

Cut From the Same Cloth: The VHP-A's Ties to its Indian Counterpart



SAVERA
UNITED AGAINST
SUPREMACY

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Savera: United Against Supremacy is a multiracial, interfaith, anti-caste coalition of Indian Americans and partners, standing together in the fight against the rise of the transnational far-right. We are committed to combating Hindu supremacy and White supremacy, and the intersections between them.

"Savera" is a Hindustani word meaning "dawn" or "new beginning."

In that vein, we look towards a world where Hindu supremacy, White supremacy, and other supremacist ideologies are no longer deep-rooted in our communities, our education system, our governments, and our everyday lives.

We envision the realization of an Indian-American majority – one that already exists, but is not yet expressive in our politics – that rejects these ideologies and the divisions they create within and between our communities, and instead uplifts the rich diversity of our cultures, backgrounds, and beliefs in order to create a more just society.

We see our security and flourishing as intimately intertwined with the security and prosperity of those around us – and not by responding to racism with hatred of our own.



Dalit Solidarity Forum



Ambedkar King Study Circle



Indian American Muslim Council



India Civil Watch International



Hindus for Human Rights

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Foreword

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP),¹ or World Hindu Council, is a far-right Hindu supremacist group with a well-documented history of violence against minorities in India. Its transnational imprint extends to numerous countries across the world, most notably the United States. In our previous report, titled “The Global VHP’s Trail of Violence,” we presented evidence collected from several authoritative sources on the range of harms perpetrated by the VHP in India, while also examining the role played by the US wing of the VHP, the VHP of America (VHP-A).²

The report found that the VHP-A has offered significant material and political support to the VHP in India, including during occasions where the latter has perpetrated mass anti-minority violence³; and also that the VHP-A has worked to popularize far-right politics in the United States, both within and outside the Indian-American community.⁴ This includes, but is not limited to: spreading Islamophobia, disinformation and hate speech⁵; defending and perpetuating casteism⁶; taking regressive stances on civil rights efforts, immigration and affirmative action⁷; and allying closely with other far-right organizations in the United States – especially a range of anti-Muslim and white supremacist actors.⁸

Although the VHP-A has shown no willingness to answer for these harms, it has a well-developed set of responses to questions about its ties to the VHP in India, whose violent militancy is explicit, pervasive and likely an embarrassment to the VHP-A. The VHP-A follows a common,

predictable refrain: that “Though inspired by the same values and ideals as those followed by Vishwa Hindu Parishad of Bharat, VHP of America is distinct, legally separate and operationally independent Non-Profit organization in its own right within the USA.”⁹

The suggestion is that the similarity in names is incidental, merely a matter of being “inspired” by the VHP in India. Former VHP-A President Abhaya Asthana has stated that the VHP-A is “totally independent of any other organization” and “is not a branch or a chapter of any other organization in USA or anywhere else in the world.”¹⁰ Former VHP-A spokesperson Shyam Tiwari, similarly, has contended that “there is no connection to the VHP except in name... We are totally separate.”¹¹ VHP-A leaders seldom require prompting to trot out these practiced lines.

Readers and observers familiar with Hindu supremacist politics, or Indian and Indian-American politics more broadly, will find the claims made by the VHP-A to be farcical – starting with the fact that the VHP and the VHP-A share a name and key elements of their logo. Moreover, this claim of independence runs counter to the VHP-A’s own website, where it describes itself as a “sister organization” of the VHP.¹²

Nevertheless, beginning from this fact, this report presents a plethora of evidence to directly refute the VHP-A’s claims by demonstrating the extent to which the VHP and the VHP-A are deeply intertwined. We present this follow-up report not out of a narrow desire to respond to the VHP-A’s

visibly spurious claims, but because the VHP-A's evasiveness is itself revealing. The VHP-A's desperation to mark its separation from the VHP in India reveals not only its inability to take responsibility for its harmful politics, but also the importance of the transnational axis it occupies, and why it seeks to conceal that axis's very existence.

It is this transnational axis – so critical in a deeply interconnected and globalized world – that we ask our readers to draw their attention to while reading this report. We aim to outline the sheer age, scale and organizational intent behind the global Hindu supremacist network, epitomized in this case by the Global VHP. This network, we argue, offers a paradigmatic example of the transnational nature of far-right movements – in particular, those that emerge from or traverse through the Global South, but whose forms, scope and structures of power remain undertheorized and poorly understood in the Global North.

Primarily, we must understand that the Hindu supremacist movement is not committed merely to the capture of power or to the achievement of specific policy goals. Rather, the movement's ultimate political goals are much broader: to reach every section of society until its hegemony is so totalizing that it can become indistinguishable from, and slowly replace, society itself.¹³ This, scholars tell us, is an organicist understanding of politics that draws from German nationalism¹⁴ and is explicitly described in dozens of RSS texts. Consider this example from the RSS's "Roadmap for the 21st Century."

The Sangh would become indistinguishable from Indian society.

The merger of the Sangh and Indian society would be as complete as the mixing of sugar in milk and just as the milk when stirred displays the characteristics of sugar, Indian society as a whole would start exhibiting the traits of the Sangh. So, the Sangh would become coterminous with all of Indian society and the need for it to exist as a distinct entity would be obviated.¹⁵

The development of Hindu supremacist networks in the US must be understood within this frame: not just as an opportunistic set of actions, but a concerted strategy aimed at achieving global hegemony. As such, the Hindu supremacist movement in the United States should not be understood as a series of individual actors, but an inter-organizational project, where each node plays a particular role within the movement's larger network.¹⁶ Within such a frame, research on the movement must pay attention not only to individual nodes in the network, but the interstitial connections between these nodes, both overt and covert.¹⁷

In this context, we must understand the salience of the VHP of America as a prime progenitor of Hindu supremacist networks along both domestic and transnational axes. As we described in our first report, this 53-year-old organization can be considered the mothership of Hindu supremacist politics within the United States: one that has helmed the Hindu supremacist movement in the country, formally or informally birthed nearly every offshoot of the movement, and has since gravitated toward an alliance with the white supremacist far-right.¹⁸

Transnationally, meanwhile, the VHP-A is a key bridging node between the United States and the Hindu supremacist movement

in India, exchanging ideas, money, and personnel¹⁹ with the center of the movement in India while representing its largest, wealthiest, and most powerful appendage in the diaspora.

Blocking the global far-right will require a deeper understanding of the ways in which supremacist actors like the VHP-A, pursuing nativist political goals, have embarked on decidedly internationalist strategies. Pro-democratic forces might well have to take a leaf out of their book, and build real transnational understanding – and, eventually, solidarity – ourselves. This report sees itself as an initial step toward both goals.

Executive Summary

This report demonstrates the depth of the ideological, organizational and financial continuity between the VHP in India and its American counterpart (VHP-A). The VHP-A's claims that it is an independent entity might hold water in a narrow, legal sense; but in a substantive sense, they are far from the truth. The VHP-A, we argue, must be seen as an **inseparable part of the VHP**: born from its efforts, and tied by shared personnel, regular coordination meetings and deep financial links – all of which are managed by a layered transnational bureaucracy.

Our argument derives from a fundamental analysis of the constitutive features of any organization – its personnel, the roles they occupy, and the ends to which the organization's resources are mobilized. Our analyses, based on the VHP-A's own records and attestations, show that:

1. The VHP-A was **conceived by and founded out of the upper echelons of the VHP, including none other than M.S. Golwalkar, the second Sarsanghchalak (supreme leader) of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), and the founder of the VHP in India.** In the years and decades since, the VHP-A emerged as the central node of a transnational right-wing network built to offer international support to the VHP and the Sangh.

Sangh or Sangh Parivar

A vast network of organizations across the world centered around the Hindu supremacist RSS. While the RSS formally acknowledges its control over less than three dozen organizations, scholarly estimates suggest that the entire network spans tens of thousands of organizations. This network allows the RSS and its organs, like the VHP, to operate under many names in many sections of society, seemingly independent of each other.

2. In contrast with their public statements, **the distinction between the VHP and the VHP-A is virtually non-existent in internal Sangh literature.** Instead, VHP-A activities are simply described as “Parishad activities,” (“parishad” means council), as “the VHP,” or sometimes as the “VHP Overseas.”
3. In the five decades since its founding, **the lifeline between the VHP-A and the VHP was not cut, but rather reinforced.**
 - a. VHP-A officials **continued to be drawn from a small pool of immigrants with past ties to the VHP** in India, or its sister organizations.
 - b. Key personnel continued to **simultaneously hold positions in both the VHP and the VHP-A.**

- c. Similarly, **VHP-A leaders made regular visits to India to meet with, and receive training from, their VHP counterparts in India**, including the Vishwa Sangh Shibir, a once-in-five-years camp specifically directed at overseas workers of the RSS and VHP. **Nearly every President or General Secretary of the VHP-A has been documented receiving training at the Shibir.**
- d. The VHP-A and VHP developed close financial relationships through which **the VHP-A has transferred over \$7 million to VHP-controlled entities in India.**
- e. VHP **officials continued to attend regular meetings and annual conferences of the VHP-A in the United States**, with the two entities' leaders appearing together under one banner.

Part 1: Mahesh Mehta, M.S. Golwalkar, and the Founding of the VHP-A

The VHP-A claims that it was incorporated in 1974 in the State of New York, and that its independence from the VHP stems from the fact that it is subject to the laws of its host country.²⁰ However, this is a half-truth, tailored specifically to public audiences. VHP-A publications repeatedly confirm that the VHP-A's founding was prompted by none other than **M.S. Golwalkar**,²¹ the second Sarsanghchhalak (supreme leader) of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS),²² and the founder of the VHP in India.²³ They reveal that Golwalkar delegated **Mahesh Mehta**, an RSS *pracharak*,²⁴ or full-time worker, to build the VHP-A as a sister organization in the US.²⁵ Such directions are common in the RSS, where *pracharaks* are regularly deputed to establish front organizations.²⁶ However, the fact that a *pracharak* was dispatched overseas reflected the importance Golwalkar gave to establishing the VHP-A.²⁷

RSS

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) is a right-wing paramilitary organization founded in 1925 with a commitment to Hindu supremacy, and the parent organization of India's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).²⁸ It was explicitly modeled on the Italian Fascist movement, in particular the military academies and youth organizations created by Italian fascist Benito Mussolini.²⁹ Since its inception, the RSS has developed a sprawling network, birthing a series of subsidiary organizations including political parties (like Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party or BJP), charities, religious organizations, and labor

unions.³⁰ With the election of Narendra Modi, a lifelong RSS member,³¹ as Prime Minister, the RSS enjoys unprecedented power in India today. The RSS, which has been implicated time and time again in anti-minority violence,³² was banned once during British rule and then thrice by the post-independence Indian government, including after Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated by an RSS member,³³ Nathuram Godse.³⁴

Mahesh Mehta

The father of the Hindu supremacist network in the United States, and an RSS member since he was 10.³⁵ He became a full-time RSS worker and was instructed to build the VHP in America.³⁶ Mehta served as the VHP-A's President for multiple terms and remained Chairman of its Advisory Board until his death in 2021.³⁷ He simultaneously served as the Central Vice President of the VHP in India and a member of its Board of Trustees,³⁸ and helped establish numerous other Hindu supremacist organizations in the US. These include the RSS's American wing, the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (HSS), as well as the Overseas Friends of the BJP—a registered foreign agent in the United States—where he was a member of the national executive council.³⁹

M.S. Golwalkar

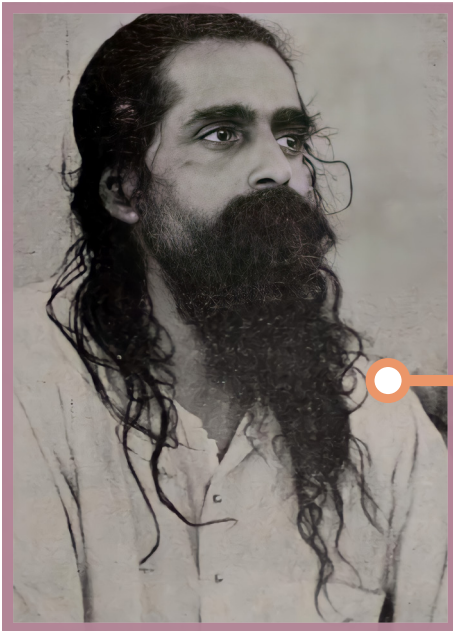
The second Sarsanghchhalak of the RSS, and one of its chief ideologues. In his work, *We, or, Our Nationhood Defined*, Golwalkar argues that Hindus must take inspiration from the treatment of Jews by

the Nazis as an example of how to treat minorities in India.⁴⁰

Mehta, whose father was also involved in the RSS,⁴¹ had been groomed by the Sangh since he was a 10-year old child, when he first met Golwalkar. “His eyes looked through me, as if penetrating me,” Mehta recalled of Golwalkar in an interview. “I was instantly glued to him,” Mehta said, and decided to train to be a Sangh worker.⁴² “Nothing convinced me until I attended the training camp of RSS at Nagpur in 1955... Since 1955, I have never been in doubt about my mission in life,” Mehta noted in his autobiography.⁴³

Mehta spent his early life deeply embedded in the RSS and its affiliates.⁴⁴ He served as the President of the Gujarat state unit of the ABVP⁴⁵ (the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad,⁴⁶ the student wing of the RSS), was sent by the RSS to work in “villages and tribal areas” of Gujarat,⁴⁷ and eventually became a senior leader in the Gujarat RSS and VHP.⁴⁸ Gaurang Vaishnav, Mehta’s close colleague for nearly five decades and a fellow member of the VHP-A Governing Council,⁴⁹ elaborates on these origins in an article published in the VHP-A’s quarterly magazine, “Hindu Vishwa”:

