCON temple in Brisbane defaced with anti-Hindu messages	Hindu Temple	Suspected pro-Khalistan elements
2022	Canada	Threats issued to Indian consulate staff during diaspora rallies	Indian diplomatic mission	Khalistani organizers
2023	Canada	Assassination of Hardeep Singh Nijjar followed by anti-Hindu rhetoric targeting Indian diaspora	Hindu individuals & Indian state symbols	Unverified; claimed to be retaliation for Indian policies
2023	USA	Swaminarayan Temple in Los Angeles defaced with "Hindutva out" graffiti	Hindu Temple	Anti-Hindu radical collectives (unconfirmed)
2023	Australia	Posters of Bhindranwale displayed near Hindu temples during protests	Temples & cultural centers	Khalistan-sympathetic groups

2023	UK	Hindu-owned businesses in Leicester targeted with vandalism post riots	Businesses	Islamist and far-left extremist mobs
2024	Canada	Hindu priests threatened outside temples with calls to “go back to India”	Individuals	Pro-Khalistani youths
2024	USA	Vandalism of Hindu temples during “anti-fascist” protests related to India’s CAA law	Temples	Radical left-wing groups conflating Indian policy with fascism
2024	UK	Indian diplomats heckled and blocked from entry at Sikh gurdwaras	Diplomats	Gurdwara committees influenced by Khalistani resolutions
2025	Australia	Hindu school in Melbourne receives threats after SB-509 hearings	Hindu cultural institution	Unidentified activists; possibly incited by false narratives of TNR
2025	Canada	Anti-India protests in Brampton glorify separatist violence and target diaspora leaders	Hindu organizations & individuals	Organized by SFJ-affiliates and sympathetic civic actors

Case Study: Canada

The Genesis of the Allegation

In September 2023, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau made a highly controversial claim in the House of Commons, alleging that there were “credible allegations” of Indian government involvement in the killing of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, a designated terrorist and leading Khalistani separatist.⁶¹ This statement marked a seismic escalation in diplomatic tensions between Canada and India and formed a foundational pillar in the emerging “Transnational Repression” (TNR) discourse targeting India.

Trudeau’s remarks were made without the provision of verifiable evidence and preempted any formal legal or investigative disclosure. Canadian security and intelligence officials did not corroborate these allegations in court or through an independent inquiry. The invocation of intelligence sources, presumably from the Five Eyes alliance, was presented in a vague and legally untestable manner. Such framing exemplifies a classic case of narrative weaponization: transforming an unresolved domestic law enforcement matter into an international diplomatic crisis, thereby invoking the TNR framework popularized by NGOs such as Freedom House and IAMC.

Political Calculations Behind Trudeau’s Strategy

Trudeau’s decision to amplify the Nijjar affair appears to have been shaped by domestic political calculus:

1. *Appeasement of the Sikh Voting Bloc*

The Sikh population in Canada, constituting approximately 2.1% of the national demographic, is disproportionately represented in pivotal electoral districts across British Columbia and Ontario. The Liberal Party, under the leadership of Mr. Trudeau, has historically relied on support from segments within the Sikh community, including those who demonstrate sympathies towards the Khalistan movement. It is noteworthy that individuals affiliated with pro-Khalistan organizations have participated as political donors and influencers within the party.

2. *Coalition Politics*

Trudeau’s minority government was sustained through the support of the New Democratic Party (NDP), under the leadership of Jagmeet Singh, a figure who has openly expressed sympathy towards the Khalistan movement. Singh has persistently refused to classify organizations such as Sikhs for Justice (SFJ) as either violent or extremist, notwithstanding their designation as such

within India. Trudeau's position may be construed as an indication of alignment with Singh's electorate, thereby ensuring political stability.

3. Projection of human rights leadership:

By portraying India as an authoritarian entity allegedly violating diaspora rights, Trudeau is able to present himself as a worldwide advocate for human rights. This approach is especially pertinent within the context of domestic political optics, where Trudeau has faced criticism regarding his handling of indigenous rights, Chinese interference in electoral processes, and deficiencies in internal security.

Impact On Indian and Canadian Hindus

The collateral damage of Trudeau's unsubstantiated allegations has been severe:

1. Chilling Effect on Hindu Civic Participation

Prominent Hindu organizations in Canada, such as the Hindu Federation of Canada and the Canadian Hindu Chamber of Commerce, have reported a spike in suspicion and hostility. Community events like Diwali celebrations and temple gatherings now face unwarranted scrutiny under the pretext of foreign influence investigations.

2. Temple Vandalism and Hate Speech

Since Trudeau's statement, there has been a documented uptick in anti-Hindu and anti-India graffiti on temples as described [above](#). These incidents have received tepid condemnation from Canadian officials, reinforcing perceptions of state-enabled impunity for Khalistani miscreants.

3. Academic and Media Hostility:

Hindu students and Indian-origin academics have faced increased pressure and marginalization, especially in institutions influenced by Khalistani-adjacent groups. Speaking positively about India or opposing Khalistan is now framed as being complicit in "repression."

India's Perspective- Security, Legality, and Sovereignty

From India's standpoint, Trudeau's accusation represents a politicized distortion of sovereign counterterrorism policy. Nijjar was not a peaceful activist but a wanted terrorist with Red Notices and Interpol alerts. His activities included fundraising for separatist violence, radicalization of Canadian youth, and calls for attacks on Indian diplomatic missions. India had formally requested Nijjar's extradition under the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT), a process Canada repeatedly delayed without explanation.

The Government of India has persistently addressed issues related to diaspora-linked terrorists through lawful measures—including the revocation of passports pursuant to the Passports Act, the review of citizenships under Section 7D of the Citizenship Act, and the submission of extradition requests accompanied by supporting evidence. Unlike authoritarian regimes, these actions have been conducted transparently, with legal contestability and judicial oversight.

India’s policy is not to suppress dissent but to respond to criminality masquerading as political expression. Canada’s reluctance to distinguish between extremist violence and democratic speech enables a grey zone exploited by actors like Nijjar and Pannun.

International Ramifications

Trudeau’s statement provided rhetorical ammunition to organizations such as IAMC and Freedom House in their expansion of TNR allegations against India. These entities have historically partnered with actors linked to Pakistani ISI and Islamist-Leftist networks. Their narratives have subsequently been disseminated to U.S. state legislatures, exemplified by California SB-509, and to NGO platforms, where Hindu and Indian diaspora organizations are unjustly examined as purported channels of repression.

Furthermore, Trudeau’s framing undermines serious discourse on the genuine TNR threats posed by China and Iran. By equating India, a constitutional democracy with due process with regimes that poison and abduct dissidents, Canada has diminished the credibility of human rights frameworks.

Analysis of TNR Related Legislations

TNR Legislations across the US

The congressional hearings and analogous proceedings conducted at the United States Congress have resulted in the proposal of various legislative measures at both federal and state levels. Presented herewith is a compilation of legislations and their status.

