



# RECOGNIZING HINDUPHOBIA

**Deputation to Mississauga City Council**

by

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# Sanatana Hindu Dharma: Includes Hindus, Jains, Buddhists & Sikhs



Sanatana dharma is an ancient indigenous, global, diverse and inclusive system of knowledge rooted in Indian sub-continent and is the source for all four dharmic traditions. They share a common worldview, many spiritual and religious principals and practices, albeit in varying degrees or variations, for example:

- **OM** as a sacred mantra or sound
- **One God**: One supreme consciousness as *Paramatma*, can be worshipped in any form or as formless
- **Aatman** or individual consciousness
- **Dharma**: Righteousness; nature
- **Karma**: Law of cause and effect; we reap what we sow
- **Reincarnation**: endless cycle of birth, death and Rebirth
- **Reverence for nature**

‘Hindu’ is a civilizational term expressed as Hindu culture or *Sanskriti* with common human values such as Ahimsa (do least harm), satya (truth), Seva (service to humanity) Dhyana (meditation)



**Phobia:** a term borrowed from psychology to describe social tensions, e.g. transphobia or Islamophobia. It refers to the irrational fear, which when internalized as prejudice and hate, tends to incite violence and acts of discrimination.

**Prejudice** against Hindu dharma or Hindus is due to ignorance, misinformation or misrepresentation of Hindu dharma in media, academia and elsewhere

- **Definition: Hinduphobia is denial, negation, prejudice or vilification against Hindus, Hinduism, or Hinduness**

Source: <https://understandinghinduphobia.org/>

## SPOTTING HINDUPHOBIA

### Appropriation

Meditation becomes mindfulness, Pranayam becomes cardiac coherence breathing exercises. Sanskrit numerals as "Arabic". Yoga is "European calisthenics". Surya namaskar becomes moon nameskar.

Credit: HinduPACT



## PRESS RELEASE – November 3, 2023

### Recognizing Hinduphobia petition tabled in the House of Commons

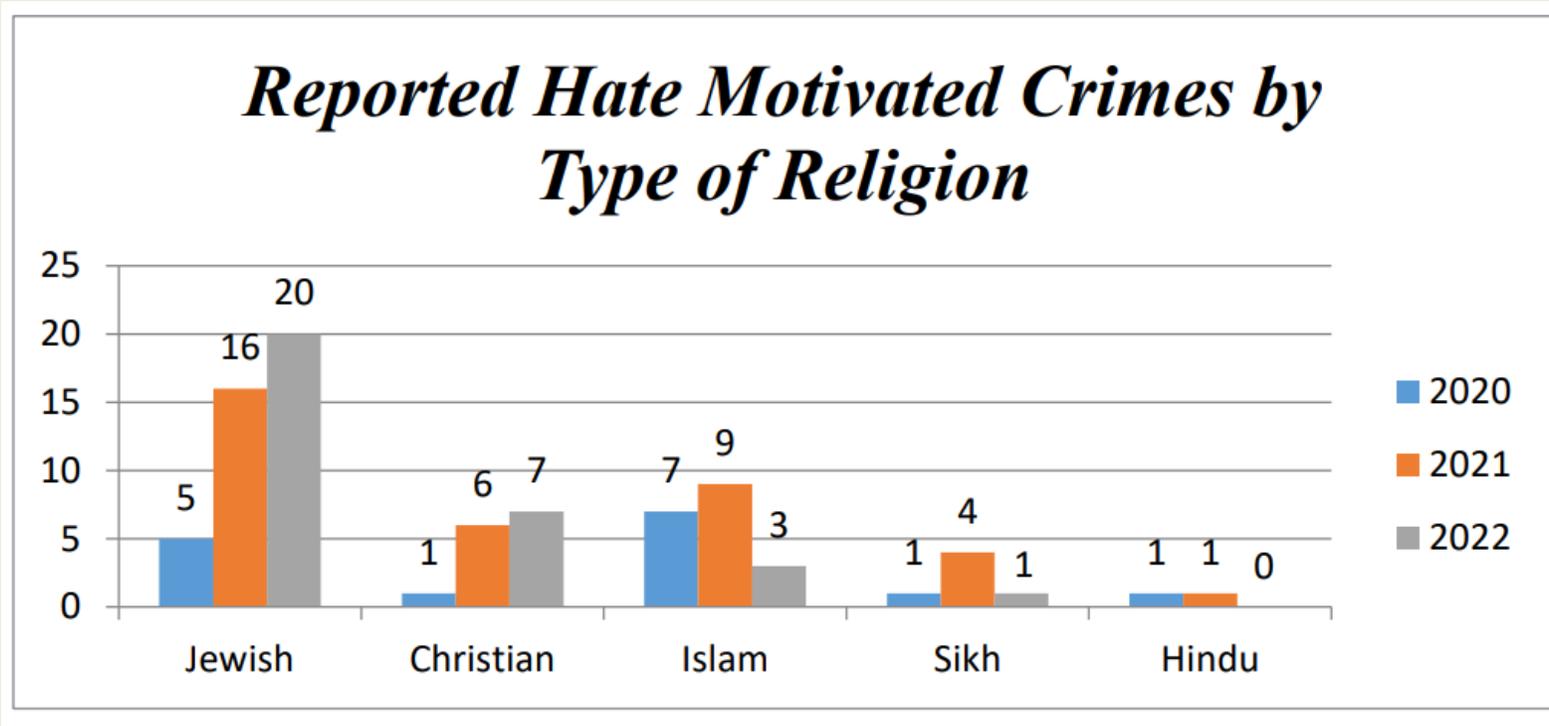
On November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023 MP Melissa Lantsman tabled our petition calling for the Government of Canada to Recognize Hinduphobia. **E-Petition 4507 closed on October 17, 2023 with 25,794 signatures and the support of 80 Hindu organizations, including many of the large Hindu temples.** Referring to the unprecedented number of attacks on Hindu temples she stated that “Everyone in this country deserves a safe place, free of intimidation and violence and harassment and vandalism to worship, no matter what that looks like. Hindus are facing growing negative stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination, at work, in schools and in their communities while traditions and cultures are misrepresented and misunderstood.”



