



11th December 2024

### Call for Accurate and Sensitive Reporting on the Sacred Swastika Symbol

The Hindu Council of Australia expresses its disappointment with the recent conflation of the sacred Swastika a revered symbol of peace, prosperity, and well-being for Hindus, Jains, and Buddhists with the Nazi Hakenkreuz, a symbol of hate and oppression.

The Swastika, deeply rooted in the traditions of Hindus, Jains, and Buddhists, has been a symbol of harmony and spirituality for thousands of years. Its inappropriate association with hate symbols perpetuates misunderstanding, causes unnecessary distress, and risks undermining multicultural harmony in Australia.

While we acknowledge the importance of addressing pressing societal issues, we urge media outlets to ensure cultural sensitivity and historical accuracy when reporting on such matters. Notably, the NSW Government and several media organizations have taken steps to adopt accurate terminology, setting a positive precedent that we hope will be embraced universally.

#### Concerns:

- **Terminological Misrepresentation:** Referring to the Nazi Hakenkreuz as a "Swastika" conflates two distinct symbols with entirely different meanings and histories. This perpetuates confusion and harms communities for whom the Swastika holds deep spiritual significance.
- **Impact on Multicultural Harmony:** Unintended misrepresentations of sacred symbols can provoke hurt and discontent, disturbing the peace and mutual respect foundational to Australia's multicultural ethos.
- **Editorial Responsibility:** Media organisations have a duty to ensure their reporting avoids stereotypes or inaccuracies that could perpetuate prejudice against minority communities.

#### Call to Action:

The Hindu Council of Australia respectfully calls for:

- **Corrections and Clarifications:** Media outlets are encouraged to explicitly distinguish the Swastika from the Nazi Hakenkreuz in their reporting.
- **Commitment to Cultural Awareness:** We invite journalists and editors to collaborate with cultural and community leaders to enhance understanding of the sacred and historical significance of symbols like the Swastika.

The Hindu Council of Australia reaffirms its commitment to fostering awareness and understanding in our diverse society. We stand ready to work collaboratively with media outlets and government bodies to ensure accurate and sensitive reporting that reflects the richness of Australia's multicultural heritage.

Let us continue building a society where mutual respect and cultural appreciation thrive, ensuring that symbols of peace and spirituality are not misrepresented.

For further information or to arrange a consultation, please contact:

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