Level	Bill	Status	Key Provisions	Scope
Federal	S. 831 / H.R. 3654 (2023)	Pending	Adds TNR to State Dept. report; strategy, training, sanctions	Policy + Accountability
Federal	H.R. 5907 (2023)	Pending	Defines TNR; enables criminal prosecution	Criminal
Federal	H.R. 9707 (2024)	Pending	DOJ to report TNR incidents annually	Reporting
Federal	H.R. 7443 (2024)	Pending	Creates DHS office for TNR coordination	DHS Coordination
Federal	H.R. 2158 (2025)	Pending	DHS TNR Working Group; annual threat assessments	DHS Monitoring
Federal	H.R. 2139 (2025)	Pending	DHS-led training for local/state law enforcement	Training Support
Federal	Law Enforcement Support & TNR Hotline Act	Committee Passed	Creates hotline; public outreach	Victim Support
Federal	S. 1591 (2025)	Introduced	Mandates DHS annual assessments and designates authoritarian regimes	Strategic Enforcement

California	AB 3027 (2024)	Failed (Held in Suspense)	Mandated TNR training by POST	Training
California	SB 509 (2025)	Pending	OES/POST to develop TNR training	Training
Texas	SB 1349 (2025)	Passed	Criminalizes TNR & unauthorized foreign law enforcement	Criminal + Training
Florida	HB 583 / SB 766 (2025)	Failed	Registers foreign agents from countries of concern	Transparency
New York	S 417 (2023–25)	Pending	Highlights TNR threats symbolically	Symbolic
New York	Baby-FARA Proposals	Pending	Foreign agent registration mandates	Transparency
Arkansas	Baby-FARA	Passed	Registers agents of adversarial nations	Transparency
Nebraska	Baby-FARA	Passed	Registration + criminal penalties	Transparency + Criminal

Key Differences and Patterns Among Legislations

1. *Country-Specific Targeting*

- Six bills explicitly mention targeted countries:
 - California AB 3027, a 2024 predecessor to SB 509 lists India as an offender. Texas SB 1349, Florida HB 583/SB 766, Arkansas Baby-FARA, Nebraska Baby-FARA: Focus on China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea.
 - Federal S. 1591: Cites China, Russia, and Iran as authoritarian regimes.
- Other bills use broad phrases such as “foreign governments,” avoiding direct references to specific nations, likely to prevent political complications or accusations of selective targeting.

2. *Terrorist Organization Inclusion*

- No bill explicitly names any terrorist group (such as ISIS, Al-Qaeda, Hezbollah).
- The focus across all laws and bills remains on the actions of foreign governments, not non-state terrorist groups, even when “coercion” or “intimidation” might overlap with terror tactics.

3. *Institutional Study and Reporting Requirements*

- Several bills feature requirements for official studies and institutional reporting:
 - Federal H.R. 9707: DOJ must report on TNR incidents annually.
 - Federal H.R. 2158 and S. 1591: DHS is tasked with ongoing monitoring, assessments, and threat analysis.
 - Federal H.R. 7443: Creates a permanent DHS office for TNR coordination.
- These studies aim to formalize the TNR policy space and inform future legislative or law enforcement action. However, they often lack direct enforcement power or criminal penalties.

4. *Enforcement Mechanisms*

- Texas SB 1349 stands alone as the only state law to directly criminalize TNR actions, including unauthorized foreign law enforcement.
- Arkansas and Nebraska’s Baby-FARA laws incorporate criminal penalties for failure to register as a foreign agent.

- Federal H.R. 5907 would enable prosecution for “foreign intimidation,” but remains unpassed.
- California’s efforts (AB 3027, SB 509) are centered on law enforcement training and community awareness—no penalties for actual acts of TNR.

5. *Scope and Approach*

- Federal Approach: Strategic—interagency coordination, reporting, oversight, and national strategy development, empowering DHS and DOJ.
- State Approach:
 - California: Prioritizes mandated law enforcement training and awareness.
 - Texas: Emphasizes robust criminal prosecution and deterrence, including unauthorized enforcement of foreign law.
 - Florida, Arkansas, Nebraska, New York: Focus on foreign agent registration, transparency, and symbolic awareness rather than prosecution.
 - New York S 417: Symbolic, raising official awareness without enforcement.

6. *Analysis and Observed Trends*

- Country-Specific Labeling is Expanding: Bills increasingly mention China, Russia, Iran, North Korea, and an attempted inclusion of India in 2024. This marks a notable shift toward selectivity that may impact diplomatic relations and perceptions among diaspora groups.
- Enforcement Still Rare: While institutional attention and reporting are rapidly growing, only Texas and a few “Baby-FARA” states have legalized criminal penalties for TNR-related conduct.
- Non-State Actors Omitted: Despite global concerns about non-state violence, U.S. legislative activity in this domain is exclusively focused on foreign states.
- Divergence in State Priorities: California’s model is preventive and training-based, Texas’s is prosecutorial, and other states are focusing on transparency measures. This patchwork may lead to inconsistent protections and uneven community risk.
- Symbolic vs. Substantive Action: New York S 417 and similar proposals illustrate symbolic action—raising awareness without adding prosecutorial or enforcement tools.

Case Study: California SB-509: Legislative Overreach Rooted in Advocacy, Not Evidence

Introduction

California's proposed legislation, SB-509, is likely to make every California resident who supports an India or a Hindu-related cause an instant suspect of being a conduit for the Indian government's supposed repressive regime. Hindu advocacy groups have therefore strongly opposed this bill.

Initially introduced in 2024 as Assembly Bill 3027 by Assemblymember Jasmeet Bains and subsequently reintroduced as Senate Bill 509¹⁰⁶ (SB-509) by Senator Anna Caballero, this legislation mandates that state agencies report incidents of "foreign government surveillance" targeting diaspora communities.¹⁰⁷ While promoted as a safeguard against authoritarian transnational repression, SB-509 explicitly identifies India alongside regimes such as China and Russia, thereby equating a constitutional democracy with governments notorious for abductions, assassinations, and media blackouts.^{108,109} This comparison is profoundly flawed and carries perilous implications as described below in the report. It constructs its argument not on substantiated law enforcement evidence or empirical data, but on unresolved diplomatic assertions, biased advocacy narratives, and ideologically driven suppositions.¹¹⁰

Legislative Capture Analysis: California SB-509

For the forces inimical to the interests of India and Hindus, California Senate Bill 509 exemplifies a successful case of legislative capture through coordinated advocacy. The bill's progression demonstrates sophisticated organizational coordination.

Phase 1: Groundwork (2023-2024)

- Sikh Coalition releases preliminary research
- SALDEF begins community mobilization
- Freedom House provides academic legitimacy

Phase 2: Legislative Introduction (2024)

- Assembly Bill 3027 introduced by Assemblymember Jasmeet Bains
- Coordinated testimony from multiple organizations
- Media campaign emphasizing TNR threats

Phase 3: Amplification (2024-2025)

Tarnishing India, Targeting Hindus: The Global Weaponization of
Transnational Narrative – A Research Report by HinduPACT

v. 1.10 ©HinduPACT, 2025
Technology ©Tattwa.ai, 2025

- Reintroduction as Senate Bill 509
- Enhanced organizational support letters
- Congressional testimony referencing the California model

The Unstable Legal Foundation of SB-509

SB-509 is not firmly rooted in substantial legal precedent; rather, it depends significantly on media references, statements from foreign political entities, and conjectural associations. Such reliance presents considerable issues within a legislative framework. The preamble and accompanying documents reference numerous politically sensitive incidents as though they are established facts.

- **Canadian Allegations Against India (2023):** The bill references the killing of Hardeep Singh Nijjar and cites Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's parliamentary accusation of possible Indian involvement. We have analyzed the impact of the former PM's political posturing in a subsequent section of this report. By constructing California state policy based on unverified foreign assertions, the bill introduces an international diplomatic dispute into domestic law, establishing a precedent that is entirely inappropriate for state legislation.
- **Imported Geopolitical Disputes:** SB-509 extends beyond local community concerns and actively participates in foreign policy discussions. For instance, it references controversies such as the India–Canada diplomatic tensions or Sikh separatist narratives to shape California legislation. This incorporates intricate geopolitical conflicts into California's internal enforcement framework, without any discernible link to local security incidents.

