



The “RSS Lobbying” Panic Is Theater:

The Paperwork—And The Network—Tell A Different Story

Legal Analysis, Media Frame, and Evidence Annex



BY AJAY SHAH • HINDUPACT’S AMERICAN HINDUS AGAINST DEFACTION (AHAD)

WASHINGTON, D.C. • FEBRUARY 2, 2026

Updated with OCR-sourced evidence annex

The “RSS Lobbying” Panic Is Theater: The Paperwork, And The Network, Tell A Different Story

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. Started as an initiative of the World Hindu Council of America (VHPA), now part of HinduPACT, 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. AHAD documents and responds to Hinduphobia. 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 and counter Hindu hatred.



Visit

www.ahadinfo.org for
more details

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.



Visit

<https://hindupact.org> for
more details.

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.

Visit <https://tattwa.ai> for details.

Get in Touch:

Email: ahad@hindupact.org

Phone: (858) 866-9661

Website: <https://ahadinfo.org>

X: @AHADHindu

YouTube: @HinduPACTVideos

Table of Contents

<u>The “RSS Lobbying” Panic Is Theater: The Paperwork, And The Network, Tell A Different Story</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>About Us</u>	<u>2</u>
<i><u>American Hindus Against Defamation (AHAD)</u></i>	<i><u>2</u></i>
<i><u>HinduPACT</u></i>	<i><u>2</u></i>
<i><u>Tattwa.ai</u></i>	<i><u>2</u></i>
<u>Overview</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>1) Start With The Filings: What The Paperwork Actually Says</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>2) Law Over Innuendo: Where The LDA Ends And FARA Begins.....</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>3) The Messenger Matters: A Movement-Journalism Frame And Its Validators</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>4) The Decoy: Why A Disclosed, Short-Lived Outreach Drew Maximum Outrage.....</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>5) What Americans Should Actually Know About The RSS (Kept Proportionate To The Legal/Policy Case)</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>6) The Naik–Fai spectrum: transparent activism vs. covert state work.....</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>7) Unified Counter & Legal Rebuttal.....</u>	<u>9</u>
<i><u>7.1 RSS is a legitimate, century-old civic movement, not a foreign state or party.....</u></i>	<i><u>9</u></i>
<i><u>7.2 Lobbying is lawful, and designed to be transparent.</u></i>	<i><u>9</u></i>
<i><u>7.3 The “clandestine” accusation collapses the FARA/LDA line.</u></i>	<i><u>10</u></i>
<i><u>7.4 Why a U.S. network aligned with the Indian left and Pakistan/Khalistan partners targets the RSS.</u></i>	<i><u>10</u></i>
<i><u>7.5 The U.S. is globally central; portraying Hindu civic life fairly here matters, and the RSS used legal means.</u></i>	<i><u>10</u></i>
<i><u>7.6 Why Prism, and why the piece reads as advocacy rather than legal analysis.....</u></i>	<i><u>10</u></i>
<i><u>7.7 Who’s quoted (Naik et al.) vs. what actual clandestinity looks like (Fai).</u></i>	<i><u>10</u></i>

8) Legal ground rules.....11

9) Why The U.S. Should Welcome, Rather Than Criminalize, Transparent Outreach.11

10) The Bottom Line.....12

APPENDIX 13

Overview

(This report was authored by Ajay Shah using SamyaTattwa for HinduPACT's American Hindus Against Defamation (AHAD). SamyaTattwa is a Tattwa.AI application)

Washington runs on disclosures. Under the Lobbying Disclosure Act (LDA), firms file an LD-1 to register, LD-2s each quarter, and, when the work ends, a termination. The system is intentionally boring: who, what, when, how much, sunlight without melodrama. Which is why the recent commotion over a short, fully disclosed 2025 engagement to introduce the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) to congressional offices tells you more about the storytelling than the facts. Turning routine paperwork into a thriller requires one ingredient: narration.

The documents themselves refuse to cooperate with that script. On the U.S. Senate's site, the quarterly report states the scope in one sentence, "*Introduce the RSS to U.S. officials*", lists the lobbyists (including a former committee chair), codes the work as foreign policy, and records a termination in September 2025. The LD-1 had registered the engagement months earlier, naming the U.S. intermediary (State Street Strategies/One+ Strategies) and the affiliated contributor, as the statute requires. That is the record, prosaic, public, and finite. ^{[2][1][3]}

The law is just as stubborn. The Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA) governs agents of foreign governments or foreign political parties. The LDA governs ordinary federal lobbying by domestic firms and nonprofits, including diaspora and faith-based organizations. The Department of Justice states the line plainly: if you are properly registered under the LDA and you are not acting on behalf of a foreign government or foreign political party, and such a government is not the principal beneficiary, FARA does not apply. ^[4] The RSS is neither a government nor a party; the stated objective was educational; the firm filed under the LDA and then terminated. If someone wants to argue FARA should have applied, the burden is to prove a government principal or principal beneficiary, not to backfill insinuation into public paperwork.

