



Sept. 26, 2022

Honorable Mayor Tory

Mr. Jim Hart, Acting Chair of TPSB

RE: REQUEST TO MAKE A DEPUTATION TO TPS BOARD IN NOVEMBER
HATE CRIMES AGAINST HINDU TEMPLES

I am writing on advice from Mr. Ken Jeffers, former TPSB member to make an urgent request to make a deputation to the Toronto Police Services Board.

Today starts the 9-day festival of Navratri. On Oct 24th we celebrate Diwali and next day is Hindu New Year. The Hindus in the community are seriously concerned about their safety. The Sept 14, 2022 defacing of BAPS Temple in Toronto is the latest in the growing trend of incidents of hate crimes against Hindus. I know Honorable Mayor has been to this temple, as has the Prime Minister, and many other dignitaries. Its an iconic landmark in our city. A video showing the vandalism on the walls of the temple can be seen [here](#). Khalistan Zindabad (Long Live Khalistan) and Hindustan Murdabad (Death to India) can be seen written on the walls.

We started a petition to raise public awareness about the growing trend of hate-crimes against Hindus <https://chng.it/KiQJK9MCnr>. This petition has been signed by over 32,500 people in a week. This shows how deeply upset the community is. Here are tweets from some Hindu and Indian groups expressing their concerns.

https://twitter.com/hindu_canadian/status/1570243679381782531?s=20&t=OBP9r9f27peIVIQ4TPP1w

<https://twitter.com/oficottawa/status/1570247584802869248?s=20&t=8IYJ3Qdeb-MxtnsaMFW7tg>

<https://twitter.com/naic15680114/status/1570266666633940993?s=20&t=ycjw5M9o17FWa9R0fRxRaA>

Repeated attacks on Hindus and their places of worship are happening across the GTA driven by Hinduphobia, fuelled by extremist ideology and 'Breaking India' divisive forces. Just last month there was a similar vandalizing of the Statue of Mahatma Gandhi at the Vishnu Mandir in Richmond Hill. Prior to that there had been a series of over 20 break-ins at numerous Hindu temples across the GTA during which alters and deities were desecrated, donated money stolen and properties damaged. Participants of a car Rally celebrating India's Independence Day were physically assaulted. These are just some examples.

The community has been traumatized by such attacks on their institutions and, religious and cultural identity. Hindus are feeling unsafe, especially because of the lukewarm action taken against perpetrators of these hate crimes by police forces.

The community is deeply disappointed with the silence of the media and politicians in reporting and denouncing such incidents of hate crimes and are demanding action.

We are deeply concerned about the labelling of these hate crimes merely as ‘acts of vandalism’. We are fully aware that similar attacks on places of worship of other religions are promptly declared as ‘hate crimes’. Why are attacks on Hindu places of worship not acknowledged as hate crimes? There is growing anti-Hindu propaganda in the media and academia. We urge all social and political institutions to speak up against such Hate Crimes motivated by Hinduphobia and to work towards ending the targeting of Hindus.

The Hindu community strongly condemns these hate crimes. Hindus are peace loving, inclusive, culturally and religiously open-minded citizens who contribute greatly to the economic, social, cultural life of Canada. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms provides Canadians the freedom to practice their faith without fear of discrimination, hate or violence.

It is the responsibility of police and all politicians to strongly denounce such hate crimes and assure Hindus that they and their places of worship will be protected so they can feel safe. There is a similar trend in growing Hinduphobia and hate crimes in the US. In response to concerns of Hindus, in 2013 the FBI began collecting data on hate crimes against Hindus.

Specifically, we ask that:

1. Hinduphobia be recognized and be included in the glossary of terms of anti-discrimination policies of the police, Government and other institutions
2. Police and courts persecute such incidents of violence as hate crimes motivated by Hinduphobia
3. Police commence collecting data on hate crimes against Hindus and Hindu institutions.
4. Police, schools and other institutions be required to undertake training on recognizing and reporting incidents of discrimination and harassment related to Hinduphobia.

We look forward to your response to our request to make a deputation at the November meeting of the TPS Board about this matter. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

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cc: Ken Jeffers