When he [Mehta] decided to migrate to [the] USA, he went to meet the



Source: Filmindia Magazine

To keep up the purity of the Race and its culture, Germany shocked the world by her purging the country of the Semitic Races—the Jews. Race pride at its highest has been manifested here. Germany has also shown how well-nigh impossible it is for Races and cultures, having differences going to the root, to be assimilated into one united whole, a good lesson for us in Hindusthan to learn and profit by. - M.S. Golwalkar

Source: Dialog Center



I have remained personally committed to the Hindu cause as a lifelong mission due to the inspiring life of Shree Guruji. (p. III)

Param Poojaniya Shri Guruji, the second Sar Sangh Chalak of RSS, inspired us to start the work as Vishwa Hindu Parishad. (p. IV)

- Mahesh Mehta, in ‘Hindu Philosophy in Action’

Sarsanghchalak (Supreme head) of RSS, late Shri Golwalkarji to seek his guidance for social work in the USA. At that time, Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) was a nascent organization in Bharat. Guruji [a title used for Golwalkar in the Sangh]⁵⁰ advised Maheshbhai to build VHP in [the] USA... He actively sought out NRIs, all young at that time, who had either RSS background or were infused with a desire to serve the Hindu society and their motherland. Thus, was born Vishwa Hindu Parishad of America (VHP-A) in 1969.⁵¹

Similarly, Mehta refers to Golwalkar as the founding inspiration of the VHP-A in his own book. “Param Poojaniya Shri Guruji, the second Sar Sangh Chalak of RSS, **inspired us to start the work as Vishwa Hindu Parishad,**” he wrote.⁵² “I have remained personally committed to the Hindu cause as a lifelong mission due to the inspiring life of Shree Guruji.”⁵³

But the VHP’s role in establishing the VHP-A was not limited to that of mere inspiration. The VHP’s upper echelons were instrumental in setting up its American unit, delegating two other high-profile leaders – S.S. Apte, its Co-Founder and first General Secretary, and Laxmanrao Bhide, the Vishwa Vibhag Pracharak of the RSS (a full-time, high-ranking leader, coordinating the “Overseas Department” of the Sangh)⁵⁴ – to support Mehta in founding the VHP-A.⁵⁵ These leaders played key roles in this process, traveling to the US to mobilize Indian immigrants with affinities to the Hindu far-right⁵⁶ and convene the VHP-A’s founding meetings.⁵⁷ Apte, in fact, traveled to 21 different countries in 1971, and **is credited in VHP texts with building the “edifice of Vishwa Hindu Parishad organization abroad.”**⁵⁸

This is corroborated by another VHP text published on its 50th anniversary, describing “VHP Work in Foreign Countries.” The text, which notably describes “VHP work in the USA,” continues:

Even prior to the formation of VHP, Sri Apteji had established regular communication channels with leading overseas Hindu brethren and institutions/organizations. Delegates from abroad had attended the 1966 World Hindu Convention held at Prayagraj. At some places abroad the Parishad work was taking roots. The VHP work in the USA had started in 1970. In 1971, Dadasaheb undertook a 9-month long overseas tour of 117 cities in 30 countries including Trinidad & Tobago, Suriname, Guyana, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Hongkong, etc., to promote the VHP work. He addressed 140 meetings of Karyakartas. He toured England for about a month and again went there in 1975.⁵⁹

Mehta has openly acknowledged the role of these RSS leaders in setting up the organizational apparatus of the VHP-A. In his account, *Hindu Philosophy in Action*, Mehta notes that while he wanted to return to India, Apte insisted that he stay in America. “Don’t go back to India, you will be required here,” Mehta remembered being told.⁶⁰

His book, a record of VHP-A activities, is revealing about the extent of VHP involvement in their American wing. “I would like to pay my humble tribute to Shree Dada Saheb Apte, the Founder General Secretary of Vishwa Hindu Parishad,” he wrote. “He visited the USA in 1970 and provided necessary stimulus through his visionary exposition of the role of Parishad work outside of India.”⁶¹ Similarly, Mehta mentions that he “must take note of the contributions of Shree Laxmanrao

Bhide, Vishwa Vibhag Pracharak of RSS in helping me during the Indian Emergency and thereafter in developing organization work in the USA.”⁶² Mehta also notes the contributions of other Indian political leaders like Laxmanrao Inamdar, the RSS’s Prant Pracharak (a high-ranking regional position)⁶³ in Gujarat, and Deen Dayal Upadhyaya,⁶⁴ the leader of the Bharatiya Jan Sangh (the predecessor to the ruling BJP today).⁶⁵

In Part 3, we demonstrate how these ties, dating back to the 1970s, have only grown stronger in the decades since. Before we do so, however, it is worth interrogating how the VHP (or the VHP-A) themselves understand these relationships, and the terms they themselves use to describe them.

Part 2: The Missing Distinction

While the VHP-A's official position is that it is a "distinct, legally separate and operationally independent Non-Profit organization in its own right within the USA,"⁶⁶ internal-facing VHP and VHP-A documents offer a starkly different picture of the relationship between the two organizations.⁶⁷ The VHP's own literature is unambiguous about the relationship between the VHP in India and its sister organizations overseas, identifying them all as constitutive of an interconnected global network.

The VHP's own website, for example, has previously described the VHP as a "Worldwide Family of Hindu Organizations" alongside links to its Indian and American units.⁶⁸ Its 50-year anniversary publication describes the VHP-A's formation as part of "VHP Work in Foreign Countries."⁶⁹ Another document, written by its former Joint General Secretary, Hari Babu Kansal, lists the VHP's international wings under the title "Vishva Hindu Parishad Abroad."⁷⁰ It goes on to claim that "there are VHP Units, registered under its name according to the laws of the respective countries, in [the] USA, U.K, Canada, ... Trinidad and Tobago, etc." The same document identifies the VHP of America as one of these wings. Tellingly, the document uses this entity's official name, "VHP of America," interchangeably with the terms "Parishad" and "VHP."⁷¹ Similarly, older versions of the VHP-A website had separate sections highlighting the co-founders of VHP and eulogizing the work of the VHP, RSS and HSS.⁷²

This interchangeability of language used to describe the VHP's international wings is, as we shall see, a recurring motif, reflecting the importance placed by the Hindu far-right in setting up a transnational right-wing network. Historically, Hindu supremacist groups grew aware of the financial and political power possessed by the diaspora well before any of their secular or progressive counterparts, developing a paradoxically transnational base of support for the deeply nativist project of Hindu supremacy.

The VHP's own literature is unambiguous about the relationship between the VHP in India and its sister organizations overseas, identifying them all as constitutive of an interconnected global network.

International work, as such, is central to the very self-conception of the VHP, which has always been imagined as a global body – as is evident in the English translation of its name, World Hindu Council. As such, the VHP's overseas work is also regularly discussed in the organization's upper-level meetings as an integral part of its functioning, and the VHP's leadership claims this work as its own. For instance, at a VHP executive meeting in August 2021, Milind Parande, the VHP's Secretary-General, noted: "At present, the VHP's work is proceeding in 29 countries, where Hindus and Hindutva is being protected and many other types of work are ongoing."⁷³

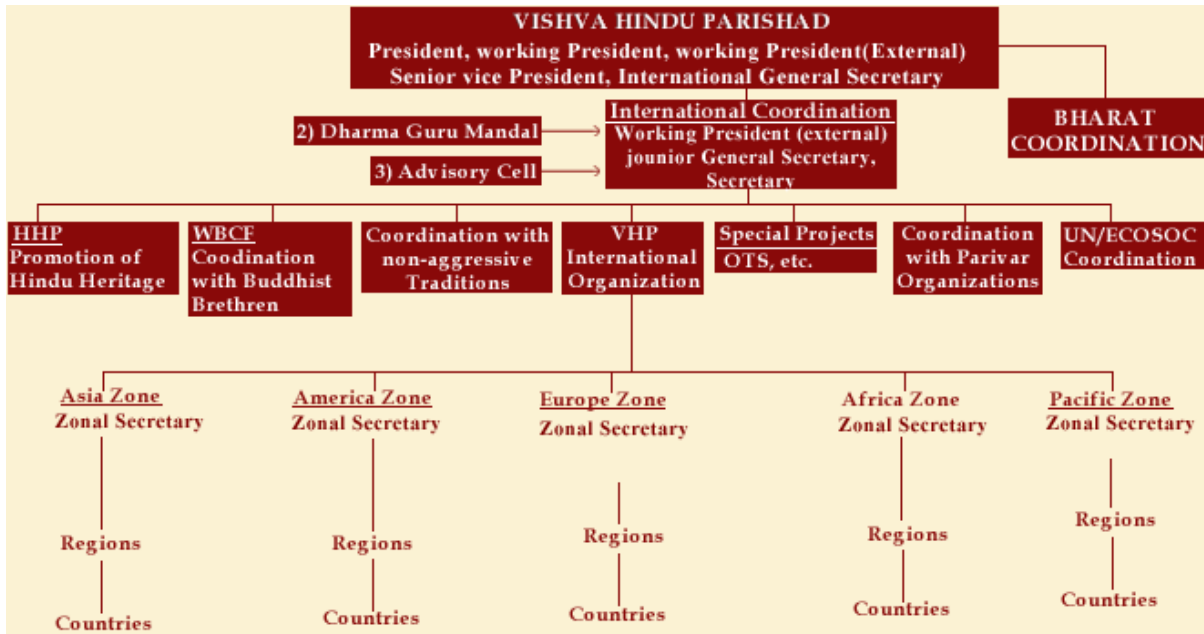


Fig 1. Self-Attested Flowchart of VHP Organization⁷⁵

Another document, now removed from the VHP website, even goes so far as to identify “VHP International Organization” on a flowchart of the VHP’s organizational structure (Fig. 1). This flowchart refers to an “International Coordination” wing split into five zones, each managed by their own “Zonal Coordinators” alongside an “International Coordination” committee. VHP texts have additionally referenced a “Consultative Committee of Vishva Hindu Parishad” set up specifically to deal with foreign affairs, as well as a committee—possibly the same as the Consultative Committee—set up to “consider various organisational matters of Vishva Hindu Parishad in respect of its functioning abroad.” In addition to VHP Joint Secretary Hari Babu Kansal, this latter committee included none other than Mahesh Mehta as one of its members.⁷⁴

According to *Vishva Hindu Parishad: Messages and Activities*, another VHP text, the “zonal coordinators” referenced in Fig.

1 “contact Vishva Hindu Parishad workers and sympathizers in all the countries in their zone and make efforts to **establish Vishva Hindu Parishad units in those countries and to get them affiliated to the Vishva Hindu Parishad in India.**”⁷⁶ These coordinators send quarterly reports to the VHP’s central office, and attend meetings of the Governing Council and Board of Trustees to ensure that “a proper liaison” exists between the work of the VHP in India and abroad.⁷⁷ Evidently, then, the link between the VHP and its overseas units – including the VHP-A – is not merely one of “shared inspiration,” but that of a **sophisticated bureaucratic apparatus spread across national boundaries.**

As we shall see in Part 3, this is perhaps most true in the case of the VHP-A, which has always been considered the VHP’s most important overseas unit.⁷⁸ VHP-A officers played leading roles in these committees for nearly five decades, **simultaneously occupying positions in both the VHP-A**

and the VHP.⁷⁹ In their writings, they similarly acknowledge that the VHP-A is indistinguishable from the VHP, and self-identify in their statements as VHP officials dispatched abroad, directed by their parent organization in India.⁸⁰ For example, in *Hindu Philosophy in Action*, Mahesh Mehta most commonly refers to the VHP-A as “the Parishad” or simply “VHP,” and their work as “**activities of the VHP in the USA** [emphasis ours].”⁸¹ Like their Indian counterparts, Mehta and his colleagues saw the VHP-A and the VHP as one, with no need for hyphenation – let alone the claim to being “legally separate and operationally independent.”⁸²

Part 3: Continued Ties

To further support the evidence presented in Parts 1 and 2, it only remains to show that this extent of overlap and coordination between the VHP and the VHP-A remains true today. This section will do so across a number of axes: the continued exchange and overlap of personnel; the ongoing co-organizing of events and programs; and the growth of significant financial connections between the two organizations.

3a VHP-A officials *continued to be drawn from a small pool of immigrants with past ties in the VHP or its sister organizations.*

In their writings, both Mahesh Mehta and Gaurang Vaishnav attest to the fact that the VHP's core cadre was built from a small pool of immigrants with similar experience in the Indian VHP or its affiliated organizations. As Mehta writes:

*"I could not resist the temptation to start a national-level organization in the United States because of my long involvement in Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and Akhil Bhartiya Vidyarthi Parishad in India. A few friends with **similar backgrounds and experience** called a meeting in New York to launch an organization to serve the needs of Hindus in America."⁸³*

Similarly, Vaishnav notes that Mehta "actively sought out NRIs, all young at that time, who had either RSS background or were infused with a desire to serve the Hindu society and their motherland."⁸⁴ Many of Mehta's contemporaries and/or immediate successors as VHP-A leaders, including

Subhash Mehta, Gaurang Vaishnav, Yash Pal Lakhra, Nand Kishore Sharma, Jyotish Parekh, Vimal Sodhani, Ram Prakash Agarwal, Girish Gandhi, Arun Kankani, Anjlee Pandya and Madhusudhan Jhaveri, all came from Sangh backgrounds, and remained closely connected to their Indian counterparts.⁸⁵ Anjlee Pandya, in fact, like Mahesh Mehta, was a key conduit between the Indian and US VHP units, as we will cover in part 3b.⁸⁶

Many of Mehta's contemporaries and/or immediate successors as VHP-A leaders... all came from Sangh backgrounds, and remained closely connected to their Indian counterparts.