"Clandestine," for its part, already has a textbook example in this domain: Ghulam Nabi Fai. For roughly two decades, Fai routed millions from Pakistan's government into Washington's policy bloodstream using straw donors and false statements. He pleaded guilty. That is what covert looks like. ^[5] A one-line LDA description that literally says *introduce the RSS*, with named lobbyists, disclosed spend, and a termination on the record, is the opposite. ^[2]

A familiar rejoinder is that the same firm, Squire Patton Boggs, has filed under FARA as well. Precisely: when SPB represents a government (e.g., Pakistan in 2025), it files under FARA and uploads exhibits to DOJ's database; when it represents a non-government principal for an educational introduction, it uses the LDA. Different principals, different statutes, different filings, by design, not loophole. ^{[6][2]}

This distinction is more than legal housekeeping. It protects pluralism. If every international-adjacent civic engagement were presumptively FARA, the United States would throttle the very advocacy that lets diaspora and faith-based communities explain themselves in the open. The right standard is the boring one we already have: disclose, debate, decide. The RSS engagement did exactly that, filed, scoped, named, terminated, and the record shows it. ^{[1][2][3]}

1) Start With The Filings: What The Paperwork Actually Says

The record is explicit. The LD-1 registration identifies the U.S. intermediary, State Street Strategies (DBA One+ Strategies), acting on behalf of the RSS, and, as the statute requires, names an affiliated contributor. The registration describes the policy area (“U.S.–India bilateral relations”) and establishes the compliance lane under the Lobbying Disclosure Act. Nothing in the registration suggests a foreign-government principal; it is a domestic lobbying engagement on its face. ^[1]

The LD-2 quarterly then does what Congress intended LD-2s to do: compress the scope into one line, “*Introduce the RSS to U.S. officials*”, and disclose the team, the chambers, the issue code (foreign policy), and the spend. It also completes the paper trail with a termination in September 2025. Read literally, the document says exactly what happened: a finite, educational introduction, conducted by named lobbyists, reported in the open, and brought to a close on a date certain. ^[2]

Because these forms are public and standardized, contemporary coverage mirrored them almost verbatim: the amendments clarifying the client chain and the end of the engagement were noted in the press, precisely how a transparent system should function. The filings led; the headlines followed. ^[3]

2) Law Over Innuendo: Where The LDA Ends And FARA Begins

Two statutes govern the terrain, and they draw a bright, non-negotiable line. FARA is a foreign-agency law: it applies when a person or firm acts “at the order, request, or under the direction or control” of a foreign government or a foreign political party, and engages in political activities or public relations in the United States on that principal’s behalf. Its disclosures are granular (contracts, materials, distributions) and its violations hinge on willful concealment. ^[4] By contrast, the LDA is a domestic-lobbying sunlight law: it normalizes advocacy by requiring registration (LD-1), quarterly activity reports (LD-2), and termination filings, so that Congress and the public can see who is speaking, on what, and with what resources. ^{[1][2]}

The bridge between these regimes is deliberate: the LDA exemption. If a registrant is properly filed under the LDA and not acting for a foreign government or foreign political party, and if such a government/party is not the principal beneficiary, then FARA registration is not required. ^[4] This isn’t a loophole; it is how Congress preserved space for diaspora, religious, cultural, and nonprofit advocacy to operate in the open. The research dossier underlines the same legal map and notes that U.S. diaspora organizations (e.g., AIPAC and others) uniformly lobby under the LDA unless and until a government nexus is established. ^[17]

Applied to the 2025 episode, the fit is straightforward. The principal at issue is **not** a state or a political party; the LD-2 purpose line is strictly educational, “*Introduce the RSS to U.S. officials*”, and the engagement was terminated within the quarter. ^[2] If critics insist FARA should have applied, the legal burden is theirs: they must show evidence that a foreign government or party was in the principal’s chair, or that the principal-beneficiary test is met, not merely that the topic is foreign-adjacent or controversial. ^[4]

Even the supposed “gotcha”, that the same law firm has filed under FARA, cuts the opposite way. When Squire Patton Boggs represents a government (for example, Pakistan in 2025), it files under FARA and posts the exhibits in DOJ’s database. ^[6] When it represents a non-government principal for an educational introduction, it uses the LDA, with LD-1/LD-2 and a termination. ^[2] Different principals, different statutes, different filings, by design.

This is why the legal threshold, not anyone’s adjectives, must govern the analysis. Moving the goalposts from “government principal” to “we dislike the principal” would collapse the LDA into FARA and punish exactly the transparency the system was built to encourage.

