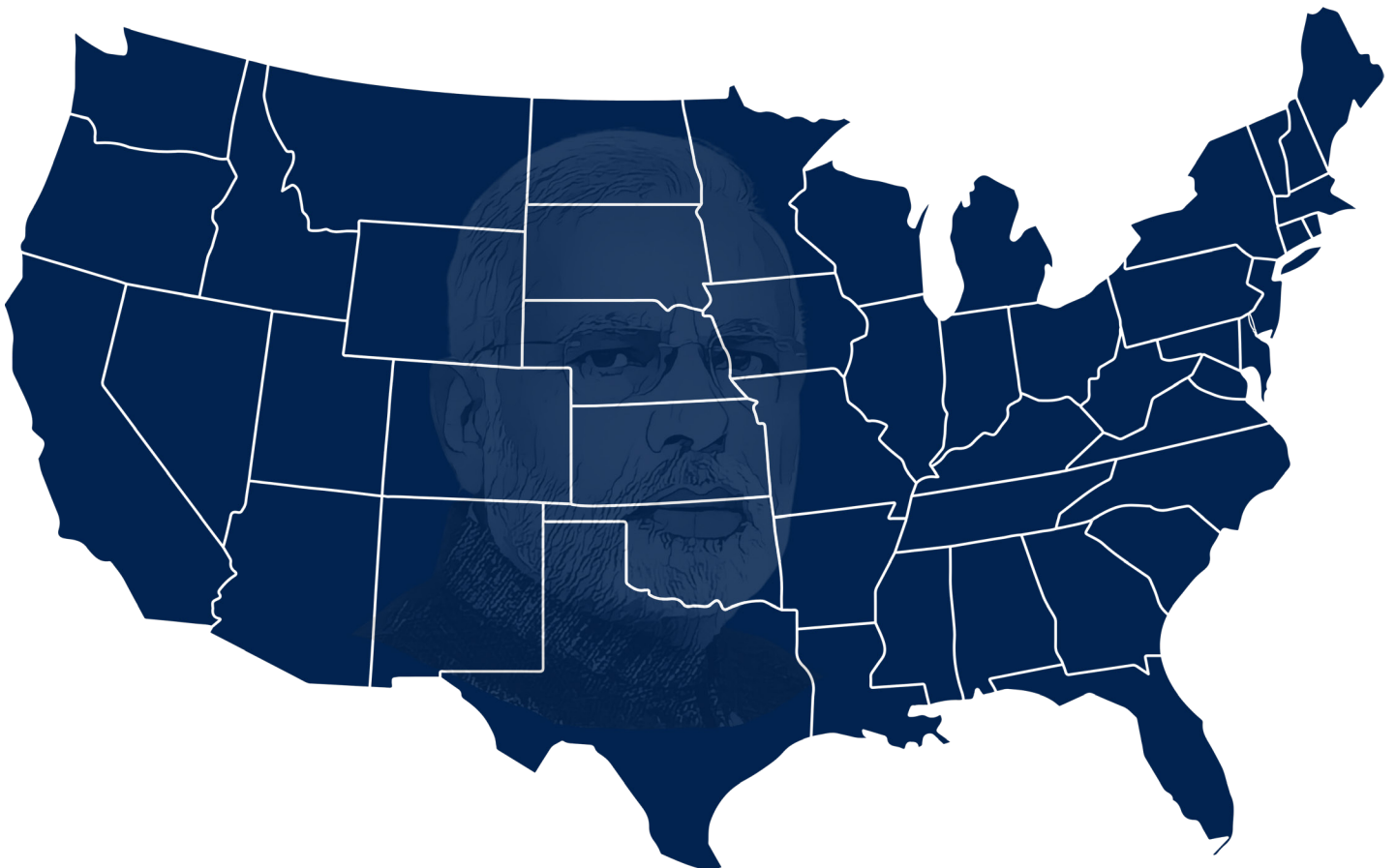




REPORT 2025

TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION

*Modi Regime's Targeting of Critics in
the United States*





The Indian American Muslim Council (IAMC) is a Washington, D.C.-based advocacy organization established in 2002, with chapters across the United States. A 501(c)3 tax-exempt non-profit, IAMC is the largest advocacy and human rights organization representing the Indian Muslim diaspora.

The core mission of Indian American Muslim Council is as follows:

To defend the fundamental and civil rights of all;

To preserve the pluralistic and democratic ethos enshrined in the constitutions of the United States and the Republic of India;

To facilitate increased interfaith and inter-community understanding in the United States, with the goal of safeguarding American society and institutions from hateful ideologies responsible for violence in India;

To increase awareness about India in order to improve cultural and trade relations between the United States and the Republic of India.

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KEY FINDINGS

- Within the United States, agents of the Indian government have practiced at least 9 out of the 11 forms of transnational repression (TNR) identified by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).
- Transnational repression impedes academic production, journalism, human rights research, and bonds between community members within the United States. The climate of fear induced by the Indian government's actions results in widespread self-censorship and directly challenges Americans' First Amendment freedoms.
- Indian consulates play a key role in perpetrating transnational repression from abroad. They serve as the long arm of the Indian government within the United States, infiltrating diaspora communities with undercover agents, undermining routine citizenship processes, and denying Indian Americans their constitutional rights.
- Transnational repression committed by the Indian government in the United States represents an extension of the Modi regime's authoritarian and Hindu nationalist domestic policy. The Indian government's assassination of a Sikh separatist in Canada (and attempt to assassinate another in the United States) aligns with its overseas killings of Sikhs in Pakistan. The persecution of American human rights activists follows the playbook of persecution of activists and critics of the Modi regime in India; the revocation of travel privileges from Indian Americans mirrors the policy of revoking passports from dissidents within India.
- Indian Americans widely reported that statements of clear support from the United States government will help diaspora communities feel safer and improve lines of communication between the two nations.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- **AFSPA** — Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, a security law which gives Indian law enforcement officers legal impunity for any violent acts committed in what the government deems “disturbed areas.”
- **AECA** — Arms Export Control Act, authorizes the US President to control the import and export of defense articles and services.
- **BJP** — Bharatiya Janata Party, the Hindu nationalist political party of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and current ruling party of India.
- **CAA** — Citizenship Amendment Act, a controversial law passed by the Modi-led Indian government which many fear could be used to disenfranchise and deport Indian Muslims en masse.
- **HSS** — Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh, a US-based Hindu nationalist organization and overseas counterpart to the India-based Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) paramilitary group.
- **OCI** — Overseas Citizenship of India entitles the children and grandchildren of Indian citizens visa-free travel and work privilege in India.
- **RAW** — Research and Analysis Wing, India's intelligence agency. Implicated in the assassination and attempted assassination of Indian nationals in Canada and the US.
- **RSS** — Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, an Indian Hindu nationalist paramilitary closely tied to the Modi regime. Its members have killed scores of Indian Muslims. Linked to the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh organization (HSS), which operates in the US and abroad.
- **UAPA** — Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, India's anti-terrorism law, widely criticized by human rights watchdogs for its overbroad provisions which enable the detention of activists without trial and other draconian punishments.
- **TNR** — Transnational Repression occurs when foreign governments reach beyond their borders to intimidate, silence, coerce, harass, or harm members of their diaspora and exile communities.
- **USCIRF** — United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, a commission that oversees conditions of religious tolerance in other countries and issues policy recommendations to the US State Department.

