Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 16, 2026

The Honorable Todd Blanche
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

The Honorable Kash Patel
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
935 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20535

Dear Attorney General Blanche and Director Patel:

We write as co-chairs of the Congressional Caucus on India and Indian-Americans to condemn the attempted mass shooting at a Hindu temple in Aurora, Illinois, and to urge the Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Investigation to act on the growing threats and hostility directed at Hindu Americans and Indian Americans. In the wake of this plot, Hindu Americans and Indian Americans across the country feel vulnerable, even in their places of worship.

According to prosecutors, on October 11, 2026, a 19-year-old man from Palatine, Illinois, set out to attack a Hindu temple in Aurora. The day before, he allegedly told a co-worker he could not wait to kill Indian people. Police later recovered a manifesto that called Indians "subhumans" and laid out a plan to kill as many as possible. He has been charged with making a terrorist threat and unlawful possession of a weapon. We are grateful to the co-workers who came forward, and to the Palatine Police Department, the Mount Prospect Police Department, and the FBI Chicago Field Office for their swift response and efforts to protect the community.

Hinduism teaches nonviolence. A temple is a place of prayer. Families gathered there that Sunday to worship, and they were nearly the victims of a massacre.

This plot did not emerge in isolation but reflects broader, troubling trends. FBI data showed an increase in reported hate crimes targeting Sikh, Hindu, and Buddhist communities in 2025. The Center for the Study of Organized Hate found that anti-South Asian hate posts on X rose roughly 240 percent between January 2024 and June 2026. In the Carnegie Endowment's 2026 survey, one in four Indian American adults reported being called a slur since the start of 2025. The attempted attack in Aurora underscores the very real danger posed by this rising hostility.

We ask that the Department and the Bureau:

1. Investigate this case as a potential federal hate crime and bring all charges supported by the evidence, including, where applicable, under 18 U.S.C. §§ 247 and 249.
2. Determine whether anyone encouraged, assisted, or coordinated with the defendant, online or offline.

3. Share timely threat information with state and local law enforcement and with Hindu temples, Sikh gurdwaras, and other South Asian houses of worship, and offer them protective resources.
4. Brief the Caucus on threats facing Hindu Americans and Indian Americans and the steps the Department and FBI are taking to address them.

Every American deserves to worship without fear. We urge you to treat this case, and the hate behind it, with the seriousness it demands.

Sincerely,

Ro Khanna
Member of Congress

Rich McCormick
Member of Congress