3) The Messenger Matters: A Movement-Journalism Frame And Its Validators

Prism is not a neutral wire service; it is a self-described *movement journalism* outlet whose mission is to “disrupt harmful narratives,” with beats spanning race, immigration, and Gaza. Its own profiles and external media-watch coverage make that provenance clear. None of this is disqualifying; it is context a careful reader needs when weighing which voices the outlet elevates and how it frames contested questions. ^{[7][13]}

Funding and institutional alignment reinforce those priors. The dossier traces Prism’s origin in the Daily Kos Education Fund (2016) and lists donors such as Open Society Foundations, with contributions routed through ActBlue; the report also catalogs fellowships and senior fellows whose public work is explicitly activist. Again, advocacy roots are not a sin; they are material to understanding why certain sources are treated as referees rather than as participants in a debate. ^{[13][14][15]}

This framing shows up in the article’s validators. A prominent example is Raqib Hameed Naik and India Hate Lab (IHL), described in mainstream coverage as a project of the Center for the Study of Organized Hate and frequently cited for year-over-year “hate speech” tallies. Editors who use IHL as a neutral authority owe readers the methods and priors; Reuters’ capsule descriptions provide the basics, but the outlet’s role in policy debates means that disclosure should be front-and-center, not tucked away. The research dossier goes further, alleging networked ties around early IHL/Hindutva Watch infrastructures and collaborators that align with Pakistan-linked media channels, claims a fair editor would surface when weighing IHL as a referee. ^{[8][19]}

Other validators raised in the dossier illustrate a similar pattern. Ben Freeman of the Quincy Institute appears with a funding ecosystem overlapping Prism’s own (e.g., OSF/Ford), which is the dossier’s point about circular validation in this space. Audrey Truschke is profiled with institutional affiliations (AIPS, SAHI, HRCP) and a public record of sharp critiques of “Hindutva,” useful to disclose when her commentary is presented as expert adjudication. The dossier’s summative claim is not that these actors lack the right to speak; it is that their financial, institutional, and ideological alignments should be visible to readers when their assessments are used to define the story’s center of gravity. ^{[18][20][21][22]}

In short, Prism didn’t merely recount filings; it chose *whose* account to embed in the narrative. A movement-journalism outlet is entitled to make those choices. A publication-quality analysis is obliged to disclose them.

4) The Decoy: Why A Disclosed, Short-Lived Outreach Drew Maximum Outrage

The scale of the reaction only makes sense against the backdrop of a U.S. advocacy pipeline that has shaped India narratives in Washington for years. The dossier maps a network centered on the Indian American Muslim Council (IAMC) and aligned partners that repeatedly converts local Indian flashpoints into Beltway “evidence”, and then routes that material through U.S. institutions. In Tripura (2021), for example, police booked accounts under UAPA over allegedly altered images and false claims about mosque attacks; the dossier traces how those claims became inputs for U.S. briefings, an archetype of the “local incident → global ‘pogrom’” conveyor. ^[23] In parallel, it describes a channel into USCIRF through relationships with a commissioner and a lobby shop, and argues that the resulting framing, including how Kashmir is represented, aligned with the advocates’ preferred narrative. ^[24]

To manufacture “proof,” the network also launched DOTO (Database of the Oppressed), a statistics portal the dossier documents as riddled with fabrication and misattribution before it was deleted in October 2024, after the numbers had already circulated widely in media and NGO testimony. ^[25] A similarly short-lived “rights” brand, the Indian American Center for Social Justice (IACSJ), appeared with a commissioner’s endorsement and then was quietly scrubbed once the nexus drew scrutiny. ^[26] The dossier situates IAMC (formerly IMC-USA) in the Jamaat-e-Islami lineage, notes personnel overlaps with ICNA, and catalogs repeated collaborations with Pakistan-linked and Khalistan-aligned activists in U.S. venues, pointing to message discipline rather than isolated incidents. ^[27]

A final multiplier is opposition validation from India. The dossier logs Sonia Gandhi’s message to IMC-USA’s 2004 convention, Hamid Ansari’s participation in IAMC-hosted programming in 2022, and Mani Shankar Aiyar’s proximity to a U.S. activist who later registered to lobby for Pakistan on Kashmir, appearances that, to congressional staff scanning invites and panels, stamp the network’s talking points as “Indian civil society” irrespective of their foreign alignments. ^[28]^[29]^[30] It then places Rahul Gandhi’s 2023 U.S. tour within this ecosystem, noting how diaspora partners and controversial endorsements converged to reinforce the same storyline. ^[31]

Set against this long-running, institutionally savvy pipeline, a one-line, terminated LD-2 describing an educational “introduction to U.S. officials” offered the perfect decoy: easy to sensationalize as “the RSS comes to Washington,” easier still to imply FARA without proving a foreign-government principal, and perfectly suited to pull scrutiny away from the network that most needed it. ^[2]^[4]

5) What Americans Should Actually Know About The RSS (Kept Proportionate To The Legal/Policy Case)

American readers already understand faith-rooted civic life. Churches run schools, synagogues coordinate disaster relief, and Latter-day Saint communities can mobilize logistics overnight. India’s analogue, at a subcontinental scale, is a century-old habit of *seva*, volunteer service, expressed through organizations that build institutions where the state struggles to reach.