- **VHPA** — Vishwa Hindu Parishad of America, a US-based Hindu nationalist organization and overseas counterpart to the India-based Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) paramilitary group.
- **VHP** — Vishwa Hindu Parishad, a Hindu nationalist paramilitary closely tied to the Modi regime. Its members have killed scores of Indian Muslims. Within the United States, agents of the Indian government have practiced at least 9 out of the 11 forms of transnational repression (TNR) identified by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2015, when the trailblazing photojournalist Masrat Zahra began covering protests and human right abuses in Jammu and Kashmir, she almost immediately attracted intense scrutiny from the Indian government. In 2020, she was charged under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), a draconian law that has enabled Indian police to arbitrarily imprison scores of activists under the pretense of anti-terrorism.¹ Zahra fled to the United States in hopes of escaping persecution and continuing her work from abroad.

But here, her problems only increased. In Zahra's absence, her family, friends, and neighbors have been targeted by the Indian government. In retaliation for her position on the Indian government's revocation of Kashmir's autonomy,² Indian police beat Zahra's father and brother. They have recently expanded their persecution to Zahra's family's next-door neighbors.

"It's constant harassment of my family, even though I'm away," Zahra said. "The police interrogate my family over and over, asking them where I am, when I am coming back, who am I working for, what my visa status is, if I am married."

Even in the US, the problem haunts Zahra, with many fellow Kashmiris and friends distancing themselves from her out of fear of repercussions for themselves and their families. Her travel privileges to India have been revoked, and she fears for her safety even in the US, where, like other Kashmiris, she contends with the threat of Indian government informers within her community. "People who have ties to Kashmir are really scared," Zahra said.

"They don't want to talk about it. They don't want to talk to me. They don't want to keep any ties with people like me who might be problematic. I don't blame them."

Troubling as it is, Zahra's story is just one of thousands of cases of transnational repression (TNR) carried out by the Indian government.

The combination of surveillance, revocation of travel privileges, and harassment of overseas relatives that Zahra has faced is emblematic of the wide range of threats posed by the Indian government to nationals residing overseas, including in the United States.

From recent assassination attempts on North American Sikhs to hitherto underreported intimidation and disinformation campaigns against foreign critics of Modi's regime, the Indian government deploys at least 9 of the 11 TNR tactics recognized by the FBI in order to silence dissidents and religious minorities residing abroad.

Though some of these practices were observed before Indian PM Narendra Modi came to power, several respondents interviewed for this report noted how the rise of Modi and his ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) correlated with the intensification of transnational repression against dissidents living in the United States. In its effort to realize the Hindu nationalist agenda of transforming India into a pure Hindu nation, purged of religious minority groups including Muslims, Christians, and caste-oppressed communities, the Modi regime has resorted to a wide variety of authoritarian tactics—which have now been

deployed against foreign dissidents.

As numerous human rights watchdogs have observed, the Modi regime has launched a far-reaching and multi-faceted attack on every independent, dissenting entity within India, cracking down on the judiciary, the free press, human rights organizations, and political opponents.³ Under the rule of Narendra Modi, India has slipped more than 20 places in Reporters Without Borders' annual free press ranking, now placing 159th out of 180 countries; imprisoned and detained scores of political critics, including Rahul Gandhi, the former head of India's leading opposition Congress party; and lent government support to Hindu nationalist groups involved in orchestrating violence against minorities—especially Muslims and Christians. The heightened persecution of Indian nationals residing in the US represents an extension of the Indian government's increasingly authoritarian practices at home.

The Indian government's practice of transnational repression has had a chilling effect on those in the US who speak out against the Modi regime's most controversial policies, including:

- The ongoing persecution of Muslims and Christians, including a rise in hate crimes and hate speech
- The Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), a BJP-supported law that experts fear will be used to disenfranchise, detain and deport Muslims⁴
- The Modi regime's human rights violations in Kashmir
- The Modi regime's promotion of a Hindu temple built over the ruins of a mosque razed by Hindu nationalist mobs
- The Modi regime's repression of farmers' protests in Punjab
- The Modi regime's use of intimidatory raids

to silence the free press, activists and human rights researchers.

The Indian government's assassination of a Sikh separatist in Canada and its attempt to assassinate another in the US follows on the heels of nearly a dozen ordered killings of Sikh separatists in Pakistan.⁵ Yet Indian American consulates continue to partner⁶ with the American counterparts of the Hindu nationalist paramilitary groups that regularly deploy violence against Muslims in India. This includes organizations such as the Vishwa Hindu Parishad of America (VHPA), foreign counterpart to the Vishwa Hindu Parishad; and the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (HSS), foreign counterpart to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).

These alliances, and the more forms of harassment and intimidation they enable, broadcast the Modi government's hatred of Indian Muslims, Christians, and other minorities residing overseas—all of whom have had to contend with violence from the Indian counterparts to these organizations. The tactics deployed by the Indian government in the US broadly align with transactional repression as it is defined by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Described as a process whereby “foreign governments reach beyond their borders to intimidate, silence, coerce, harass, or harm members of their diaspora and exile communities in the United States,” the FBI lists the following tactics as emblematic of TNR:

- Stalking
- Online disinformation campaigns
- Harassment
- Intimidation or threats
- Forcing or coercing the victim to return to their country of origin
- Threatening or detaining family members or friends in the country of origin

- Abusive legal practices (e.g., lawsuits, asset freezes, or withholding legal documents such as passports)
- Cyber hacking
- Assault
- Attempted kidnapping
- Attempted murder⁷

This survey identified the Indian government as using at least 9 of these tactics within the United States and/or against American citizens, with only kidnapping and stalking going unreported.

These attacks have profound and far-reaching effects. TNR instills fear into regime dissidents, severs them from their families and friends, undermines job security, destroys their relationships with audiences and contacts in India, erodes diplomatic ties, and limits freedom of speech through self-censorship.

The impact of transnational repression is not confined to those who have publicly criticized the Modi regime: it affects the broad swaths of the Indian diaspora who have seen the consequences of speaking out and fear so much as clicking “like” on a public social media post.