# Our concern: Hate crimes against Hindus are not being recognized/documentated by police



Yearly Comparison of Hate-Motivated Crimes in Canada reported to police by type of religion, 2020 to 2022.



Source: Statistics Canada

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July 14, 22, Vishnu Mandir, Richmond Hill



Sept. 5, 22, BAPS Temple, Toronto

## Hindu temples shaken by series of break-ins in Peel Region



Priests estimate about \$25,000 stolen from Mississauga, Brampton temples

CBC News

Posted: February 10, 2022

Last Updated: February 10, 2022



The head priest at Maa Chintpurni, Hari Bhajan Sharma, says his community is distressed over the break-in and disrespect shown to their temple. (Grant Linton/CBC)



# Attacks on Temples



Attacks hate graffiti on temples rose from **2 in 2022 to over 10 in 2023** across Canada.

In addition, there have been a series of **break-ins** in temples, including theft and **desecration** of alters.

- Communities have been **traumatised**.
- Why are these attacks **not reflected in Hate statistics?**

### **Phobia context:**

The graffiti and other signate refers to Hindus as violent and oppressive, e.g. they are baby killers and responsible for genocide of minorities.



# Why does police not apply existing criminal law and document attacks on Hindu temples as hate-motivated crimes?



Hate-motivated crime is currently limited to four offences as described in the **Criminal Code of Canada**. These offences specifically pertain to hate, which fall under the Hate-Propaganda section and require consent before charges are laid.

1. Section 318 (1) - Advocating Genocide
2. Section 319 (1) - Public Incitement of Hatred
3. Section 319 (2) - Willful Promotion of Hatred
  - Section 319 (2.1) - Willful Promotion of Anti-Semitism
4. Section 430 (4.1) - Mischief relating to religious property

**Section 430(4.1) of the Criminal Code makes it illegal to commit mischief against property primarily used for religious worship or a cemetery, with an increased penalty if motivated by bias, prejudice, or hate based on religion, race, color, or national or ethnic origin.**



Feb. 14, 2023  
Ram Mandir, Mississauga



# Hinduphobia in Canada: Historical



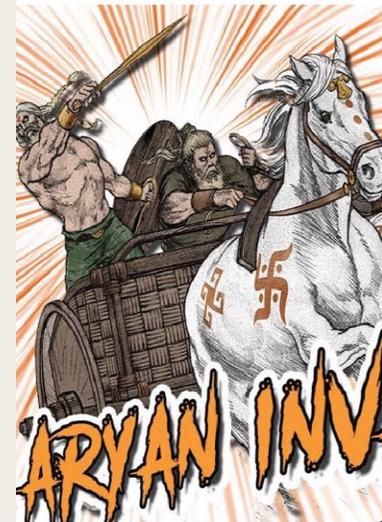
- **Early Canada had a Whites-Only policy:**
- Head tax, continuous journey requirement to limit immigration
- Immigration began in 1903 – most came after 1960s; today mostly students or well educated urbanites
- 2021 Census: 830,000 Hindus in Canada

## Phobia context:

Hindus are a **threat to Canada's culture and economy**

Hindus seen **unfit for Canada's climate and culture**

## SPOTTING HINDUPHOBIA



### Hindus as Invaders

Scholars and books claiming Aryans invaded India Aryans pushed the Dravidians to the South. Hindus usurped the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Bhagwad Gita from the natives.