But this pattern has also remained remarkably consistent well beyond the founding generation of the VHP-A. Take, for example, the VHP-A's current President, Ajay Shah,⁸⁷ who came to the US after serving in the ABVP in Mumbai,⁸⁸ an organization which he credits "for inspiring him to work on Hindu causes."⁸⁹ The ABVP, or Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad, is the student wing of the RSS, infamous for its violence on campuses against women, minorities and dissenting voices.⁹⁰

3b Key personnel have continued to simultaneously hold positions in both the VHP and the VHP-A.

Officers simultaneously occupying leadership positions in more than one organization can often be a tell-tale sign that two organizations are closely linked, or that they perhaps even constitute a single entity. This has often been the case for the VHP-A, whose members often occupied key roles in the VHP itself.

Mahesh Mehta and Anjlee Pandya, for example, remained closely tied to the VHP at the level of both their home state, Gujarat, as well as at a national level.⁹¹ (It is worth remembering that Mehta, as an RSS pracharak, had committed his life to the Sangh's cause.) Mehta, as previously mentioned, was a VHP Central Vice President and a member of its Board of Trustees.⁹² Pandya, on the other hand, worked as a VHP General Secretary, the "International Liaison and Director of International Programs and Projects for the VHP,"⁹³ as well as the Zonal Coordinator for the America Zone (one of the VHP's International Zones).⁹⁴ She often split her time between the US and India, regularly visiting the VHP's headquarters in India and taking part in the VHP's campaigns,⁹⁵ and is repeatedly referred to in Mehta's book and VHP publications as a key link between the VHP's units in both countries.⁹⁶

Both Mehta and Pandya were **also officers (President and International Coordinator, respectively) of an entity called "VHP Overseas,"** an organization incorporated in 2002 at their shared address in Needham, MA.⁹⁷ This organization was chaired by B.K. Modi, the External Vice President of the VHP,⁹⁸ who made multiple trips to the

US to coordinate activities with the VHP-A. Vimal Sodhani is listed as Treasurer, Madhusudhan Jhaveri as Zonal President, and Sharad Gandhi and Jyotish Parekh as Directors.⁹⁹ In other words, these individuals **simultaneously served as members of both the 'VHP Overseas' and the VHP-A.** During the same period, Parekh served as the VHP-A's President, Gandhi as its Vice President, Mehta the Chairman of its Advisory Board, and Jhaveri and Sodhani as members of its Governing Council.¹⁰⁰ (Notably, Madhusudhan Jhaveri and Jyotish Parekh are still members of the VHP-A's Advisory Board, while Vimal Sodhani is a member of the VHP-A's Governing Council.)¹⁰¹ When these individuals participated in or organized events in India, they often did so under the banner of "VHP Overseas."¹⁰² The term "VHP-A," therefore, was (and remains) a term whose use was restricted to an external, American audience.

The term "VHP-A," therefore, was (and remains) a term whose use was restricted to an external, American audience.

Throughout this period, both the "VHP Overseas" and the VHP-A functioned as effectively the same organization, and claimed similar activities as organizational expenses on their respective IRS 990 forms.¹⁰³ As we shall see in Part 3e, this time period also corresponded with a number of major events and activities co-organized by the VHP-A and the VHP both in India and the United States, which by then had clearly become the VHP's top outpost outside India.

These blurred – or, indeed, nonexistent – boundaries between the VHP and the

VHP-A are extensively backed up by these statements, where the two are clearly seen as one. Mehta, for example, writes in his book of the “Vishva Hindu Parishad Chapter of Washington DC,” or of the “VHP–role and future direction.”¹⁰⁴ These references provide a revealing insight into the self-conception of this organization.

3C VHP-A leaders made regular visits to India to meet with, and receive training from, their VHP counterparts in India.

Just as key VHP leaders were responsible for overseeing the work of their foreign units, they also set up a sophisticated system to allow for their foreign counterparts to meet with, and receive training from, the central command in India. The VHP’s own internal documents, for instance, clearly outline the unity of purpose underlying this work:

A number of Vishva Hindu Parishad workers and well-wishers from abroad, while on visit to New Delhi, meet Parishad’s

*Central Office-bearers. They report the progress of Vishva Hindu Parishad work in their respective countries and of the Projects, which they propose to undertake in near future.*¹⁰⁵

In addition to submitting reports at VHP headquarters, many VHP-A leaders have attended the Vishva Sangh Shibir (VSS), a once-in-five-years camp held in India specifically targeted at overseas workers of the RSS and VHP.¹⁰⁶ In the words of Walter Andersen, a scholar granted access to the RSS, and his coauthor, an RSS insider Sridhar Damle,¹⁰⁷ the training seeks to “create an international pool of potential RSS workers to be assigned anywhere in the world to spread the message of Hindutva.”¹⁰⁸ The event is (in) famously exclusive: to even attend the event, Hindu supremacist officers must complete three levels of “Sangh Shiksha Varg” training camps within the US.¹⁰⁹ Mahesh Mehta, the VHP-A’s Founder, attended multiple VSS events in his lifetime, where he often appeared as a keynote speaker.¹¹⁰ Jyotish Parekh, Yash Pal Lakhra, Mihir Meghani, Braham Aggarwal, Radheshyam Dwivedi,



Newspaper cutouts of the Vishva Sangh Shibir

Ramesh Bhutada, Vijay Pallod, Sharad Amin, Sujatha Amin, Darshan Soni, Shri Chandak, Ramesh Shah, Kokila Shah, and Arun Kankani are all long-time VHP-A leaders who have received training at the VSS.¹¹¹

Just as key VHP leaders were responsible for overseeing the work of their foreign units, they also set up a sophisticated system to allow for their foreign counterparts to meet with, and receive training from, the central command in India.

The VSS, in addition to being a key locale for training, also reveals further details about the extent of coordination between the VHP and the VHP-A. At the 1990 VSS in Bangalore, for example, Mehta gave a presentation on VHP work in America, outlining their events and activities organized alongside the VHP. In his speech, he also noted that Anjlee Pandya, the General Secretary of the VHP-A (and, simultaneously, the VHP's International Coordinator and Director of International Programs and Projects), **participated in the VHP's ongoing campaign calling for the destruction of the centuries-old Babri Masjid in Ayodhya.**¹¹² Pandya was arrested on her way to Ayodhya in October 1990, and Mehta proclaimed that "Parishad acknowledges her act of dedication and sacrifice with honor."¹¹³ The VHP's campaign eventually culminated in the razing of the mosque two years later, in 1992, which sparked deadly anti-Muslim riots that killed thousands across India.¹¹⁴ As we describe in Part 3e, many of the accused involved in the case traveled to the US a year later, in 1993, as part of a dedicated campaign on behalf of the VHP-A to rehabilitate the image of these far-right leaders (and, possibly, raise further funds).

3d The VHP-A and VHP developed close financial relationships through which the VHP-A has transferred over \$7 million to its Indian affiliates between 2001 and 2020.¹¹⁵

VHP-A documents explicitly state that the purpose of much of their fundraising is to transfer money abroad to the VHP in India.¹¹⁶ One of the main instruments used for this purpose has been the VHP-A's "Support A Child" (SAC) project, whose neutral-sounding name belies the fact that it is entirely a VHP-controlled entity. Both the VHP-A's IRS 990 forms as well as the FCRA releases of the VHP and its affiliates concur in identifying money raised from SAC as proceeding from the VHP-A to the VHP¹¹⁷; SAC has no independent legal existence of its own.¹¹⁸ In just six years between 2015 and 2020, for example, the VHP-A sent approximately \$2.5 million through this program.¹¹⁹

SAC Annual Reports, moreover, often begin with a note of introduction from a VHP executive, and clearly identify the funds raised in the United States as supporting a series of projects executed in India by its parent organization, the VHP. SAC's 2019 Annual Report, for instance, includes a message from Nand Lal Lohia, the VHP's All India Secretary for Seva [Service], in which he writes that through the SAC program, "VHP-A is helping VHP Bharat [India] to serve these children more effectively."¹²⁰ In fact, the reports even explicitly mention that "VHP Bharat has made a considered decision" to ensure that "we shall support only VHP-affiliated organizations and trusts."¹²¹ A major beneficiary of these funds is Bharat Kalyan Pratishtan (BKP), a VHP-run organization that SAC describes as a "partner" organization; through the VHP and



The VHP-A has transferred over \$7 million to VHP and its affiliates between 2001 and 2020

BKP, the VHP-A has boasted of the “presence of SAC Supported Hostels in all the states of Bharat.”¹²²

That the VHP-A raises funds for the VHP is also clear in other pieces of evidence. As we noted in our previous report, individual VHP-A members like Sachin Chitlangia – a close affiliate of BJP leader Kapil Mishra – transferred over \$115,000 through a series of fundraisers in the aftermath of the Delhi riots; although its final recipients were not named, these included VHP-led initiatives such as the new Ram temple.¹²³ Similarly, fundraising drives have been major parts of many trips made by high-level VHP leaders to the United States,¹²⁴ while Facebook fundraisers in the United States held for the VHP are channeled through the VHP-A, and show clear evidence of a directive role from India, with VHP-A leaders describing themselves waiting for instructions from India.¹²⁵

3e VHP officials from India have continued to attend regular meetings and conferences of the VHP-A in the United States, with the two entities’ leaders appearing together under one banner.

As previously outlined in this report, VHP literature has extensively documented the important role played by major VHP leaders in traveling abroad to set up its overseas units, beginning with the role played by S.S. Apte in establishing the VHP-A in

...on almost an annual basis, the VHP-A and VHP have co-organized events where the two organizations’ leaders appear together, often under one banner.

1970–71. However, this was hardly a singular occurrence; **on the contrary, VHP leaders have regularly traveled to the United States**, speaking at events, visiting VHP-A leaders, and attending the VHP-A’s gatherings, including their annual Governing Council meeting.¹²⁶ These visits were not random or spontaneous, but involved individuals specifically designated to coordinate the activities of the VHP’s foreign units with their parent branch in India. In fact, on almost an annual basis, the VHP-A and VHP have co-organized events where the two organizations’ leaders appear together, often under one banner.

1970s and 1980s

S.S. Apte did not merely travel to establish the VHP-A in 1970–71, but also returned on multiple occasions that decade. **In 1975, for example, he is pictured attending a VHP-A Governing Council meeting in Washington, D.C.**¹²⁷ In and around the 1980s, these trips were taken by a whole constellation of VHP leaders: Harmohan Lal, the VHP Secretary General; Swami Chinmayananda, a co-founder of the VHP; Rajendra Singh, the RSS General Secretary (and later Sarsanghchalak); Swami Tilak, a religious leader affiliated with the VHP and a former editor of the affiliated mouthpiece “Panchjanya”; H.V. Seshadri, Rajender Singh’s successor as RSS General Secretary; Karan Singh, a VHP President; Bhagwat Singh Mewar, also a VHP President; Laxmanrao Bhide, the RSS Vishwa Vibhag Pracharak; Samsher Singh, a VHP Sikh leader; Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the BJP President; and

K.S. Sudarshan, the RSS General Secretary (and later Sarsanghchalak). Most of these leaders made recurring visits, and all are mentioned in VHP-A publications as speakers at VHP-A-organized conferences and as attendees at VHP-A meetings.¹²⁸ (By the mid-1970s, the VHP-A had begun organizing their annual Governing Council meetings on the sidelines of a public-facing “Annual National Conference” or “Hindu Conference.” VHP leaders from India were regular participants at these events, both as keynote speakers for the public event as well as participants at internal strategy meetings held by the VHP-A’s Governing Council.¹²⁹)

Major leaders from India have also been described as attending regional conferences and youth camps organized by the VHP-A. For example, Laxmanrao Bhide traveled to the US in both 1986 and 1987, and addressed the VHP-A’s Youth Camp in Camp Hill, PA.¹³⁰ Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the leader of the BJP, visited



A poster that says “Lest we forget the Babri Masjid demolition in Ayodhya.” Source: Kandukuru Nagarjun

Major leaders from India have also been described as attending regional conferences and youth camps organized by the VHP-A.

the same year, and spoke at the New England Hindu Conference on June 27, 1987.¹³¹ The 1989 Hindu Unity Day celebrations were held to mark the 100th birthday of Keshav Baliram Hedgewar, the founder and first Sarsanghchalak of the RSS. K.S. Sudarshan, the organization's then General Secretary, was the chief guest at the final program in Newington, CT.¹³²

1990s and 2000s

The same trends continued in the 1990s and 2000s, up to the present day. While it is beyond the scope of this report to list every visit made by a VHP leader to the United States, the role of the VHP-A in the aftermath of the demolition of the Babri Masjid is worth reiterating here, and speaks to some unmistakable patterns. The VHP-A's Global Vision 2000 Conference, organized in Washington, DC, in 1993, just months after the Babri Masjid was razed to the ground by a VHP-led mob, occurred in the face of strong public pressure against the VHP for its role in the demolition and the violence that followed. Nevertheless, the VHP-A was able to invite a laundry list of VHP and Sangh officials to the event: RSS Pracharak Dattopant Thengadi, VHP Trustee Rajmata Vijay Raje Scindia; BJP MP Uma Bharati, RSS Pracharak P Parmeshwaran; RSS Secretary General K.S. Sudarshan, VHP President Vishnu Hari Dalmia, BJP President Murli Manohar Joshi—and, perhaps most notably, Narendra Modi, India's current Prime Minister, who was then an RSS pracharak

and BJP General Secretary.¹³³ At the event, these leaders were given the opportunity to celebrate their violent campaign on the global stage.