Like Zahra, many respondents to this survey observed how former friends in the United States maintain distance from fear of being seen as an ally to public critics of the Modi regime.

With no sign that the Modi regime's campaign of transnational repression will slow down soon, it is critical that the United States act quickly to protect the First Amendment freedoms, security, and community integrity of Indian Americans. Respondents to this survey repeatedly emphasized that the United States taking a clear public stand against TNR would help the Indian diaspora feel safer and freer within the US. Taking a clear stance on TNR would facilitate the free ex-

change of information among scholars and journalists, rebuild trust within the diaspora community, and help to protect First Amendment freedoms. Sanctioning the most powerful individuals who have approved TNR attacks against Americans would also send a clear message to India that their tactics will not be tolerated. Other IAMC recommendations for addressing TNR can be found at the conclusion of this report.

2. METHODOLOGY

In compiling this survey, IAMC conducted extensive interviews with individuals who had experienced transnational repression from the Indian government. Individuals were selected on the basis of their encounters with TNR, both from within IAMC's membership and through outreach with a broader network of diaspora organizations, academics, journalists, religious groups, and human rights watchdogs. Some of the interviews were conducted anonymously out of respect for security concerns, while others were on record. IAMC asked victims of TNR for their suggestions as to what the US government should do to help remediate the situation.

Following the completion of the interview period, IAMC also compiled existing reporting and research on individuals who have experienced TNR, drawing from investigations in major newspapers as well as lesser-known reports from human rights organizations.

3. TNR TACTICS

A. Violent Attacks in the US

The most egregious form of transnational repression practiced by the Indian government is the assassination of Indians residing abroad. In 2023, Indian agents allegedly assassinated one Canadian Sikh leader, Hardeep Singh Nijjar, while conspiring but failing to assassinate a Sikh leader in New York City, Gurpatwant Singh Pannun.⁸

Though investigations are ongoing, preliminary findings suggest that two close associates of Indian PM Narendra Modi were linked to the two assassinations: Samant Goel, former chief of India's foreign intelligence agency, the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW); and Ajit Doval, Modi's national security advisor. The investigations have also found with greater certainty that senior Indian intelligence officials within RAW ordered the killings.⁹

The death of Nijjar and the attempted killing of Pannun sent shockwaves not only through Indian American Sikh communities, but also through the broader community of Indian American human rights activists and dissidents. Commenting on the general climate of fear in the American diaspora, one anonymous Indian American researcher said: "Everyone is absolutely terrified."¹⁰

According to Canadian officials and an indictment in US federal court, the North American assassination attempts were coordinated between American and Canadian Indian government representatives and senior intelligence officials in India.

According to the investigation, RAW officer Vikram Yadav stated that Pannun's death was a "priority" before ordering the assassination. Yadav allegedly worked with Nikhil Gupta, an Indian national and former drug trafficker, who attempted to pay for a hitman in New York in order to avoid criminal punishment in India. The federal indictment against Gupta alleges that his organization intended to conduct other assassinations on North American soil. "We have so many targets," Gupta told the undercover FBI agent whom he had unwittingly hired to kill Pannun.

These events represent the extension of a violent transnational campaign conducted by the Modi government in Pakistan, where at least 11 Sikh or Kashmiri leaders in exile have been assassinated over the past two years. The extension of these tactics into the United States was attributable, one Western security official said, to closer political ties between Indian and American leaders. Asked why India would take the risk of attempting to assassinate an American citizen, the anonymous security official said: "Because they knew they could get away with it."¹¹

In August 2024, unknown assailants conducted another assassination attempt on a Sikh leader living in California Satinder Pal Singh Raju, who was the victim of a drive-by shooting. Raju was connected to the Canadian Sikh leader, Nijjar, giving cause to investigate this incident as yet another instance of India's increasingly violent campaign of TNR against American citizens.¹²

B. Retaliation Against Family Members and Friends in India

Among the most common forms of transnational repression faced by Indian nationals residing abroad is the harassment and intimidation of their India-based relatives, friends, partners, and former neighbors. The Indian state has retaliated against foreign critics by threatening their contacts in India with police violence, invasive interrogations and phone calls, verbal threats, and the confiscation or even demolition of family-owned properties.

US-based interviewees reported that foreign interrogators were particularly interested in obtaining information about their citizenship and visa status within the US, questioning their families until they obtained information that might be used against them in immigration procedures. This form of TNR is felt acutely by Kashmiris living abroad.

Interviewees frequently noted how family harassment diminished the quality and freedom of academic production, journalistic coverage, and dialogue between Indian nationals in the United States. It is a direct threat to Americans' First Amendment freedoms, undermines relationships between families and friends, and imposes high social costs on those who bear any association whatsoever with Indian dissidents residing in India or abroad.

Masrat Zahra, now a faculty member at the University of Missouri school of Journalism, continues to experience the consequences of this form of transnational repression firsthand. As the first female photojournalist in Jammu and Kashmir, her work attracted intense scrutiny

from the Indian government almost as soon as she began reporting. In 2020, Indian law enforcement charged Zahra under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), a draconian anti-terrorism law that human rights groups have criticized for enabling Indian police to arbitrarily imprison scores of activists. After Zahra fled to Germany in hopes of escaping persecution, her family was targeted by state officials instead.

"It's constant harassment of my family even though I'm away," Zahra said. "The police interrogate my father over and over, asking about my whereabouts, when I was returning back, and who am I working for, inquiring about my visa

"People who have family in Kashmir are really scared," Zahra said. "They don't want to talk about it. They are hesitant to speak and self-censoring. They don't want to keep any ties with people which might cause any issues for their families back home. I don't blame them. I have been a victim of Indian repression firsthand."

status, and if I was married." In 2020, Jammu and Kashmir Police officers beat her father and mother, injuring their arms and legs. The police have recently expanded their harassment to neighbors living in the vicinity of Zahra's family in Kashmir. Zahra's outspokenness has led numerous friends and members of the diaspora to distance themselves or cut off ties altogether.

One anonymous Kashmiri researcher who has written about the destruction of Kashmir's independent media and the censorship of

Kashmiri cultural production said her Kashmir-based relatives also faced harassment from the Indian government. “My family has been frequently visited by Indian bureaucrats, Indian police, and interrogated about how much property they have, and what I am doing in the U.S,” said the researcher. “We are kind of marked as people speaking internationally about Kashmir.”

The researcher explained that these questions about her family's property were likely intended to intimidate them about the possible threat of dispossession. In Kashmir, the demolition or seizure of homes belonging to dissidents has become an endemic issue,¹³ despite being formally banned by India's Supreme court.¹⁴ “[Indian government police] want my family to know their home can be taken away from them,” said the researcher.

