

## **Scottish Parliament Group Endorses Groundbreaking Hinduphobia Report by Gandhian Peace Society**

Edinburgh, 03<sup>rd</sup> Feb 2025

In a historic moment for the Hindu community in Scotland, the Scottish Government Cross Parliamentary Group has fully accepted and supported the comprehensive report on Hinduphobia presented by the Gandhian Peace Society. This marks the first time such an in-depth study on the subject has been submitted and presented at the parliamentary level in Scotland and the United Kingdom.

CPG Convenor Professor Peter Hopkins commended the comprehensive nature of the report.

MSP Foysol congratulated the Gandhian Peace Society on this work on Hinduphobia.

A new report by the [Gandhian Peace Society](#) examines the issue of Hinduphobia in Scotland and its impact on the Hindu community. The report, titled "Hinduphobia in Scotland: Understanding, Addressing, and Overcoming Prejudice", explores specific incidents of Hinduphobia while also capturing perspectives and experiences directly from Scottish Hindus. The report was presented by Anuranjan Jha, Dhruva Kumar, Sukhi Singh Bains and contributed by Ajit Trivedi, special contribution by Mr Neil Lal, President of Indian Council of Scotland.

A working draft report was presented on January 23<sup>rd</sup> to the [Cross Party Group](#) on Challenging Racial and Religious Prejudice, convened by Peter Hopkins and chaired by MSP Foysol Choudhary. The group includes representatives from Jewish, Muslim, and Hindu communities.

According to the 2011 census, Hindus make up around 0.3% of Scotland's population. However, the report highlights that this community has faced numerous challenges due to their religious identity. Reported hate crimes include the 2021 vandalism of a Dundee temple and a 2021 attack on a Hindu family's home in Glasgow.

Mr Anuranja Jha, as President and Chairman of the Gandhian Peace Society, we are deeply concerned by the findings presented in this report highlighting troubling instances of Hinduphobia in Scotland. Our organisation is founded on the principles of nonviolence and social justice espoused by Mahatma Gandhi, and we firmly believe that Hinduphobia goes against the very ethos of a tolerant, diverse, and progressive society. We should work together to improve society based on the principles of Gandhi, especially in times of global conflict.

The report also cites statistics indicating that the number of charges related to Hinduism increased from 9 in 2019-20 to 14 in 2020-21. Compared to 1.6% of the general Scottish population, 2.4% of Hindus reported experiencing harassment or discrimination in 2019-20.

Dhruva Kumar, General Secretary of the Gandhian Peace Society, stated: "The instances of Hinduphobia outlined in Scotland are profoundly concerning and highlight the challenges faced by the Hindu community in various aspects of life, including workplaces and schools." Kumar reiterated the importance of Hindus in Scotland and their significant contributions.

The report puts forth recommendations to address Hinduphobia, such as strengthening hate crime laws, promoting accurate representations of Hinduism in schools, providing support networks for victims, enforcing zero-tolerance discrimination policies, and facilitating interfaith dialogues.

As the President and Chairman of the Indian Council of Scotland and United Kingdom, I am deeply concerned about the rising tide of Hinduphobia in Scotland and elsewhere. Hinduphobia is a form of religious discrimination and hatred that targets Hindus and Hinduism, often based on ignorance, stereotypes and misinformation. It is unacceptable and must be challenged and condemned by all people of goodwill. I urge all Hindus and non-Hindus alike to join hands with the Gandhian Peace Society and its leaders in spreading Gandhi's message of harmony and humanity.

Dhruva Kumar added: "A multifaceted approach involving education, legal interventions, and community engagement is essential to combat Hinduphobia effectively. It is imperative that authorities, educational institutions, and communities collaborate to create a society where Hinduphobia has no place."

Sukhi Bains, a diversity consultant who contributed to the report, said: "We need collaborative efforts across civil society to address Hinduphobia through education, community engagement, and policy reform. Our aim is to build a Scotland that values and protects diversity."

Statistics from the NHS show Hindus had the lowest recruitment success rate among religious groups at NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (1.99%), Glasgow City Council (2.7%), and Renfrewshire Council (1.39%).

Additionally, 16% of Scots surveyed said they would be unhappy if a close relative married a Hindu, up from 10% in 2010. This is higher than those unhappy about a relative marrying a Muslim (14%), Jew (11%), or Buddhist (9%).

The report details multiple hate crimes, including:

- A 2021 attack on a Hindu family's Glasgow home by masked men.
- The 2021 vandalism of a Dundee temple with hateful graffiti.
- A 2020 attack on a Hindu temple in Edinburgh, involving arson and anti-Hindu slogans.

A 2022 study by Pearn Kandola found 38% of Hindu employees in the UK had religious holiday requests rejected and 93% avoided wearing religious clothing at work.

Specific hate crimes highlighted include the 2021 vandalism of a Dundee temple and a 2020 arson attack on an Edinburgh temple.

Author Dhruva Kumar said, "The data and troubling examples clearly show Hinduphobia is a pressing issue needing action across education, law, policy, and civil society to ensure Hindus feel safe, included, and respected."

Sukhi Bains, a representative of the Hindu community in Scotland, commented: "This report gives voice to the difficulties we face and urges action against religious discrimination. We hope it leads to greater understanding and support for the Hindu community."

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educational institutions, and communities must collaborate to create a society where Hinduphobia has no place."

Aline Dobbie, a famed author, Scottish but born in India, said Scotland has a long tradition of welcoming diversity. We must uphold those values by ensuring that no religious community faces marginalisation or discrimination. Only by working together across all sections of society can we build a Scotland devoid of prejudices, where pluralism and harmony prevail.

After the working draft was presented to the Scottish Parliamentary Group, the concerns were deliberated on [Awaz FM 107.2](#) on January 27 and 24. Dhruva Kumar and Sukhi Bains, Acharya Abhishek Joshi adeptly discussed the issues within the framework of Sanatan Dharma, garnering widespread support from listeners across Scotland.

The Gandhian Peace Society urges individuals, organisations, and the government to embrace these recommendations to build a Scotland that values diversity and dignity for all. As a charity advocating peace and religious harmony, the society hopes this report will spur collective action against Hinduphobia.

Full Report can be downloaded here:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1jtfJiilLk35PVA2yL7YNPIXU8TyBJyOf/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1jtfJiilLk35PVA2yL7YNPIXU8TyBJyOf/view?usp=drive_link)