In 1998, after the BJP came to power in India, VHP and VHP-A collaborations reached a zenith. In consecutive years, the VHP-A held two Dharma Sansads, or Religious Parliaments, in the US, hosting over two dozen religious leaders handpicked by the VHP.¹³⁴ The second event was followed by the Dharma Prasar Yatra, which saw over half-dozen VHP leaders fly across the US on a chartered plane. As Mahesh Mehta describes in his book, this was an event ostensibly hosted by the VHP-A, but was in fact conceived by B.K. Modi, the President-External of the VHP.¹³⁵ A second edition of the Dharma Prasar Yatra was held in 2001, and was also planned jointly by an International Coordination Committee involving members of both the VHP and the VHP-A that met in Karnavati, Gujarat.¹³⁶ In the same year, the VHP-A also grew heavily involved in the VHP's work in Gujarat, sending Jyotish Parekh, Mahesh Mehta and Anjee Pandya to India along with close to half a million dollars the VHP-A had raised for the VHP.¹³⁷ A year later, the same VHP organized militias that went on a spree of devastating violence, killing nearly 2,000 Muslims in the Gujarat pogroms, in which a UK government report later concluded that "the VHP and its allies acted with the support of the state Government."¹³⁸

A year later, the same VHP organized militias that went on a spree of devastating violence, killing nearly 2,000 Muslims in the Gujarat pogroms...

Recent Years

In more recent years, Ashok Singhal, the former International Working President of the VHP¹³⁹; Swami Vigyananand, the Joint General Secretary of the VHP¹⁴⁰; and Ashok Chowgule, the VHP's External President and former President,¹⁴¹ have all made repeated visits to coordinate and supervise the work of the VHP-A. Champat Rai Bansal, the VHP's International Secretary General¹⁴²; and Prashant Hartalkar, the VHP's Central Secretary for International Coordination¹⁴³ have also made visits to the US,¹⁴⁴ as has Sadhvi Rithambara, a senior VHP leader accused of leading the demolition of the Babri Masjid in 1992.¹⁴⁵ Rithambara, in fact, has visited the US on numerous occasions, and has established American chapters of her own organization, Param Shakti Peeth.¹⁴⁶

The VHP/VHP-A's own descriptions of these visits makes clear their importance in coordination. Take, for example, a series of visits by Ashok Chowgule in both 2012 and 2013, where Chowgule toured the United States and met officers from different local VHP-A chapters.¹⁴⁷ These visits were clearly organized as coordination meetings, with local chapters offering updates to Chowgule, who in turn presented on the VHP's coordinating efforts. As a local VHP-A chapter report describes:

*During the meet & greet event held at Missouri city, he [Chowgule] informed audience on history of VHP and its mission and vision... He also gave an overview of VHP international co-ordination activities like facilitating conferences in Asia Pacific countries, formation of new VHP units in areas of Hindu presence, providing logistics and intellectual support to world wide Hindu organizations...*¹⁴⁸

Similarly, the VHP-A's closeness to Ashok Singhal, who was the VHP's International President for two decades between 1991 and 2011,¹⁴⁹ has been documented in detail by their publications. Singhal made documented visits to the US in 1993,¹⁵⁰ 1998,¹⁵¹ 1999, 2000,¹⁵² 2002/2003,¹⁵³ 2012,¹⁵⁴ and 2015,¹⁵⁵ playing key roles in organizing or speaking at many of the VHP-A's most high-profile events in these years. On Singhal's death in 2015, the VHP-A published an obituary in his honor, describing him as a "friend and a companion in the journey of VHP of America since the mid-80s," and held joint events with the VHP in India to commemorate his death.¹⁵⁶

Singhal's relationship with the VHP-A has cemented the mutual involvement of the VHP and the VHP-A in the other's work. Even events with no significant international component continue to see the heavy involvement of VHP leaders. Take, for example, a 2015 Hindu Awareness Yatra organized by the VHP-A, for which former VHP International Working President Ashok Singhal, VHP Secretary General Champat Rai Bansal, and VHP Central Secretary Prashant Hartalkar traveled to the US,¹⁵⁷ or the participation of VHP leaders like Swami Vigyananand in various iterations of the VHP-A's Hindu Mandir Executive Conference, held almost every year since 2006.¹⁵⁸

Vigyananand has also organized the World Hindu Economic Forum, an event hosted by the VHP-A in 2016, as well as the World Hindu Congress, a quadrennial event co-organized by the VHP and its global affiliates.¹⁵⁹ While VHP-A leaders traveled to attend the 2014 World Hindu Congress in New Delhi, the 2018 event was hosted by the VHP-A in Chicago, and saw a constellation of VHP and Sangh members present,

including none other than Mohan Bhagwat, the Sarsanghchalak (Supreme Leader) of the RSS.¹⁶⁰ More recently, VHP leaders have participated in and spoken at VHP-A events, including the Hindu Heritage Month, organized in October 2021, which featured VHP President Ashok Chowgule as the keynote speaker.¹⁶¹ The 2022 version of the same event featured RSS General Secretary Dattatreya Hosabale inaugurating the event as a Chief Guest and keynote speaker.¹⁶²

A few months later, in April 2023, the VHP-A even worked alongside the VHP to co-host an event in India. Titled “Understanding Hindudvesha in the Globalizing World,” the event included Jai Bansal, the VHP-A Vice President of Education, alongside a range of Indian far-right leaders including Kapil Khanna, the President of VHP Delhi.¹⁶³

In November 2023, the global Hindu supremacist movement convened again at Bangkok for another edition of the World Hindu Congress, which continues to be led by VHP General Secretary Vigyananand. The event, as always, featured some of the most powerful men in the RSS, including Bhagwat, Hosabale and Suresh Soni, as well as Sangh leaders from across the diaspora, including the likes of David Frawley, Sohini Sircar, Prakasarao Velagapudi and Saumitra Gokhale from the US.¹⁶⁴ VHP affiliates from across the world, including Abhaya Asthana of the VHP-A, also attended.¹⁶⁵

In December 2023, the VHP-A’s “Hindu Mandir Empowerment Council” announced a campaign to celebrate the consecration of the Ram Mandir, a large temple built on the site where VHP members and other Hindu militants demolished the Babri Masjid. This is a major plank of the BJP’s ongoing election campaign in India.¹⁶⁶ The celebration was

held in direct partnership with both the VHP in India¹⁶⁷ and the Shree Ram Janma Bhumi Teerth Kshetra Trust that the VHP operates.¹⁶⁸ On the website hosted by the VHP-A for the campaign, titled RamMandir2024.org, the VHP-A again explicitly attests to its ties to the VHP, writing: “Vishwa Hindu Parishad of America is the oldest organization aside from VHP Bharat and as a sister organization, it is our distinct honor to help make this the grandest celebration in North America.”¹⁶⁹ The website has congratulatory messages from RSS Sarsanghchalak Mohan Bhagwat¹⁷⁰ and VHP Joint General Secretary Swami Vigyananand,¹⁷¹ and a donation link on the website allows users to donate to the VHP-run trust through the VHP-A¹⁷², alongside other categories such as “SEVA in Bharat.”¹⁷³ As a part of this celebration, moreover, the VHP-A is now conducting a “Rath Yatra” or “chariot march” across the US,¹⁷⁴ celebrating the construction of the temple in consort with the VHP’s campaign in India.¹⁷⁵

The irony is striking: in 2024, even as the VHP claims to be not just “legally separate” but “operationally independent” of the VHP,¹⁷⁶ it simultaneously identifies as a “sister organization” of the VHP, joins the VHP in its campaigns and celebrations, and directly routes money to the VHP.

Conclusion

In this report, we have interrogated the VHP-A's claims to independence from the VHP – not merely at the level of a narrow legal technicality, or at the level of the organizations' shared names and logos, but at a more substantive level that engages the question of how the Sangh, and the VHP in particular, organizes transnationally. In the process, we have demonstrated, backed by irrefutable evidence sourced from the VHP/VHP-A's own documents, that the VHP-A was founded by the VHP, remains tied by shared personnel, financial connections and a sophisticated bureaucratic infrastructure, and that the two organizations continue to coordinate closely with each other. The weight of this information, coupled with the language used by the VHP/VHP-A's own texts, where the two organizations are often described as one, leaves us to conclude that **the VHP-A must be considered an inseparable part of the VHP's global network.**

The implications of these findings are stark. The Global VHP is just one example among dozens of other constituent parts of the broader Sangh network. Not only do similar relationships exist among other Sangh organizations and their overseas wings – say, the RSS and HSS, or the BJP and OFBJP¹⁷⁷ – but in horizontal ways too. For example, the relationship between the VHP and the BJP¹⁷⁸ can be considered analogous to that between the VHP-A and OFBJP,¹⁷⁹ the latter of whom was forced to register as a Foreign Agent in the US in 2020.¹⁸⁰ The dense relationships between these organizations throw into question whether a similar designation would indeed be appropriate for

a wider range of organizations.

Regardless, for civil society actors, the learning is simple: we must take seriously the significant global presence of the Hindu supremacist network, and the extent of its organizational coordination across borders. **The entire Global VHP, including its US wing, must be held accountable for its violent and supremacist actions worldwide.**

This applies in the other direction too. The transnational implications of Hindu supremacy and its effects on communities and political systems across the world continue to grow, and yet the nature of these movements remain only superficially understood. Media attention might only respond to the most sensational acts of violence or displays of hatred, like the 2022 violence in Leicester, United Kingdom¹⁸¹ or the bulldozer parade in Edison, New Jersey that same year,¹⁸² but the longer arc of the emergence of Hindu supremacist politics in those locations is seldom interrogated. Deepening this understanding requires a more informed historical and critical analysis of both the ideological tenets of Hindu supremacy and the organizational strategies that advance them. We hope this report helps extend this critical work.

Appendix A: VHP-A Leaders with VHP/Sangh Ties

All names in Appendices A and B are excerpted from the Sangh's own documents and sources.

1. Mahesh Mehta

Self-attested links to RSS and ABVP, including personal connections with, and inspiration from, Golwalkar, Laxmanrao Imamdar, Laxmanrao Bhide, S.S. Apte, Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, etc. Was the head of ABVP Gujarat and an RSS pracharak. Attended (and spoke at) the Vishwa Sangh Shibir in 1990. Also held the position of VHP Overseas Vice-Chairman. Within the United States, he is considered the father of the Hindu supremacist network. Mehta was an RSS member since he was 10, became a full-time RSS worker, and was instructed to build the VHP in America. Mehta served as VHP-A's President for multiple terms and remained Chairman of its Advisory Board until he died in 2021. He simultaneously served as the Vice President and a member of the Board of Trustees of VHP, and co-founded numerous other Hindu supremacist organizations in the US, including the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (HSS), the American wing of RSS; and the Overseas Friends of BJP, the registered foreign agent of BJP in the US, where he served on its national executive council. *Hindu Philosophy in Action / Multiple pages*

2. Anjlee Pandya

Served as General Secretary of the VHP-A, started out as a full-time unpaid volunteer. "Spearheaded VHP-A's major conferences in 1984 and 1993; Dharma Samsads; Dharma Prasaar Yatra; hosting 100 Hindu saints and dignitaries for the United Nations' Millennium Peace Summit; several Hindu Mandir

Executives' Conferences (HMEC)" *VHP-A obituary, Hindu Vishwa / Multiple pages*

International Liaison and Director of International Programs and Projects for VHP. Worked full time beginning in the Emergency and is listed throughout the book as a key link between the VHP and VHP-A. Arrested for her role in the campaign to tear down the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya. *Hindu Philosophy in Action / Multiple pages*

3. Jyotish Parekh

Traveled to Lodai, Gujarat in 2001 for the VHP-A's Rekindle Hope project *Hindu Philosophy in Action / 16*

Attended Vishwa Sangh Shibir in 2006 in Ahmedabad headed by RSS <https://www.harekrsna.com/sun/news/01-06/news313.htm>

4. Abhaya Asthana

Convened the 2018 World Hindu Congress in Chicago, and traveled to Bangkok in November 2023 for the 2023 World Hindu Congress <https://events.worldhinducongress.org/WHC2023#/speakers?lang=en>, <https://www.worldhinducongress.org/blogs/post/lokvanitalks-to-sanjay-kaul-and-abhaya-asthana-about-whc-2018>

5. Renu Gupta

Traveled to various hostels, schools in India from 2012 (met a VHP volunteer in Kochi, met Shri Ramnath ji, RSS pracharak from UP in 2019 <https://www.supportachildusa.org/wp-content/>

[uploads/2021/02/SACAnnual_Report2018_19.pdf](https://www.supportachildusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/SACAnnual_Report2018_19.pdf)
/ 10

Visited school in Coimbatore run by the VHP TN wing under “Samarpan Seva Sansthan” Trust, where she meets Sudhakarji, a Pracharak of the RSS

https://www.supportachildusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/SACAnnual_Report2019_20.pdf
/ 12

6. Chandrakant Bhatia

Visited school in Uttarakhand and met with Sadhwiji, Nandlalji and Mamtaji (likely VHP or RSS personnel)

https://www.supportachildusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/SACAnnual_Report2019_20.pdf
/ 11

7. Jayant Daftardar

Paid tribute to Ashok Singhal at a memorial in Atlanta

<https://nripulse.com/glowing-tributes-paid-to-vhp-leader-ashok-singhal-at-chinmaya-mission-atlanta/>

Writes that “BKP is our main partner which runs several hostels in cities as well as in remote villages and tribal regions of India ... BKP, a project of VHP, with the help of about 200 associated organizations or trusts all over Bharat”

https://www.supportachildusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/SACAnnual_Report2020_21.pdf
/ 9

8. Arun Kankani

Attended a Vishwa Sangh Shibir from Dec. 29, 2010 to January 3, 2011 organized by the RSS

<https://india-herald.com/summit-of-global-hindus-fifth-vishwa-sangh-shibir-p2495-1.htm> / 1

“A Rajasthani Swayamsevak, Arun Kankani rang me up in my office.”; “Arun was a Bal swayamsevak. He used to conduct the shakha very competently.”