The effect of such intimidation is to inhibit the circulation of knowledge, both overseas and within India. “Transnational repression results in blockages of knowledge production,” the researcher said. “A lot of people, academics that I know have gone completely silent. PhD students don't want to be seen speaking on any panel that includes me.”

A prolific Kashmiri political commentator who wished to remain anonymous said he has also contended with the consequences of speaking out about his homeland. After facing the threat of imprisonment alongside other colleagues at his newspaper, the commentator moved to the United States to continue their work from afar. In 2021, the commentator began posting public criticism of the Modi government's crackdown on farmers' protests in the state of Punjab.¹⁵

Shortly after publishing these comments, the commentator learned that their family members in Jammu and Kashmir had been detained and questioned by local police, themselves appointed and controlled by the BJP-led government in Delhi.

“My father and brother had to go to the police station multiple times,” said the commentator. “The police also stopped by to ask my mother where her son was, and what was I doing. They called my sister multiple times too. I definitely self-censored after that.” According to the commentator, the government repeatedly questioned their family about their relative's citizenship status in the US, seeking detailed information about what kind of work visa they possessed here.

These police encounters led the commentator to restrict their contact with family to the bare minimum. They don't share their work, discuss their day-to-day life, or say anything else to family that Indian authorities might wish to know. “I blocked my mother-in-law and sister on social media because she was sharing a lot of my cartoons online. They didn't realize it could put all of our relatives in trouble,” said the commentator. A stranger whom the commentator had never met was also allegedly detained by police in Goa just for retweeting their posts.

In 2023, Sam Khan, an American citizen, actor, and online activist, dealt with harassment of his Mumbai-based parents. Khan's parents are in their 80s and had no knowledge of their son's online criticism of the Modi-led government and its policies. Armed police officers nonetheless entered their home and interrogated them,

provoking an anxiety attack in his elderly mother. "They've not committed any crime. They're in their 80s. My mother had an angiography a few days ago and is a heart patient. Are old Indian parents responsible for a foreign-citizen son's tweets?" Khan wrote on X.¹⁶

Raqib Naik, a Kashmiri journalist and founder of the hate speech and hate crime watchdogs India Hate Lab and Hindutva Watch, has also had to contend with retributive attacks against his family. After being repeatedly interrogated in 2019 for his reporting on the Indian government's revocation of Kashmir's autonomous status, Naik fled to the United States. Here, he has continued to face threats on his life, as well as numerous threats against his family.

In September 2020, an Indian military official sent Naik a message saying "i have invited your father for a cup of tea." A month later, a different Indian intelligence officer said he had contacted Naik's father, vowing that he and Naik would "meet in person" despite Naik having moved to America. In June 2022, while traveling in another country, Naik received an anonymous text message saying "you are being tracked and will be prosecuted." He immediately flew back to the US. Then, in December 2023, Naik's father was once again called to a military camp. There, an army official told Naik's father that his son should write nicer articles about India.¹⁷

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C. Undermining Citizenship Rights, Detentions, and Deportations

In an attempt to silence and intimidate foreign nationals deemed hostile to the Modi regime, the BJP selectively undermines Indian travel rights for American citizens and Indian nationals residing in the United States. The Indian government has:

- deported American citizens of Indian origin
- confiscated passports of Indian nationals, confining them to India
- placed individuals on no-fly lists
- and—in a matter of particular concern for Indians born in the US—withheld or revoked Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) status, a permit that allows any person with parents or grandparents from India to live and work in India without a visa for life.

Indian consulates in the United States play a vital role in abetting this form of transnational repression, whether by ordering deportations of American citizens from India or providing intelligence gathered on Americans to official counterparts in India. According to the Indian news website Article 14, the Indian government has withdrawn OCI status from at least 102 foreign nationals between 2014 and May 2023.²⁰ At least three of these cancellations were due to criticism of Hindu nationalism on social media and/or voicing support for protests by farmers between 2020 and 2021. Other OCI revocations and deportations have taken place in retaliation

against foreigners and Indian nationals working for Christian organizations, working for human rights NGOs, and producing independent journalism. The loss of OCI status often means that the target is cut off from family, friends, and employment in India.

More common than the withdrawal of OCI status is the revoking of Indian passports from Indian nationals. In the estimation of one human rights lawyer who wished to remain anonymous, this issue has affected thousands of Indian nationals residing abroad, particularly Kashmiris. In August 2023, the regional passport office in Srinagar, Kashmir went on a wave of suspensions of Indian passports, with at least 10 Kashmiri passports suspended. (In some estimates, the count is as high as 90).²¹

By severing critics from their families and friends, the Indian government's weaponization of citizenship has reverberations throughout the Indian diaspora. Many fear that they too will be barred from the country of their birth in retaliation for speaking out against the Modi regime.

The loss of citizenship imposes immense costs—personal, professional, and financial—on those who must contend with this form of transnational repression. Revocation of OCI status has forced Indian nationals to spend great sums relocating, challenging legal decisions, and finding new work. Even leading US politicians have voiced fear of such repercussions for speaking out against the Modi regime. “I’m always thinking about the impact on my family—for example, if there was some attempt to not allow me back into India,” Rep. Pramila Jayapal (D-WA) has said.²²

Among the victims of OCI-based transnational repression is the acclaimed novelist and journalist Aatish Taseer. In September 2019, Taseer's OCI status was revoked on the grounds that he had defrauded the Indian government by failing to state that his father was Pakistani. Raised in India by his mother, far from his absent Pakistani father, Taseer had never before encountered issues with his overseas citizenship based on paternity claims. The timing of the OCI revocation notice—shortly after Taseer had published a piece in *Time* magazine criticizing the Modi regime—raises the strong possibility that the Indian government was retaliating against Taseer for his public statements. Leading BJP spokesman Sambit Patra, who had also participated in an infamous New Jersey parade featuring an anti-Muslim hate symbol²³, publicly criticized Taseer for his work.²⁴

“It is hard not to feel that I was being punished for what I had written,” Taseer wrote of the decision.²⁵ Though technically allowed 21 days to contest the government's revocation, Taseer received his letter 20 days after the initial decision. Though he immediately emailed the Indian Consulate in New York to challenge the ruling, Taseer learned that the revocation was final. “With my grandmother turning ninety next year—and my mother seventy—the government has cut me off from my country and family,” Taseer wrote.

Other victims of retaliatory attacks on travel privileges attested that the process for challenging the withdrawal of travel privileges is effectively useless. Masrat Zahra received a notice from the regional passport office informing her that her passport had been revoked, dated July 10, 2023. Though the notice stated she had 20 days to res-

pond, the letter was never formally delivered to her address. Instead, the letter was left with a local shopkeeper in the same locality as Masrat Zahra's native area. The letter was postmarked Sept 21, 2023, almost nine weeks after the time to respond had already expired. Masrat came to know about the letter several months later when her mother happened to visit the market. The revocation of her passport has prevented her from travelling anywhere outside the USA related to her job.