The RSS, founded in 1925, is a mass volunteer movement organized around neighborhood shakhas (local gatherings) that emphasize discipline, character, and civic responsibility. Its legally distinct affiliates work in education, tribal welfare, health, and disaster response. When southern India flooded in 2018, reporting from Kerala showed Seva Bharati teams procuring relief materials, running medical camps, and partnering with other groups on the ground; the coverage treated this not as spectacle but as ordinary civil society doing its job. ^[9] On the U.S. side of the same pipeline, Sewa International raised funds and coordinated volunteers, a familiar pattern to anyone who has seen diaspora networks snap into action for earthquakes, cyclones, or cloudbursts. ^[10]

Education follows the same logic of proximity and frugality. The Ekal Vidyalaya ecosystem, legally and financially separate from the RSS, runs one-teacher schools in underserved rural and tribal areas, publishing detailed U.S. annual reports that enumerate reach, spending, and outcomes. The point is not to fold every Hindu organization into the RSS, but to show a wider Hindu civic habit: if a community needs a school, a clinic, or a relief camp, somebody starts one. ^[11]

A single local anecdote makes this texture less abstract. During the 2018 monsoon devastation in Karnataka’s Kodagu district, Seva Bharati worked with a local Muslim-run charity to deliver food kits and ambulance services to families in need. It didn’t trend because it was normal, neighbors cooperating under pressure. That ordinariness is precisely what drops out of international debates that reduce “Hindutva” to a single, pejorative label. ^[12]

None of this demands agreement with every idea associated with Hindu nationalism. It does require analytical discipline: distinguishing civilizational identity (Hindutva in its literal sense of “Hinduness”) from every partisan or polemical use of the term, the same way American readers routinely distinguish Catholic social teaching from electoral Catholicism, or evangelical service networks from partisan organizing. Keeping that distinction in view is part of reading the filings and the law fairly in a plural society.

6) The Naik–Fai spectrum: transparent activism vs. covert state work

Two names clarify the difference between active advocacy in the open and clandestine state influence that the law is designed to punish.

Raqib Hameed Naik is a journalist-activist whose India Hate Lab (IHL) and Center for the Study of Organized Hate projects publish year-over-year “hate speech” tallies drawn from media/video scraping under a U.N. definition; Reuters has repeatedly summarized those findings and their circulation into public debate. Editors who present IHL as a neutral referee should disclose methods, priors, and institutional alignment up front. The research dossier goes further, alleging early infrastructure and collaborator linkages around IHL/Hindutva Watch that intersect with Pakistan-linked outlets, context a fair reader needs when weighing how these datasets are used to frame India and Hindu civic groups in U.S. venues. ^[8]
^[19]

Ghulam Nabi Fai, by contrast, is the bright-line case of covert agency. Over roughly two decades, Fai concealed millions of dollars in Pakistan government funding to influence U.S. policy on Kashmir, using straw donors and issuing false statements, and ultimately entered a felony plea. That is textbook FARA territory, precisely the kind of clandestine operation the statute targets. ^[5]

Between those poles lies normal K-Street reality, which is why the legal lane matters. When Squire Patton Boggs represents a government client (e.g., Pakistan in 2025), it files under FARA and posts exhibits in DOJ’s database. When it represents a non-government principal for a limited, educational introduction (as with the RSS matter), it files under the LDA, with LD-1, LD-2, and a termination on the public Senate site. Different principals, different statutes, different filings, by design. ^{[6][2]}

7) Unified Counter & Legal Rebuttal

7.1 RSS is a legitimate, century-old civic movement, not a foreign state or party.

Founded in 1925, the RSS functions as a mass volunteer network with legally distinct affiliates in education, welfare, and disaster relief, activity American readers recognize as faith-rooted civil society rather than a state apparatus. Mainstream reporting documents field work such as Seva Bharati’s flood relief and the diaspora’s logistics via Sewa International; Ekal Vidyalaya’s audited U.S. annual reports show a separate, low-cost rural-education pipeline. ^{[9][11][17]}

7.2 Lobbying is lawful, and designed to be transparent.

Congress built the LDA to normalize advocacy through registration (LD-1), quarterly reports (LD-2), and terminations. The 2025 outreach followed that script: LD-1 identifies the U.S. intermediary and affiliated contributor; LD-2 compresses scope into one line, “*Introduce the RSS to U.S. officials*”, lists lobbyists and spend, and records a September 2025 termination; contemporary coverage mirrored those filings. ^{[1][2][3]}