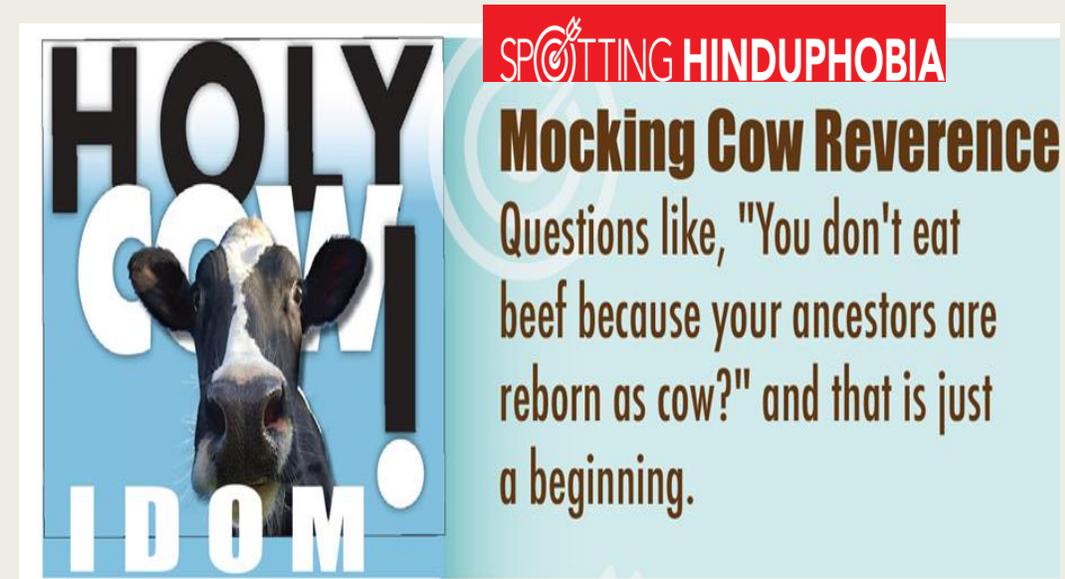
Credit: HinduPACT

# ॐ Understanding the Historical roots of Hinduphobia

- **Colonial/White Supremacy** - Hindus seen as inferior race which justified colonization and erasure of their identity (similar to racism against indigenous peoples)
- **Theological prejudice:** Hindus viewed as **unbelievers/idol worshippers**, condemned to burn to hell, which justified forced conversion, attempted cultural genocide (destruction of Hindu temples, books) and physical genocide through murder, famines etc.
- **Marxist ideology:** Hindus and Hindu dharma seen as the **oppressor**, with the oppressed being the persons of other faiths or particular groups within the Hindu fold.

## Phobia context: Hindus seen as

- a threat to western civilization
- a barrier to mankind's collective salvation.
- a barrier to human rights of the oppressed





# Prejudice and Hinduphobia in the Academia:



The overwhelming focus in academia is on:

