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BRIEFING

Recognizing and Addressing Hinduphobia

Hinduphobia includes hostility, prejudice, dehumanizing stereotypes, profiling and discrimination directed at Hindus or Hindu traditions.

18%

of Hindu Indian Americans reported experiencing religious discrimination in the previous year (Carnegie Endowment, 2020 Indian American Attitudes Survey).

What it can look like

- Temple vandalism, threats, harassment, or targeted violence.
- Applying different standards to Hindu Americans than to other religious groups.
- Mockery of deities, sacred practices, names, clothing, accents, or dietary traditions.
- Treating the sacred swastika as proof of Nazi sympathy despite its ancient Hindu meaning.
- Presenting Hinduism through caste, superstition, exoticism, or social problems.
- Excluding established Hindu voices from discussions that directly concern Hindu beliefs or communities.
- Educational materials that present Hindu civilization primarily through colonial-era frameworks or reduce Hinduism to stereotypes.
- Narratives that rely on sources that cite one another, anecdotal or self-selected data, and “experts” not recognized by the broader Hindu community, while overlooking the understanding of practicing Hindus.

How leaders can respond

- Name anti-Hindu bias clearly when evidence supports it.
- Apply equal standards of religious freedom, safety, and dignity.
- Consult credible Hindu leaders and affected community members.
- Seek out credible data from transparent sources and rigorous analysis.
- Support accurate education and responsible public language.
- Include Hindu institutions in interfaith, civil rights, and public safety partnerships.
- Support accurate public education about Hinduism. Consult multiple credible Hindu scholars, clergy, and community institutions when developing educational materials.
- Before acting on a narrative, verify it independently: review large-scale, methodologically sound data and consult mainstream, temple-based Hindu organizations.

FOR PUBLIC LEADERS

Make deliberate efforts to hear directly from Hindu constituents and institutions, including voices that may not be represented in established advocacy spaces.