7.3 The “clandestine” accusation collapses the FARA/LDA line.

FARA governs agents of foreign governments or foreign political parties; DOJ’s guidance preserves an LDA exemption where a registrant is properly filed under LDA and no foreign government/party is the principal or principal beneficiary. By that standard, the RSS matter belongs in the LDA lane. If someone claims otherwise, the burden is to show evidence of a state/party principal or principal-beneficiary, not to relabel routine disclosure as covert. The word “clandestine” belongs to cases like Ghulam Nabi Fai, concealed Pakistan funding, straw donors, false statements, felony plea, not to a one-line LD-2 with a termination. ^[4]
^[5]^[2]

7.4 Why a U.S. network aligned with the Indian left and Pakistan/Khalistan partners targets the RSS.

The dossier maps a Beltway pipeline, centered on IAMC and aligned groups, that converts local Indian incidents into U.S. “evidence,” manufactures datasets (DOTO), leverages USCIRF access, launches pop-up fronts (IACSJ), and deletes/scrubs assets when challenged; Congress-adjacent appearances by Indian opposition figures then stamp these talking points as “Indian civil society.” In that environment, a short, transparent LDA filing that says “*Introduce the RSS*” is an ideal decoy to siphon scrutiny away from the pipeline itself. ^[23]^[27] ^[28]^[31] ^[32]^[33] ^[2]

7.5 The U.S. is globally central; portraying Hindu civic life fairly here matters, and the RSS used legal means.

American debates set global narratives. Penalizing disclosure distorts attention and chills normal diaspora advocacy. The correct baseline is one set of rules: LDA for domestic/diaspora groups; FARA when a government/party is in the principal’s chair (or is the principal beneficiary). The filings and DOJ guidance point to LDA here; where the same K-Street firm represents a government (e.g., Pakistan in 2025), it files under FARA and posts exhibits in DOJ’s database. ^[1]^[2]^[4]^[6]

7.6 Why *Prism*, and why the piece reads as advocacy rather than legal analysis.

Prism identifies as movement journalism; its provenance in the Daily Kos nonprofit and funding ecosystem explains source selection. The dossier describes a *closed validation loop* in which funders, validators, and outlet sit in the same ecosystem, so anti-RSS narratives arrive pre-framed and are presented as neutral. That editorial right comes with a disclosure obligation when treating movement-aligned “labs” and advocates as referees. ^[7]^[13]^[16]^[18]^[22]

7.7 Who’s quoted (Naik et al.) vs. what actual clandestinity looks like (Fai).

Raqib Hameed Naik and India Hate Lab produce datasets widely amplified in U.S. debates; editors should foreground methods and priors when using them as arbiters. That is not the same category as Fai, a proven covert state-influence scheme that triggered FARA’s criminal teeth. Conflating the two collapses necessary distinctions and blurs the legal threshold. ^[8]^[19]^[5]

8) Legal ground rules

- Threshold: FARA is triggered by agency for a foreign government/party; properly filed LDA work is exempt unless a government/party is the principal or principal beneficiary. ^[4]
- Transparency: Here the paper trail is exactly what Congress intended, LD-1, LD-2 (“*Introduce the RSS ...*”), and termination. ^{[1][2][3]}
- Precedent: True clandestinity in this space looks like Fai (concealed Pakistan funding, straw donors, false statements, felony plea), not a one-line LD-2. ^{[5][2]}
- Lane change: When Squire Patton Boggs represents a government client (e.g., Pakistan in 2025), it files under FARA; for a non-government educational institution, it files under LDA and terminates. ^{[6][2]}
- Pluralism: Collapsing LDA into FARA would chill normal, transparent advocacy by diaspora, religious, cultural, and nonprofit groups, the voices LDA keeps in sunlight. ^[4]

9) Why The U.S. Should Welcome, Rather Than Criminalize, Transparent Outreach

If America wants a cleaner influence environment, the answer is not to stigmatize disclosure; it is to demand more of it, and apply the same standard to everyone. That’s what the LDA already does: it compels firms to say who they represent, what they are doing, who on the Hill they contacted, and how much they spent, then to announce when the engagement ends. The RSS matter did exactly that, register, report, terminate, and every step is visible on the Senate site. ^{[1][2][3]} Treating that compliance as incriminating punishes the very transparency pluralism requires.

There is a second-order cost to sensationalizing routine filings: it crowds out scrutiny of opaque pipelines that have learned to look “civil society” while functioning like classic narrative operations. The dossier documents a multi-year network, centered on IAMC and aligned partners, that manufactures “datasets,” routes them through U.S. venues, and then deletes/scrubs assets once their provenance draws attention. ^{[23][24][25][26][27]} Editors and staff who reward paperwork with scandal and pipelines with amnesty invert the incentives of a disclosure-based system.