Award-winning journalist Angad Singh, an American citizen, also had his OCI status revoked. Singh was an assistant producer on the 2020 VICE documentary *India Burning*, which covered nationwide protests in India against the Citizenship Amendment Act, a newly enacted legislation that many fear will be used to deport Muslims en masse from India.

After the documentary won the prestigious duPont-Columbia award in 2021, Singh and other journalists at VICE had multiple visa requests to make documentaries about social issues or cultural events ignored or denied.

Then in 2022, while attempting to visit family in India, Singh was detained at immigration at the Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi. Despite possessing OCI status, which entitled him to travel to India without a visa, Singh was questioned by airport immigration authorities, who confiscated his passport and OCI card before sending him on a flight back with no explanation given.

“It's one thing to deny me a right as a journalist but another to deny my rights as a citizen to see

my family,” Singh said. Singh reached out to the Indian Consulate in New York for a reason as to why he was refused entry. After receiving no response, he resorted to filing a lawsuit in the New Delhi High Court. Upon the judges’ orders, he was notified by the Indian government in court that he had been put on a blacklist in 2021.

Since then, Singh has been in a legal battle to challenge this decision. Court proceedings have thus far revealed that Singh was charged by the Foreigners Regional Registration Officer (FRRO) in India, and that he “was blacklisted...at the behest of Consulate General of India New York (under Ministry of External Affairs)” in March 2021.

According to the FRRO affidavit, Singh’s “documentary India Burning presented a very negative view of India’s secular credentials. He misrepresented facts in his visa application filed for obtaining a journalist visa in the year 2020 and has indulged in blatant anti-national propaganda to defame the country.”

In March 2024, nearly two years into the court proceedings, Singh received notice from the Indian Consulate General in New York that his OCI status was to be revoked. Though Singh is legally entitled to challenge the OCI revocation, he has received no communications from the Indian government regarding his appeals.

“Many in the Sikh diaspora have heard my story. The message that just one person has been blacklisted is incredibly impactful in our diasporas,” Singh said. “It scares people who think of speaking out.” Singh remains unable to return to India to visit family.

Discussing possible solutions to his issue, Singh offered: “Government acknowledgement really does take off a lot of the burden of people having to prove that their transnational repression is real.”

Christine Mehta, formerly a researcher with Amnesty International India and now an editor at the Boston Globe, had her OCI status [revoked](#) in 2014.²⁶ The move likely came in retaliation to Mehta’s work on a [study](#) conducted between 2012 and 2014 for Amnesty International India.²⁷ She had spent two years documenting human rights violations committed in Jammu and Kashmir under the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA), a security law which grants law enforcement officers legal impunity for any violent acts committed in “disturbed areas.” According to Amnesty International, the AFSPA “empowers security forces to arrest and enter property without warrant and gives the security forces power to shoot to kill in circumstances where members of the security forces are not at imminent risk.”²⁸

Mehta, an American citizen, was detained by the Foreigner Regional Registration Office (FRRO) in Bengaluru in November 2014, when she was handed a Leave India Notice (LIN) without explanation. She was then deported, and has not been allowed to return to India since. “If individuals are targeted for no recognisable crimes, then this diminishes the democratic essence of a country that prides itself as being the world’s largest,” Mehta wrote of her experience.²⁹

Mehta’s deportation and OCI revocation come in a broader context of crackdowns against Amnesty International—including office raids and

the imprisonment of employees—that have severely hampered the ability of the organization to operate in India, forcing them to shut down local offices.³⁰

C.1 Detentions and Deportations

American Christians have also been repeatedly denied entry into India, deported, and even imprisoned for participating in routine and secular charitable activities.

In October 2019, Tennessean pastor Bryan Nerren was imprisoned for 6 days, then prevented from leaving India for 7 months, due to spurious accusations that he had failed to declare the \$40,000 in funds he had brought into India. Held in the city of Sigdiri, he was repeatedly questioned by Indian officials who relayed intimidating messages and warned him not to practice Christianity in India. According to Nerren, one local BJP leader visited him to say: “We do not help our poor children, and we don’t want you to come here and help the poor children either. God decided that they are poor, and if they die, they die.” Local officials also spoke with Nerren’s lawyer, who says he was told: “We have been ordered to make a case against your client and that he is here for converting people and we are going to stop American Christians from coming here, and we will make an example of him.”³¹

Nerren’s release required months of diplomatic negotiations between the United States and India, during which time the pastor was prevented from leaving the country and threatened with further prison time in India. The impact on Nerren and his family was significant. Nerren’s

daughter has cerebral palsy and often refused to eat or drink in his absence. During his detention, she developed pneumonia and lost nearly 20 pounds, Nerren said. “That’s my first child, so when someone takes your child and puts him where you might not ever see him again, it does something to you,” Nerren’s mother told reporters.³²

India has also been adamant about refusing entry to human rights watchdogs and preventing them from operating safely within the country. In 2020, India turned down a request for travel visas from the US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF).³³ USCIRF, a federal commission tasked with advising the government on international religious freedom, has repeatedly clashed with Indian officials over its criticism of India’s deteriorating religious freedom situation. In April of that year, USCIRF’s annual report recommended that the US officially designate India a “Country of Particular Concern” on religious freedom—the commission’s highest warning for countries that abuse religious rights.³⁴

Christo Thomas Philip, an Indian American emergency room doctor in Dallas, was deported from India in 2016. For three years before that date, Philip had been working at Duncan Hospital in Bihar, serving the rural poor. Planning to return to his post that summer, he flew into Delhi with his family, only to be deported to Istanbul immediately after his arrival. “That was one of the darkest moments in my life, to have my freedom taken away even though I had done nothing wrong except sacrifice a comfortable and lucrative life in the US as an emergency physician to serve those that had no one to care for

them in India,” Philip wrote.³⁵

According to Indian customs officials, the Indian Consulate of Dallas had ordered the deportation, charging Philips with preaching Christianity and conducting conversions.³⁶ Though Philip successfully challenged the revocation of his OCI (after a three-year legal battle in the Indian Supreme Court), the damage was done. “The entire ordeal of shifting back to the US and finding a new home and establishing our life in the US cost well over Rs 20 lakh[(about \$23,000)],” Philip wrote. In Philip’s absence, the hospital in Bikar went four months without a critical care specialist—a major issue, given that it was one of the only hospitals in the region with advanced facilities.

Peter Cook, executive director of the New York State Council of Churches, was deported from India in 2018 along with a sizable group of visitors. Cook said that he and other members of his group were interrogated before being sent back a few hours after their arrival. One of the guards reportedly told a member of the church group that “Christians are not welcome in India,” Cook stated.

