

# RSS at 100 A Civilisational Dialogue

Engagements in the UK, US, and Germany | April 2026

Published May 12, 2026

Publication No. RP1045-12052026



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# I. Foreword

In April 2026, as Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) completed its one hundredth year of selfless service to society and nation, its General Secretary, RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale, undertook a sequence of engagements across the United Kingdom, the United States and Germany. Within the span of a single month, he addressed academic forums, policy institutions, civic gatherings and members of the Indian diaspora in London, at Stanford University, at the Hudson Institute in Washington, and at leading German institutions in Berlin. The arc of these engagements, considered together, reflects a deliberate widening of the civilisational dialogue that RSS has cultivated for a century within India.

The visits were on invite of several institutions and organisations in the UK, US and Germany and were exploratory in the deepest meaning of the word; that is, conversations in which great civilisational traditions sought to understand one another at the level of values, history, organisation and shared aspiration. The questions that animated the engagements, namely how societies remain cohesive in times of rapid change, what role cultural frameworks play in sustaining social order, and how civil society can complement in building a more balanced and sustainable future, transcend governments, electoral cycles and even national boundaries. They are the questions of the present age, and they were addressed across three different settings with characteristic measure and depth.

This brief, prepared by the Centre for Integrated and Holistic Studies, presents a structured account of these three engagements, the worldview they expressed, and the philosophy and organisational character of RSS that informed them. It is intended for policy researchers, academics, civic institutions, members of the diplomatic and diaspora communities, and informed general readers, particularly in the West, who have begun in recent years to take a serious interest in the worldview of contemporary Bharat. The brief is written with attention to factual accuracy, to the scholarly sources upon which it draws, and to the dignity of the conversations that it documents.

The reader will encounter, across the pages that follow, an organisation of striking coherence; a hundred-year-old movement that has never undergone an internal split, that operates over one hundred thousand local units across India through a structure that pays no member, that has inspired some forty national institutions, and that nevertheless approaches the conversation with the wider world in a spirit of humility and dialogue. The brief opens with the highlights of the three visits, sets out the foundations of the movement that undertook them, devotes a chapter to each country in turn, and closes with the recurring threads that bind the engagements together. The conversations of April 2026 mark a deliberate broadening of the civilisational dialogue that RSS has long cultivated. This brief is a contribution to its continuation.

**Note on terminology:** *The brief uses Bharat and India interchangeably, in keeping with the dual usage that has been part of the Indian self-understanding from the earliest days of the modern republic. It uses Hindu in the cultural and civilisational sense employed by RSS itself, and it preserves the Sanskrit terms swayamsevak, pracharak, shakha, seva and others where these convey nuances that English equivalents cannot fully capture. Each such term is explained on its first appearance.*

## II. Highlights

In April 2026, in the centenary year of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale undertook a sequence of engagements across the United Kingdom, the United States and Germany. The visits were conducted at the invitation of host institutions, in the spirit of dialogue coinciding with the centenary of RSS: an offering of a hundred years of reflection and experience to humanity at large, in the cause of the welfare of all beings and the global good. Their essential particulars are set out below.

**I. United Kingdom, 10 to 15 April 2026.** Six days of engagements in London and Rugby, including a session at Chatham House on RSS View of the World; a roundtable at the International Centre for Sustainability on Understanding Bharat from the Grassroots; an academic roundtable on RSS and Civic Institutions with researchers from Oxford, University College London, the School of Oriental and African Studies, the London School of Economics, Cambridge and Sussex; a cross party dinner with Members of Parliament and Peers from the House of Commons and the House of Lords; sessions with senior business leaders on the Global Vision of RSS in the Present Geopolitical Situation; a session with Hindu samaj leaders and community organisations; and a Karyakarta Mandal of Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh UK at Rugby. The conversations cultivated civilisational dialogue with British public life and presented a fuller picture of contemporary Bharat as a modern, technologically advanced and rising civilisational power.

**II. United States, 16 to 26 April 2026.** Ten days of engagements anchored by two principal events. The first was participation in the inaugural THRIVE 2026 summit at the Stanford Faculty Club on 16 and 17 April, convened by the Global Science Innovation Forum, where the Sarkaryavah spoke on the panel Science, Knowledge Systems and Civilisational Leadership alongside Nobel Laureate Steven Chu, Lieutenant General H.R. McMaster, Ram Shriram, Vinod Khosla and Professor Dame Juliet Gerrard. The second was a fireside dialogue at the Hudson Institute, Washington D.C., on 23 April, with the foreign policy thinker Walter Russell Mead. The visit also included a community reception at the Hilton McLean, Virginia, organised by the Foundation for India and Indian Diaspora Studies in association with the Hudson Institute; engagement with the Indian American diaspora in the Midwest hosted by leaders including Dr. Bharat Barai and Shrinarayan Chandak; a conversation with the technology and policy researcher Bill Drexel; and an interview with Rob Schmitz of National Public Radio.

**III. Germany, 28 to 29 April 2026.** Two days of discussions in Berlin with senior representatives of leading German policy institutions, namely Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik and Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, alongside members associated with the Abgeordnetenhaus of Berlin. The discussions explored structural similarities between Bharat and Germany as societies, the role of civil society institutions, sustainability across cultural and policy contexts, and the constructive participation of the Indian diaspora in German society. The Sarkaryavah also addressed a community gathering organised by the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh in Berlin to commemorate one hundred years of RSS, attended by over two hundred HSS volunteers.

**IV. Recurring themes across the three engagements.** Six themes surfaced consistently across London, Stanford, Washington and Berlin. First, the philosophy of oneness and the universal family, expressed in the ancient Sanskrit ideal of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, which holds that the whole world is one family. Second, the integration of cultural rootedness with modern progress, articulated through the image of the banyan tree whose deep roots and many branches together constitute its life. Third, the framework of Economy, Ecology and Ethics as the fuller lens through which scientific and technological progress must be evaluated. Fourth, the responsibility of the Indian diaspora to participate constructively in the social and economic fabric of its countries of residence while retaining its cultural connection with Bharat. Fifth, the framework of Panch Parivartan, the five centenary transformations of social harmony, family awakening, environmental stewardship, selfhood and civic duty, offered as universally applicable principles rather than as concerns particular to Bharat alone. Sixth, the hundred-year journey of RSS itself, sustained without break across a century of voluntary action, as a model of patient civilisational endeavour offered to the wider human family.

**V. The character of the engagements.** Across all three countries, the engagements were exploratory and dialogue driven, conducted on the invitation of host institutions, and undertaken in the spirit of mutual understanding. They reflect the wider recognition that the deepest connections between societies are formed through people to people and societal connects, in the conversations of scholars, the friendships of communities, the reflections of civic institutions and the everyday lives of diaspora families. The engagements documented in this brief are part of the wider offering that RSS makes to humanity in its centenary year, in the spirit of contribution to the welfare of all beings and the global good.

### III. Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh is a socio-cultural movement, founded in the city of Nagpur in central India on the festival of Vijayadashami in the year 1925 by Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar. It is the largest voluntary organisation in the world. RSS draws its name from three Sanskrit words. Rashtriya means national; Swayamsevak refers to a self motivated volunteer; Sangh denotes an association or coming together. Read together, the name articulates the very purpose of the movement, which is the formation of selfless self-motivated volunteers who place the well-being of the nation and the wider global family at the centre of their lives.

The core philosophy of RSS may be summarised as cultural oneness, selfless service, and universal goodwill. RSS views Hindu civilisational values as the enduring fabric of the Indian nation. The term Hindu, in RSS usage, is understood in a cultural and civilisational sense; it denotes cultural and traditional roots, and not in a theocratic sense. Successive Sarsanghchhalaks have made clear that Hindu Rashtra refers not to a religious state but to a nation rooted in the shared ethos of its civilisation, a nation that ensures oneness in diversity and equal respect for all communities. RSS considers all Indians as part of one extended family and invokes ancient Sanskrit ideal of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, the whole world is one family. Spiritual humanism, as upheld by RSS thinkers, holds that there is a divine spark in every individual; service or seva, to the poor or afflicted, is therefore considered a form of worship. From these convictions flow the practical emphases of the movement: the consolidation of social inclusivity across caste and community, Dharma as the righteous moral order, humility, discipline, respect for all and especially for elders, inclusive teamwork, and the principle of nation before self.

RSS conducts its principal activity through daily and weekly local gatherings called shakhas, in which volunteers known as swayamsevaks engage in physical exercise, often including yoga and traditional Indian games, the recitation of moral anecdotes, group discussion, song and the singing of an RSS prayer that salutes Bharat Mata, the Mother India. The shakha usually lasts about an hour. It is the bedrock of RSS and the cellular unit of the movement; it instils physical fitness, friendship, discipline and a deeply felt sense of equality among participants from every walk of life. As of the current count, RSS conducts approximately 88,949 daily shakhas across India, supplemented by approximately 30,000 additional weekly assemblies.

RSS is led by a Sarsanghchhalak, a position of moral and ideological guidance; the current Sarsanghchhalak is Dr. Mohan Bhagwat. Day to day operational direction is exercised by the Sarkaryavah, the General Secretary, supported by Sah-Sarkaryavahs, the Joint General Secretaries, and a team of full time functionaries called pracharaks. All offices in RSS are unpaid; pracharaks live a life of voluntary austerity and are admired for their personal integrity. Many give their full time to the work of RSS, renouncing professional careers and often remaining bachelors so as to be more mobile in their service. From the very beginning, Dr. Hedgewar himself cautioned the members never to treat him or any individual as a supreme leader, and he set in place the practice that the Bhagwa Dhwaj, the saffron flag, would be revered as the supreme guru of the movement rather than any person. This practice continues to this day. In RSS, an official post is referred to as dayitva, that is, responsibility, highlighting duty over authority.

RSS is open to all without distinction. There is no official membership form, no volunteer credits and no fee. There is also no age bar or qualification. One becomes a member, that is, a swayamsevak, simply by attending the local shakha and participating regularly. Boys typically join in childhood or youth, men of all ages may join at any time, and women may participate in parallel through the RSS inspired women's movement called the Rashtra Sevika Samiti. The shakhas have always been open to people of all castes and backgrounds, and inter dining and oneness across social strata are common in its gatherings. RSS preserves its independence from government and from external patrons through small offerings called Guru Dakshina, by which volunteers contribute modest sums to fund workings of RSS.