Conflation of Advocacy and Evidence: SALDEF and Beyond

One of the principal supporting stakeholders of the bill is the Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF).¹¹¹ Although SALDEF undertakes significant community advocacy activities, its policy positions are predominantly advocacy-driven rather than grounded in legal conclusions derived from judicial or investigatory due process.¹¹² When legislative texts include advocacy narratives without verifying their factual foundations, it undermines the distinction between public interest and interest group lobbying.

Legislative capture by ideologically motivated entities, particularly those with agendas hostile to Indian American organizations, erodes trust and invites judicial scrutiny. Public policy must be formulated through neutral, pluralistic inputs, not shaped by one-sided representations of contested issues.

Mischaracterizing Democratic Governance in India

The supporting documents of SB-509 additionally reference India's handling of the 2020–2021 Farmers' Protest as evidence of "diaspora repression."¹¹³ This interpretation is both factually selective and analytically flawed. India's temporary suspension of internet services and administrative measures were enacted under legal provisions comparable to those invoked in the United States during public emergencies, such as curfews during riots or restrictions on mass gatherings during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Omitted from the bill are crucial facts:

- Violent elements infiltrated the protests, including attacks on public property and religious symbols.
- India's Supreme Court oversaw the legality of protests, and prominent national media outlets extensively covered both police conduct and protesters' grievances.¹¹⁴
- Sikh leaders engaged in negotiations with the government and were not collectively subjected to repression.

This contextual blindness is not accidental; it forms part of a broader effort to portray India, and by extension its diaspora, as a repressive entity, thereby justifying the scrutiny of Indian-American civic actors.

Legal Risk: Criminalizing Cultural and Religious Engagement

SB-509 facilitates the misclassification of peaceful cultural programs, academic discussions, and religious festivals as forms of "surveillance" or "state-backed influence." For Indian-American 501(c)(3) organizations such as HinduPACT, Hindu American Foundation (HAF), and CoHNA, this situation poses a significant reputational and legal risk. These organizations adhere to IRS transparency regulations, maintain U.S.-based governance, and operate with financial independence; nonetheless, under SB-509, they could be subjected to investigation or be labeled as "foreign-linked" solely for advocating India's image or organizing diaspora-themed panels.

This legislative overreach strikes at the heart of diaspora religious freedom and cultural identity, with specific implications for Hindus and Indian Americans who maintain strong, organic ties to India.¹¹⁵ It encourages arbitrary designation, places undue burden on civic engagement, and undermines constitutionally protected First Amendment rights.

Jurisdictional Overlap and Federal Preemption

Crucially, the legislation encroaches upon domains of exclusive federal jurisdiction. Issues pertaining to foreign surveillance, diplomatic operations, and foreign agent registration are within the jurisdiction of:

- The Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA)¹¹⁶
- The framework of the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT).
- Federal law enforcement and diplomatic agencies, including the Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

By establishing state-level investigative obligations and enforcement triggers for such matters, SB-509 presents potential risks:

- In conflict with existing federal laws
- Encouraging inconsistent enforcement.
- Inviting legal challenges based on the federal preemption doctrine.^{117,118}

Instead of enhancing the safety of the diaspora, the legislation poses a risk of inducing disorder in jurisdictional enforcement, obstructing federal investigations, and exposing California to potential litigation from targeted individuals and groups.

Chilling Effect and Institutional Paranoia

Activities such as hosting Indian diplomats, engaging with consular grievance mechanisms, or participating in U.S.–India business forums could be misinterpreted as “state-directed coordination.”

This apprehension is not merely theoretical; it is operational. Even the perception of legal vulnerability can suppress speech, hinder cultural outreach, and dissuade young Indian Americans from pursuing civic careers.

Diaspora expression transitions from a right to a liability. Dialogue is viewed with suspicion, while advocacy is increasingly subject to surveillance. This encapsulates the core of transnational repression—yet this phenomenon originates from within.

A Veiled Attempt to Disconnect Hindus and Indians from India

More fundamentally, SB-509 represents an ideological effort to sever diasporic connections—aiming to create a division between Indian Americans and their cultural, spiritual, and civilizational homeland. Hindus, in particular, become targets of civilizational profiling, where any expression of dharmic heritage or endorsement of India’s democratic principles is perceived as an act of foreign allegiance.

This disconnection is not a consequence of policy; rather, it constitutes the policy itself. SB-509 does not aim for balance or proportionality; instead, it advocates for detachment: the separation of Hindus from India, advocacy from legitimacy, and civic engagement from constitutional protections.

Conclusion: SB-509 as a Case Study in Policy Failure

By relying on contested international claims, conflating advocacy with fact, and targeting one specific diaspora community under the guise of civil protection, SB-509 undermines constitutional norms, threatens free expression, and damages the very trust it claims to uphold.

Instead of guaranteeing security, it legitimizes suspicion. Instead of fostering inclusion, it institutionalizes exclusion. California, and by extension the United States, must refrain from adopting policies that replicate the repression they purport to oppose.

If passed, SB-509 risks transforming into a legislative case study illustrating how ideological capture, narrative laundering, and policy overreach can undermine civil liberties within a democratic framework.

HinduPACT Recommendations on SB-509

- Reject SB-509 .
- Avoid the duplication of existing and emerging federal protections against TNR
- Allocate Resources to protect against anti-Hindu bias in California
- Implement enforcement guidelines to safeguard against racial, religious, or ethnic targeting.

Case Study: Texas SB1349

Texas Transnational Repression legislation, Senate Bill 1349¹¹⁹ takes effect on September 1, 2025.

Key Provisions of Texas SB 1349

1. Criminalization of Transnational Repression

The law delineates transnational repression as acts perpetrated by an agent of a foreign government or terrorist organization against individuals within Texas, with the purpose of suppressing, punishing, or controlling protected First Amendment activities.

The statute establishes new criminal offenses for engaging in or conspiring to commit acts such as assault, harassment, human trafficking, or coercion, particularly when these acts are executed to intimidate or retaliate against individuals for their protected speech or actions, or when carried out on behalf of a foreign government or terrorist organization in relation to these offenses.

The legislation stipulates that the penalty for transnational repression is elevated one level above the most serious underlying offense. For example, if the underlying crime is a felony, the TNR-related offense will carry an even higher penalty. Minimum sentencing thresholds are established, including a 15-year minimum for the most severe felonies.

2. Law Enforcement Training and Study

SB 1349 mandates that the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement develop and implement training programs for peace officers. These programs aim to assist officers in identifying, preventing, and responding to transnational repression, including gaining insights into the methods employed by foreign governments and terrorist organizations. The legislation also requires a comprehensive study of TNR threats within Texas, with findings and recommendations to be submitted to the legislature by March 1, 2026. The provisions related to the study shall expire on April 1, 2026.

3. Legislative Context and Rationale

The Texas legislature articulated mounting concerns regarding foreign actors—particularly those originating from authoritarian regimes—employing tactics such as intimidation, harassment, and coercion to suppress critics, dissidents, and diaspora communities within the state. The legislation aims to address legal deficiencies that previously permitted such behavior to remain unpunished when conducted on behalf of foreign entities. Texas’s initiative parallels analogous legislative efforts at both state and federal levels, exemplifying a bipartisan consensus on the imperative to

safeguard residents from repression emanating from foreign sources while upholding constitutional freedoms.