Welcoming transparent Hindu civic outreach does not mean suspending judgment about ideas. It means applying one set of rules to Hindu organizations that America already applies to Jewish, Greek, Armenian, Muslim, and secular advocacy: LDA for domestic and diaspora groups; FARA when a government or foreign political party is in the principal’s chair (or the principal beneficiary). ^{[4][6]} That consistency stabilizes the lane for normal persuasion while reserving criminal tools for covert state work, like the Fai scheme that ended in a felony plea. ^[5]

There is also the matter of substance. Most Americans’ contact with Hindu civic life is not through a headline; it is through a neighbor, a temple food drive, a scholarship fundraiser, a disaster-relief campaign. The coverage from Kerala and Kodagu, Seva Bharati’s field clinics, Sewa International’s diaspora logistics, interfaith cooperation during floods, underscores that this is not a clandestine state project; it is a community habit of seva replicated across continents. ^{[9][10][12]} Normalizing that reality in the U.S. public square, without either hagiography or caricature, is in the national interest.

Finally, a word about the press. A movement newsroom is free to choose its frames; readers and policymakers are free to discount them if the validators' priors and funders are not disclosed with the same vigor applied to the targets. Prism's self-description, philanthropic alignments, and reliance on ideologically congenial "labs" are all part of the story; in a disclosure-based democracy, they belong on the table next to LD forms and DOJ guidance.^{[7][13][14][15][8]} When all the facts are on the table, the RSS filings look like what they are: a brief, educational introduction, conducted in the open, then closed.^[2]

10) The Bottom Line

The century-old RSS is a lawful cultural organization. Lobbying is lawful in the United States. When a domestic firm conducts a finite, educational introduction on behalf of a non-government principal, the correct lane is the LDA, with an LD-1 registration, an LD-2 that states the scope in a single line, and a termination on the public record. That is exactly what happened here: *"Introduce the RSS to U.S. officials,"* named lobbyists, disclosed spend, and a September 2025 close-out.^{[1][2][3]}

By contrast, FARA is built for agents of foreign governments or foreign political parties, and DOJ's guidance makes the bridge explicit: properly filed LDA work is exempt unless a government or party is in the principal's chair, or the principal beneficiary test is met. There is no evidence of that threshold in this case; asserting it without proof turns a legal standard into a mood.^[4]

If "clandestine" needs a meaning check, the Fai case supplies it: covert state funding, straw donors, false statements, felony plea, FARA in its intended use. That is not what a one-line LD-2 and a termination describe.^{[5][2]} And the same K-Street firm that filed FARA exhibits for Pakistan in 2025 shows how compliance looks when the principal is a government; when the principal is not, it uses LDA. Different principals, different statutes, different filings, by design.^{[6][2]}

The larger distortion is where attention is directed. A one-quarter, disclosed LDA engagement became a canvas for maximal suspicion, while a multi-year Beltway pipeline, manufactured datasets, disappearing fronts, institutional access, and opposition validators, continued to set the frame with comparatively little scrutiny. That is the inversion the dossier documents in detail.^{[23][24][25][26][27][28][29][30][31][32][33]}

The remedy is boring and American: one set of rules for everyone. File in the correct lane. Disclose who and what. Debate the wisdom of meetings and the merits of ideas. Decide with the whole record in view. Apply FARA when a government/party is the principal; apply LDA when it is not. Do not penalize transparency by treating compliant paperwork as a confession, and do not excuse opacity because it arrives in the language of "civil society." Hold Hindu organizations to the same standard as Jewish, Greek, Armenian, Muslim, and secular advocacy, and hold their critics to the same standards of disclosure you demand of them.^{[4][6]}

When that standard is kept, the "RSS lobbying" panic resolves into what it is: a narrative flourish wrapped around paperwork that says exactly what it says, and a distraction from the influence network that deserved far more scrutiny than it got.^{[2][23]-[27]}

APPENDIX

Categorized Evidence Annex (uses endnotes [1]–[33])

1. Public Filings & Statutory Framework

I.1 LD-1 registration: SPB; State Street/One+ Strategies OBO RSS; affiliated contributor named; policy area U.S.–India relations. [1]

I.2 LD-2 (Q3-2025): one-line scope “Introduce the RSS to U.S. officials”; lobbyists, FOR code, spend; **termination** recorded Sept. 2025. [2]

I.3 Contemporary press mirrored the amendments/termination. [3]

I.4 DOJ FARA FAQ: LDA exemption; foreign government/party “principal/principal-beneficiary” test. [4]

I.5 Comparator practice: U.S. diaspora/faith groups lobby under LDA; when principal is a **government**, registrants use FARA (e.g., AIPAC’s domestic posture; general precedent summarized in dossier). [17]

1. Clandestine vs. Disclosed

II.1 **Fai** case: concealed **Pakistan** funding, straw donors, false statements; felony plea, textbook FARA. [5]