<https://hindupact.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Manu-Sangh-and-I.pdf> / Ch 5,
Pg 3

9. Gaurang Vaishnav

Describes being guided by RSS and VHP volunteers while on the campaign trail for Modi

<https://vicharak1.wordpress.com/2014/04/30/history-in-the-making-on-the-campaign-trail-from-usa-to-india-6/> / Pg 1

“as you know I have held positions where I have come in close contact of the thought leaders of VHP (Bharat), RSS and BJP.”
<https://vicharak1.wordpress.com/2020/10/01/why-i-will-vote-for-the-democratic-slate-this-election-by-gaurang-g-vaishnav-part-2-of-4/> / Pg 1

Hosted by Sadhvi Pragya Singh Thakur, who stands accused in the 2008 Malegaon bombings, while campaigning for Modi. “I conveyed to her that hundreds of volunteers from across the globe were working for her victory.”

<https://vicharak1.wordpress.com/2019/05/11/on-the-campaign-trail-10-may-6-7-8-and-9-bhopal-mp-sadhvi-pragya-sinh-thakurs-constituency/>

Describes meeting Modi a few times between 1975 and 2008, sometimes through RSS connections.

<https://www.worldhindunews.com/welcome-hon-prime-minister-gaurang-vaishnav-national-convener-global-indians-for-bharat-vikas/> / Full document

10. Girish Gandhi

“Modi came to our home in Salem, New Hampshire”; later describes spending time with “Manya Ashok Ji” (likely Ashok Singhal, VHP chief) “under whose guidance I have learnt a lot and implemented volunteering service to Bharat as well as United States”
<https://www.vhp-america.org/video/girish-gandhi/>
/ 2:31

Described working on VHP projects in India.
<https://docplayer.net/52200410-Vishwa-hindu-parishad-world-hindu-council-of-america-inc-volume-xxxix-no-2-april-june-2010.html>

Spoke and presented alongside Dr Mohanrao Bhagwat from the RSS at a function organized by Rashtriya Patrakarita Kalyan Nyas. Attended by RSS Spokesman M.G. Vaidya
<https://samvada.org/2012/news/sarasanghachalak-mohan-bhagwat-appeals-to-journalists-spread-positive-values/>

11. Pranjivan Patel

Short Press Trust of India obituary announcing his death in New Jersey at 76 in 2001 calls him the co-founder of VHP America
<https://www.tribuneindia.com/2001/20010520/world.htm>

12. Shyam Tiwari

Mentions in Hindu Vishwa's tribute to Anjlee Pandya that he met her first during the World Vision conference in Atlanta (1991–92)
<https://www.hinduviswa.org/home/anjeeben-championed-the-cause-of-networking-hindus-worldwide>

Longtime spokesperson for the VHP-A; on one occasion, he argued that "There is no connection to the VHP except in name. We are totally separate."
https://inthesetimes.com/issue/27/04/feature2_side2.shtml

13. Yashpal Lakhra

Keynote speaker for the HSS's New York celebrations of Hindu Unity day during his tenure as VHP-A president (1991-1995)
<http://www.hvk.org/1997/0297/0165.html>

14. Kanchan Bannerjee

This article describes how Bannerjee co-founded the Hindu Students Council (HSC) with help from the VHP while a student at

Boston University.
<https://www.hinduismtoday.com/magazine/october-1997/1997-10-searching-for-our-roots/>

Attended and presented at Dharma Summit in 2005 along with Sri Sudharsan, head of the RSS, and other Sangh affiliates
<https://www.hinduismtoday.com/magazine/january-february-march-2006/2006-01-summit-ponders-next-generation/>

15. Subhash Mehta

"VHP-A was founded on October 19th 1970 and incorporated in the state of New York on May 16, 1974 by Dr. Mahesh Mehta, Shri Pranjivan Patel, Shri Subhash Mehta, Shri Arvind Sant and Shri M P Srinivasan."
<https://vhpachicago.org/portal/2016/01/16/vhpa-faq/>

Retells how many RSS bigwigs, including Narendra Modi, Keshavrao Deshmukh, and Laxmanrao Imamdar were invited to dinner at Subhash Mehta's house
Arvind Chaturvedi, The Real Modi: The Man Who Would be Prime Minister, Bloomsbury Publishing, Aug 28, 2020 / End of Chapter 16

16. Srinivas Bolisetty

Listed as a contact for the Raleigh/Durham chapter of the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (HSS)
<http://hsctruthout.stopfundinghate.org/Report/ch2.html#f38>

17. Sukdev Soni

VHP-A President in 1975. Pictured with Mahesh Mehta and S.S. Apte at a DC meeting
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 4

18. G.V. Chelvapilla

First VHP-A President
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 5

19. B.D. Raheja

Hosted the 1972 Conference in Chicago.
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 5

20. Arvind Sant, Pranjivan Patel, M.P. Srinivasan, Subhash Mehta

Signed the VHP-A's Charter of Incorporation
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 5

21. Deendayal Khandelwal

In charge of establishing Hindu University of America
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 7

22. Subhash Mehta

VHP-A Organizing Secretary. Coordinated the 1989 Hindu Unity Day celebrations
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 8

23. Jyotish Parekh

Was VHP-A treasurer in 1993 during the GV2000 event. Is now President at the time of writing (2003). Was also President as of June 2000 (see p. 238)
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 9

24. Ajay Shah

Founded AHAD
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 10

25. Nand Kishore Sharma, Brij Bhushan Garg

Key in setting up youth camps
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 10

26. Kanchan Bannerjee

Co-founder of Hindu Students Council
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 11

27. Harish Pandya

Set up Sanskar Bharati, an audio-visual center
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 13

28. Ramesh Patel, Yogesh Naik

Led Seva activities

Hindu Philosophy in Action / 14

29. Sushim Mukherjee

Led SAC for 12 years
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 15

30. Basant Tariyal, Veena Gandhi, Yash Pal Lakhra, Ramesh Shah

Co-founded Ekal Vidyalaya Foundation USA. Mehta: "VHP-A has spared four very dynamic leaders, Dr. Basant Tariyal, Dr. Veena Gandhi, Dr. Yash Pal Lakhra, Shri Ramesh Shah to make this institution successful."
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 16

31. Jyotish Parekh

Pictured in Lodai in 2001 alongside Tarachand Chheda, BJP MLA in Gujarat; Jaydeepbhai Patel, Jt. Gen. Sec. of VHP Gujarat; Anjlee Pandya; and Mahesh Mehta, Vice-Chairman of VHP Overseas. Was VHP-A President at the time
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 16

32. Gaurang Vaishnav

Edited "Hindu Vishwa" for two decades
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 17

33. Hemendra Acharya

Took over editing "Hindu Vishwa" from Gaurang Vaishnav
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 17

34. Dayananda Saraswati

Hosted the first Dharma Sansad in Arsha Vidya Gurukulam, PA. 28 gurus attended, Dayananda pitched the VHP-A and efforts at networking temples began
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 17

35. N.K. Gupta, Ajeet Barshikar

Participated in the Dharma Prasaar Yatra, 1999

Hindu Philosophy in Action / 20

36. Madhusudhan Jhaveri

VHP-A Vice President, pictured with Har Mohan Lall, VHP Secretary General; Ram Prakash Agarwal, VHP-A President; H.V. Seshadri, RSS Secretary General; Mahesh Mehta, VHP-A Founder and General Secretary at the 10th Hindu Conference in NY in 1984
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 79

37. Ram Prakash Agarwal

VHPA President, pictured with Har Mohan Lall, VHP Sec Gen; H.V. Seshadri, RSS Sec Gen; Mahesh Mehta, VHPA Founder Gen Sec; Madhusudan Jhaveri, VHPA VP; at the 10th Hindu Conference in NY in 1984
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 79

38. Yash Pal Lakhra

Succeeded Mahesh Mehta as President in 1995. Mehta had been President since the 1989 Houston meeting, and General Secretary from 1971 to 1989
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 107

39. Nand Kishore Sharma

Pictured at the New England Hindu Conference in Boston in June 1987 with Sardar Samsher Singh, Sikh Sangat, India; Swami Jyotirmayananda, Founder President, International Yoga Research Foundation, Miami, USA; C.B.S. Patel, VHP-A Vice President; A.B. Vajpayee, BJP President; Swami Satchidananda, Yogaville, VA; Swami Vishwa Vijay Tirth. Was President at the time.
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 132

40. C.B.S. Patel

Pictured at the New England Hindu Conference in Boston in June 1987 with Sardar Samsher Singh, Sikh Sangat, India; Swami Jyotirmayananda, Founder President, International Yoga Research Foundation,

Miami, USA; Nand Kishore Sharma, VHP-A President; A.B. Vajpayee, BJP President; Swami Satchidananda, Yogaville, VA; Swami Vishwa Vijay Tirth. Was Vice President at the time.

Hindu Philosophy in Action / 132

41. Jitendra Sukhadia

Pictured among a laundry list of Sangh bigwigs at the UN Summit in 2000. Was New York Chapter president then
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 170

42. Rakesh Popli, Subhash Mehta, Parmeshwar Rao

Mentioned as key figures in Friends of India Society International (FISI), Indians for Democracy (IFD) and India Development Service (IDS), all established by the Sangh around the Emergency.
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 326

43. Sharad and Girish Gandhi

August 2000, New York. Managed Phase 1, Arrangements for the UN Summit
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 239

44. Vimal Sodhani and Ramesh Patel

August 2000, New York. Managed Phase 2, Dharma Prasaar Yatra, for the UN Summit.
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 239

45. Mukund Mody and Ila Sukhadia

August 2000, New York. Managed Phase 3 of the UN Summit, public reception of A.B. Vajpayee and the Dharma Gurus
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 239

Appendix B: VHP or Sangh Leaders with US Connections, as described in Mahesh Mehta's *Hindu Philosophy in Action* (i.e., between 1970 and 2001)

All names in Appendices A and B are excerpted from the Sangh's own documents and sources.

- 1. Kushaubhau Thakre - RSS, Past BJP President 1970:** Gave a speech with 150 people in audience. New York City (NYC)
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 3
- 2. S.S. Apte - VHP Founder, Gen Sec 1971:** Traveled to twenty-one countries to "build the edifice of the Vishva Hindu Parishad abroad," according to this VHP text. Multiple locations
The Hindu Awakening : Retrospect and Promise (New Delhi : Vishva Hindu Parishad , n.d.) / 32
- 3. S.S. Apte - VHP Founder, Gen Sec 1971:** Mehta writes: "He visited the USA in 1970 and provided necessary stimulus through his visionary exposition of the role of Parishad work outside of India." Unspecified place
Hindu Philosophy in Action / IV, 3
- 4. S.S. Apte - VHP Founder, Gen Sec 1975:** Attended a VHP-A meeting in DC. Pictured alongside Mahesh Mehta and Sukhdev Soni. Was with Mahesh Mehta the day the Emergency was announced (June 25) for the Washington, D.C. meeting. Washington, D.C.
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 4
- 5. Swami Tilak - VHPA Guide, Former Editor of Panchjanya 1975:** Met Mahesh Mehta. Boston
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 183
- 6. Harmohan Lal - VHP Secretary General 1980:** Pictured with Mahesh Mehta and the Dalai Lama. NYC
Hindu Philosophy in Action 106
- 7. Swami Chinmayananda - VHP Co-Founder 1982:** Attended and spoke at the VHPA's Governing Council Meeting. Needham, MA
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 73
- 8. Raju Bhaiyya - RSS General Secretary 1982:** Keynote speaker at the VHP-A's Ninth Hindu Conference. Los Angeles
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 70
- 9. Raju Bhaiyya - RSS General Secretary 1982:** Attended and spoke at the VHPA's Governing Council Meeting. Needham, MA
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 73
- 10. Swami Tilak - VHPA Guide, Former Editor of Panchjanya 1982:** Spoke at the Los Angeles Conference. Los Angeles
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 185
- 11. Swami Tilak - VHPA Guide, Former Editor of Panchjanya 1983:** Spoke at the 1983 Youth Camp. Unspecified
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 187
- 12. H.V. Seshadri - RSS General Secretary 1984:** Spoke at the VHP-A's 10th Conference in Madison Square Garden (MSG). Madison Square Garden, NYC
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 7
- 13. Swami Chinmayananda - VHP Co-Founder 1984:** Spoke at the VHPA's 10th Conference in MSG. Madison Square Garden, NYC
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 7

14. Karan Singh - VHP President 1984: Spoke at the VHPA's 10th Conference in MSG. Madison Square Garden, NYC
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 7

15. Bhagwat Singh - President, VHP Mewar 1984: Spoke at the VHPA's 10th Conference in MSG. Madison Square Garden, NYC
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 8

16. Bhagwat Singh - President, VHP Mewar 1984: Pictured with the VHPA Governing Council. Unspecified
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 20

17. Harmohan Lal - VHP Secretary General 1984: Pictured with the VHPA Governing Council. Unspecified
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 20

18. Harmohan Lal - VHP Secretary General 1984: At the 10th Hindu Conference in NYC. NYC
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 79