4. Implications for Diaspora Communities

Civil rights advocates have cautioned that broad definitions and enhanced penalties could pose risks of profiling or deterring legitimate cultural, religious, or political participation, especially for Indian, Hindu, and other diaspora communities maintaining connections with their countries of origin. Although there are certain safeguards related to free speech, the legislation is not entirely foolproof. It does not hold sufficiently accountable those who make false accusations of TNR. Consequently, state and non-state actors may exploit SB advocacy groups to weaponize this legislation against the Indian and Hindu diaspora.

Comparative Analysis

Provision	Texas SB 1349	California SB-509 (for comparison)
Focus	Criminalizes TNR acts and unauthorized foreign law enforcement	Reporting and investigation of foreign surveillance, with specific references to India and other countries
Penalties	Enhanced criminal penalties, minimum sentencing	Administrative and civil remedies
Training & Study	Mandated for law enforcement; statewide study	Reporting and monitoring mechanisms
Community Impact	Seeks to protect all residents; concerns about profiling	Criticized for targeting Indian/Hindu diaspora specifically

Legislations in Other Nations

Over the past three years, TNR has become a global issue as the following table indicates:

Bill No.	Bill Title	Year Introduced	Current Status	Jurisdiction
C-70	An Act Respecting Countering Foreign Interference	2024	Passed	Canada
C-2	Strong Borders Act	2025	Introduced	Canada
National Security Act	Modernized Espionage and Foreign Interference Laws	2023	In Force	United Kingdom
FIRS	Foreign Influence Registration Scheme	2025	Launched	United Kingdom
Joint Statement on TNR	UNHRC Joint Statement Condemning TNR	2023	Adopted	Australia
Declaration of Principles	Declaration to Combat TNR	2023	Endorsed	Australia
DGSI Measures	French DGSI Monitoring TNR Activities	2024	Operational	France
Parliamentary Review	Hearing on TNR Measures	2024	In Review	Germany
Resolution 2509	Condemning TNR and Protecting Human Rights	2023	Adopted	European Union
UNHRC Statement	Call to Address TNR	2025	Discussed	United Nations

Predictive Analysis: Adverse Impact of TNR Allegations

This predictive analysis evaluates potential adverse impacts on the Indian and Hindu diaspora across various dimensions, including social cohesion, political participation, economic opportunities, and community safety. The analysis forecasts both immediate and long-term ramifications that could significantly transform the experience of the diaspora within these host nations.

Methodology and Assumptions

This **projected adverse impact analysis** is predicated on historical precedents concerning the influence of geopolitical tensions on diaspora communities, current public opinion trends, and observable governmental response patterns. The predictions presume a continued escalation of TNR allegations and diplomatic tensions between India and these Western nations.

United States

Social and Cultural Impacts

Community Polarization (High Probability - 6-18 months)

- Increased internal divisions within the Indian American community along religious and regional lines
- Potential ostracization of community members perceived as supporting India's government
- Generational conflicts as younger, more assimilated Indian Americans distance themselves from India-related issues
- Decline in participation in India-centric cultural events and festivals

Religious Freedom Concerns (Medium Probability - 1-3 years)

- Hindu temples and organizations may face increased scrutiny from law enforcement
- Potential surveillance of religious gatherings and cultural events
- Self-censorship in religious and cultural expression to avoid association with controversial political issues
- Reduced funding for Hindu religious institutions from donors concerned about legal implications

Political and Civic Participation

Reduced Political Influence (High Probability - 2-5 years)

- Decreased effectiveness of Indian American and American Hindu political advocacy groups
- Potential loss of political appointments and advisory positions for community members
- Reduced access to elected officials and policy-making processes
- Marginalization of pro-India voices in mainstream political discourse

Civic Engagement Decline (Medium Probability - 1-3 years)

- Withdrawal from mainstream civic organizations and community boards
- Reduced participation in local politics and community leadership roles
- Decreased voter turnout in elections due to political disillusionment

Economic and Professional Impacts

Career Limitations (High Probability - 1-2 years)

- Potential security clearance challenges for Indian Americans and American Hindus in the government and defense sectors
- Increased scrutiny of Indian professionals in technology and research fields
- Possible restrictions on participation in sensitive government contracts and projects
- Self-imposed limitations on career choices to avoid security-related complications

Business Impact (Medium Probability - 3-4 years)

- Reduced investment flows between Indian American businesses and India
- Potential challenges in obtaining licenses for India-related business activities
- Decreased networking opportunities with Indian government and business representatives

Canada

Security and Safety Concerns

Physical Security Risks (High Probability - 6-12 months)

- Increased hate crimes and targeted attacks against Hindu temples and community centers
- Personal safety concerns for prominent Hindu and Indian Canadian leaders
- Potential vigilante actions by extremist groups within various communities
- Reduced participation in public religious and cultural events due to security fears

Community Fragmentation (High Probability - 1-2 years)

- Deepening divisions between different religious and ethnic communities within the broader South Asian diaspora
- Potential for intercommunity violence and civil unrest
- Breakdown of interfaith dialogue and cooperation initiatives
- Geographical clustering and self-segregation of communities

Institutional and Legal Impacts

Institutional Discrimination (Medium-High Probability - 1-2 years)

- Potential exclusion from government advisory committees and multicultural councils
- Reduced representation in publicly funded cultural and educational programs
- Possible investigations and audits of Hindu organizations and charities
- Challenges in obtaining permits for religious and cultural facilities

Legal Vulnerabilities (Medium Probability - 3-4 years)

- Increased legal scrutiny of community organizations and their activities
- Potential freezing of assets for organizations with ties to India
- Challenges in immigration and citizenship processes for Hindu applicants

- Possible restrictions on travel to India for Canadian citizens

Economic Consequences

Economic Marginalization (Medium Probability - 2-5 years)

- Reduced business opportunities in sectors sensitive to India-Canada relations
- Potential boycotts of Hindu-owned businesses by certain activist groups
- Decreased investment in community infrastructure and development projects
- Limited access to government contracts and public sector opportunities

Political and Civic Participation

Reduced Political Influence (High Probability – 6-12 months)

- Active rejection of candidates whose views align with India
- Reduced role in mainstream political parties

Civic Engagement Decline (High Probability - 1-4 years)

- Reduced access to elected officials and policy-making processes
- Decreased voter turnout in elections due to political disillusionment

United Kingdom

Political and Representational Challenges

Political Marginalization (Medium-High Probability - 1-3 years)

- Reduced influence of Indian-origin MPs and peers in foreign policy discussions
- Potential challenges to the political careers of prominent Hindu politicians
- Decreased appointments to government positions and advisory roles
- Limited effectiveness of India-UK friendship groups and cultural organizations

Media and Public Perception (High Probability - 6-18 months)

- Negative media coverage associating the entire Hindu and British Indian diaspora community with TNR allegations
- Increased scrutiny of Hindu organizations and their funding sources
- Potential for discriminatory coverage in mainstream British media
- Reduced platform for Hindu voices in public discourse

Social Integration Challenges

Community Cohesion Strain (Medium Probability - 1-2 years)

- Potential backlash from other minority communities against Hindu-British citizens
- Reduced participation in interfaith and multicultural initiatives
- Possible exclusion from certain civic and community organizations
- Decreased support for Hindu cultural events and festivals from local authorities

Educational Impact (Medium Probability - 2-4 years)