Swayamsevaks at a daily shakha, the bedrock of the RSS. These hour-long local gatherings bring together volunteers for physical exercise, yoga, traditional games, and song, instilling discipline, friendship, and a sense of equality across every walk of life.

While RSS confines its scope to running shakhas and enlisting volunteers with capacities and capabilities, those volunteers are encouraged to work in different sectors of national life based on their interests. Over time, dedicated swayamsevaks have voluntarily founded a plethora of organisations inspired by RSS ideals; among them, the Bhartiya Janta Party in politics, Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad in student affairs, the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh in labour, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad in religious and cultural activities, Seva Bharati for service projects, Vanavasi Kalyan Ashram for tribal welfare, and Vidya Bharati running schools, among many others. These inspired organisations operate independently but maintain relations with RSS; a coordination forum called the Samanvay committee ensures that they communicate with one another and uphold common values. RSS itself, as a movement, pointedly stays out of party politics. Approximately forty inspired institutions, most of them themselves nationwide, work in every major domain of public life.

The scale of RSS, when stated in plain numbers, is striking. Over one hundred and ten thousand local units convene every week or every day across the country. Hundreds of thousands of full time and part time swayamsevaks (volunteers) contribute their labour without compensation or credit. This scale, however, is not the most significant fact about RSS. The most significant fact is that this scale is achieved without coercion, without paid employment, without compulsory membership and without external funding. It is achieved through the slow, patient cultivation of voluntary commitment over many years and across many generations. The continuity of leadership and the absence of internal schism across a hundred years are widely regarded as among the most distinctive features of RSS. Observers have attributed this stability to the consensual succession of its Sarsanghchalaks, the strong shared sense of mission, and the cultural emphasis on duty over privilege within the organisation.

It is this experience that RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale brought to his engagements across the United Kingdom, the United States and Germany in April 2026. The General Secretary of RSS occupies a unique vantage point. He is responsible for the day to day functioning of the entire movement; he travels widely across India and increasingly across the world; he is in continual conversation with volunteers at every level, from the youngest swayamsevak in a neighbourhood shakha to the most senior pracharak engaged in national discussions; and he speaks not in his own name but in the name of the long tradition that RSS embodies. His remarks in London, at the Stanford Faculty Club, at the Hudson Institute and in Berlin are, accordingly, the articulation of the worldview of one of the most influential socio-cultural movements of the present age. The chapters that follow set out the philosophical, historical and organisational foundations of that worldview, before turning to the engagements themselves.

## IV. Philosophy and Ideological Foundations

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh was founded upon a simple yet profound idea, namely that the national resurgence of India required the revitalisation of the society's core cultural values and its underlying oneness. Dr. Hedgewar and his successors viewed Hindu civilisation as the enduring fabric of the Indian nation. In the words of Sarsanghchalaks throughout the years, Hindu culture is the life breath of Bharat; without it India would remain a mere geographical entity rather than a nation with a soul.

The term Hindu, in RSS usage, is understood in a cultural and civilisational sense. RSS sees India's ancient heritage, its philosophical traditions and its way of life, collectively termed Hindutva or Hinduness, as the wellspring of national character and social cohesion. This usage does not denote a theocratic sense; rather, it denotes cultural and traditional roots. Successive Sarsanghchalaks have made clear that Hindu Rashtra refers not to a religious state but to a nation rooted in the shared ethos of its civilisation, a nation that ensures oneness in diversity and equal respect for all communities. From its earliest days RSS has stood against divisiveness.

RSS embodies the notion that the body and mind are dedicated to society. Service to society, in this view, is service to the divine, and it extends naturally to the welfare of the entire world. The core philosophy of RSS can therefore be summarised as cultural oneness, selfless service, and universal goodwill.

A key philosophical tenet of RSS is the idea of strength through shared Samskruti, that is, shared tradition and culture. Only a strong and united society can safeguard its freedom and dignity. An early RSS resolution declared that it is the duty of every Hindu to consolidate Hindu society, with RSS acting as the instrument to carry out this task. This focus on unity translates directly into social inclusivity. RSS considers all Indians as part of one extended family. It invokes ancient Sanskrit ideal of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, the whole world is one family. In practice, RSS has, over the years, undertaken many initiatives to erode caste barriers and promote social harmony. Its shakhas have always been open to people of all castes and backgrounds, and inter dining and oneness across social strata are common in its gatherings. Its inspired organisations, in turn, work with communities across faiths and traditions; the Muslim Rashtriya Manch (Muslim National Forum) engages with Muslim communities, the Rashtriya Isai Manch (National Christian Forum) engages with Christian communities, and dharmic forums such as the Rashtriya Sikh Sangat (National Sikh Association) work amongst the followers of the Sikh Gurus, among other such initiatives.

Spiritual humanism, as upheld by RSS thinkers, holds that there is a divine spark in every individual. The literal commitment of a swayamsevak is that his physical capacities and his mental faculties are placed at the disposal of society. The motivation is not gratitude for something received but recognition that one is, by nature, indebted to the larger life that sustains one. If there is a divine spark in every individual, then service to another human being is, in a real sense, service to the divine itself. Seva is therefore not an external obligation imposed upon the swayamsevak by the requirements of social policy. It is the natural expression of a worldview in which the well-being of every other human being matters as deeply as one's own. This philosophical grounding distinguishes RSS seva from much of what is called philanthropy or charity in the western world. Philanthropy in the modern sense often presupposes a giver who has resources and a recipient who lacks them, and the relationship is essentially one way. Seva, in RSS understanding, is not a one way transfer from giver to recipient. It is the offering of oneself in a relationship in which both parties are dignified, in which the server is neither superior nor pitying, and in which the service rendered is itself a privilege gratefully accepted.

This philosophy of seva, combined with patriotism, has caused RSS to evolve as a movement devoted to the uplift of the nation rather than to any narrow self-interest. Humanitarian relief and community service have therefore become a prominent aspect of RSS work. Since its inception, RSS volunteers have been mobilised for relief during natural disasters and national crises, from helping refugees during the Partition of India in 1947 to almost every earthquake and flood relief in later years. Prominent commentators and leaders in Indian public life have acknowledged the personal integrity and dedication of RSS selfless volunteers.

The concept of leadership in RSS is that the ultimate guru is the ideal, symbolised by the Bhagwa Dhvaj (saffron flag), and not any living person. No leader is considered infallible or beyond the organisational principles. From the very beginning, Dr. Hedgewar himself requested volunteers never to treat him or any individual as a supreme leader. RSS ideology hopes for a future society in which social institutions function harmoniously, guided by Dharma, that is, by the righteous moral order. In guiding its volunteers, RSS therefore lays great emphasis on humility, discipline, respect for all, especially elders, and inclusive teamwork. The daily routine of the shakha, in which volunteers collectively perform exercises, games and rituals and take turns leading activities, is intended to ingrain an ethos of cooperative action without egotism.

RSS thinkers further promote the philosophy of Integral Humanism, originally propounded by Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya, a lifelong swayamsevak of RSS, which envisions a model of development that balances material and spiritual well-being. Integral Humanism brings together the four dimensions of human life, the body, the mind, the intellect and the soul, and insists that the well-being of any one of these is incomplete without the well-being of the others. In the same spirit, RSS articulates a model of national development in which modern progress advances alongside spiritual wisdom, ethical conduct and cultural rootedness, the four moving together as inseparable dimensions of the same human enterprise.

By prioritising nation before self and emphasising that the mission is bigger than any one individual, RSS philosophy creates character rich nationals who can serve the nation in many different capacities. It is upon this foundation of philosophy that all work of RSS, from its civic institutions to its global engagements, is ultimately built.

Dr. Hedgewar Smruti Mandir in Reshimbagh, Nagpur.  
Reshimbagh is where the Sangh's first shakha was held in  
1925, making it a place of deep significance for swayamsevaks.





Representatives at the Akhil Bharatiya Pratinidhi Sabha, the RSS's apex decision-making council. Meeting annually to decide the direction and working of the RSS through consultation and consensus, it brings together around 1,500 representatives from all organisational provinces (prants) and major RSS-inspired organisations.

## V. Organisation and Working

RSS is unique in its organisational structure, which is at once highly disciplined and informal in its texture. There is no official membership form, no volunteer credits and no fee. One becomes a member, that is, a swayamsevak, simply by attending the local shakha and participating regularly. There is also no age bar or qualification. Boys typically join in childhood or youth, men of all ages may join at any time, and women may participate in parallel through the separate RSS inspired women's movement called Rashtra Sevika Samiti.

The basic unit of RSS is the shakha, which can be as small as a dozen volunteers who meet daily, or weekly in some cases, in a neighbourhood park or any open space. The shakha usually lasts about an hour and includes physical exercises, often including yoga and traditional Indian games, the recitation of moral anecdotes, group discussion and the singing of an RSS prayer that salutes Bharat Mata, the Mother India. This routine has been the bedrock of RSS; it instils physical fitness, friendship, discipline and a deeply felt sense of equality among participants from every walk of life.

To understand RSS one must understand the swayamsevak. The English word volunteer is a loose translation of the Sanskrit term, the meaning of the original is richer. A swayamsevak is not a person who gives some hours to community work and receives a credit in return. A swayamsevak is a person who has adopted volunteering as a way of life. In RSS understanding, the volunteer is twenty-four hours by seven days a week and three hundred and sixty-five days a year. Once a swayamsevak, the saying goes, always a swayamsevak. The commitment is not to a particular project but to a particular way of being in the world, in which service is woven into every dimension of life: family, profession, community and nation. The mechanism by which this way of life is cultivated is the daily shakha. Over months and years, the swayamsevak forms friendships that last a lifetime, develops habits of discipline and self-reliance, comes to associate his own well-being with the well-being of the wider community, and gradually internalises the values that RSS seeks to cultivate. The continuity of the work is sustained by both an organisational structure and the personal bonds of friendship and shared mission that grow within the

shakha. From these millions of swayamsevaks, present in nearly every walk of life across the country, RSS draws the depth and the texture of its presence in society.

