

06 BRIEFING Understanding Hindu Symbols

Hindu symbols carry philosophical and devotional meaning. They should be described with care.



Om (Aum)

A sacred sound and symbol associated with ultimate reality, consciousness, and the unity underlying existence.



Lotus

Represents spiritual growth, purity, beauty, and the ability to rise above difficult surroundings.



Diya

A small lamp symbolizing knowledge, hope, and light overcoming darkness.



Murti (Sacred image)

A sacred form of the Divine used in worship. It is treated with reverence.



Tilak and bindi

Forehead marks whose meanings vary by tradition, region, occasion, marital custom, and personal practice. Some are associated with spiritual awareness, honoring higher intuition or the ajna (“third-eye”) center.



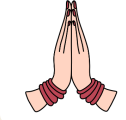
Swastika

An ancient sacred symbol whose Sanskrit name signifies well-being or good fortune. It is used in Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, and other traditions. The sacred swastika differs fundamentally from the Nazi emblem, the Hakenkreuz (“hooked cross”), in history, meaning, and context.



Saffron color

A color associated with spiritual discipline, courage, and renunciation.



Namaste

A respectful greeting that literally conveys “I bow to you” and is often understood spiritually as honoring the Divine within another person.

FOR PUBLIC LEADERS Do not use sacred symbols as casual decoration without understanding their meaning and context.