II.2 Contrast: RSS matter is ordinary LDA paperwork with public termination. [2]

III. Messenger & Validators (*Prism* + ecosystem)

III.1 *Prism* model: BIPOC-led movement journalism; “disrupt harmful narratives.” [7] [13]

III.2 Funding/institutional context: OSF; ActBlue; senior fellows with activist pedigrees. [14] [15]

III.3 “Closed validation loop” (executive summary). [16]

III.4 Validators & circularity: **Ben Freeman/Quincy**; **Audrey Truschke** affiliations; ideological priors disclosed. [18] [20] [21] [22]

III.5 **Naik / India Hate Lab**: Reuters capsule on method and tallies; dossier’s network-linkage claims. [8] [19]

1. The IAMC-Centered Beltway Pipeline

IV.1 **Tripura 2021**: UAPA bookings tied to altered/false visuals; narrative becomes D.C. fodder. [23]

IV.2 **USCIRF access path**: relationships with a commissioner and lobby firm; framing effects (Kashmir) alleged. [24]

IV.3 **DOTO** dataset: fabrication critiques → revisions → **deletion** (Oct 2024) after wide citation. [25]

IV.4 **IACSJ** pop-up front → scrubbed after exposure of nexus. [26]

IV.5 Lineage/alignments: IAMC (ex-IMC-USA) in **Jamaat-e-Islami** orbit; ICNA overlaps; Pakistan/Khalistan co-presence. [27]

IV.6 Opposition validation: **Sonia Gandhi** message (2004), **Hamid Ansari** programming (2022), **Aiyar–**

Fischer proximity (Fischer later lobbied for Pakistan on Kashmir). [28] [29] [30]

IV.7 Rahul Gandhi U.S. tour (2023) in the same ecosystem. [31]

IV.8 Synthesis diagrams and conclusion: media/NGO/party loop; “real risk” is the Pakistan-linked, disappearing-fronts ecosystem; RSS LDA outreach is transparent. [32] [33]

1. **Scope of the RSS Outreach & Legal Lane**

V.1 Purpose was **informational/educational** (“introduce”); no policy bill of work disclosed; engagement ended in Q3. [2]

V.2 Dispute-era statements (who hired whom) don’t alter the statutory fit (LDA) shown in filings. [3]

V.3 When SPB represents a **government**, it files under **FARA** (Pakistan, 2025 exhibits). [6]

1. **Positive Hindu Civic Record (kept concise; mainstream sources)**

VI.1 Seva Bharati, Kerala floods (2018): relief materials, medical camps, NGO coordination. [9]

VI.2 Sewa International (U.S.), diaspora fundraising/logistics in Kerala floods. [10]

VI.3 Ekal Vidyalaya, one-teacher schools; U.S. annual reports. [11]

VI.4 Kodagu flood relief: **Seva Bharati + Muslim-run NGO** joint operations. [12]

Notes & Sources

[1] **U.S. Senate LDA , LD-1 registration** (Squire Patton Boggs; State Street/One+ Strategies OBO RSS; affiliated contributor; “U.S.–India bilateral relations”).
<https://lda.senate.gov/filings/public/filing/66677189-ca34-422f-80d4-8137ef5c32c8/print/>

[2] **U.S. Senate LDA , LD-2 (Q3-2025) & termination**. Purpose line: “Introduce the RSS to U.S. officials.” Lobbyists, issue code (FOR), spend, and **termination (Sept 2025)** recorded.
<https://lda.senate.gov/filings/public/filing/19aeeec68-06c0-4289-aba7-bf672705eeec/print/>

[3] **Press summary of amendments/termination** mirroring the Senate filings: *US lobby firm says RSS no longer its client*.
<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/us-lobby-firm-says-rss-no-longer-its-client-101769799742900.html>

[4] **Department of Justice , FARA FAQ**. LDA exemption and “principal beneficiary” standard for when FARA applies despite LDA.
<https://www.justice.gov/nsd-fara/frequently-asked-questions>

[5] **Ghulam Nabi Fai , DOJ press release**. Felony plea for concealing **Pakistan** government funding (straw donors, false statements), textbook **FARA** case.
<https://www.justice.gov/archives/opa/pr/virginia-man-pleads-guilty-scheme-conceal-pakistan-government-funding-his-us-lobbying-efforts>

[6] **SPB filing under FARA when the principal is a government (Pakistan, 2025)**. DOJ FARA e-file exhibit.
<https://efile.fara.gov/docs/2165-Exhibit-AB-20250411-106.pdf>

[7] **Prism’s “movement journalism” profile , Nieman Lab**.
<https://www.niemanlab.org/2020/10/prism-a-news-site-led-by-women-of-color-centers-the-voices-of->

[marginalized-people-in-its-reporting/](#)

[8] **Reuters capsule , India Hate Lab / CSOH (Raqib Hameed Naik)**. Example: *Anti-minority hate speech in India rose by 13% in 2025, US research group says* (Jan 13, 2026).