- Potential challenges in establishing new Hindu schools and educational institutions
- Reduced funding for Hindu studies and cultural programs in universities
- Possible exclusion from certain academic collaborations with Indian institutions

- Decreased scholarship opportunities for students with connections to India

Economic and Professional Consequences

Professional Limitations (Medium Probability - 1-3 years)

- Potential restrictions on UK-India business collaborations
- Reduced opportunities in diplomatic and foreign service careers
- Possible challenges in obtaining security clearances for sensitive positions
- Decreased effectiveness of UK-India business councils and trade organizations

Australia

Educational Sector Vulnerabilities

Academic Restrictions (High Probability - 1-2 years)

- Potential restrictions on Indian students and researchers in sensitive fields
- Reduced collaboration between Australian and Indian educational institutions
- Possible surveillance of Indian student organizations and cultural groups
- Decreased funding for India-related research and academic programs

Student Experience Degradation (Medium-High Probability - 6-18 months)

- Increased discrimination against Indian international students
- Potential restrictions on student visa approvals and renewals
- Reduced support for Indian cultural organizations on university campuses

Economic and Business Impacts

Trade and Investment Challenges (Medium Probability - 2-4 years)

1. Potential restrictions on Australia-India trade and investment flows
2. Reduced participation in bilateral economic forums and trade missions
3. Possible challenges in obtaining licenses for India-related business activities
4. Decreased effectiveness of Australia-India business councils

Professional Services Impact (Medium Probability - 1-3 years)

- Potential restrictions on Indian professionals in certain sectors
- Reduced opportunities for career advancement in the government and defense sectors
- Possible challenges in professional licensing and accreditation processes
- Decreased networking opportunities with Indian government and business representatives

Cross-Country Systemic Impacts

Diaspora Network Fragmentation

Transnational Community Breakdown (High Probability - 2-5 years)

- Weakening of global Hindu and Indian diaspora networks
- Reduced coordination between diaspora organizations across countries
- Potential isolation of communities in countries with stronger anti-India sentiment
- Breakdown of traditional diaspora support systems and cultural exchanges

Cultural and Religious Preservation Challenges

Cultural Identity Crisis (Medium-High Probability - 3-7 years)

- Potential abandonment of Indian cultural practices and traditions
- Reduced transmission of Hindu religious and cultural knowledge to younger generations
- Possible conversion or assimilation pressures on community members
- Loss of cultural institutions and traditional community structures

Intergenerational Impact

Youth Disengagement (High Probability - 2-5 years)

- Younger generations may distance themselves from Indian and Hindu identity
- Reduced participation in cultural and religious activities
- Potential identity conflicts and psychological impacts on diaspora youth
- Decreased interest in learning Indian languages and cultural practices

Conclusion

The transnational repression allegations against India pose significant risks to Hindu and Indian diaspora communities across these four key Western democracies. The analysis suggests that Canada faces the highest risk of severe adverse impacts, followed by the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia. The timeline for these impacts varies, with some immediate effects already observable and others projected to unfold over several years.

The most significant risks include community fragmentation, reduced political influence, economic marginalization, and potential threats to physical security. However, the established nature of these diaspora communities, their economic integration, and existing legal protections may help mitigate some of these adverse impacts.

The ultimate trajectory will depend on how the TNR allegations evolve, the response of host governments, and the ability of diaspora communities to adapt and advocate for their interests while maintaining their cultural and religious identity.

Hindupact Policy Recommendations ON TNR

The aforementioned analysis provides targeted policy recommendations for democratic nations aiming to distinguish legitimate counter-extremism strategies from authoritarian transnational repression (TNR). These recommendations are based on best practices derived from intergovernmental guidance, legislative reforms, and civil society frameworks, ensuring that responses to security threats adhere to rule-of-law principles, safeguard diaspora civic space, and uphold democratic norms.

Maintain Rigorous Evidentiary Standards for TNR Labeling.

Transnational repression must be recognized as state-sponsored extrajudicial coercion, including assassinations, renditions, and intimidation of families, validated by independent judicial or credible intelligence findings. Host governments must adopt a precise definition of TNR in accordance with United Nations guidance, ensuring that any classification is supported by documented evidence before undertaking diplomatic, legislative, or sanctions measures.¹²⁰

Alleged TNR accusations and incidents must be rigorously verified, consistently documented, and systematically recorded in a centralized registry to ensure proper oversight and accountability transparency.¹²¹ Individuals and organizations that exploit the registry for political or criminal aims must be held criminally accountable.

Integrate TNR Response into International Human Rights Bodies

Persistent advocacy within the United Nations Human Rights Council, the United Nations General Assembly, and regional bodies, citing the United Nations High Commissioner's TNR Guidance,¹²² will serve to harmonize global standards.

Uphold Legal Reciprocity and Equal Treatment of Democracies.

Democratic states ought to be mandated to conform to uniform procedural standards in their interactions with one another, as well as in their dealings with non-democratic regimes.¹²³ For example, the United States Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA) exemplifies reciprocity by mandating that specific requests from foreign principals necessitate registration.¹²⁴

Requests for Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties (MLATs), extradition, Interpol Red Notices, and the revocation of citizenship or visas should adhere to consistent evidentiary thresholds,¹²⁵ rights to appeal, and judicial review procedures across all nations, without compromising the core objective of these instruments – namely, to aid in the prevention of terrorist attacks.

Host countries must not permit their territories to be utilized as launch pads for terrorism or issue violent threats to other democracies. Perpetrators aiming to undermine democratic nations and

institutions must not be permitted to conceal their actions under the pretext of “Transnational Repression.”

Avoid Politicized or Selective Oversight

Parliamentary and congressional hearings regarding TNR should feature balanced panels consisting of government officials, independent experts, and diaspora representatives. This approach, supported by the European Parliament’s investigation into surveillance abuses, seeks to prevent echo chambers and ensures that testimonies are assessed in accordance with legal standards, thereby minimizing biased narratives.¹²⁶

Implement TNR Policies at the Federal Level.

Foreign affairs are matters entrusted to the Federal government due to its comprehensive intelligence regarding terrorism and international trafficking, as well as its expertise in international legal matters. A smorgasbord of TNR-related training, regulations, and sanctions implemented at local or state levels would lead to inconsistent enforcement. Legislation proposed at the state level, such as California’s SB-509, is more vulnerable to influence from powerful political lobbies, thereby compromising the integrity of the democratic process. Moreover, these measures may result in targeting, profiling, and intimidation of affected communities and their representative organizations.

Regulate Surveillance Technologies and Defend Privacy

Legislative measures are essential to prohibit the export and misuse of commercial spyware. Legislators ought to amend cybersecurity and export-control statutes to include provisions for end-use certifications, establish criminal sanctions for unauthorized deployment, and mandate transparency disclosures from technology providers.

The European Union’s upcoming Digital Operational Resilience Act (DORA)¹²⁷ and the United Nations Guidance on TNR recommend that member states prohibit the sale of spyware to repressive regimes and uphold end-to-end encryption.¹²⁸

Any regulation pertaining to surveillance must take into account the authentic security concerns of democratic governments. This is particularly important to ensure that the legitimate application of technology for the detection and prevention of transnational terrorism, drug trafficking, human trafficking, and fraudulent monetary transactions remains accessible.

Implement Targeted Sanctions and Accountability Measures

Host governments should utilize existing frameworks, such as the Global Magnitsky Act, Khashoggi Ban,¹²⁹ and EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime,¹³⁰ to address individuals and entities credibly responsible for TNR acts.¹³¹ Transparency in the sanctioning process, including the publication of aggregate statistics,¹³² sanction designations, and supporting evidence, will serve to enhance legitimacy and prevent misuse.