From thousands of such shakhas, the wider organisation of RSS volunteers emerges. Local units are grouped, for purposes of coordination, into districts, regions and provinces, designated in Hindi as Nagar, Prant and so forth, up to the all India level. The organisation as a whole is mentored by the Sarsanghchalak. He is a friend, philosopher and guide to all volunteers and the working style of RSS is consultative. There exists an apex council called the Akhil Bharatiya Pratinidhi Sabha or general council, which has representatives from all states and major inspired organisations and which meets annually to discuss and decide through consultation and consensus the direction and broad Karyapadhathi or system of working. On a day to day basis, much of the operational leadership lies with the Sarkaryavah, the General Secretary, supported by the Sah-Sarkaryavahs, the Joint General Secretaries, and a team of pracharakas who serve as full time functionaries for various zones and projects. Notably, even the Sarsanghchalak, supremely respected, lives a simple life like any other pracharak.

The pracharak tradition is among the most distinctive features of RSS. A pracharak is a full time, lifelong volunteer who renounces a private career, often remains unmarried so as to be more mobile in his service, and dedicates himself entirely to the work of RSS. He receives no salary. He is supported by the wider community of swayamsevaks for his basic needs. He travels frequently, living a life of voluntary austerity, and serves wherever the organisation requires his presence. Over a century, this tradition has produced a remarkable cohort of austere and devoted men whose only credential is their service. Many have spent decades travelling from one part of Bharat to another, organising shakhas, mentoring young volunteers and embodying in their own lives the values that RSS seeks to inculcate. RSS leadership has consistently been drawn from the pracharak tradition; the present Sarsanghchalak Dr. Mohan Bhagwat and the present Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale have themselves spent their adult lives as pracharakas, as did each of their predecessors. The pracharak is not a salaried official; he is a volunteer who has made his volunteering complete. Through his life he keeps the spirit of the movement alive in a thousand local settings, and through his unselfishness he immunises the movement against the corruptions to which civic organisations are otherwise prone.



One hallmark of RSS organisational culture is the spirit of selflessness and volunteerism at every level. All functionaries of RSS, from local shakha volunteers to the Sarsanghchalak himself, are unpaid. This voluntary character has won admiration from many observers, as it has produced honest and austere leaders. Internal decision making in RSS emphasises consensus. The RSS principle is that positions are responsibilities, not privileges. In RSS, an official post is referred to as dayitva, that is, responsibility, highlighting duty over authority. This approach has helped to keep the organisation cohesive across generations.

Another striking aspect of the structure of RSS is its network of inspired organisations. While RSS confines its scope to running shakhas and enlisting volunteers with capacities and capabilities, those volunteers are encouraged to work in different sectors of national life based on their interests. Over time, dedicated swayamsevaks have voluntarily founded a plethora of organisations aligned with RSS ideals; approximately forty such institutions, most of them themselves nationwide, work in every major domain of public life. In the world of student affairs, the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad has become one of the largest student movements in the country. In labour, the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh has grown into the largest trade union in Bharat, articulating a distinctively Bharatiya approach to the dignity of work. In religious and cultural life, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad has anchored the long civilisational endeavour of the Indian people. In service, Seva Bharati has carried out work in urban slums and rural villages across the country. In tribal welfare, Vanavasi Kalyan Ashram has extended schools, hostels and welfare programmes to forest dwelling communities across the central and northeastern belts. In education, Vidya Bharati operates one of the largest non-government school networks in Bharat, while Ekal Vidyalaya has brought one teacher schools to remote habitations. In rural development, the Deendayal Research Institute has pioneered the Chitrakoot model of

integrated village transformation. In economic thought, the Swadeshi Jagaran Manch has long advocated the path of self-reliance. In language, Samskrita Bharati works for the revival of Sanskrit as a living language of thought, and in the arts, Sanskar Bharati supports cultural expression rooted in civilisational continuity. In the engagement of inter community dialogue, the Muslim Rashtriya Manch, the Rashtriya Isai Manch and the Rashtriya Sikh Sangat carry the spirit of universal family into work with Muslim, Christian and Sikh communities, alongside many other such initiatives. In the welfare of former servicemen, the Poorva Sainik Seva Parishad supports veterans of the armed forces. RSS volunteers also played a key role in the formation in 1951 of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh, which later evolved into the Bharatiya Janata Party, the latter remaining inspired by RSS philosophy. RSS itself, however, pointedly stays out of party politics as a movement. Swayamsevaks go on to hold key presence in various social, cultural, educational, developmental, labour and political fields across Bharat based on their interest and merit. This expansive network allows for specialised work in many domains while the core of RSS focuses on its primary task of character building. The inspired organisations operate independently but maintain relations with RSS; a coordination forum called the Samanvay committee ensures that all such organisations communicate with one another and uphold common values.

Throughout its organisational evolution, RSS has adapted gracefully to changing times. In recent years it has evolved some practices; for instance RSS has begun making considered use of digital tools for internal communication and outreach. Yet the essence of its organisational model remains the daily shakha and the personal bond between swayamsevaks as members of an extended family of brothers, and through the Rashtra Sevika Samiti also as sisters, working towards a common ideal.



Dr. Hedgewar at the 1930 Satyagraha against British occupation of India, part of his lifelong involvement in the freedom struggle that predated and continued alongside his founding of the RSS.

## VI. Journey of Bharat and RSS

The story of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and the story of Bharat are intertwined. In every situation through which the nation has passed, in moments of struggle and in moments of construction, in adversity and in the steady work of ordinary days, RSS has been present at the side of Bharat. It has formed the national backbone in times of trial and contributed quietly to every dimension of the country's growth in times of peace. The two have moved together; what Bharat has lived through, RSS has lived through with it, in a relationship of companionship and complementary purpose. From a small founding gathering in a Nagpur park to a movement of one hundred thousand local units, RSS has walked alongside the nation as it has travelled from colonial occupation to the threshold of its civilisational resurgence in the present century. To understand RSS is to understand the journey of the nation within which it took root.

In 1925, Bharat was nearing the centre of its struggle for independence after nearly two centuries of colonial rule. Indian society had been depleted of its self-confidence by a long colonial education that taught it to look upon its own civilisational inheritance as backward, and the social fabric of the country had been weakened by inherited divisions. The freedom movement, then gathering momentum under figures including Gandhi and Tilak, had awakened the political consciousness of the country, but it had not yet resolved the deeper question of what kind of society would inhabit a free India. It was this question that occupied Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar, who concluded that beyond the immediate task of ousting the colonial administrators, the deeper challenge was the cultivation of unity, self-confidence and a rekindled sense of shared purpose among the people of Bharat. The founding of RSS on Vijayadashami in 1925 was the practical expression of that thought.

In the two decades that followed, RSS grew alongside the freedom movement. Dr. Hedgewar himself had been jailed twice, in 1921 and 1931, for his participation in the freedom struggle. During the Quit India movement of 1942, swayamsevaks took part under the leadership of M. S. Golwalkar (Guruji), the second Sarsanghchalak. The houses of senior RSS functionaries provided safe haven to underground freedom fighters, including Aruna Asaf Ali, who later recalled being given refuge by the Delhi Sanghchalak Lala Hansraj for several days in 1942. Swayamsevaks such as Hemu Kalani of Sindh, who removed fishplates from railway tracks to obstruct the movement of British troops, were martyred by the colonial occupiers. Colonial British intelligence reports of the period acknowledged with concern the rapid expansion of RSS and the spread of patriotic awakening across the country.

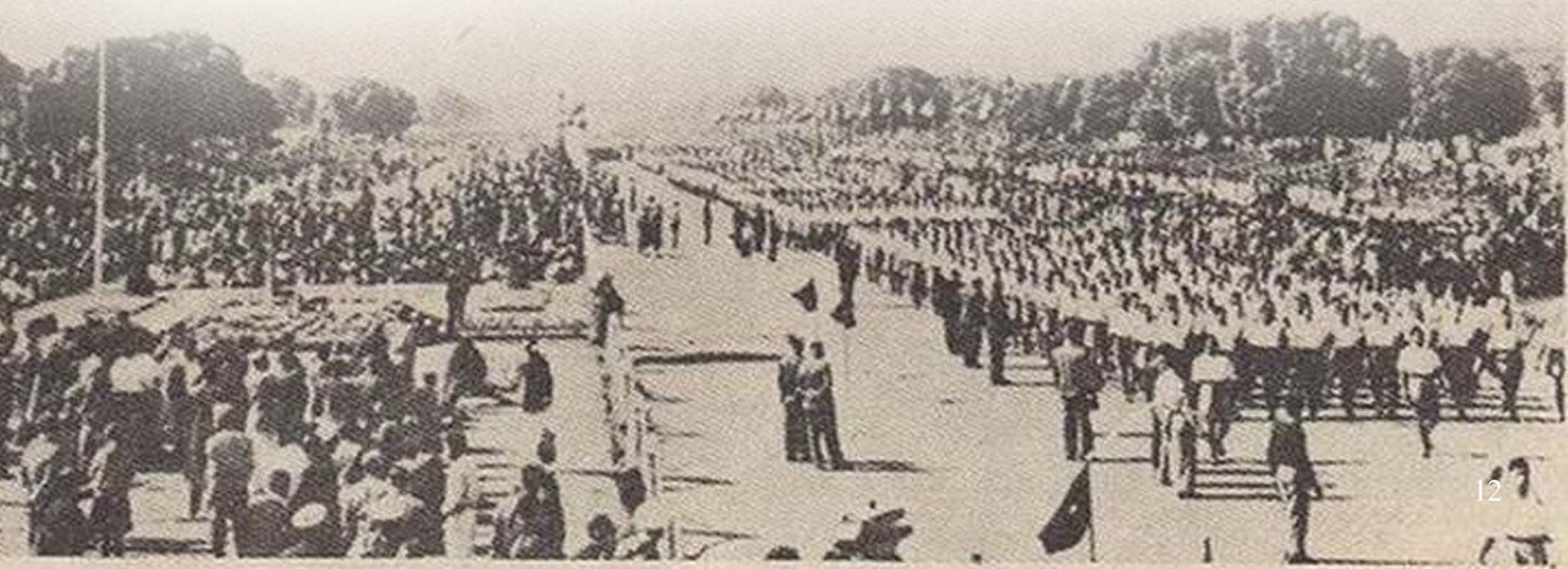
The achievement of independence in 1947 was accompanied by the trauma of Partition, in which the country was divided along religious lines and millions of people were uprooted from their homes. Swayamsevaks worked across the new border to bring families safely to India and to organise relief and rehabilitation across Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, Rajasthan, Delhi and West Bengal. In Amritsar, swayamsevaks defended the sacred Darbar Sahib against attacks on the nights of 6 and 9 March 1947, and seventy-five swayamsevaks were posted thereafter to safeguard the shrine. In Calcutta, the Vastuhara Sahayata Samiti, established to receive refugees from

East Bengal, fed eighty thousand people, distributed clothing to over one hundred and fifty thousand more, helped over three thousand families secure employment, and settled over a thousand families on agricultural land. Recording these events in 1949, Professor A. N. Bali wrote of the swayamsevaks that "their discipline, their physical fitness and their selflessness in the face of dangers came to the rescue of the people in Punjab when the whole province was burning."

