



## THREAT INSIGHT

# Hindutva Violent Extremism in New Zealand

Issued: 8 April 2021

21-36-TI

(R) This assessment provides an overview of *Hindutva*, an extreme form of Hindu nationalism, and assesses its potential nexus to violent extremism and how this may impact the New Zealand terrorism threat environment in the future.

(R) CTAG has moderate confidence in our assessments, based on our understanding of violent extremism in New Zealand.

### Key Judgements

1. (R) *Hindutva*<sup>1</sup> violent extremism crosses a spectrum of ideologies, but most closely aligns to identity-motivated violent extremism (IMVE).
2. (R) There are almost certainly a small number of individuals and groups in New Zealand adhering to *Hindutva*.
3. (R) There is currently no indication that individuals adhering to *Hindutva* violent extremism currently have the intent or capability to conduct a terrorist attack in New Zealand.
4. (R) There is a realistic possibility offshore intercommunal tensions could influence New Zealand-based *Hindutva*-aligned groups and individuals to conduct acts of violence, although it is unlikely to manifest as acts of terrorism in the short to medium-term.

### *Hindutva*

5. (R) *Hindutva* is an extreme form of Hindu nationalism that advocates for Hindu supremacy in India. *Hindutva* is a sectarian ideology based on the denigration of others for their identity as “non-Indian”, with a core belief that religions, such as Islam and Christianity, lack loyalty to the Hindu Indian nation. This has led to intercommunal tensions across India and globally.
6. (R) The *Hindutva* movement is represented in India by the *Sangh Parivar*, which is a collective of organisations affiliated to *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh* (RSS, National

<sup>1</sup> Hindutva translates into English as “Hindu-ness” and is an extreme form of Hindu nationalism which believes India is first and foremost a Hindu nation.

Volunteer Organisation). s6(a) [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] The international wing of RSS is known as *Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh* (HSS, Hindu Volunteer Organisation).

### **Hindutva-motivated violence**

7. (R) CTAG assesses that *Hindutva* violent extremism most closely aligns to an identity-motivated violent extremism (IMVE) ideology. *Hindutva* violent extremism is distinct from faith-motivated violent extremism (FMVE), which would require Hindu religious doctrine to be used to justify violent extremism.<sup>2</sup>
8. (R) During the 2000s there were a number of incidents relating to *Hindutva*-motivated violence:
  - a. 2002: riots occurred in Gujarat in which 1044 people were killed, 790 of whom were Muslim.
  - b. 2007: The *Samjhauta* Express train service linking Delhi with Lahore, Pakistan, was bombed and 90, mainly Pakistani Muslims, were killed.
  - c. 2007: the *Ajmer Daragh*, an Islamic Sufi Shrine, was bombed and three people were killed.
  - d. 2007: The *Makkah Masjid* mosque in Hyderabad was bombed, resulting in 16 deaths.
9. (R) Intercommunal tensions motivated by extreme ideologies, such as those of *Hindutva* in India, will almost certainly spill over into countries with large expatriate populations, including New Zealand.
10. s6(a) [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] ongoing intercommunal tensions between Hindu and Sikh communities in some Australian states, have resulted in some isolated instances of violence.
  - a. (U) In early-March, a group of Indian Sikhs was reportedly attacked with baseball bats and hammers in Sydney, following growing tensions within the Indian community in Australia over farming laws in India.

### **Hindutva in New Zealand**

11. (R) CTAG assesses there are almost certainly a small number of *Hindutva*-aligned individuals and groups present in New Zealand. However, while threatening rhetoric has been espoused online s6(a) [REDACTED], we have sighted no information to indicate there have been any physical acts of violence linked to these individuals or groups to date.

12. s6(a) [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

<sup>2</sup> Refer to 20-229-TI for CTAG's Violent Extremism Terminology Framework.

s6(a)  
[Redacted text block]

**Assessment**

- 13. (R) CTAG assesses there is a realistic possibility offshore intercommunal tensions could influence New Zealand-based *Hindutva*-aligned individuals and groups to conduct acts of violence. In the short to medium-term, based on international examples, CTAG judges these tensions would likely manifest in New Zealand as isolated incidents of intercommunal violence between individuals rather than acts of terrorism.
  
- 14. (R) CTAG has no information to indicate individuals or groups adhering to *Hindutva* violent extremism currently have the intent or capability to conduct a terrorist attack in New Zealand in the short to medium-term. We assess in the long-term there is a realistic possibility exacerbated intercommunal tensions, combined with other societal factors, will to some extent detrimentally influence the New Zealand terrorism threat environment.

*Intelligence cut-off date: 7 April 2021*



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**CTAG Threat Definitions**

Likelihood Assessment	Threat Level
Terrorist attack, or violent protest, or violent crime is expected	EXTREME
Terrorist attack, or violent protest, or violent crime is assessed as highly likely	HIGH
Terrorist attack, or violent protest, or violent crime is assessed as feasible and could well occur	MEDIUM
Terrorist attack, or violent protest, or violent crime is assessed as a realistic possibility	LOW
Terrorist attack, or violent protest, or violent crime is assessed as unlikely	VERY LOW

**Probabilistic language**

<< Lower likelihood		Even chance		Higher likelihood >>	
Remote/Highly unlikely	Unlikely	Realistic possibility	Likely Probable Probably	Highly likely	Almost certain

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