By implementing these policy recommendations, democratic governments can effectively distinguish between lawful sovereign security measures and authoritarian coercion. Upholding legal reciprocity, safeguarding diaspora civic space, and maintaining rigorous evidentiary standards will preserve the integrity of counterterrorism collaboration and protect diaspora communities from genuine transnational repression.

Transparency

HinduPACT recommends that the funding sources of the organizations promoting TNR against democracies be made public. Similarly, the funding sources for TNR research in academia must also be made public. Finally, there must be enhanced scrutiny of foreign-influenced advocacy campaigns

Conclusion

The TNR narrative directed against India constitutes a deliberate geopolitical strategy and coordinated advocacy that lack empirical evidence. It aims to delegitimize India's global standing and to sever the cultural and civilizational ties of the Hindu diaspora.

This report reveals a complex network involving state actors, advocacy groups, and funding entities collaborating to disseminate allegations of transnational repression against India. The Pakistani ISI has adeptly utilized Western advocacy organizations and institutional predispositions to cultivate a self-perpetuating narrative ecosystem, which has notably influenced international perceptions of India's diaspora policies.

In contrast to authoritarian regimes that operate through opaque networks and extralegal directives, India administers its diaspora engagement via formal and accountable institutions. India's diplomatic outreach is conducted through transparent and registered civil society partnerships.

The report does not aim to defend India; rather, it focuses on safeguarding universal democratic values from exploitation by hostile state entities and violent non-state actors who utilize human rights language as a weapon. It is a collective challenge for all democracies to preserve civil liberties and prevent the gradual erosion of the fundamental distinctions between democratic governance and authoritarian repression.

Narrative Shift and Operational Success

This report illustrates that within a very brief timeframe, Pakistan and its proxies, including Khalistan advocates and supporters of Kashmiri terrorism, have accomplished notable success when evaluated based on the following criteria.

1. Narrative Shift: Successfully reframed Khalistan terrorism as a human rights issue.
2. International Legitimacy: Secured Western institutional support for separatist causes.
3. Diplomatic Pressure: Established sustained pressure on India-West relations.
4. Resource Efficiency: Achieved minimal direct investment with maximum strategic impact.

Weaponization of Human Rights Language

The weaponization of human rights language for geopolitical objectives constitutes a considerable challenge to international institutions and democratic societies, necessitating responses such as enhanced transparency, improved oversight, and strategic communication initiatives. If not addressed, this phenomenon risks legitimizing separatist movements, undermining democratic allies, establishing false equivalencies between democracies and autocracies, and exploiting Western institutional biases.

Vulnerabilities in Western Democratic Systems

The success of these campaigns reveals structural vulnerabilities:

- Foundation Funding: Lack of transparency in grant-making decisions
- Academic Capture: Insufficient scrutiny of research funding sources
- Legislative Process: Vulnerability to coordinated advocacy campaigns
- Media Ecosystem: Tendency toward sensationalized narratives

Most concerning is the successful legislative capture demonstrated by California SB-509, which shows how coordinated advocacy campaigns can translate narrative warfare into concrete policy outcomes that affect bilateral relations between democratic allies.

HinduPACT Recommendations

Policy Recommendations

- Maintain rigorous standards for TNR labeling
- Integrate TNR Response into International Human Rights Bodies
- Uphold Legal Reciprocity and Equal Treatment of Democracies
- Avoid Politicized or Selective Oversight
- Implement TNR Policies at a Federal Level
- Regulate Surveillance Technologies and Defend Privacy
- Implement Targeted Sanctions and Accountability Measures

Transparency Recommendations

- Foundation Disclosure: Mandatory reporting of grants supporting foreign policy advocacy
- Academic Funding: Clear disclosure of funding sources for TNR-related research
- Legislative Process: Enhanced scrutiny of foreign-influenced advocacy campaigns

For the Indian and Hindu diaspora, rejection of the TNR narrative against India is not merely political advocacy. It does not solely represent advocacy for their *dharmabhoomi*, or spiritual land. Rather, it is a rejection of hate and an endeavor to preserve their cultural heritage and faith. It is primarily about the physical safety of their places of worship and their personal survival.

Appendix

Appendix A: HinduHate Bias Detector Methodology

Introduction to NLP Methodology

Bias detection in NLP has gained significant traction; however, there remains a critical gap in addressing biases specifically targeting Hinduism, Hindutva, and Indian identity. Anti-Hindu biases often manifest subtly in global media, academia, and policy narratives, affecting perceptions and policy-making. To address this, the HinduHate Detector research by Tattwa.AI introduces a structured, deterministic NLP-based detection system tailored explicitly for these biases, offering precise, context-sensitive analysis suitable for rigorous academic and public discourse.

This deterministic approach is then augmented with probabilistic model-based deep learning techniques. The hybrid methodology ensures a thorough, reproducible, and scientifically grounded approach. Additionally, this approach effectively combines the precision of computational tools with interpretive depth to identify bias, inflammatory rhetoric, and patterns of Hindu hate.

NLP System Overview

Data Corpus

Training datasets include the full texts of over a hundred books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and news items. Concurrent searches of reputable news sources supplement these. Additionally, several relevant databases are incorporated to improve the context of analysis and help generate counter-responses.

Rules Generation

A subset of the data corpus was manually and automatically analyzed to create rules. Approximately 2000 rules have been generated. The system is designed to continuously enhance the algorithms by learning from the newly analyzed data.

Lexicons And Vocabularies

The system leverages comprehensive lexicons to identify biases explicitly:

- Anti-Hindu Tropes
- Mischaracterization
- Headline Sentiment
- Pro-Hindu Terms

- Named Entities

Rules and Rule Categories

Structured analytical axes include:

- **Sentiment Rules:** India Sentiment (ISS), Hindu Sentiment (HSS), Hindutva Sentiment (HTSS).
- **Bias Matrix:** Language, Sources, Representation, Mischaracterization, Framing, Expert Selection, Historical Context.
- **Intent and Emotion Markers:** Rhetorical, narrative, expressive, directive triggers.
- **Narrative Integrity Checks:** Ensuring factual alignment, ideological clarity, and misrepresentation detection.
- **Visibility & Alignment Checks:** Hindu Visibility Index (HVI), Hindutva Alignment Score (HAS).
- **Risk Escalation Metrics:** Narrative Shift Index (NSI), Hinduphobia Risk Score (HRS).

NLP Analysis

- **Purpose:** To evaluate the hate, emotions, intent and tone expressed in the document's language.

Steps:

- **Text Preprocessing:** The text was tokenized and cleaned (removal of stop words, punctuation, etc.) for computational analysis.
- **Bias (sentiment, emotions, intent, tone) Scoring:** Each sentence was classified as Positive, Negative, or Neutral, using both lexicon-based techniques and NLP models.
- **Phrase Analysis:** Bigrams and trigrams were analyzed to detect recurring emotionally charged terms (e.g., "Hindu supremacist," "far-right advocacy").
- **Visualization:** Results were presented as pie charts, radial charts and word clouds to represent bias trends clearly.

Deep Learning (If Applicable)

- **Model Architecture:** For contextual and semantic text analysis, pre-trained deep learning models like BERT (Bidirectional Encoder Representations from Transformers) were utilized.