In the same period, at the request of Sardar Patel, Guruji travelled to Srinagar to meet Maharaja Hari Singh of Jammu and Kashmir and discussed that accession to the Indian Union was the course in the interest of both the State and its people. Eight days later the Maharaja signed the Instrument of Accession, and Jammu and Kashmir became an integral part of India.

In the decades that followed, the nation was tested in three wars. During the conflict with China in 1962 and the wars with Pakistan in 1965 and 1971, swayamsevaks across the country undertook traffic management, civil defence, blood donation, refugee assistance and support to the families of soldiers. Their discipline in 1962 was so striking that Prime Minister of India Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru invited swayamsevaks to march in the 1963 Republic Day Parade. In 1971, RSS volunteers ran camps across West Bengal, Assam and Tripura that provided food, shelter and medical aid to lakhs of families crossing over from East Bengal during the war that resulted in the liberation of Bangladesh.

A 3500-strong contingent of swayamsevaks in full uniform, with RSS band, marching in the Republic Day Parade, Delhi, 1963, months after the swayamsevaks service during the 1962 Sino-Indian War.



When the suspension of democratic rights during the internal emergency of 1975 to 1977 placed the country's fundamental freedoms under threat, swayamsevaks across the nation participated in the campaign for the restoration of democracy. The lifting of the Emergency in 1977 confirmed that the democratic spirit of Bharat would not yield. During the difficult days that followed the assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984, RSS volunteers protected vulnerable Sikh families across Delhi and elsewhere; the noted columnist Khushwant Singh later acknowledged that RSS had played an honourable role in maintaining Hindu Sikh unity in those moments. On 25 June 1989, twenty one swayamsevaks were martyred when terrorists attacked an RSS shakha in a park at Moga, Punjab, a tragedy met with a renewed resolve to nation building.

Alongside its work in moments of trial, RSS contributed throughout these decades to the steady cultural and civilisational reawakening of Bharat. From the late 1980s, the long movement for the restoration of the Ram Janmabhoomi at Ayodhya gathered momentum and saw the participation of swayamsevaks across the country. The movement reflected a deeper aspiration of Indian society to recover and honour the sacred sites at the heart of its civilisational memory. After decades of patient effort and protracted legal proceedings, the Supreme Court of India delivered its verdict in November 2019 and the Pran Pratishtha, the consecration of the deity, took place on 22 January 2024 in the presence of the Sarsanghchalak Dr. Mohan Bhagwat and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The moment marked the culmination of a generation long civilisational endeavour.

Alongside this cultural reawakening, RSS has contributed a body of intellectual thought that has shaped how Bharat thinks about its own development. An influential articulation came from Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya, whose philosophy of Integral Humanism, propounded in 1965, offered a model of development that balances the four dimensions of human life, the body, the mind, the intellect and the soul, and refuses to reduce the human being to a unit of either material production or political abstraction.

The principle of Antyodaya, the rise of the last person, which flows from Integral Humanism, has shaped Indian thinking on inclusive development across the decades since.

In the field of labour and economic thought, Dattopant Thengadi founded the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh in 1955, today the largest trade union in the country, and articulated a distinctively Bharatiya approach to labour grounded in dignity, duty and the well-being of the worker's family rather than in class antagonism alone. Thengadi also founded the Swadeshi Jagaran Manch, whose case for economic self-reliance long preceded the present national vocabulary of Atmanirbharta.

In rural development, Nanaji Deshmukh founded the Deendayal Research Institute and pioneered the Chitrakoot model of integrated village development, an enduring contribution to Indian thinking on gram swaraj (Village self-governance) and the role of culture in growth, for which he was conferred the Bharat Ratna in 2019.

The wider RSS swayamsevaks has contributed in parallel to other domains. Vidya Bharati has articulated a culturally rooted approach to education that has informed the wider national conversation, including aspects of the National Education Policy of 2020 and the integration of Indian Knowledge Systems into mainstream curricula.

RSS thinkers have long articulated a dharmic ecological sensibility, drawing on Indic traditions of reverence for nature well before climate change became a global vocabulary, and have given the cause of Paryavaran, environmental stewardship, the place it now occupies as one of the five centenary focus areas.

Sanskrita Bharati has worked for the revival of Sanskrit as a living language of thought, and Sanskar Bharati for the arts, both contributing to the long civilisational continuity that has been the central preoccupation of RSS reflection across its hundred years. These contributions, taken together, have helped to sharpen the intellectual foundations on which contemporary Bharat now stands.

As India opened to the world economy from 1991 onwards and entered a phase of rapid growth, RSS articulated a vision of national development in which modern progress could advance alongside cultural rootedness rather than at its expense. RSS inspired institutions that grew from the soil of RSS gave practical form to that vision. Vidya Bharati became one of the largest non-government school networks in the country, educating millions of children.

Vanavasi Kalyan Ashram extended schools, hostels and welfare programmes to tribal communities across the central and northeastern belts. Seva Bharati conducted service projects in urban slums and rural villages. Ekal Vidyalayas (One teacher schools) brought one teacher schools to remote habitations. Environmental initiatives across the wider RSS family promoted tree planting, water conservation and ecological education. The everyday rhythm of the shakha, multiplied across one hundred and ten thousand locations, formed the cultural ground from which all of these institutions drew their volunteers.

Service in times of disaster continued unabated. When the Bhuj earthquake devastated Kutch in January 2001, swayamsevaks were among the first responders, distributing relief and helping families

to rebuild. The pattern repeated itself in the floods of Bihar, Assam and Kerala, in the cyclones of the eastern coast, and in landslides in the Himalayan region. RSS became, in effect, an institutional infrastructure of service that the country could rely upon when ordinary infrastructure was overwhelmed.

The COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 to 2021 brought one of the largest mobilisations of voluntary effort in the history of RSS. Over three lakh forty two thousand swayamsevaks served at sixty seven thousand locations across the country, distributed ration kits to over fifty lakh families and meal packets to over three crore people, organised over forty four lakh face masks and tens of thousands of units of blood donation, and ran COVID Service Centres in forty three major cities. The Pune pattern of door to door medical screening, conducted jointly by trained doctors and Sangh volunteers in containment zones, became a recognised model of community led pandemic response. Beyond food and medical aid, swayamsevaks organised cremation services for families bereaved during the worst phases of the second wave, the kind of seva that rarely makes headlines.

Swayamsevaks assisting at a Covid vaccination drive in Bhopal. Across the pandemic, the RSS mobilised volunteers nationwide to support hospitals, distribute food and oxygen, and help run inoculation camps.



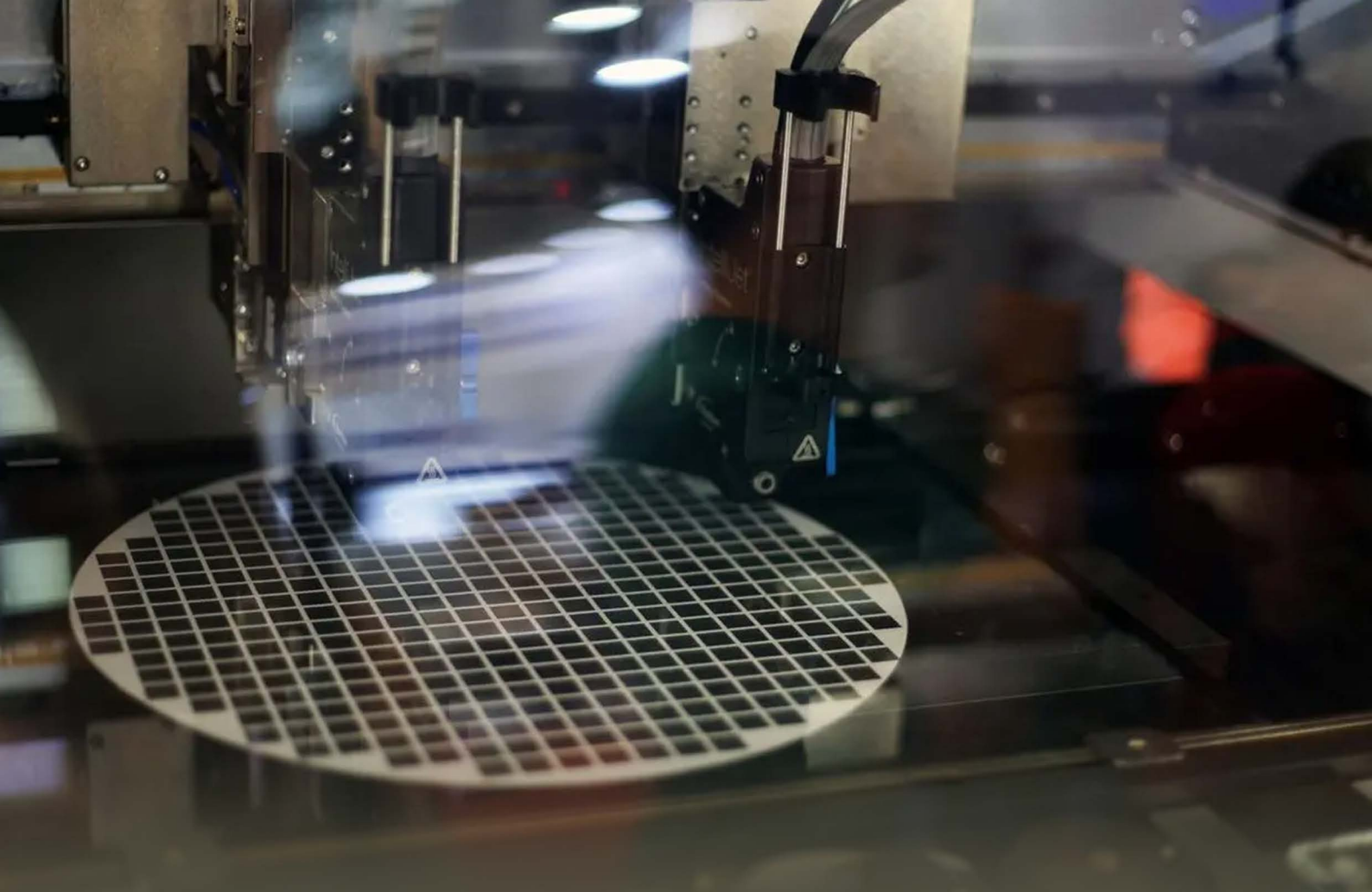
Each of the six elevated men who have served as Sarsanghchalak, from Dr. Hedgewar in 1925 to the current Sarsanghchalak Dr. Mohan Bhagwat, has upheld the same core vision while adapting strategy to the changing requirements of the times. The continuity of leadership and the absence of internal schism are widely regarded as among the most distinctive features of RSS. Observers have attributed this stability to the consensual succession of its Sarsanghchalaks, the strong shared sense of mission, and the cultural emphasis on duty over privilege within the organisation.