19. Laxmanrao Bhide - RSS Vishwa Vibhag Pracharak 1986: Met with Mahesh Mehta. Unspecified
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 184

20. Samsher Singh - Sikh Sangat 1986: Visited Mahesh Mehta. Boston
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 132

21. Laxmanrao Bhide - RSS Vishwa Vibhag Pracharak 1987: Addressed a Youth Conference. Camp Hill, PA
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 13

22. Samsher Singh - Sikh Sangat 1987: Spoke at the New England Hindu Conference on June 27, 1987. Boston
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 132

23. Atal Bihari Vajpayee - BJP President 1987: Spoke at the New England Hindu Conference on June 27, 1987. Boston
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 132

24. Swami Vishwa Vijay Tirth 1987: Spoke at the New England Hindu Conference on June 27, 1987. Boston
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 132

25. K.S. Sudarshan - RSS General Secretary (later Sarsanghchalak) 1989: Keynote speaker at the concluding function of Hindu Unity Day 1989, celebrated on the Birth Centenary of Hedgewar. Newington, CT
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 9

26. Shyam Gupta - RSS Pracharak, Friends of Tribals' Society Founder 1989: Traveled across the US to pitch the One-Teacher-School idea to VHP-A members across the country. Led to the founding of Ekal Vidyalaya Foundation of America. 30+ locations
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 15

27. Murli Manohar Joshi - BJP Leader 1993: Gave the keynote address at the Global Vision 2000 Conference, held to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Swami Vivekananda's Chicago Speech, and post-Babri Masjid demolition. Washington, D.C.
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 206

28. Multiple - Multiple 1993: Spoke at the Global Vision 2000 Conference, held to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Swami Vivekananda's Chicago Speech. Also held post-RJB demolition. Washington, D.C.
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 206

29. Badri Prasad Toshniwal - VHP Vice President 1993: Spoke at the Global Vision 2000 Conference, held to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Swami Vivekananda's Chicago Speech. Also held post-RJB demolition Washington, D.C.
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 206

30. Dattopant Thengadi - RSS Pracharak, BMS Founder 1993: Attended/spoke at the Global Vision 2000 Conference, held to

celebrate the 100th anniversary of Swami Vivekananda's Chicago Speech. Also held post-RJB demolition. Washington, D.C.
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 210

31. Rajmata Vijay Raje Scindia - VHP Trustee

1993: Attended/spoke at the Global Vision 2000 Conference, held to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Swami Vivekananda's Chicago Speech. Also held post-RJB demolition Washington, D.C.

Hindu Philosophy in Action / 210

32. Uma Bharati - BJP MP 1993: Attended/spoke at the Global Vision 2000 Conference, held to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Swami Vivekananda's Chicago Speech. Also held post-RJB demolition. Washington, D.C.

Hindu Philosophy in Action / 210

33. K.S. Sudarshan - RSS Secretary General

1993: Attended/spoke at the Global Vision 2000 Conference, held to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Swami Vivekananda's Chicago Speech. Also held post-RJB demolition Washington, D.C.

Hindu Philosophy in Action / 210

34. P. Parameshwaran - RSS Pracharak, President of Vivekananda Kendra 1993:

Attended/spoke at the Global Vision 2000 Conference, held to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Swami Vivekananda's Chicago Speech. Also held post-RJB demolition Washington, D.C.

Hindu Philosophy in Action / 210

35. Narendra Modi - BJP Gen Sec 1993:

Attended/spoke at the Global Vision 2000 Conference, held to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Swami Vivekananda's Chicago Speech. Also held post-RJB demolition. Washington, D.C.

Hindu Philosophy in Action / 215

36. Vishnu Hari Dalmia - VHP President

1993: Attended/spoke at the Global Vision

2000 Conference, held to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Swami Vivekananda's Chicago Speech. Also held post-RJB demolition. Washington, D.C.

Hindu Philosophy in Action / 215

37. B.K. Modi - VHP President-External

1999: Ideated and participated in the Dharma Prasar Yatra in 1999. New York, Washington DC, Houston, Boston, Atlanta, Chicago, Detroit, Edison, Cherry Hill, Harrisburg

Hindu Philosophy in Action / 19-20

38. Multiple - Multiple 1999: Participated in the 1999 Dharma Prasar Yatra. New York, Washington DC, Houston, Boston, Atlanta, Chicago, Detroit, Edison, Cherry Hill, Harrisburg

Hindu Philosophy in Action / 19-21

39. K.L. Chug - Chairman, Ekal Vidyalaya

Foundation India 1999: Participated in the 1999 Dharma Prasar Yatra. New York, Washington DC, Houston, Boston, Atlanta, Chicago, Detroit, Edison, Cherry Hill, Harrisburg

Hindu Philosophy in Action / 19-22

40. B.K. Modi - VHP President-External 2000:

Spoke at a reception for Indian delegates at the UN Summit. UN, New York

Hindu Philosophy in Action / 22, 170

41. Ashok Singhal - VHP International

President 2000: Spoke at a reception for Indian delegates at the UN Summit. UN, New York

Hindu Philosophy in Action / 22, 170

42. Multiple - ? 2000: Post-summit Dharma Prasar Yatra in 2000. NY, NJ, IL, TX, CA, GA, MA, CT and MI

Hindu Philosophy in Action / 22

43. Parmananda Giri - VHP Leader 2000:

Spoke at the UN Summit. UN, New York

<https://pspausa.org/our-guiding-force/> / N/A

44. Vishnu Hari Dalmia - VHP President 2000: Spoke at a reception for Indian delegates at the UN Summit. UN, New York
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 170

45. Narendra Modi - BJP Gen Sec 2000: Spoke at a reception for Indian delegates at the UN Summit. UN, New York
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 170

46. Sardar Jagjit Singh - Namdhari Sikh Leader and founder member of VHP since 1964 2000: Spoke at a reception for Indian delegates at the UN Summit. UN, New York
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 170

47. Multiple - Multiple 2000: Spoke at a reception for Indian delegates at the UN Summit. UN, New York
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 170

48. Satyamitrananda Giri - VHP Leader, founder of Bharat Mata temple 2000: Attended a Reception Dinner after the UN Summit organized by BK Modi. Staten Island, New York
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 170

49. BK Modi - VHP Vice President-External 2000: Attended a Reception Dinner after the UN Summit organized by BK Modi. Staten Island, New York
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 170

50. Ashok Singhal - VHP International President 2000: Attended a Reception Dinner after the UN Summit organized by BK Modi. Staten Island, New York
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 170

51. Narendra Modi - BJP Gen Sec 2000: Attended a Reception Dinner after the UN Summit organized by BK Modi. Staten Island, New York
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 170

52. Multiple - Multiple 2000: Attended a Reception Dinner after the UN Summit

organized by BK Modi. Staten Island, New York
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 170

53. Parmananda Giri - VHP Leader 2000: Attended a Reception Dinner after the UN Summit organized by BK Modi. Staten Island, New York
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 170

54. M.M. Joshi - BJP Leader 2000: Attended a community meeting at Swaminarayan Temple on June 11. Also met on the same day as a member of a Coordination Committee for the UN Summit. Edison, NJ
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 238, 243

55. BK Modi - VHP Vice President-External 2000: Attended a community meeting at Swaminarayan Temple on June 11. Also met on the same day as a member of a Coordination Committee for the UN Summit. Edison, NJ
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 238, 243

56. K.S. Sudarshan - RSS Sarsanghchalak 2001: Spoke as part of the VHP-A's Vishwa Dharma Prasaar Yatra. Nagpur, India
<http://www.hvk.org/2001/0801/109.html> / N/A

57. Tarachand Chheda - BJP MLA in Gujarat 2001: Photographed at events co-organized by the VHP-A and VHP Gujarat. Lodai, Gujarat
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 16

58. Jayadeep Patel - General Secretary, VHP Gujarat 2001: Photographed at events co-organized by the VHP-A and VHP Gujarat. Lodai, Gujarat
Hindu Philosophy in Action / 16

59. B.K. Modi - VHP President-External 2001: Organized the Vishwa Dharma Prasaar Yatra in 2001, alongside Anjlee Pandya. This was first discussed at the International Coordination Committee in Karnavati in 2000. Worldwide

60. B.K. Modi - VHP President-External 2001:

Spoke as part of the VHP-A's Vishwa Dharma Prasaar Yatra. Nagpur, India

<http://www.hvk.org/2001/0801/109.html> / N/A

61. Sadhvi Rithambara - VHP, Yuva Vahini

Leader 2001: Spoke as part of the VHP-A's Vishwa Dharma Prasaar Yatra. Nagpur, India

<http://www.hvk.org/2001/0801/109.html> / N/A

62. Pravin Togadiya - VHP 2001: Spoke as part of the VHP-A's Vishwa Dharma Prasaar Yatra. Nagpur, India

<http://www.hvk.org/2001/0801/109.html> / N/A

Appendix C: VHP-A Annual Financial Transfers to the VHP and its Affiliates

(Minimum) Amount of Money Sent to India	Year	Source	Reference
\$963,689.00	2001	2001 Tax Return, money earmarked for India	https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/display_990/510156325/2002_11_EO%2F51-0156325_990_200112
\$383,191.00	2002	2002 Tax Return, money earmarked for India	https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/display_990/510156325/2003_12_EO%2F51-0156325_990_200212
\$317,043.00	2003	2003 Tax Return, money earmarked for India	https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/display_990/510156325/2004_12_EO%2F51-0156325_990_200312
\$280,909.00	2004	2004 Tax Return, money earmarked for India	https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/display_990/510156325/2006_07_EO%2F51-0156325_990_200412
\$503,400.00	2005	2005 Tax Return, money earmarked for India	https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/display_990/510156325/2006_12_EO%2F51-0156325_990_200512
\$255,423.00	2006	2006 Tax Return, money earmarked for India	https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/display_990/510156325/2007_12_EO%2F51-0156325_990_200612
\$95,911.00	2007	2007 Tax Return, money earmarked for India	https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/display_990/510156325/2009_01_EO%2F51-0156325_990_200712

\$343,404.00	2008	2008 Tax Return, money earmarked for India	https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/display_990/510156325/2009_12_EO%2F51-0156325_990_200812
\$192,961.00	2009	2009 Tax Return, money earmarked for India	https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/display_990/510156325/2010_12_EO%2F51-0156325_990_200912
\$213,952.00	2010	2010 Tax Return, money earmarked for India	https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/display_990/510156325/2011_12_EO%2F51-0156325_990_201012
\$215,235.00	2011	2011 Tax Return, money earmarked for India	https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/display_990/510156325/2012_12_EO%2F51-0156325_990_201112
\$205,732.00	2012	2012 Tax Return, money earmarked for India	https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/display_990/510156325/2014_01_EO%2F51-0156325_990_201212
\$310,129.00	2013	2013 Tax Return, money earmarked for India	https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/display_990/510156325/2014_12_EO%2F51-0156325_990_201312
\$64,620.00	2014	2014 Tax Return, money earmarked for India	https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/510156325/201513179349308571/full
\$167,126.00	2015	2015 SAC donation - self-attested	https://www.supportachildusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/SACAnnual_Report2019_20.pdf
\$339,532.00	2015	2015 Tax Return, money earmarked for India	https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/510156325/201623169349300342/full
\$379,013.63	2016	2016 SAC donation-self-attested	https://www.supportachildusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/SACAnnual_Report2019_20.pdf

\$453,488.00	2017	2017 SAC donation-self-attested	https://www.supportachildusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/SACAnnual_Report2019_20.pdf
\$5,000.00	2018	to VHP Kerala for flood relief efforts - self-attested	https://www.vhp-america.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Q4-2018-Seva-Newsletter-for-VHPA.pdf
\$431,352.10	2018	2018 SAC donation-self-attested	https://www.supportachildusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/SACAnnual_Report2019_20.pdf
\$535,980.21	2019	2019 SAC donation-self-attested	https://www.supportachildusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/SACAnnual_Report2019_20.pdf
\$519,931.48	2020	2020 SAC donation-self-attested	https://www.supportachildusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/SACAnnual_Report2020_21.pdf
\$7,177,022.42	2001-2020	Overall between 2001 and 2020	

Endnotes

- 1 The VHP is sometimes transliterated as “Vishva Hindu Parishad” as well. <http://vhp.org/>
- 2 <https://www.wearesavera.org/resources/reports/>
- 3 <https://www.wearesavera.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/The-Global-VHPs-Trail-of-Violence-v2.pdf>, pp. 13–23
- 4 <https://www.wearesavera.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/The-Global-VHPs-Trail-of-Violence-v2.pdf>, pp. 24–35
- 5 <https://www.wearesavera.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/The-Global-VHPs-Trail-of-Violence-v2.pdf>, pp. 25–26
- 6 <https://www.wearesavera.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/The-Global-VHPs-Trail-of-Violence-v2.pdf>, pp. 27–28
- 7 <https://www.wearesavera.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/The-Global-VHPs-Trail-of-Violence-v2.pdf>, pp. 31–33
- 8 <https://www.wearesavera.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/The-Global-VHPs-Trail-of-Violence-v2.pdf>, pp. 29–30
- 9 <https://www.vhp-america.org/about-vhpa/vhpa-faq/>
- 10 https://www.lokvani.com/lokvani/article.php?article_id=7683
- 11 https://inthesetimes.com/issue/27/04/feature2_side2.shtml
Both Tiwari and Asthana remain active with the VHP-A, on their Executive Board and as Chairman of their Advisory Board, respectively. <https://www.vhp-america.org/about-vhpa/vhpa-executive-board/> <https://www.vhp-america.org/about-vhpa/vhpa-advisory-board/>
- 12 <https://web.archive.org/web/20231211040958/https://rammandir2024.org/>
- 13 <https://www.deccanherald.com/india/rss-fast-paced-expansion-will-one-day-take-form-of-society-itself-says-bhagwat-hails-outfit-for-treating-all-as-its-own-1210552.html>
- 14 See <https://hcn.org.uk/blog/nazism-and-hindu-nationalism/>, <https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/creating-german-nation>, and <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09584935.2022.2132219>
- 15 Ambekar, Sunil. *The RSS: Roadmaps for the 21st Century*. India: Rupa, 2019, p. 9. Ambekar, who is a high-level RSS pracharak, also writes: “To use a metaphor, just as the mighty rivers fall into oceans and have no separate existence, the Sangh’s complete union with society is conceived as the ultimate goal. ‘Sangh Samaj Banega’ is a slogan, referring to the merging of Sangh with society, which is raised repeatedly in the RSS to reinforce this goal when Sangh and society become one.”