<https://www.reuters.com/world/india/anti-minority-hate-speech-india-rose-by-13-2025-us-research-group-says-2026-01-13/>

[9] **Kerala floods , Seva Bharati relief reporting (2018) , Deccan Herald.**

<https://www.deccanherald.com/india/karnataka/seva-bharati-relief-materials-to-flood-victims-690109.html>

[10] **Kerala floods , Sewa International (U.S.) fundraising/logistics , NDTV.**

<https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/houston-based-indian-ngo-raises-over-10-000-for-kerala-flood-victims-1903042>

[11] **Ekal Vidyalaya Foundation (U.S.) , Annual Reports portal.**

<https://www.ekal.org/us/annual-reports>

[12] **Kodagu floods , joint relief (Seva Bharati + Muslim-run NGO) , Times of India.**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/joint-op-by-rss-ngo-run-by-muslims-gives-hope-to-flood-hit-people-of-kodagu/articleshow/65540502.cms>

The following links reference the dossier “*Global Left’s New Target: RSS and the US-Based Network Behind the Attack.*” [referred to as “Global Left’s Target” in the links below

[13] **Prism’s institutional origin & mission** (founded as the **Daily Kos Education Fund**; mission to “disrupt harmful narratives”; code-of-ethics admitting non-detachment from politics). (*Global Left’s Target*; pp. 5–6)

[14] **Funding & philanthropy context** (OSF listed; ActBlue used for donations; other progressive funders). (*Global Left’s Target*; pp. 5–6)

[15] **Senior fellows signal activist alignment** (e.g., Patrisse Cullors, Maurice Mitchell, LaTosha Brown). (*Global Left’s Target*; p. 6)

[16] **Executive summary , “closed validation loop”** (claims → internal citations → amplification). (*Global Left’s Target*; pp. 2–3)

[17] **Legal framework** (LDA §613(d) exemption; religious/charitable context; diaspora precedents incl. AIPAC posture). (*Global Left’s Target*; pp. 6–7)

[18] **Validator: Ben Freeman / Quincy Institute** (funding overlap with Prism ecosystem). (*Global Left’s Target*; pp. 7–8)

[19] **Validator: Raqib Hameed Naik / IHL/CSOH** (alleged Pakistan-aligned links around early infra/collaborators; graphic mapping). (*Global Left’s Target*; pp. 8–9)

[20] **Validator: Audrey Truschke** (AIPS fellowship; SAHI board; HRCP link; Lahore Lit Fest; controversies). (*Global Left’s Target*; pp. 9–10)

[21] **Pattern note on validators** (financial/institutional/ideological ties to anti-India entities). (*Global Left’s Target*; p. 11)

- [22] **Network diagram** (funders, platforms, validators, nodes: OSF → Prism/IAMC/USCIRF). (*Global Left's Target*; p. 4)
- [23] **Tripura 2021** (UAPA bookings tied to altered/false visuals; “local incident → global ‘pogrom’” funnel). (*Global Left's Target*; pp. 11–12)
- [24] **USCIRF access path** (Rasheed Ahmed ↔ Commissioner Nadine Maenza; lobby channel; Kashmir mapping claim). (*Global Left's Target*; p. 12)
- [25] **DOTO dataset** (fabrication critiques → revisions → **deletion Oct 2024** after wide citation). (*Global Left's Target*; p. 13)
- [26] **IACSJ front** (launched with a commissioner’s nod → quietly scrubbed). (*Global Left's Target*; p. 13)
- [27] **Lineage/alignments** (IAMC in **Jamaat-e-Islami** orbit; ICNA overlaps; Pakistan/Khalistan co-presence). (*Global Left's Target*; pp. 13–14)
- [28] **Opposition validator , Sonia Gandhi** (message to IMC-USA, 2004). (*Global Left's Target*; p. 15)
- [29] **Opposition validator , Hamid Ansari** (participation in IAMC-hosted programming, 2022). (*Global Left's Target*; p. 15)
- [30] **Congress link , Mani Shankar Aiyar & Carin Jodha Fischer** (Fischer later lobbied for Pakistan on Kashmir). (*Global Left's Target*; p. 15)
- [31] **Rahul Gandhi U.S. tour (2023)** (coordination with IAMC/HfHR/ICNA; endorsements context). (*Global Left's Target*; p. 16)
- [32] **Synthesis diagram** (media/NGO/party loop; OSF-funded validators; Prism amplification; IAMC pipeline). (*Global Left's Target*; p. 18)
- [33] **Dossier conclusion** (the foreign-influence risk is the Pakistan-linked, disappearing-fronts ecosystem; RSS LDA outreach is transparent). (*Global Left's Target*; pp. 20–21)