A century on, both the movement and the nation stand transformed. From a small founding gathering in a Nagpur park, RSS has grown into a presence in every state of Bharat, sustaining one

hundred thousand local units, inspiring forty nationwide institutions, and shaping a body of thought that has informed Indian reflection on development, labour, education, ecology and culture. From a society depleted by colonial rule, Bharat has emerged into the confidence of its own civilisational voice. The hundred years that have passed have been the years in which a fragmented people rediscovered the unity that lies beneath their diversity, and in which a movement founded in 1925 became one of the largest associations of selfless self-motivated volunteers the world has known. The journey of Bharat and the journey of RSS, distinct in their forms but companionable in their purpose, have arrived together at the threshold of a second century.

## RSS Sarsanghchalaks Through the Years





## VII. Vision for India's Future

From its inception, the vision of RSS has been the all-round national rejuvenation of Bharat based on its civilisational values. Dr. Hedgewar often spoke of an independent Bharat rediscovering its civilisational glory, and the long arc of his thought has shaped every successive Sarsanghchalak's articulation of the RSS mission. RSS seeks the building of a society that is self-confident, united and capable of resisting both external threats and internal social ills, with cultural strength as the foundation of national strength.

In practical terms, RSS envisions Bharat as a strong, self-reliant, just and inclusive nation, capable of offering elevated leadership on the world stage. The aspiration of Bharat as a Vishwaguru, a world teacher or guide, draws upon its historic civilisational contributions to science, technology, medicine, yoga and spirituality, as well as upon its harmonious worldview rooted in the welfare of all humanity and all beings. Contemporary RSS thinkers articulate a model of national development in which modern progress advances alongside spiritual wisdom, ethical conduct and cultural rootedness, the four moving

together as inseparable dimensions of the same human enterprise. RSS usage of the term Hindu Rashtra does not connote a theocratic state. Rather, it refers to an inclusive nation enlightened by the age old Sanatana Dharma, that is, governance guided by the eternal values of Bharat's heritage. The vision is one of a Bharat whose institutions, public life and civic culture are informed by the wisdom of its long civilisational inheritance, while remaining open to the best that other cultures have to offer.

The animating insight of this vision is that cultural values and modernisation are not strictly opposed. While modernisation may bring industrialisation, technology and individualistic trends, and while cultural continuity is rooted in older patterns of life, the two can exist simultaneously, even if some adaptation is required from time to time. The experience of many oriental societies in recent decades bears this out. Whether one looks at Hindu society in Bharat, or at Japan, or others, all have modernised significantly while keeping their cultural and civilisational values intact and drawing inspiration from those values.

To illustrate the point philosophically, RSS thinkers invoke the Sanskrit word Sanatan, which means the eternal. Sanatana, in the philosophical tenets of Hindu thought, is at once ancient and ever growing. Culture and modernisation, in this understanding, are part of nature; they are conditions of one another, and the integration of the two is the work of the present generation. In many traditions of philosophical reflection, both Eastern and Western, the deepest cultural roots and the most ambitious projects of modernisation are seen not as adversaries but as conditions of one another. The deepest cultural inheritance and the most advanced technological capability, in this view, are the two hands of a single civilisational endeavour.

On the question of technology and modernity, the RSS view is unmistakably affirmative. The movement seeks to integrate modern technology within a framework of traditional Bharatiya culture, promoting a philosophy in which culture and modernisation flourish together. RSS articulates a techno civilisational approach that places self-reliance, Swa, at the centre, embracing technology for national development while preserving the depth of Bharat's cultural sensibility. Technology, in this view, is necessary and welcome for development; the considered intent is that Bharat should be a creative master of technology and shape its uses for the wider human good rather than be reshaped by it.

The application of this affirmative vision is wide ranging and concrete. RSS supports production by the masses rather than only mass production, harnessing modern tools to ensure dignified employment for Bharat's vast population, and using technology to strengthen rural development, organic farming and small scale industries within the broader Swadeshi tradition. RSS welcomes artificial intelligence as a transformative force for economic renewal and agriculture, and it advocates digital sovereignty in Bharat's technology. Its outreach extends to digital skill development and the considered engagement of technology in education, ensuring that the next generation is

equipped to meet the challenges and opportunities of the present age. In its own self-description, RSS is an evolving, responsive and organic entity that uses modern technology to strengthen Bharat's traditional identity. The integration of cultural inheritance with technological capability is not, in the RSS view, a paradox to be managed but a synthesis to be cultivated.

The current Sarsanghchalak Mohan Bhagwat has spoken about creating a society in which science and technology advance in concert with cultural rootedness and ethical responsibility. RSS thinkers promote ideals such as Integral Humanism, the philosophy propounded by Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya, which envisions a model of development that balances material and spiritual well-being. In social terms, the vision of RSS includes the eradication of caste discrimination, the uplift of the underprivileged and the acknowledgement of women's power, called Naari Shakti, all within a framework of cultural continuity that draws strength from inherited wisdom rather than from imported ideologies.

In the near term, RSS sees its role as that of a socio-cultural nation builder, guiding societal elevation, fostering cultural and civilisational values among the youth, and responding to the nation's needs as they emerge. Its vision consistently emphasises work beyond the realm of government, through communities and individuals, to bring about change in character and consciousness. RSS describes itself as a guiding, providing and protective force in society; it guides moral values, its volunteers provide selfless service and relief, and it upholds cultural integrity. This is the vision RSS carries into its centenary year and into its conversations with the world. The chapter that follows sets out the practical map of that vision in the form of Panch Parivartan, the five centenary focus areas through which RSS now seeks to embed this vision in the everyday life of society.

# Panch Parivartan (Five Transformations)

## Samajik Samrasta

Social harmony and cohesion  
Overcoming inherited barriers,  
building friendships across  
communities, weaving threads of  
plural society into a single fabric.  
*Universal: every diverse society*



## Kutumb Prabodhan

Family awakening  
Strengthening bonds of affection,  
respect and trust within the family;  
transmission of cultural memory  
across generations.  
*Universal: families everywhere*



**INDIVIDUAL  
TO FAMILY  
TO NATION  
TO HUMANITY**

## Paryavaran

Environmental stewardship  
Saving water, planting trees,  
organic farming, conserving  
local water bodies; recovery of  
kinship with the living world.  
*Universal:  
the planetary home*



## Swa

Selfhood and self reliance  
Culture, languages and products of  
one's own; self respect and capacity  
as the foundation for generous  
engagement with the world.  
*Universal:  
every confident nation*



## Nagrik Kartavya

Civic duty  
Following traffic laws, paying taxes,  
keeping public places clean; civic  
character as the indispensable  
counterpart of democratic institutions.  
*Universal: every working democracy*



## VIII. Panch Parivartan: Five Centenary Focus Areas

In its centennial year the vision of RSS has crystallised into Panch Parivartan, the Five Transformations, a holistic mission launched by RSS to drive societal and national reconstruction. The mission focuses on five key pillars of change that begin with the individual and the family, and extend through them to the eventual

transformation of the entire nation, and ultimately to the welfare of humanity at large. The five transformations together form the practical map of that work. They are universal in their significance; they speak not only to the needs of Bharat but to the needs of every society that seeks to renew itself in the conditions of the present age.

The first focus area is social harmony and cohesion, expressed within Panch Parivartan as Samajik Samrasta. Within any large and diverse society, the existence of disparities and varied identities can occasionally generate tensions. Samajik Samrasta invites the individual to look upon every other member of society as kin, and the family to teach this disposition to its children. Through inter community gatherings, the celebration of festivals together and the daily practices of common life, inherited barriers begin to dissolve and friendships emerge across communities. Social harmony, in this view, is not the suppression of diversity but the flowering of unity within it. As individuals and families take up the practice, neighbourhoods change, and as neighbourhoods change, the nation moves towards a more cohesive expression of its plural inheritance. The transformation envisaged is universal: societies across the world face inherited divisions, and the patient work of harmony is the shared inheritance of humanity wherever it lives.