The deportations cost Cook’s group several thousand dollars in wasted funds. His efforts to recoup the sum proved to be fruitless. Though the Indian Consulate of New York apologized for the deportation, they later made a threatening call to Cook after he publicly criticized the Indian government’s Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA).

“I spoke out against the CAA at an Albany City Council meeting,” Cook said, “and almost immediately after that, I got a phone call from

the same man I’d spoken with at the New York City consulate. He said, ‘I can’t believe you, as a Christian, are defending Muslim terrorists.’” Cook said he has not felt safe returning to India since the call.

“There’s a lot of fear in Indian Christian communities who have property, loved ones, and connections in India,” Cook said. “Right now when we try to get Indian Christians to speak out dn

D. Political Interference Via Indian Consulates and Overseas Political Groups

In addition to surveilling activists, sending threatening messages and organizing intimidatory meetings, and helping to coordinate deportations, passport revocations, and OCI cancellations of Indian nationals, Indian consulates have also sought to influence American legislation and perceptions of Hindu nationalism. In alignment with the BJP's push to silence criticism of its more extreme policies, domestic Indian consulates have on several occasions allied with domestic Hindu nationalist groups to challenge opponents of the Modi regime.

These partnerships and influence campaigns send clear intimidatory messages to Indian American minority communities, whose members fear that local consulates are biased against them and consequently self-censor. Indian consular involvement in legislative campaigns also serves to intimidate US politicians, who have shied away from speaking on controversial topics for fear of damaging relationships between local government and the consular services that their constituents rely on.

Indian consulates have repeatedly partnered with the most powerful Hindu nationalist organization in the United States, the Hindu America Foundation (HAF).

Throughout its history, HAF has lobbied against legislation critical of the Modi regime and in favor of policies that align with Modi's geopolitical interests. Their lobbying work has included: 1) an unsuccessfully challenge againsting

the US's revocation of Modi's travel visa in 2005, in recognition of Modi's role in enabling mass anti-Muslim violence in the Gujarat Pogrom of 2002;³⁷ 2) challenging California legislation aimed at making caste-based oppression illegal; 3) lobbying to prevent the US from selling fighter jets to Pakistan; 4) defending the Modi's controversial citizenship law the CAA bill, which many fear could be used to deport Muslims.³⁸ In attempting to defend Modi's visa travel privileges, the HAF partnered with Bharat Bhai, who later would register as a foreign agent partnered with the Consul General of India. In 2019, HAF also reportedly provided a platform for an Indian embassy official to interact with US congressional staffers and placed a HAF intern in the embassy.³⁹

The involvement of Indian consular officials in quashing a Chicago City Council resolution illustrates the effect of Indian transnational repression on local governments.

In 2021, Chicago alderwoman Maria Hadden sponsored a City Council resolution which would have condemned Hindu nationalist violence and the Citizenship Amendment Act championed by Modi and the BJP.⁴⁰ After the resolution was introduced, Amit Kumar, then the consul general of India in Chicago, joined members of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad of America (VHPA), a domestic Hindu nationalist group, in lobbying against the resolution.⁴¹ The VHPA has sent more than \$7 million to its foreign counterpart, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), an Indian paramilitary organization that has perpetrated violence against Indian Muslims.⁴²

In response to intense lobbying from this alian-

ce between the consulate and members of domestic Hindu nationalist organizations, several mentions of troubling human rights trends in India were struck from the resolution. References to various issues—including the mob lynchings of Muslims and other minorities, a high-ranking Indian official's comments comparing undocumented people in India to termites, the Indian government's restrictions on Jammu and Kashmir, and problems with the Citizenship Amendment Act—were stricken from the resolution. The Consul General of India in Chicago also reportedly intimated that the passage of the legislation could damage relations between India and the United States, leading former Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot to distance herself from the legislation.⁴³ The lobbyist group reportedly asked Kumar to personally send letters to the mayor and aldermen.

Four days before the Chicago City Council was to vote on the resolution, lobbyists sent hundreds of WhatsApp messages to local politicians encouraging them to oppose it. The group also created 17 different versions of email petitions, resulting in each alderman receiving 5,000 to 7,000 emails. The consul general, Kumar, worked as part of an alliance that also included the Middle East Forum, a conservative American think tank widely recognized as Islamophobic.⁴⁴ As a result of consular and campaign influence, the resolution was defeated in Chicago City Council. A pressure campaign waged by the Indian consulate in concert with virulently anti-Muslim organizations had succeeded in repressing valid criticism of the Indian government's troubling human rights record.

In 2024, the Consulate General of India in New York City worked with the VHPA to promote an anti-Muslim hate symbol in the city's annual

India Day Parade. The VHPA's float included a recreation of the Ram Mandir, a Hindu temple built directly over the ruins of a mosque raised by Hindu nationalist mobs in 1992.⁴⁵ This partnership is particularly troubling given the history of the VHPA's Indian counterpart, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP). In 2002, VPH members helped to organize the killing of more than 2,000 predominantly Muslim Indians after the destruction of the mosque where the Ram Mandir now stands.⁴⁶

The VHPA announced their float at the Indian Consulate of New York in August⁴⁷, immediately provoking an outcry among the local Indian human rights and interfaith community. The float was later denounced by New York City Mayor Eric Adams, New York City councilmembers Shekar Krishnan and Shahana Hanif, and State Assemblymember Zohran Mamdani. The councilmembers and assemblymember wrote at the time that “public celebrations should not include symbols of division or bigotry. A float celebrating the construction of the Ram Temple would be divisive, and runs counter to the values of New York City.”⁴⁸ The float appeared in the parade despite the controversy.⁴⁹

Two years earlier, Indian politicians played a role in supporting a more overt display of anti-Muslim hatred at a India Day parade in Edison, New Jersey. That year, unknown Hindu nationalist groups paraded a bulldozer decorated with pictures of notorious anti-Muslim hater Yogi Adityanath and Indian PM Narendra Modi.⁵⁰ Bulldozers are widely recognized as hate symbols in India due to their use, in destroying Muslim-owned homes and property—especially by Adityanath, known to his supporters as Bulldozer Baba.^{51 52} BJP spokesperson Sambit Patra,

who has used anti-Muslim slurs in debates and attacked critics of the CAA⁵³, was the grand marshal of the parade.⁵⁴

In 2020, the Indian Consulate of Houston also lent its support to Hindu nationalist groups, who chanted violent and sexually crude anti-Muslim threats on the consulate grounds with the aid of consular facilities. A group of interfaith human rights organizations had gathered across the street from the consulate to protest the CAA, the controversial bill that many fear could be used to deport Muslims. In response, Hindu nationalist counterprotesters gathered in front of the consulate without any pushback from staff. Pugging into interior consulate outlets to power their audio equipment, and frequently entering and exiting the premises, Hindu nationalist groups chanted offensive and violent slogans to the interfaith groups, including: “Shoot The Traitors!” (Desh Kay Gaddaron Ko, Goli Maro Salon Ko); “We will liberate You by Executing/Shooting you!” (Hum Thok Kay Dengay Azaadi); “We will liberate You by F***ing / Raping You” (Hum Pale Kay Daingay Azaadi); and “We will liberate them [Muslim women] from their black veils” (Ham Daingay ... Kaalay Burkay Say Azaadi). The counter protestors also praised the mob-led destruction of the Babri Mosque in 1992.