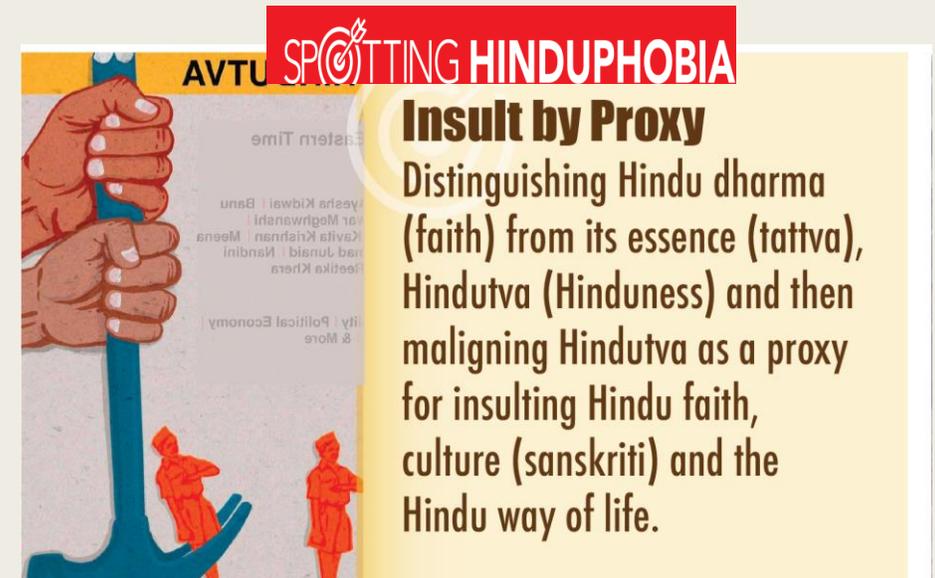
- creating **atrociti literature** (research on negative stories about Hindu civilization) and on
- portraying Hindus and Hindu civilization (India) as either **backward** or **oppressors of minorities, women, among others.**

The proposed remedy is the **annihilation** or **dismantling** of Hindu dharma.

The overly negative portrayal of Hindu civilization feeds Hinduphobia.

## Phobia context:

Hindus, Hindu religion and Hindu civilization are to be feared because they are oppressors of minorities and others and therefore are dangerous.



Credit: HinduPACT

# ॐ Hinduphobia today



- **Prejudice in Media:** same as above – creating negative stereotyping leading to prejudice against Hindus - their culture and traditions.
- **Individual racism:** Hindus face bullying in schools, discrimination at workplaces and harassment or violence public spheres:

**Common Slurs:** cow-piss drinkers, cow worshippers, Pajeet, idol worshippers, dot head

- **Systemic racism** – Hindus face discrimination due to color, immigrant status, creed
- **Institutional racism:** There is a lack of recognition or inaction by police, social services, schools and colleges when incidents of Hinduphobia happen/reported.

## Phobia context:

Hindus are feared as **oppressors**

or

**a threat** to Canada's economy, society and culture



Image: Leena Manimekali

## SPOTTING HINDUPHOBIA

### Insult to Deities

Distorted deities in products  
Like music videos and movies,  
toilet seats, slippers, bath mat  
beer bottles.

Credit: HinduPACT



# Attacks to Hindu students' identity in public school



Canadian Organization for Hindu Heritage Education

## SPOTTING HINDUPHOBIA

### Customs Misunderstood

Bindis wearers called "Dots | Dotheads"  
Hindus called as "Idol-worshippers"  
& Shiva Linga referred as phallus.



Credit: HinduPACT

Hindu students are

- being told they will burn in hell and they should convert
- taunted for their deities, rituals, bindi, vegetarian diet
- Reports to teachers not taken seriously
- There is under reporting due to fear of reprisal
- lack of support from school administrators.
- Curriculum is focussed on social problems in India and does not teach about the amazing contributions of Hindu civilization such as yoga, meditation, zero, Algebra, botany, astronomy, art, architecture etc.

**Phobia context:** Hindus are to be feared and hated because they worship a false God and this comes in the way of the collective salvation of humanity.

**Note: PDSB and Durham DSB have officially recognized Hinduphobia in their anti-racism policy.**



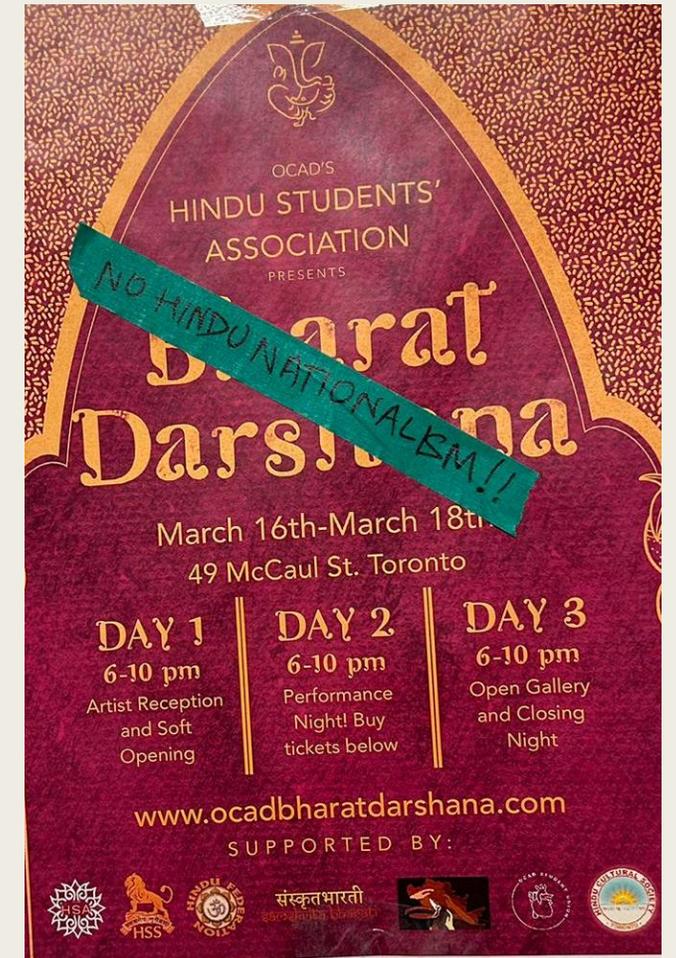
# Hinduphobia in colleges and universities