The second focus area is family awakening, expressed within Panch Parivartan as Kutumb Prabodhan. Families are built on affection and trust. In the conditions of modern life, families everywhere come under various pressures and risk losing their cohesion. Kutumb Prabodhan affirms that healthy families are the guarantee of healthy nations, and indeed of a healthy human family. The work begins within the household: in the practice of affection and respect among parents, children and elders; in the discipline of lifelong learning; in the transmission of cultural memory across generations. Family values, in this sense, are not narrow or constraining but expansive. The family is the fundamental institution within which character is formed, and the strengthening of the family is therefore the most direct contribution to the strengthening of the wider society and ultimately the wider human community. The work of family awakening, like the work of harmony, speaks to the central concern of every society in the present age.

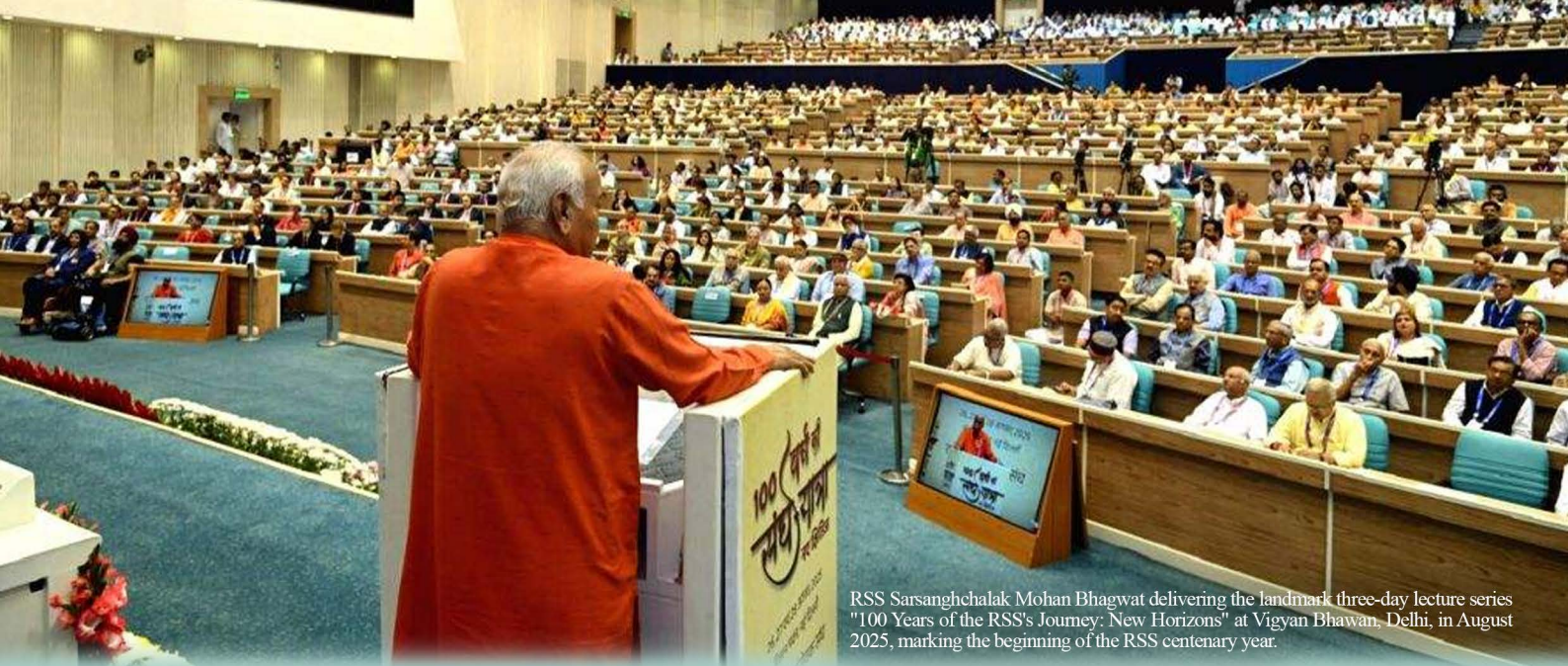
The third focus area is environmental stewardship, expressed within Panch Parivartan as Paryavaran. Environmental issues are widely discussed on international forums, public policies are framed and protocols are signed; yet ultimately, environmental outcomes depend on how individuals, families and communities behave with respect to nature. Paryavaran therefore communicates small but doable actions that ordinary people can take in their everyday lives. Using less energy, saving water, planting trees, embracing organic farming and conserving local water bodies; when these simple practices are adopted by an individual, taken up by a family, and embraced by millions of families together, they become a powerful force for ecological well-being on which the entire human family depends. Paryavaran draws on the wider recovery of an ecological sensibility that has long been part of Indic civilisation and that finds, in different forms, expression in traditional cultures across the world. The transformation envisaged is at once intimate and planetary: the recovery of a respectful kinship with the living world that sustains us all.

The fourth focus area is selfhood, expressed within Panch Parivartan as Swa, and captured more widely in the contemporary term Atmanirbharta. Swa promotes culture, languages and products, and marks the considered movement from political freedom, Swatantrata, to genuine self-reliance. The work begins with the individual's relationship to her own cultural inheritance, with the family's transmission of its languages and traditions, and with the household's preference for products of one's own land. From these everyday practices, a society develops its capacities, and from a society of capable households, a nation builds the foundations of true self-reliance. Self-reliance, in this sense, is not the closing of doors but the maintenance of self-respect and capacity. International cooperation, trade and intellectual exchange continue, and indeed flourish on a stronger foundation. The principle is universal: any engagement between societies must be on terms

that are fair to each, and that protect the long term interests of all. Self-reliance is the foundation that allows generous engagement with the world to be sustained, and it strengthens the ground upon which the whole human family can stand together.

The fifth focus area is civic duty, expressed within Panch Parivartan as Nagrik Kartavya. The institutions of democracy, the institutions of public life and the institutions of community everywhere require citizens of character to function well. Nagrik Kartavya invites the individual to take seriously the practices of everyday citizenship: following traffic laws, paying taxes and keeping public places clean, treating these as responsibilities rather than as mere rights. Families pass these habits to their children; communities reinforce them; and a society of such citizens lifts the standard of public life across the nation. The cultivation of civic sense, of duties as well as rights, of consideration for fellow citizens, of basic ethical practices in everyday life; these together constitute the wholesome citizenship that makes a great society possible in any part of the world. Without civic character, formal institutions become brittle; with it, they flourish.

These five focus areas together constitute a coherent programme for the revitalisation of society and the welfare of humanity. Samajik Samrasta, Kutumb Prabodhan, Paryavaran, Swa and Nagrik Kartavya, the five transformations of Panch Parivartan, are not particular to Bharat alone. They are conditions of human flourishing wherever human beings live. The method of their realisation, beginning with the individual and the family and extending through them to the nation and ultimately to humanity, ensures that the work of transformation is grounded in the everyday lives of ordinary people rather than confined to the deliberations of distant institutions. Distinctively Bharatiya in their cultural texture and universally applicable in their underlying principles, the five transformations of Panch Parivartan embody, in compact form, the integration of cultural rootedness with global responsibility that has been the principal theme of RSS reflection across its hundred years. They constitute, in their universality, an invitation to the wider human conversation, and they form the practical map upon which RSS now invites the world into dialogue.



RSS Sarsanghchalak Mohan Bhagwat delivering the landmark three-day lecture series "100 Years of the RSS's Journey: New Horizons" at Vigyan Bhawan, Delhi, in August 2025, marking the beginning of the RSS centenary year.

## IX. Centenary Engagements

Hundred years of RSS, completed in October 2025 and culminating on Vijayadashami of 2026, are being marked not by display but by deepened service. The reflections and experiences accumulated across these hundred years are not the inheritance of RSS alone. They belong, in their underlying principles, to humanity at large. The centenary year is an occasion to share these reflections in the spirit of contribution to the welfare of all beings and the global good. The engagements documented in this brief, undertaken across the United Kingdom, the United States and Germany in April 2026, coincide with the centenary year and are part of this wider offering of dialogue.

The orientation of the centenary engagements is therefore outward to humanity and all beings, not inward to the achievements of the movement. The questions that have RSS reflection across its hundred years, namely how societies remain cohesive in times of rapid change, how families and communities can be sustained under the pressures of modernity, how cultural continuity can be reconciled with technological progress, and how civil society can contribute to the wider work of nation building, are questions that belong to every society in the present age. They transcend governments, electoral cycles and even national boundaries. They are the shared questions of humanity in the twenty first century, and the experience of RSS, gathered patiently across a century of voluntary action, has a lot to offer to the wider human conversation about them.

Several considerations have shaped the global engagement of the centenary year. The first is the growing scale and influence of the Indian diaspora across the world. Indians abroad are no longer to be understood through the older prism of remittances and economic contribution alone. They are highly educated, professionally accomplished and economically influential communities, and they constitute, by their everyday participation in the social fabric of their countries of residence, a living bridge between Bharat and the wider world. The invitations to engage in the conversations of April 2026 came from a range of institutions across the three countries, including academic and policy bodies, civic forums, legislative officials, business communities and the community organisations.

The second consideration is the recognition that the welfare of humanity in the present age cannot be built on the formal lanes of governments alone. Trade agreements and strategic convergences are necessary, but they are not sufficient. Lasting cooperation between societies requires an understanding of one another's social structures, cultural impulses and civilisational anchors. The diffusion of international influence beyond the state, into think tanks, cultural organisations, diaspora networks and civil society institutions, is among the defining features of the present age. The work of contributing to global good, on this understanding, is shared work, in which every civil society tradition has a part to play.

The third consideration is the recognition that genuine dialogue between civilisations begins with mutual understanding. Some perceptions of RSS in segments of Western discourse have, at times, been formed at a distance from its lived practice and from the substance of what it actually does. The centenary year is an appropriate moment to invite serious officials, in academic, policy and civic settings, into the fuller understanding upon which serious dialogue can rest. The intent is not advocacy but conversation; the offering, on the part of RSS, is the texture of its own experience for whatever it may contribute to the wider human reflection upon shared questions.