Applications:

- **Sentiment Classification:** Identifying sentiment categories (Positive, Negative, Neutral) for sentences and phrases.
 - **Bias and Rhetoric Detection:** Detecting subtler forms of bias, such as euphemisms, dysphemism, or inflammatory framing, using contextual embeddings.
 - **Semantic Relationships:** Understanding the connections between terms to detect thematic patterns.
- **Validation:** Deep learning results were cross-verified with human assessments to ensure reliability and interpretability.

Appendix B: Research methodology used in this report

Research Design

The HinduHate Detector application component, *SamyaTattwa*, constructs a counter-narrative from an Indian and Hindu perspective. *SamyaTattwa* intrinsically utilizes the following methods using multiple publicly available LLM models.

A component of the system subsequently reviews published literature, including peer-reviewed publications, books, research reports, media reports, and others, to verify the validation of key arguments. Citations are provided at the conclusion of major sections.

Due to limitations of current technology, it is not possible to generate document-wide validation at once.

It is important to observe that, despite the utilization of an automated AI-driven approach, we affirm that our research methodology complies with an established framework for hypothesis formulation and falsification within this discipline.

Key Components

- Qualitative components
 - Include in-depth analysis of legal instruments (Citizenship Act, Passports Act, UAPA) and detailed case narratives (Pannun, Nijjar, Swain, Taseer).
- Quantitative components
 - Draw on Freedom House's TNR database (1991–2023), SAR-Europe incident logs, and Interpol Red Notice statistics to compare India's performance against authoritarian regimes.
 - Quantitative Benchmarking: Cross-referencing Freedom House TNR database (1991–2023), Polity IV indices, and SAR-Europe logs, and Interpol Red Notice statistics to compare India's performance against authoritarian regimes.
- Document Analysis
 - Documentary Analysis: Review of Indian statutes (Citizenship Act, Passports Act, UAPA), court rulings, Interpol records, and MLAT filings.

This combination maximizes construct validity by ensuring legal analysis aligns with empirical incident data and criterion validity by benchmarking against established global indicators

Falsification Testing

- **Null Hypothesis:** “India engages in covert TNR akin to authoritarian states
- **Observable Implications:** Extrajudicial killings, forced renditions, family coercion.
- **Alternative Explanations:** Lawful counterterror operations under due process.

Limitations & Ethical Considerations

- **Selection Bias:** High-profile cases may omit lower-visibility incidents.
- **Access Constraints:** Classified intelligence and diplomatic cables remain inaccessible.
- **Analytical Neutrality:** Maintained objectivity despite advocacy orientation; acknowledged potential source biases while prioritizing corroboration.

Appendix C: Glossary of Terms

Transnational Repression (TNR):

A term used in international human rights and security discourse to denote the deployment of extraterritorial coercion by a state against its perceived critics or dissidents residing abroad. TNR encompasses a spectrum of practices, including but not limited to physical violence (e.g., assassination), illegal rendition, proxy harassment of family members, digital intimidation, and abuse of immigration or legal processes. Democracies and authoritarian states alike may exercise forms of extraterritorial enforcement, but TNR is generally characterized by its covert, extralegal, and repressive nature.

Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI):

A legal classification established pursuant to Section 7A of the Citizenship Act, 1955, which provides long-term residency rights and visa-free travel privileges to individuals of Indian descent who have acquired foreign citizenship. While granting numerous benefits, including equality with Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) in economic and educational domains, OCI status does not constitute dual citizenship. It may be revoked under Section 7D for reasons such as fraudulent actions, threats to India's sovereignty, or association with activities detrimental to the interests of the state. All cancellations are subject to appeal before Indian High Courts, in accordance with constitutional protections.

Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA):

India's primary anti-terrorism legislation, initially enacted in 1967 and subsequently amended multiple times through 2019 to adapt to evolving domestic and transnational threats, authorizes the designation of individuals and organizations as terrorists. The Act prohibits their financial and material support networks and permits preventive detention. It incorporates rigorous procedural safeguards, including tribunal reviews, rights of appeal, and judicial oversight, thereby distinguishing it from repressive laws typical of authoritarian regimes.

Interpol Red Notice:

An international alert disseminated by the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) at the request of a member state pertains to the identification and provisional arrest of an individual pending extradition, surrender, or equivalent legal procedures. It is important to note that a Red Notice does not constitute an arrest warrant and necessitates validation under the host country's legal framework. Interpol's Article 3 explicitly forbids the issuance of Red Notices motivated by political, military, religious, or racial considerations. Compliance with this article is a vital measure of a state's adherence to international law.

Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT):

A bilateral agreement between two nations to facilitate official cooperation in criminal investigations and judicial proceedings. Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties (MLATs) enable the collection and exchange of evidence, extradition of fugitives, service of judicial documents, and execution of search and seizure orders. India maintains MLATs with over 40 countries, including the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada. Requests submitted under MLATs necessitate judicial certification and adhere to due-process protocols, contrasting with informal or coercive repatriation methods employed by certain states.

Passports Act, 1967:

An Indian statute authorizes the Ministry of External Affairs to issue, impound, or revoke passports. Reasons for revocation encompass withholding material facts during the application process, ongoing criminal proceedings, or behavior detrimental to the sovereignty, integrity, and security of India. Administrative decisions made under this legislation are **open to judicial review**, thereby providing safeguards against arbitrary use of state authority. This legislation is comparable to analogous statutes in the United Kingdom, Canada, and the United States.

Sedition (Section 124A, Indian Penal Code):

A colonial-era statute criminalizing acts and expressions that incite disaffection against the Government of India. Although its application has been constitutionally challenged and is presently subject to judicial review, the legislation has traditionally been employed in cases involving incitement to violence or threats to public order. It is distinct from criticism or dissent, which are protected under Article 19(1)(a) of the Indian Constitution, which guarantees freedom of speech and expression.

Hinduphobia:

A term denoting hostility, prejudice, or systemic discrimination directed towards Hindu individuals, beliefs, or cultural practices. It manifests through derogatory stereotypes, delegitimization of Hindu philosophies, vandalism of temples, and harassment of Hindu organizations. In diaspora contexts, Hinduphobia intersects with academic, media, and policy frameworks that often conflate Hindu identity with extremism or nationalism without substantiation.

State Sovereignty:

A foundational principle of international law affirming that each nation-state possesses the exclusive right to govern its territory, enact and enforce laws, and conduct foreign relations without external interference. Sovereignty entails both the duty to protect citizens and the right to regulate foreign nationals and organizations within a state's jurisdiction. Claims of transnational repression must be weighed against this principle, especially where actions are demonstrably tied to national security, judicial processes, and statutory authority.

Extradition Act, 1962 (India):

Governs the surrender of individuals from India to foreign jurisdictions (and vice versa) for criminal prosecution. Extradition under this Act requires a formal treaty, court review, and the approval of the central government.

The Foreigners Act of 1946

Authorizes the Indian government to regulate the entry, residence, and departure of foreign nationals. It is frequently applied in immigration enforcement matters, including deportations and visa status reviews.

Diaspora Surveillance vs. Cultural Diplomacy:

A conceptual pair that is instrumental in distinguishing between legitimate consular activities, such as community events and welfare outreach, and illicit surveillance or coercion.

Appendix D: HinduPACT Legal Brief Opposing California SB-509 (2025)

INTRODUCTION

This legal brief contests the constitutionality and detrimental socio-political ramifications of California Senate Bill 509 (“SB-509”), which has been enacted under the guise of addressing transnational repression. Notwithstanding its declared purpose, SB-509 poses a substantial risk of evolving into a legislative instrument for selective profiling, cultural suppression, and the violation of constitutional rights of law-abiding Indian-American and, specifically, American Hindu communities in California.