- Students told to not start a Hindu club by college administration
- Students not allowed to do essays or research on positive aspects of Hindu dharma
- Curriculum content is very negative: teaches Hindu religion is oppressive to women, minorities, children

## Phobia context:

Hindus, Hindu religion and culture are to be feared and hated because they are oppressors – Hindus are White Adjacent, Supremacists, inherently bigoted.



Credit: Hindu Student Council, OCAD



# Hinduphobia & Hate speech on social media: Quotes from a 2022 study at Rutgers University

- “While there is an **alarming, recent rise** in the use of...anti-Hindu slurs and slogans — that both connote and disseminate Hinduphobia on popular social media...Platforms, civil society organizations, and media are largely unfamiliar with Hinduphobia.”
- “The **weaponization** of Hinduphobia for facially political aims in the real world poses a tangible threat to ratchet anti-Hindu violence.”
- “The essential first step in combating hate speech is to **call it out**”.
- Source: <https://networkcontagion.us/reports/7-11-22-anti-hindu-disinformation-a-case-study-of-hinduphobia-on-social-media/>



Anti-Hindu genocidal meme



# Swastika is not a hate symbol



**SPOTTING HINDUPHOBIA** Credit: HinduPACT



## **Symbols and Icons Denigrated**

Distorted AUM made it into a curse word, Swastika represented as a hate symbol

Police Services across Canada list swastika as a hate symbol and its public display as a hate motivate crime. But the swastika is a sacred symbol and word for Hindus, Jains, Buddhists, among others. The similar looking hate symbol is not a Swastika. We request all politicians, educators and media be educated to delink the Swastika from the hate symbol.

### **Phobia context:**

Misrepresentation of the hate symbol as a swastika creates prejudice and hate towards Hindu, Jain and Buddhist traditions and people.

To learn more: please go to [understandingswastika.org](http://understandingswastika.org)



# SADAN organization wrote letter to all MPs against recognizing Hinduphobia



They openly advocate for the annihilation of Hindu dharma because:

- Yoga is oppressive
- Namaste is oppressive
- Allowing Hindus to celebrate Diwali, Holi and other festivals is condoning oppression of Dalits, Muslims, Christians
- Being a vegetarian is an act of supremacy; must eat beef
- Hindus speaking up for their rights are Supremacists

## SPOTTING HINDUPHOBIA

**Caste**

**Caste Affront**  
Reference to Hindu dharma as Brahminism, amalgamating varna and jati into "caste" and then seeking "caste as a protected class" status to make every Hindu a suspect with a aim to have Hindus shed their Hindu identity. Not to be confused with genuine concern for the downtrodden.

Credit: HinduPACT

**TDSB and City of Brampton have passed 'caste oppression' motions. According to the October 2023 OHRC policy position these motions are xenophobic and therefore against the HR Code.**

**Phobia context:** Hindus are oppressors of minorities therefore Hindu religious practices and celebration are to be disallowed/cancelled and Hindu religion be 'dismantled'.



# Recommended action items



The Hindu community seeks equal protection under the law and requests:

1. - City council to pass a motion to recognize Hinduphobia and it be added to its anti-discrimination policy.
2. - Request Ontario Human Rights Commission to include Hinduphobia under creed, similar to anti-Semitism and Islamophobia.
3. -Develop education materials and hold training sessions for staff and community about Hinduphobia
4. Create a Committee of Hindu community members in an advisory role to the City Council and the Anti-Hate Committee or Anti-Discrimination Committee.