The wider purpose of the centenary outreach has been articulated by Sunil Ambekar, the Akhil Bharatiya Prachar Pramukh of RSS, who accompanied the Sarkaryavah on parts of the Europe leg of the tour. The journey of RSS, Ambekar has observed, is closely intertwined with the journey of Bharat itself, with its growth, its development and its social transformation across the past hundred years. The centenary outreach is, in this spirit, an occasion to share that journey with the world; to offer, in dialogue, the perspectives and practices that the experience of a century has yielded. Among these are gifts that have already begun to find their place in the wider world, such as yoga, alongside others that are now offered for consideration, including the family awakening programmes and the wider framework of social and civilisational values that have animated the work of RSS. The outreach seeks, equally, to address through patient people-to-people dialogue the misunderstandings that have at times accumulated about RSS, about Hindutva and about the long historical record of Bharat. The world today, Ambekar has noted, is curious about Bharat, drawn to its civilisational depth through different doorways, and the centenary year is an appropriate moment to walk through those doorways together. The aim of the dialogue is not merely the discussion of problems but the offering of possible solutions: a Hindu philosophical framework that may, in its own measured way, contribute to a humanity living more peacefully with itself and with the natural world.

The engagements undertaken by RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale in the United Kingdom, the United States and Germany were shaped by all three considerations. They were exploratory in their character, dialogue driven in their method, and conducted on the invitation of host institutions across the three countries. The officials were varied; senior academics, policy thinkers and members of legislative bodies in London and Berlin; Nobel laureates, statesmen, technologists and senior foreign policy thinkers in California and Washington; and members of the Indian diaspora across all three countries. The conversations ranged across a broad terrain, including the philosophy of oneness and the universal family, the integration of cultural rootedness with modern progress, the role of civil society in building social cohesion, the constructive participation of the diaspora in its countries of residence, the framework of Panch Parivartan as a contribution to the welfare of humanity, and the larger civilisational conversation between Bharat and the wider world.

The engagements were also reciprocal. In each country, RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale invited his officials to continue the dialogue through future visits to Bharat, and emphasised that the conversation initiated in April 2026 is intended to be sustained over time. The aspiration is that these exchanges, informal yet substantive, will deepen the mutual understanding from which the wider work of global good can grow.

The following sections detail the engagements undertaken across the three countries.

# CHATHAM HOUSE

## THE ROYAL INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

### IX.I The United Kingdom

The first leg of the engagements took place in the United Kingdom from 10 to 15 April 2026. Over the course of six days, RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale engaged with a wide cross section of British public life, from senior academic and policy institutions to legislators, business leaders, community representatives and members of the Indian diaspora. The visit was conducted in the spirit of rededication that has marked the centenary year, with social harmony, nation building and selfless service to society as its pillars.

The first major engagement of the visit was a session at Chatham House, the Royal Institute of International Affairs in London, on the theme RSS View of the World. Chatham House is among the oldest international affairs institutions in the contemporary world, and its readiness to host a substantive conversation with RSS reflected the wider recognition that civilisational perspectives now deserve a place in the international affairs conversation alongside the more conventional registers of governance. The discussion at Chatham House covered the civilisational values

underpinning the work of RSS, its approach to social transformation through voluntarism, and the place of Bharat in the evolving global order. The conversation ranged across foreign policy questions, the engagement of youth in civic life, and the relationship between cultural inheritance and the nation.

A roundtable was held at the International Centre for Sustainability in the City of London on the theme Understanding Bharat from the Grassroots. The conversation explored the conception of Bharat as a civilisational entity rather than as a political construct alone, the distinction between Rashtra, the deeper civilisational nation, and the modern nation state, and the role of self-correction within society as an instrument of reform. The discussion reflected the maturity of the centenary engagement: the move from the more familiar exchanges around policy and trade towards a deeper conversation about what societies are, how they sustain themselves over centuries and how they renew themselves from within.

Two separate sessions were held with senior business leaders in London on the theme Global Vision of RSS in the Present Geopolitical Situation. These conversations addressed the steady growth of RSS over its hundred years into a broad based people's movement, the teachings of Swami Vivekananda on balancing material progress with harmony with nature, and the meaning of Dharma as an ethical order for individuals, families and nations alike. The participants showed particular interest in the seva activities of the wider RSS family, including the work of Seva Bharati and other inspired institutions in education, healthcare and tribal welfare, and the role of philanthropy in supporting these efforts. The conversations reflected the willingness of the British business community to engage seriously with the cultural and ethical foundations of Bharat at a time when business engagement between the two countries is deepening.

An academic roundtable on the theme RSS and Civic Institutions drew researchers and faculty from a number of leading British universities, including Oxford, University College London, the School of Oriental and African Studies, the London School of Economics, Cambridge and Sussex, among others. The participants represented fields including Hindu studies, anthropology, politics, international relations, economics and law. The discussion examined the organisational character of RSS, its relationship with the institutions of constitutional democracy in Bharat, and the meaning of voluntarism on mass scale. The breadth of disciplines represented in the room reflected the recognition that RSS, as one of the largest civil society organisations in the world, calls for serious analytical engagement across multiple intellectual traditions. RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale extended an open invitation to the assembled scholars to visit RSS projects in Bharat and to study the work of the movement at first hand.

A cross party dinner was hosted with Members of Parliament and Peers from the House of Commons and the House of Lords on the theme RSS's Role in Shaping India's Future. Representatives from the Conservative Party, the Labour Party and the Liberal Democrats attended. The conversation touched on the foundational principles of RSS, the grassroots work of the wider RSS family in education, healthcare, tribal welfare and disaster relief, and the perspective of RSS on the future of Bharat. The role of the Indian diaspora in the United Kingdom and India relationship was also discussed, with a shared recognition that the diaspora has emerged as one of the most important bridges between the two societies. The cross party character of the gathering was itself significant; it reflected the recognition, across the British political spectrum, that the engagement with RSS and with the wider civilisational tradition of Bharat is a matter of national interest rather than of partisan affiliation.

A separate session was held with Hindu samaj leaders and representatives of community organisations from across the United Kingdom, providing an opportunity for informal interaction and dialogue on matters of shared concern. The session brought together leaders of various Hindu, dharmic and Indian community organisations who have, over the decades, built the institutional fabric of the diaspora in Britain. The conversation reflected the depth and maturity of the diaspora institutions and their growing role in the cultural life of the United Kingdom.

RSS Sarkaryavah also attended a Karyakarta Mandal of the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh, United Kingdom in Rugby. The gathering brought together volunteers and functionaries of HSS UK in a setting that was at once a centenary commemoration and a working meeting of the kind that takes place across the wider HSS network worldwide. HSS UK has, over the decades, become a significant presence in the everyday social life of the Hindu diaspora in Britain, and the Karyakarta Mandal in Rugby interacted with the RSS Sarkaryavah.

A consistent theme across the engagements was the constructive participation of the Indian diaspora in the social fabric of the United Kingdom. The diaspora in Britain, today numbering close to two million, has long been one of the most successful communities in the country, distinguished by its educational accomplishment, professional contribution and civic participation. RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale emphasised that the role of the diaspora extends well beyond economic success; it carries the responsibility of contributing to the social cohesion of the host society, of serving as a cultural bridge between Bharat and the United Kingdom, and of demonstrating, through everyday conduct, the values of mutual respect and constructive engagement that have long characterised the Indian presence in Britain.

A second consistent theme was the place of seva, selfless service, in the work of the wider RSS family. Across the academic, business, political and community sessions, officials showed sustained interest in the practical work of inspired institutions like Seva Bharati, Vidya Bharati and Vanavasi Kalyan Ashram, and in the philosophical foundation of seva as service to the divine spark in every human being. The interest reflected a wider recognition that civic traditions across the world are looking for renewed sources of voluntary commitment, and that the experience of RSS, gathered across a hundred years, has something to contribute to that wider search.

A third theme, drawn out particularly in the academic and policy roundtables, was the relationship between cultural inheritance and democratic citizenship. The conversation explored how a society can hold its civilisational traditions and its modern democratic institutions together, how cultural depth can strengthen rather than constrain civic life, and how voluntary movements can complement the institutions of formal democracy in sustaining the fabric of public life. These are questions that face every modern democracy, and the engagement at Chatham House and in the academic roundtable reflected a shared interest in thinking them through across civilisational settings.

The United Kingdom visit concluded on 15 April 2026. Across its six days, it had brought RSS into substantive conversation with several of the most important institutions of British public life, with members of the legislature across party lines, with the academic community across multiple universities, with senior business leaders, with community organisations and with the volunteers of HSS UK. RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale extended invitations to his various officials to continue the dialogue through future visits to Bharat. The conversations begun in London and Rugby are intended to be sustained over the years to come, and the engagement of the centenary year, on the British leg of its programme, accordingly closed not on a final note but on the opening of a longer dialogue.



Bronze statue of Mahatma Gandhi in Tavistock Square, London. Such memorials across the world stand as a reminder that Bharatiya thought continues to inspire movements for peace and justice everywhere.



RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale with participants at the inaugural THRIVE 2026 summit, hosted at the Stanford Faculty Club on 16 and 17 April. The gathering, convened by the Global Science Innovation Forum, brought together Nobel laureates, policymakers, technologists, and leaders from all walks of life.

## IX.II The United States

The second leg of the engagements brought RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale to the United States for a ten day programme from 16 to 26 April 2026. He undertook two principal engagements at the invitation of host institutions, alongside a community reception, meetings with the Indian American diaspora across multiple cities, and conversations with American media and policy officials. The first principal engagement was his participation in the inaugural THRIVE 2026 summit at Stanford University, convened by the Global Science Innovation Forum on 16 and 17 April. The second was a fireside dialogue at the Hudson Institute in Washington, D.C., on 23 April, held with the noted foreign policy thinker and historian Walter Russell Mead. Both engagements were marked by candour, mutual respect, and a shared interest in the conditions that allow great civilisations to flourish in a rapidly changing world.

