

HINDU AMERICAN FOUNDATION

910 Seventeenth St., Suite 316A

Washington, D.C. 20006

hinduamerican.org | 202.223.8222



August 27, 2021

Dear President and Esteemed University Administrators,

We write to follow up on our previous email from August 19, 2021 and to inform you that the organizers of “Dismantling Global Hindutva” have removed your institution's logo. If this occurred upon your request, we thank you for your prompt attention in ensuring that the event organizers did not mislead the public about your institutional endorsement of their event.

Replacing the display of logos and names of universities is a list of contributing and sponsoring departments and centers, at least one of which is housed in your university. We would assume that the legal, tax-exempt limitations on political activities extend from the institutional level to the departmental. The central topic of this partisan event remains the same -- to oppose and “dismantle” the Bharatiya Janata Party, a democratically elected party in India.

As we stated before, we support the rights of academics in their individual capacity to engage in partisan activism concerning India. But we firmly believe that universities, and by extension university departments, centers, and institutes, should remain apolitical and non-partisan.

“Dismantling Global Hindutva” is not only political and partisan. It veers into promoting Hinduphobia and anti-Hindu hatred in the activists and politicians it platforms, in the resources it promotes, and in the reductionist definition of Hinduism it presents. Scholar-activists associated with the event and the anonymous event organizers themselves continue to deny the existence of anti-Hindu hatred and Hinduphobia, and use reckless and incendiary labels such as “supremacist,” “extremist,” even “fascist” to describe literally thousands of individuals and numerous Hindu American community and student organizations expressing serious concerns about the appearance of institutional endorsement and support of a partisan political event.

In the midst of this kind of vitriolic and unprofessional environment, what psychological and professional safety will you provide to faculty and students in these departments that may be concerned about the impact sponsorship of a controversial political event could have on their reputations, scholarship, and professional opportunities, including opposition to sponsorship? What assurances will you offer to Hindu and Indian students, faculty, and staff that incidents of Hinduphobia and anti-Hindu hatred will be taken seriously when one of your departments is actively promoting and participating in an event that denies both?

Attached please find a petition letter with 10,360 signatories who joined HAF's grassroots effort to echo our concerns about this event. Preceding this, over 8,000 individuals sent you emails expressing the same. We know there are letters and petitions you have likely received from other Hindu American

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community organizations. We also know that parents, students, and alumni have reached out in their individual capacities to express disappointment and concern.

This issue is not one that is going away anytime soon. In our 18 years of existence, we have never seen an issue galvanize so many Hindus of all national and ethnic backgrounds and political persuasions. The response of your institution, or lack thereof, will not go unnoticed.

We respectfully request a conversation to discuss appropriate next steps, including a letter to all students and faculty and/or public statement that you stand against Hinduphobia and anti-Hindu hate and affirm your commitment to open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive engagement with different perspectives.

Best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Suhag Shukla'.

Suhag Shukla, Esq. - HAF Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Samir Kalra'.

Samir Kalra, Esq. - HAF Managing Director