- 16 <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09584935.2022.2132219>
- 17 See our diagram in <https://www.wearesavera.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/The-Global-VHPs-Trail-of-Violence-v2.pdf>, p. 10 for an illustration
- 18 <https://www.wearesavera.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/The-Global-VHPs-Trail-of-Violence-v2.pdf>
- 19 See Part 3 of the report for numerous examples.
- 20 As stated by former President Abhaya Asthana in http://www.lokvani.com/lokvani/article.php?article_id=7683, and on the VHP-A website at <https://www.vhp-america.org/about-vhpa/vhpa-faq/>
- 21 <https://www.vhp-america.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Hindu-Vishwa-Apr-June-2017-Inside-Pages.pdf>, p. 5
- 22 <https://www.sciencespo.fr/mass-violence-war-massacre-resistance/en/document/golwalkar-19-february-1906a-5-june-1973.html> , <https://caravanmagazine.in/history/rss-golwalkar-links-nazism>
- 23 <https://vhp.org.uk/about-vhp/founders-vh/> , <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3517547>
- 24 <https://hinduvishwa.org/dr-mahesh-mehta-a-born-leader-and-a-patriot/>
- 25 Mahesh Mehta, Hindu Philosophy in Action, p. III
- 26 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27644183>
- 27 See <https://caravanmagazine.in/reportage/foreign-returns>
- 28 <https://www.loc.gov/item/lcwaN0002938/>, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Rashtriya-Swayamsevak-Sangh>, <https://www.newyorker.com/news/on-religion/the-violent-toll-of-hindu-nationalism-in-india>, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/indias-bjp-is-the-worlds-most-important-party-rashtriya-swayamsevak-sangh-narendra-modi-china-ccp-japan-indo-pacific-strategy-hindu-nationalism-496211c2>
- 29 <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/foreign-hand-in-the-sangh-rss-hindu-society-muslims-christians-5117648/> , <https://caravanmagazine.in/history/rss-golwalkar-links-nazism>
- 30 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27644183>, Felix Pal (2023) The shape of the Sangh: rethinking Hindu nationalist organisational ties, Contemporary South Asia, 31:1, 133-143, DOI: 10.1080/09584935.2022.2132219
- 31 https://www.pmindia.gov.in/en/personal_life_story/personal-life-story/
- 32 <https://www.hrw.org/reports/2002/india/India0402-05.htm>, <https://time.com/6320003/india-weaponizing-history-against-muslims/>
- 33 <https://thewire.in/books/rss-godse-gandhi-assassin-dhirendra-jha-book-excerpt> , <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/1/30/india-gandhis-killer-godse-never-left-rss-claims-new-book>

- 34 <https://www.deccanherald.com/india/why-rss-was-banned-three-times-in-the-past-1149307.html>
- 35 <https://hinduvishwa.org/my-interactions-with-dr-mahesh-mehta/>
- 36 <https://www.vhp-america.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/web-hindu-vishwa-january-march-2022.pdf>
- 37 <https://bridge.georgetown.edu/research/factsheet-vishwa-hindu-parishad-of-america-vhpa/> , <https://www.vhp-america.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/web-hindu-vishwa-january-march-2022.pdf>
- 38 <https://www.vhp-america.org/dr-mahesh-mehta-vhpa-founder-and-a-great-visionary-leaves-us-for-eternity-2/>
- 39 <https://bridge.georgetown.edu/research/factsheet-vishwa-hindu-parishad-of-america-vhpa/>, <https://www.vhp-america.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Hindu-Vishwa-Apr-June-2017-Inside-Pages.pdf> p. 5
- 40 <https://www.haaretz.com/world-news/2021-03-01/ty-article-opinion/.premium/why-is-indias-government-celebrating-an-antisemitic-pro-genocide-hitler-devotee/0000017f-e108-d804-ad7f-f1fa46980000> , <https://caravanmagazine.in/history/rss-golwalkar-links-nazism>
- 41 <https://scroll.in/article/661189/bjp-backers-in-the-us-study-aaps-strategies-to-influence-indian-politics-from-afar>
- 42 As reported in <https://caravanmagazine.in/reportage/foreign-returns>
- 43 Mahesh Mehta, Hindu Philosophy in Action, p. 109
- 44 <https://www.vhp-america.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/web-hindu-vishwa-january-march-2022.pdf>, p. 13
- 45 <https://india-herald.com/obituary-mahesh-mehta-p8036-65.htm>
- 46 <https://www.abvp.org/akhil-bhartiya-vidyarthi-parishad-not-students-wing-bjp-shreehari-borikar>
- 47 <https://scroll.in/article/661189/bjp-backers-in-the-us-study-aaps-strategies-to-influence-indian-politics-from-afar>
- 48 Mahesh Mehta, Hindu Philosophy in Action, p. 107
- 49 <https://www.vhp-america.org/about-vhpa/governing-council/>, <https://www.vhp-america.org/dr-mahesh-mehta-vhpa-founder-and-a-great-visionary-leaves-us-for-eternity-2/>
- 50 <https://www.golwalkarguruji.org//Encyc/2017/10/16/GlimpsesofaGreatSoul.html>
- 51 <https://www.vhp-america.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Hindu-Vishwa-Apr-June-2017-Inside-Pages.pdf>, p. 5
- 52 Mahesh Mehta, Hindu Philosophy in Action, p. IV

53 Mahesh Mehta, Hindu Philosophy in Action, p. IV

54 <http://www.vakmumbai.org/llb.php>

55 Both are credited in Mehta's memoirs, as well as in other VHP texts and other academic scholarship. See <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3517547> , <https://www.vhp.org/organization/8/>, <https://www.hvk.org/2014/0914/39.html>

56 See <https://www.vhp-america.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Hindu-Vishwa-Apr-June-2017-Inside-Pages.pdf>, p. 5

57 Mahesh Mehta, Hindu Philosophy in Action, p. IV

58 Vishva Hindu Parishad, Vishva Hindu Parishad, The Hindu Awakening: Retrospect and Promise, (New Delhi, Vishva Hindu Parishad, n.d, as quoted in Lise McKean, Divine Enterprise: Gurus and the Hindu Nationalist Movement (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), p. 112. See <https://archive.org/details/divineenterprise0000mcke/page/112>

See also <http://www.sacw.net/DC/CommunalismCollection/ArticlesArchive/GeetaPuriAug08.html>

59 <https://www.hvk.org/2014/0914/39.html>

60 As reported in <https://caravanmagazine.in/reportage/foreign-returns>

61 Ibid.

62 Ibid.

63 Mahesh Mehta, Hindu Philosophy in Action, p. IV. A Prant Pracharak is a full-time RSS worker occupying the senior-most position in a particular province.

64 <https://deendayalupadhyay.org/jansh.html>

65 <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Bharatiya-Janata-Party#ref789894>

66 <https://www.vhp-america.org/about-vhpa/vhpa-faq/>

67 By the term "internal," we do not mean that these documents are private. All evidence presented in this report is from publicly available sources. However, the term "internal," as used in this report, refers to documents produced for an audience of VHP workers and sympathizers, rather than the general public. As this report shows, these documents present a markedly different image of the VHP, its affiliates, and their organizational relationships.

68 <https://web.archive.org/web/19980611081540/http://www.vhp.org/vhp/>

69 <https://www.hvk.org/2014/0914/39.html>

70 https://web.archive.org/web/20070420111815/http://www.vhp.org/englishsite/d.Dimensions_of_VHP/qVishwa%20Samanvya/vishvahinduparishadabroad.htm

71 Ibid. The text goes on to proclaim that the VHP-A has sent over \$1 million to India – a figure that is now several times as large, as Part 3 will show.

72 <https://web.archive.org/web/20020225185227/http://www.vhp-america.org:80/michigan/>

index.html#TOP, https://web.archive.org/web/20071017153826/http://www.vhp-america.org/dynamic/modules.php?name=Web_Links&l_op=viewlink&cid=2

73 <https://web.archive.org/web/20230511130652/https://vhp.org/media/documents/hinduvisv-llaug21.pdf>, p. 2

74 https://web.archive.org/web/20070420111815/http://www.vhp.org/englishsite/d.Dimensions_of_VHP/qVishwa%20Samanvya/vishvahinduparishadabroad.htm

75 https://web.archive.org/web/20030101213237/http://www.vhp.org/englishsite/d.Dimensions_of_VHP/qVishwa%20Samanvya/vhp_chart.htm

76 Vishva Hindu Parishad, *Vishva Hindu Parishad, Messages and Activities* (New Delhi, Vishva Hindu Parishad, n.d.), p. 7, as quoted in Lise McKean, *Divine Enterprise: Gurus and the Hindu Nationalist Movement* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), p. 113

77 Ibid.

78 This is evident in the extent of organizational resources devoted to the founding of the VHP-A by the VHP, as described in Part 2 of this report. Not only was the VHP-A the first foreign affiliate of the VHP to be founded, but it has also outranked its counterparts in terms of the number of events organized, the number of trips designated to the US by the VHP central command, as well as the Indian-American community in the United States' burgeoning reputation as a populous and wealthy immigrant community.

79 See Part 3b of this report.

80 See, for example, Mahesh Mehta, *Hindu Philosophy in Action*, pp. III–V. VHP leaders often describe this nature of overseas work with the language of the karmabhoomi, or “land of action.” In other words, work in an overseas karmabhoomi can still contribute to the political project of the matrubhoomi (motherland). Ashok Singhal, writing the foreword to Mehta's book, uses this exact language, in fact.

81 See, for example, Mahesh Mehta, *Hindu Philosophy in Action*, p. 115

82 <https://www.vhp-america.org/about-vhpa/vhpa-history-and-milestones/>

83 Mahesh Mehta, *Hindu Philosophy in Action*, p. III

84 <https://www.vhp-america.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Hindu-Vishwa-Apr-June-2017-Inside-Pages.pdf>, p. 5

85 See, for example, <https://www.vhp-america.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/web-hindu-vishwa-january-march-2022.pdf>, https://www.mediavigil.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/US_HinduNationalism_Nonprofits.pdf, <https://hinduviswa.org/a-vhpa-legend-leaves-the-stage/>, <https://www.vhp-america.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/hindu-vishwa-jul-sep-2021-small.pdf>, <https://india-herald.com/summit-of-global-hindus-fifth-vishwa-sangh-shibir-p2495-1.htm>

[A full list of VHP-A personnel with ties to the VHP is offered in Appendix A.](#)

86 <https://www.vhp-america.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/hindu-vishwa-jul-sep-2021->

small.pdf

87 <https://www.vhp-america.org/about-vhpa/vhpa-executive-board/>

88 <https://hmec.info/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Mandir-Vani-2022-FINAL.pdf>, p. 14

89 <https://hindupact.org/about-us/leadership/>

90 See, for example Nandini Sundar, “Universities as Sites of Violence, Power (and Justice?).” *Power, Violence and Justice: Reflections, Responses and Responsibilities* (2023): 229, and <https://scroll.in/latest/1064541/delhi-at-least-three-students-injured-at-jnu-in-clash-between-abvp-left-groups>

91 <https://vskbharat.com/shradhanjali-to-dr-mahesh-j-mehta/?lang=en>, <https://www.vhp-america.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/hindu-vishwa-jul-sep-2021-small.pdf>, <https://indianewengland.com/world-hindu-council-of-america-founder-mahesh-mehta-passes-away-at-86-vhpa-leaders-mourn-his-death/>

92 <https://www.vhp-america.org/dr-mahesh-mehta-vhpa-founder-and-a-great-visionary-leaves-us-for-eternity-2/>

93 Pandya is listed as such in Mahesh Mehta, *Hindu Philosophy in Action*, p. V

94 https://web.archive.org/web/20070420111815/http://www.vhp.org/englishsite/d.Dimensions_of_VHP/qVishwa%20Samanvya/vishvahinduparishadabroad.htm

95 <https://www.vhp-america.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/hindu-vishwa-jul-sep-2021-small.pdf>, p. 9

96 See, Mahesh Mehta, *Hindu Philosophy in Action*, pp. 22, 150, 238 and 337, for examples.

97 2002 Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax. Vishwa Hindu Parishad Overseas, EIN 04-3576058. https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/display_990/43576058/2003_04_EO%2F04-3576058_990_200212
The VHP Overseas now operates as “World Hindu Council Inc.”

98 <https://www.vhp-america.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/hindu-vishwa-jul-sep-2021-small.pdf>, p. 52; Mahesh Mehta, *Hindu Philosophy in Action*, pp. 170, 238, 243.