The actions of these three consulates in the three largest population areas of Indian Americans indicates clear political biases. Consulates show a marked preference for celebrating the construction of the Ram Mandir—and by implication, the violent anti-Muslim riots which enabled it—and they attempt to intimidate and silence critics of the CAA and other human rights abuses committed by the Modi regime. In coordinating with

Hindu nationalist groups, they effectively telegraph that they cannot be relied on to be neutral arbiters of immigration and other consular services, instilling fear into the Indian American community.

E. Disinformation Campaigns

E.1 The Disinfo Lab

Since at least 2020, an Indian intelligence-affiliated organization called the Disinfo Lab has produced extensive dossiers of disinformation aimed at discrediting US-based critics of the Modi government in India. Totalling several hundred pages of fabricated claims, the Disinfo Lab's smear campaigns have been distributed by domestic Hindu nationalist groups to members of the US Congress and the California legislature. These dispatches are also regularly amplified by senior leaders of the BJP and members of the Hindu nationalist press in India.

The inner workings of Disinfo Lab and its covert efforts to intimidate critics abroad were detailed in a lengthy Washington Post report published in December 2023. According to former Disinfo Lab employees quoted in the report, the organization is led by Lt. Col. Dibya Satpathy, a RAW officer who is reportedly connected to India's national security advisor, Ajit Doval.⁵⁵

The impact of these reports has been severe. According to anonymous sources, Indian law enforcement officials have cited claims from these reports while interrogating detained Indian Americans and Indian nationals. The dissemination of these reports online also routinely leads

to death threats and threats of sexual violence against their targets, according to multiple researchers and activists targeted in Disinfo Lab reports.

In the words of an anonymous human rights researcher named in a Disinfo Lab dossier: “Every time Disinfo Lab puts something out, there is an uptick of threats—people shouting, ‘You’re with Soros, with Mossad, with ISI [Inter-Services Intelligence, Pakistan’s intelligence agency].’ When they discussed me, I received rape threats. Anonymous online trolls said they would rape me and my daughter.”

Among the myriad groups and individuals targeted by Disinfo Lab are IAMC, Hindus for Human Rights (HFHR), Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal (D-WA 7th District), the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), journalist and activist Pieter Friedrich, and the Dalit (i.e. oppressed caste) rights organization Equality Labs.

Disinfo Lab reports have falsely presented IAMC and HFHR as a front organization for Pakistan’s Inter-Services Intelligence agency, while leveling similarly baseless allegations that US Representative Pramila Jayapal was under the influence of “Islamist funding.” In California, Hindu far-right organizations used Disinfo Lab reports to suggest that Equality Labs, a US-based Dalit (the lowest caste in India) advocacy group, was connected to Pakistani intelligence.

In 2021, Pieter Friedrich, an independent journalist and researcher who focuses on the international impact of Hindu nationalism, was targeted by a Disinfo Lab report. An outspoken critic of the BJP’s human rights abuses and repression of Punjab farmer protests, Friedrich was alleged to be at the center of a Pakistan-sponsored te-

rrorist operation linked with the Sikh separatist movement.⁵⁶ The 97-page report also provided detailed information about Friedrich’s mother, father, and brother-in-law.

Shortly after the report appeared online, Delhi police amplified its claims” in a public press conference, where they deemed Friedrich to be the mastermind of an online “psyop” campaign and alleged he was the originator of a social media toolkit with which he had, in fact, no involvement.⁵⁷ Pro-government television channels then aired segments claiming that Friedrich and Pakistan had orchestrated the 2021 farmers’ protest at New Delhi’s Red Fort, which had been violently suppressed by the Modi government.⁵⁸

Friedrich said the experience of being targeted along with his family by the Indian government has made him “cagey in a way that I don’t want to be as an American citizen.” He added: “It makes people that I’m in touch with targets too.” Following the Disinfo Lab report and the Delhi police conference, Friedrich was warned by Indian contacts that it would be unsafe for him to enter the country. “I would be scared for my life if I went to India,” he said. In subsequent years, Friedrich has had his social media accounts banned in India, thereby cutting off contact between him and the majority of his more than 100,000 followers on X.

The Disinfo Lab has also published extensive dossiers targeting Sunita Viswanath, the founder of the Hindus for Human Rights organization and a vocal critic of Hindu nationalism. Pointing to the backing Viswanath had received from George Soros’s Open Society Foundation while at the head of a different organization,

the Disinfo Lab alleged that she and Soros were waging a war against India's national integrity. Two months after the release of the report, Amit Malviya, the head of the BJP's social media team, posted a photo on X of Viswanath meeting with Indian opposition leader Rahul Gandhi. Attached to the post was a flowchart—stamped with the Disinfo Lab logo—illustrating Viswanath's connections to Soros.⁵⁹

“Who is she exactly?” Malviya wrote on X. “She is nothing but a proxy of George Soros, who has committed \$1 billion to meddle in India's internal affairs, through a network of opposition leaders, think tanks, journalists, lawyers and activists.” The post was retweeted 7,800 times.

E.2 Dismantling Global Hindutva Conference Retaliation

One example of how transnational repression affects academic freedom and community dialogue in the US was the disinformation campaign against the Dismantling Global Hindutva academic conference in September 2021. With support and sponsorship from more than 53 American universities, the online conference gathered academics to discuss Hindutva (Hindu nationalism) and its global impact on human rights, academic freedom, and political violence.