The legislation, which has been poorly drafted and vigorously promoted by interest groups with specific agendas, establishes pathways for the government to scrutinize legitimate cultural, religious, and political expressions under the pretense of thwarting foreign interference.

Statement of Facts

SB-509 purports to eventually criminalize acts of transnational repression, which are defined as attempts by foreign governments to harass or silence diaspora communities.

Concerns Regarding Targeting:

India and its diaspora, especially American Hindus, have been disproportionately referenced in public campaigns advocating for SB-509, notwithstanding the global nature of diaspora politics.

- **Community Alarm:**
American Hindu civic and cultural organizations, which are actively involved in legitimate advocacy and the promotion of cultural heritage, are facing an escalated risk of unwarranted scrutiny.
- **HinduPACT Statement:**
“SB-509 is dangerously overbroad and poses a risk of criminalizing the lawful activities of members of our community. By neglecting to differentiate between authentic harassment and legitimate cultural or political advocacy, this legislation paves the way for the profiling of Indian-Americans and Hindu organizations based on unfounded suspicions. We strongly urge the State of California to reject this bill in order to safeguard our constitutional freedoms.”
— *HinduPACT (Hindu Policy Research and Advocacy Collective)*

Legal Issues

1. First Amendment Violations

Encroachment upon the rights of free speech, religious expression, and freedom of association.

2. Fourteenth Amendment Equal Protection

Selective enforcement poses the risk of disproportionately targeting Indian-American and Hindu communities.

3. Vagueness and Overbreadth

Ambiguities present unconstitutional risks related to arbitrary enforcement.

4. Conflict with International Human Rights Norms

Cultural rights and protections for diaspora communities are jeopardized.

Arguments

A. SB-509 Imperils Free Speech and Religious Freedom

The First Amendment protects community advocacy, cultural events, and political expressions. SB-509's imprecise language could criminalize lawful community activities simply because they reflect cultural or political pride connected to India.

B. Violates Equal Protection Under the Fourteenth Amendment

The inequitable targeting of activism pertaining to India fosters an atmosphere of selective enforcement, which is inconsistent with the constitutional guarantees of equal protection.

C. Law Is Impermissibly Vague

The failure of the bill to precisely delineate the terms “intimidation” or “coercion” exposes ordinary civic actions to potential arbitrary interpretation and enforcement.

D. Contradicts International Human Rights Commitments

The right of minority communities to cultural expression is enshrined in international law. SB-509 threatens these rights for Indian-Americans.

Conclusion

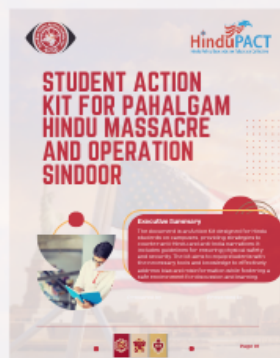
SB-509, while styled as protective legislation, threatens to violate constitutional protections and promote cultural profiling. It risks chilling legitimate speech, undermining civic participation, and fostering unjustified suspicion toward Hindu-American and Indian-American communities.

Recommendations:

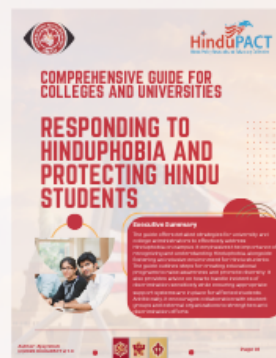
- Urgent legislative amendment to clarify and narrowly tailor the bill.
- Development of enforcement protocols that prohibit cultural and religious profiling.
- Vigilant judicial oversight and, if necessary, constitutional challenge.

Respectfully submitted,
[HinduPACT Legal Advocacy Team]

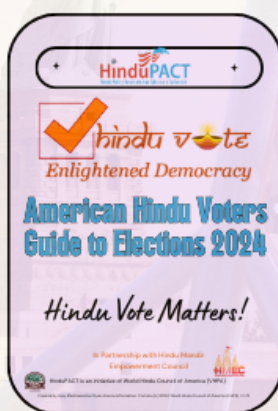
HinduPACT Publications



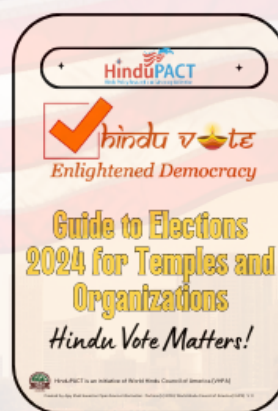
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HINDUPACT GUIDE CALIFORNIA SB-403

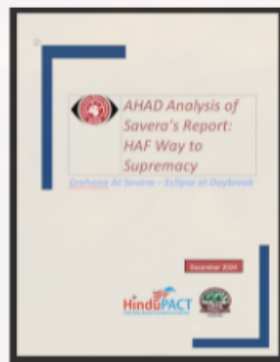


HINDUVOTE GUIDES FOR VOTERS, TEMPLES AND ORGANIZATIONS

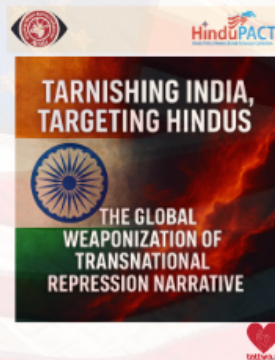
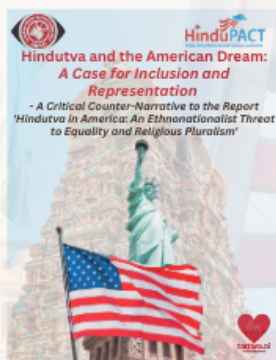


HinduPACT Publications

AHAD HINDUPACT REPORTS



Detailed Counter to Reports by Savera on Hindu Organizations



Hindutva and the American Dream: A Case for Inclusion and Representation
Counter to Rutgers Report on Hindutva in America

Tarnishing India, Targeting Hindus
- Global Weaponization of Transnational Repression Narrative



HINDU POLICY RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY COLLECTIVE

Hindu Policy Research and Advocacy Collective (HinduPACT) researches, educates, and advocates for dharmic values in public life.

INITIATIVES



Established in 1997, American Hindus Against Defamation (AHAD) is the first Hindu movement in the world to create awareness and actively seek to remediate Hinduphobia, denigration of Hindu scriptures, deities, icons and cultural symbols in publications, mass media, textbooks, etc.

AHAD AI uses innovative AI methods to detect and counter Hindu hatred

CHINGARI - Coalition for Hindu Girls Abducted and their Rights is a human rights initiative to create awareness about Pakistani Hindu girls who are abducted forcibly converted and sexually abused

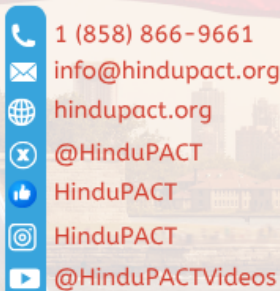


HinduVote brings dharmic values to democracy. We work with temples and community organizations to facilitate voter registration and education. We make candidates and legislators aware of our perspective.

Hindus Advancing Human Rights (HAHRI) advocates for human rights globally. It has been instrumental in bringing a formal complaint about genocide in Pakistan



HinduPACT coordinates United Colors of Holi, an effort of united Hindu temples and organizations to promote what unites us, regardless of our race, ethnicity, and national origin



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