99 2002 Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax. Vishwa Hindu Parishad Overseas, EIN 04-3576058. https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/display_990/43576058/2003_04_EO%2F04-3576058_990_200212

100 2002 Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax. Vishwa Hindu Parishad of

America (VHP-A), EIN 51-0156325.

https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/display_990/510156325/2003_12_EO%2F51-0156325_990_200212

101 <https://www.vhp-america.org/about-vhpa/vhpa-advisory-board/>, <https://www.vhp-america.org/about-vhpa/governing-council/>

102 See, for example, Mahesh Mehta, Hindu Philosophy in Action, p. 16, where Mehta, Pandya and Parekh are seen working under the banner of VHP Gujarat in the town of Lodai, and where Mehta is identified in the photo as the Vice Chairman of VHP Overseas.

103 2002 Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax. Vishwa Hindu Parishad Overseas, EIN 04-3576058. https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/display_990/43576058/2003_04_EO%2F04-3576058_990_200212 and 2002 Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax. Vishwa Hindu Parishad of

[America \(VHP-A\), EIN 51-0156325.](https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/510156325)

https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/display_990/510156325/2003_12_EO%2F51-0156325_990_200212

104 Mahesh Mehta, Hindu Philosophy in Action, pp. 75 and 206

105 https://web.archive.org/web/20070420111815/http://www.vhp.org/englishsite/d.Dimensions_of_VHP/qVishwa%20Samanvya/vishvahinduparishadabroad.htm

106 <https://organiser.org/2011/01/23/44622/general/r8d867ee7/>, <https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/simply-put-overseas-swayamsevaks-their-hindutva-project/>

107 Damle is a leader in the Chicago chapter of the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (HSS), the RSS's overseas wing. <https://caravanmagazine.in/literature/shridhar-damle-modi-gave-idea-for-rss-book-promotions-deliberately-focused-on-white-skinned-andersen>

108 See <https://scroll.in/article/889509/how-the-rss-operates-in-foreign-countries-in-general-and-the-usa-in-particular>

109 Ibid.

110 Mahesh Mehta, Hindu Philosophy in Action, pp. 150 and 146

111 <https://india-herald.com/overseas-hindus-attend-camp-for-sevaks-p889-1.htm>, <https://india-herald.com/summit-of-global-hindus-fifth-vishwa-sangh-shibir-p2495-1.htm>. See Appendix A for further details.

112 Mahesh Mehta, Hindu Philosophy in Action, pp. 144–151.

113 Mahesh Mehta, Hindu Philosophy in Action, pp. 144–151.

114 <https://www.npr.org/2019/04/25/711412924/nearly-27-years-after-hindu-mob-destroyed-a-mosque-the-scars-in-india-remain-dee>

115 This figure is extensively detailed in Appendix C.

See <https://web.archive.org/web/20230331060851/http://sacw.net/article14915.html> and https://sanhati.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/US_HinduNationalism_Nonprofits.pdf for in-depth research on the extent of financial transfers from India to the US.

Also see, for the VHP-A's own attestations, the following sources:

https://www.supportachildusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/SACAnnual_Report2020_21.pdf, https://www.supportachildusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/SACAnnual_Report2019_20.pdf, https://www.supportachildusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/SACAnnual_Report2018_19.pdf 2001–2019. Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax. Vishwa Hindu Parishad of America (VHP-A), EIN 51-0156325 <https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/510156325>.

116 See https://www.supportachildusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/SACAnnual_Report2018_19.pdf, https://www.supportachildusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/SACAnnual_Report2019_20.pdf, https://www.supportachildusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/SACAnnual_Report2020_21.pdf

117 Funds from the US are routed to Bharat Kalyan Pratishtan (BKP), described in VHP-A newsletters as a “project of Vishwa Hindu Parishad.” BKP is based out of the same address as the VHP’s central location in Delhi. See <https://www.supportachildusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/SevaPatriJan2018.pdf>

FCRA forms are no longer available online, but downloaded copies can be shared upon request. For an illustrative example: FCRA form FC-4 releases show figures of INR 38,210,753.00 and INR 33,805,011.00 received by BKP from the VHP of America in 2019–20 and 2020–21 respectively. These figures roughly correspond with the VHP-A’s own 990 forms released to the IRS in those years. (See <https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/510156325> and Appendix C.)

118 2001–2019. Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax. Vishwa Hindu Parishad of America (VHP-A), EIN 51-0156325. <https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/510156325>, <https://www.supportachildusa.org/>. The VHP-A and SAC share a Tax ID.

119 https://www.supportachildusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/SACAnnual_Report2019_20.pdf, https://www.supportachildusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/SACAnnual_Report2020_21.pdf

120 https://www.supportachildusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/SACAnnual_Report2018_19.pdf, https://www.supportachildusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/SACAnnual_Report2019_20.pdf, https://www.supportachildusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/SACAnnual_Report2020_21.pdf

121 https://www.supportachildusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/SACAnnual_Report2020_21.pdf, p. 2

122 <https://www.vhp-america.org/sac-reaches-a-major-milestone-since-inception/>

123 <https://www.wearesavera.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/The-Global-VHPs-Trail-of-Violence-v2.pdf> p. 22.

124 See <https://caravanmagazine.in/politics/american-sangh-affair-tulsi-gabbard> for a number of examples.

125 See, for an example, this comment from Mahendra Sapa, the VHP-A DC coordinator, to Sachin Chitlangia, a VHP-A Houston leader, in the context of a fundraiser for the construction of a Ram temple on the site of the demolished Babri Masjid: “Sachin, there’s so much of miscommunication going on,” wrote Sapa. “Last night we had a call and it was decided we won’t cancel this fund raising but put in a note that the money transfer mechanism has not been finalized by Bharat [India], so funds shall remain with VHPA till then. In worst case scenario funds can be refunded or put to other similar cause. I sincerely apologize multiple heads

communicating with you. Final instructions should be coming to you today.”

<https://archive.is/wip/f3Gv1>

126 See Appendix B.

127 Mahesh Mehta, *Hindu Philosophy in Action*, p. 4. Apte is pictured alongside Mehta and Sukhdev Soni, the then-President of the VHP-A, at the meeting.

128 For example, Rajender Sharma and Swami Chinmayananda attended the 1982 Governing Council meeting held at Mahesh Mehta’s house in Needham, MA, and Harmohan Lal and Bhagwat Singh attended the 1984 Governing Council meeting. See Mahesh Mehta, *Hindu Philosophy in Action*, pp. 70, 73 and 79, as well as Appendix B for further details.

129 The presence of the highest-ranking leaders of the RSS and VHP at these events also reflects the fact that by the 1980s and 1990s, the VHP-A’s events and conferences had grown significantly in both scale and ambition. The 1984 Hindu Conference in New York, for example, was held alongside a massive public event at Madison Square Garden, and saw the participation of Harmohan Lal, the VHP Secretary General; Swami Chinmayananda, the co-founder of the VHP; H.V. Seshadri, RSS General Secretary; Karan Singh, the VHP President; and Bhagwat Singh Mewar, the VHP President.

See Mahesh Mehta, *Hindu Philosophy in Action*, p. 7-8, as well as Chapter 10

130 Mahesh Mehta, *Hindu Philosophy in Action*, p. 13

131 Mahesh Mehta, *Hindu Philosophy in Action*, p. 132

132 Mahesh Mehta, *Hindu Philosophy in Action*, p. 9

133 Mahesh Mehta, *Hindu Philosophy in Action*, pp. 210, 215. Mehta also discusses the pressure faced following the Babri Masjid demolition on p. 9.

134 The event was organized by an international “Coordination Committee,” whose members included BK Modi (VHP President-External), Murli Manohar Joshi (BJP President) and Ashok Singhal (VHP International Working President).

135 The idea was then “accepted by the Executive Board,” and “With a short notice of three months VHP-A members got ready with the necessary infrastructure.” See Mahesh Mehta, *Hindu Philosophy in Action*, pp. 19–20.

136 See Mahesh Mehta, *Hindu Philosophy in Action*, p. 23 and <http://www.hvk.org/2001/0801/109.html>

[Anjee Pandya and Mahesh Mehta were both part of this International Coordination Committee, and B.K. Modi, Sadhvi Rithambara and Pravin Togadia were among the VHP leaders who kicked off the event in Nagpur before it traveled across the world.](#)

137 Mahesh Mehta, *Hindu Philosophy in Action*, p. 16

138 <https://thewire.in/communalism/full-text-bbc-documentary-gujarat-riots-modi-uk-report>
While connections between charity funds raised in the US and UK and the Gujarat violence has

been made in the case of the Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram, no similar investigation has been made in the case of the VHP.

139 <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/agra/agra-where-vhp-ideologue-ashok-singhal-was-born/articleshow/49820736.cms>

140 <https://www.theweek.in/news/india/2023/10/14/when-we-say-bharat-there-is-consciousness-of-bharat-mata-whf-founder-swami-vigyananand.html>

141 <https://www.vhp.org/organization/20/>

142 <https://vsktelangana.org/manoj-verma-is-new-chief-of-bajrang-dal-milind-parande-joint-gen-sec-of-vhp>

143 <https://hindutvawatch.org/at-thanksgiving-event-by-migrant-hindu-doctors-from-pak-vhp-official-warns-of-medical-visa-misuse-by-muslims-the-indian-express/>

144 https://www.lokvani.com/lokvani/article.php?article_id=11349

145 See Appendix B for more details.

146 <https://vatsalyagram.org/about-us/>, <https://causes.benevity.org/causes/840-710916422>, <https://www.northjersey.com/story/news/2022/09/09/hindu-nationalist-controversial-appearance-ridgewood-nj/67998426007/>

147 <https://india-herald.com/vhp-leader-from-india-visits-houston-p3211-1.htm>, <https://rahulchandraji.files.wordpress.com/2014/08/press-release-vhp-bharat-president-shri-ashok-chowgule-visits-houston-texas.pdf>,

148 <https://rahulchandraji.files.wordpress.com/2014/08/press-release-vhp-bharat-president-shri-ashok-chowgule-visits-houston-texas.pdf>

149 <https://www.theweek.in/theweek/more/ashok-singhal-tribute.html>

150 <https://americankahani.com/perspectives/hindsight-is-2023-my-chance-encounter-with-the-vishwa-hindu-parishad-30-years-ago-is-haunting-me-even-today/>

151 https://web.archive.org/web/20000604120700/http://www.vhp-america.org:80/dharma_sansad.html

152 <https://m.tribuneindia.com/2000/20000911/main1.htm>

153 <https://www.hvk.org/2003/0203/205.html>. The article references a newspaper report published in mid-January 2003 about Singhal's visit; it is unclear whether the visit took place in late 2002 or early 2003.

154 <https://shrisuryanarayanmandir.org/2012/08/28/7th-hindu-mandir-executives-conference-press-release/>

155 <https://archive.is/mMrwd>

156 <https://web.archive.org/web/20240203154537/https://www.worldhindunews.com/remembering-ma-ashok-singhal-ji-vishwa-hindu-parishad-of-america-VHPa/>, <https://groups>.

google.com/g/bsna-nj-chapter/c/Ldfpl8rvm-s

157 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=53HEG1llsnM>

158 For example, Swami Vigyananand was pictured with Dr. Abhaya Asthana at the HMEC's 2018 Regional meeting in Southern California. <https://twitter.com/vhpanews/status/988111983860838400>

159 <https://www.nriinternet.com/Associations/INDIA/W/WHEF/LA-2016/index.htm>

160 <https://www.worldhinducongress.org/blogs/reports/>

161 https://www.lokvani.com/lokvani/article.php?article_id=18062

162 https://hindumonth.org/event/inaugural-hindu-heritage-month/?utm_source=pocket_saves

163 <https://web.archive.org/web/20231211034622/https://hindudvesha.org/events/understanding-hindudvesha-in-the-globalizing-world/>

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The trust has declared that it has authorized Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS), Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and those with "credible credentials" in society to collect voluntary donations from people.

<https://theprint.in/india/cheques-worth-rs-22-cr-donated-to-ram-mandir-trust-bounced-vhp/1005128/>, <https://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/2021/jan/31/have-authorized-rss-vhp-to-collect-donations-ram-temple-trust-2257630.html> , <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/ram-temple-trust-has-received-around-rs-100-crore-donation-says-champat-rai-101610872453419.html>

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- 172 <https://app.aplos.com/aws/give/VHPA/donations>. “Shri Ram Janambhoomi Trust Donation” is listed as an option on the donation portal
- 173 <https://app.aplos.com/aws/give/VHPA/donations>
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- 177 <https://www.audreytruschke.com/hindu-right-us-oxford-research-encyclopedia>
- 178 See, for example, the ways in which the BJP has sought to benefit electorally from the VHP’s mobilization efforts around the Ram temple. <https://www.hindustantimes.com/cities/lucknow-news/vhps-rice-initiative-gathers-steam-bjp-looks-to-cash-in-on-temple-appeal-101704218183089.html>
- 179 A number of Sangh officials, from Mahesh Mehta himself to the likes of Achalesh Amar and Romesh Japra today, have held cross-membership in the OFBJP and the VHP-A. See, for example, <https://web.archive.org/web/20201122103817/https://india-herald.com/indian-democracy-matured-p5605-1.htm> and <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/nri/us-canada-news/indians-in-houston-organise-tesla-light-show-ahead-of-ram-mandir-inauguration/articleshow/107016919.cms> for Achalesh Amar, and https://www.vhp-america.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/VHPA-Newsletter-Feb-2012_0.pdf and <https://indiapost.com/event-held-to-highlight-modi-governments-achievements/> for Romesh Japra.
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- 181 <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2024/feb/08/unrest-leicester-muslim-hindu-revealed-britain-modi-india-2022>
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