Soon after the event was publicized, participants were inundated with violent threats based on misleading claims circulated by Hindu nationalist leaders in India and the United States. Accused of promoting terrorism and anti-nationalist or anti-Hindu rhetoric, participants received tens of thousands of death and rape threats

from individual X accounts in India. A number of participants withdrew from the conference out of fear of being banned from traveling in India or violence against themselves and their families. The servers of Drew University in New Jersey crashed after receiving more than 30,000 threats. Conference speaker Meena Kandasamy had pictures of her children posted online, captioned “ur son will face a painful death.”⁶⁰

The flood of hate speech was inflamed by public statements from leading Indian politicians. BJP politician Kapil Mishra, notorious for his role in inciting anti-Muslim violence in Delhi, falsely claimed that conference attendees were supporting terrorism in a Tweet that was reposted nearly 20,000 times.⁶¹ Kanchan Gupta, a senior advisor to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting under Modi, also helped to promote attacks against the conference attendees.⁶²

Many of the attacks on academics participating in the conference appear to have been coordinated by BJP members and India-based Hindu nationalist groups. According to a study conducted by researchers at Columbia University, a considerable portion of the threats were generated by a “workforce” of users working with the BJP and other Hindu nationalist organizations in India and using WhatsApp and Instagram to plan attacks and disseminate information.⁶³ Individuals in these networks amplified misinformation generated by influential Hindu nationalists and disseminated it through social media, Indian television and other news media.

Many of the misleading claims concerning the conference originated from the Hindu American Foundation (HAF), a domestic Hindu nationalist

group with ties to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) paramilitary organization in India.⁶⁴ After running an extensive campaign against the attendees, HAF launched a civil complaint with the Department of State against the University of Pennsylvania for sponsoring the conference.⁶⁵ Members of the the Vishwa Hindu Parishad of America (VHPA)—which has sent millions of dollars to the anti-Muslim Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) paramilitary group—contributed to the more than 1.3 million emails sent to universities demanding they withdraw from the conference.⁶⁶

Purnima Dhavan, associate professor of history at University of Washington, Seattle, said the disinformation and intimidation campaign would “have grave and negative consequences on academic work...It creates an atmosphere of fear in the classroom when faculty and students know that they will be trolled, harassed, or threatened for any discussion or debates about these topics.”⁶⁷

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Those interviewed for this report widely noted how government acknowledgement of the problem of transnational repression could provide its victims with the assurance and confidence to speak freely. Pointing to the increasingly vocal criticism of the Chinese state by members of the American Uyghur diaspora, one anonymous human rights researcher stated, “They [Uyghurs] know they have an ally in the US government. That goes a long way towards giving people the power to exercise their First Amendment rights.” To raise the visibility of the Indian government’s practice of transnational repression and protect its victims going forward, IAMC recommends that the government adopt the following measures.

1. Implement Bipartisan Transnational Repression Reporting Act

The Transnational Repression Reporting Act of 2024 was introduced in Congress in October, 2024 by California Representative Adam Schiff and cosponsored by Representatives Daniel S. Goldman, David Valadao, Ilhan Omar, Barbara Lee, James McGovern, Eleanor Holmes Norton, and Eric Swalwell.⁶⁸ Establishing an annual attorney general-led reporting process for all instances of transnational repression, the bill is poised to help not only the victims of the Indian government’s overseas attacks, but a wide range of US citizens contending with threats from the governments of Saudi Arabia, Iran, China, and other regimes hostile to public criticism.

The bill would require the attorney general to catalog each case of transnational repression in an annual report and document the US government’s law enforcement response in each instance, as well as the response of foreign governments after being confronted with their involvement. These facts and findings would then be shared with the public each year in a Congressional hearing, greatly raising the profile of victims of transnational repression from the Indian government and other governments among politicians and everyday Americans alike.

2. Sanction offending Indian officials under the Global Magnitsky Act

Under the Global Magnitsky Act, the US may impose sanctions on any individual who violates “internationally recognized human rights and freedoms, such as the freedoms of religion, expression, association, and assembly, and the rights to a fair trial and democratic elections.”⁶⁹ The acts of transnational repression committed by several leading Indian officials clearly meet this criterion.

The US should begin by imposing comprehensive travel and financial sanctions on India's home minister, Amit Shah, who according to revelations by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and former Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, allegedly orchestrated illegal extortion and assassination operations within Canada.

We urge similar sanctions against India's national security advisor, Ajit Doval, who oversees India's foreign intelligence agency, the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW). According to a release by the US Department of Justice, RAW attempted to orchestrate the assassination of an US citizen in New York City last year. The United States should also sanction India's former high commissioner to Canada and the five other diplomats who were expelled alongside him for their shared involvement in the assassination of Hardeep Singh Nijjar.

Sanctioning Shah, Dova, and other Indian diplomats involved in assassination attempts would be consistent with the United States' recent announcement that 19 Indian private firms and two Indian nationals would be added to a list of entities and individuals sanctioned for aiding Russia's war efforts in Ukraine.⁷⁰ Aimed at suppressing the use of third countries to circumvent restrictions on abetting Russia's military campaign, the sanctions send a clear message that the US will not tolerate Indian cooperation with Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine.

Such sanctions should also apply to the family members of Shah, Doval, and the Indian diplomats in Canada found to have participated in the assassination attempts. Taken together, they would send a powerful message that the US opposes political violence, reaffirming its commitment to justice and human rights.

3. Prevent Intimidation, Surveillance and Harassment Campaigns by Indian Consulates in the United States

The United States has the right and the obligation to demand that consulates based within its territory comply with US laws. Members of Indian consulates in the United States and Canada have routinely flouted these laws by participating in assassination campaigns, surveilling American citizens, interfering in local political processes, and issuing threats that undermine Americans' First Amendment freedoms. Canada expelled a number of its top Indian diplomats for their involvement in the assassination of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, and the United States must do the same if our law enforcement services discover similar culpability in the attempted assassination of Gurpatwant Singh Pannun. State and local governments should also regularly communicate with their Indian consulates and constituents to assure that consulates are providing fair and neutral provision of immigration services. In cases where it is discovered that consulates are coordinating with Indian intelligence officers to deny Indian citizens their rights, American officials must ensure that this practice ceases.

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

The US Department of State should accept the United States Commission for International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) recommendation to designate India as a Country for Particular Concern (CPC), given its repeated violations of human rights and religious freedom for those living in India and in the United States. USCIRF has expressed "extreme disappointment" that the State Department "yet again failed to designate" India among Countries of Particular Concern "despite its own reporting and statements," and called for a Congressional hearing to demand explanations from the administration.⁷¹ USCIRF's CPC designation is its highest warning against countries who undermine religious freedom. India's repression of religious minorities both abroad and domestically means that such a designation is long overdue.

5. Activate the Arms Export Control Act

The US government should activate sections of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA) to halt arms transfers to India until the Modi regime ceases its persecution of religious minorities and dissidents living abroad. The AECA prohibits weapons' export licenses to any countries that are engaged in a "consistent pattern of acts of intimidation and

harassment” against individuals in the United States⁷². As such, the US government has a legal responsibility to revoke existing arms export licenses to India and to halt weapons transfers until such time as the Modi regime halts its campaign of transnational repression. Senator Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) suggested the invocation of AECA at a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing in December, 2023.⁷³

6. END NOTES

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