### ***THRIVE 2026 at the Stanford Faculty Club.***

The Global Science Innovation Forum's inaugural invitation only summit convened Nobel laureates, global policymakers, visionary technologists and ethicists at the Stanford Faculty Club, with an opening reception at the Computer History

Museum, the symbolic centre of the digital age. The conference focused on three core pillars, namely artificial intelligence, sustainability and health. Distinguished participants included Professor Steven Chu, Nobel Laureate in Physics and former United States Secretary of Energy; Lieutenant General H.R. McMaster, former United States National Security Advisor; Ram Shriram, founding board member of Google; Vinod Khosla, founder of Khosla Ventures; and Professor Dame Juliet Gerrard, former Chief Scientific Advisor to the Prime Minister of New Zealand. The summit produced concrete outcomes including the Human Agency Standard, the Trustworthy AI Audit Model, the Edge AI Deployment Framework, the Human and AI Work Design Model, and a set of policy blueprints for ethical governance, all aimed at ensuring that technology serves humanity, promotes equity and supports long term civilisational flourishing. Conference Chair Professor Anurag Mairal characterised the Forum as one focused on enabling global collaboration among scientists, engineers and innovators to address the biggest problems the world faces, with solutions anchored in the cultural and civilisational context of local communities.

Speaking on the panel ***Science, Knowledge Systems and Civilisational Leadership***, RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale offered the framework that has since been widely cited as the central articulation of his Stanford engagement.

*"Scientific advancement must be evaluated not just through economic outcomes but through a broader lens of economy, ecology and ethics."*

If traditional knowledge is not properly understood, all those scientific inquiries of the past will be concluded as only superstitions. The first term, economy, recognises the legitimate place of material progress and prosperity in human life; the second term, ecology, places that progress within the larger order of the living world upon which all human flourishing depends; the third term, ethics, places the whole within the moral order that is the proper context of any considered human action. The three-fold lens was offered not as a constraint upon innovation but as a fuller framework for it.

RSS Sarkaryavah developed the proposition with reference to the Bharatiya tradition's long civilisational reflection on the relationship between knowledge and ethics.

*"There was never a divide between the spiritual and the scientific, only a unified pursuit of truth," he observed.*

What we call 'spiritual texts' today often encoded deep scientific frameworks. Yoga Sutras of Patanjali is one such example." The systems of knowledge that pre modern civilisations developed, including Indian medical thought, Indian mathematics, Indian astronomy, Indian linguistics and Indian philosophy of mind, are not failed precursors to the modern sciences but sophisticated systems of inquiry in their own right.

*"India's knowledge tradition doesn't separate science from spirituality, it unifies perception, reasoning, and the beyond. From Yoga Sutras to Upanishads, it has always been about understanding the cosmos, the self, and nature, now being rediscovered and revived,"*



RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale with Bill Drexel, Senior Fellow at the Hudson Institute, at THRIVE 2026. Hosabale offered a philosophical and societal view of science and technology, drawing on Bharatiya thought.

he added. The relevance to the contemporary technology conversation was clear. As artificial intelligence systems are trained on the corpora of human knowledge, the question of which corpora are included and which are neglected becomes a question of global significance. The future of artificial intelligence, in this view, is more abundant when it can draw upon the full range of human reflection rather than upon a narrow slice of it.

*"Ancient systems were both ethical and scientific, designed for real, everyday human challenges. For progress to be meaningful, knowledge must flow into education, and from education into technology,"*

RSS Sarkaryavah observed.

The exchange among the panellists revealed a striking convergence of concerns. Steven Chu spoke of the simultaneous challenge of artificial intelligence replacing many jobs and demographic decline reducing the working population, characterising the transition as a huge challenge. Vinod Khosla observed that the cheapest technology can also be the most sustainable if humanity puts its mind to it. Ram Shriram described the democratisation of knowledge through artificial intelligence as the next great frontier in adaptive learning. Juliet Gerrard called for bipartisan, non-political bodies across the world to take long term decisions on health and wellness. The Sarkaryavah's contribution placed these technological conversations within the larger arc of civilisational continuity, insisting that they belong together within a single integrated horizon of economy, ecology and ethics.



RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale in a fireside dialogue at the Hudson Institute, Washington, D.C., with Walter Russell Mead, Distinguished Fellow at Hudson and Columnist at The Wall Street Journal, exchanging perspectives on civilisation and society.

## *Dialogue at the Hudson Institute.*

Following the engagements at Stanford, the Sarkaryavah travelled to Washington, D.C., for a fireside dialogue at the Hudson Institute on 23 April. The Hudson Institute is among the most respected foreign policy institutions in the United States. Walter Russell Mead opened the conversation by observing that RSS is one of the largest organisations in the world today, that its trajectory may be the longest of any comparable movement of the modern era, and that its field of operation is the world's most populous country, and yet it remains, for many in the United States, almost unknown territory. To have the General Secretary of RSS willing to answer questions from the Hudson community, Mead remarked, was a real privilege. The dialogue that followed was a genuine encounter between American policy thinking and the worldview of one of the world's largest civilisational movements.

At the heart of the Sarkaryavah's articulation was the philosophy of oneness.

*"Hindu philosophy and Hindu culture, by their very structure, do not allow it to be supremacist,"*

he observed, "because RSS sees that the whole world is one family and all are brothers and sisters. There is no question of supremacy in such a worldview, and RSS sees the same oneness running through all beings, both living and non living. When this is the basic philosophy, the supremacist nature of Hindus simply cannot be present." The articulation was rooted in the ancient Sanskrit ideal of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, the world is one family. Hindu thought emphasises that there is a deeper continuity in which all beings participate. Of the spirit in which RSS approaches the world, the Sarkaryavah added,

*"humility begins with a simple realisation: we are all part of the same universal energy."*

In a moment that carried perhaps the greatest weight of the dialogue, RSS Sarkaryavah offered a calm and confident summary of the historical record of Hindu civilisation in its dealings with other peoples.

*"Hindus have never invaded any country and Hindus have nothing to apologise for,"*

he stated. The reach of Indian civilisation across the centuries, he observed, has indeed been considerable. Indian thought informed the philosophical traditions of much of South East Asia. Indian numerals, Indian mathematics, Indian astronomy and Indian medicine travelled across continents long before the modern age of communication. Yet none of this expansion was accompanied by armies of occupation or by the enslavement of conquered populations. The civilisational reach was achieved through the appeal of ideas and the patience of commerce, not through the sword. The remark, widely reported in the days that followed, distilled in a single line a long historical record that scholarly accounts of the geographic and cultural reach of Indian civilisation have consistently borne out.

On the question of Hindu identity, the Sarkaryavah offered an important conceptual clarification. Hindu, he explained, is a civilisational identity rather than a religious one in the narrow Western sense. The soul of Bharat in the long history of its civilisation, he said, is spirituality, and the culture of Bharat is the expression of that spiritual soul. The RSS Sarkaryavah was candid about the fact that tensions sometimes arise between communities. Such tensions, he observed, "have arisen on and off because of political interest, because of wrong understanding or interpretation of history, and because of various manoeuvres external to the basic life of the communities concerned." They are not the consequence of the philosophy of RSS or of the civilisational tradition that it carries; they are extrinsic and political in origin. From this diagnosis he drew a constructive prescription.

*"RSS believes that continuous and comprehensive dialogue with all groups will definitely help in clearing misconceptions or any fears that may exist."*

On the relationship between modernity and tradition, the Sarkaryavah articulated what has become one of the most cited formulations of his United States engagement. The Bharatiya tradition (Indian tradition), he said, can be imagined as the banyan tree. "The banyan tree has deep and strong roots, which are its cultural and civilisational ethos, and at the same time many branches in which every season new sprouts, leaves and flowers bloom. The tree is therefore as new as it is old, and as old as it is new.

*"Modernisation and cultural continuity can live together; they are part of nature."*

On the United States and Bharat as partners, RSS Sarkaryavah spoke in characteristically constructive terms. Bharat, he observed, wishes to have good relations with all countries, both near and distant, and particularly with major nations such as the United States. Given Bharat's size, its demographic dividend, its technological advancement and its position as a major economy, a deeper partnership with the United States is naturally called for. Such a partnership rests on three foundations, namely

*"mutual trust, a level playing field and mutual respect."*

Civic institutions, think tanks and universities, and others, can do a great deal to dispel prejudice and to build the mutual understanding upon which cooperation flourishes. The relationship is therefore more societal in its scope, resting on the conviction that two great democracies have much to learn from one another and much to contribute together to the welfare of humanity.



Panel discussion on the global impact of the RSS, India's civilisational values, and its growing role in shaping global peace and stability. From left: Professor Walter Andersen (South Asia Studies, Johns Hopkins University), Dattatreya Hosabale (RSS Sarkaryavah), and Walter Russell Mead (Distinguished Scholar of American Strategy and Statesmanship, Hudson Institute).

## ***Community Reception, 23 April 2026.***

Following the Hudson dialogue, a large community reception was held that evening at the Hilton McLean Tysons Corner in Virginia, on the theme Bharat's Global Vision and Role in the Emerging World: Civilisational Foundations for Prospering Together. The reception was organised by the Foundation for India and Indian Diaspora Studies in association with the Hudson Institute, and brought together community leaders, scholars and technology entrepreneurs of the Indian American diaspora. RSS Sarkaryavah was joined on the panel by Walter Russell Mead and the long standing scholar of RSS, Walter Andersen, who described the movement as a stabilising influence in Bharat, particularly for its ability to foster social cohesion and patriotism while adapting to modern needs. Mead, reinforcing the wider arc of the conversation, observed that a strong, fully developed, self-confident, outward looking Bharat could reshape global geopolitics and reduce the risk of conflict, particularly in Asia.

*"The world needs a vibrant, developed, harmonious, strong Bharat,"*

he added. Addressing the gathering, the Sarkaryavah observed that "the vision of Bharat is that there is a oneness of unity and the oneness is present in all being, living and non-living." He offered a widely quoted reflection on the paradox of modern life. Humanity, he said, has "bigger houses, but smaller families," has "more knowledge, but less judgment," has "more experts, but more problems," and has "conquered outer space, but not inner space." The Bharatiya philosophy, he noted, "recognises nature as Mother, with enough for our need but not to fulfil our greed." On diversity, he observed that "diversity should be celebrating the beauty of human society." Of Bharat's civilisational claim, he said that "when Bharat says the world is one family, it says it from some experience of practice." On the requirements of Bharat's global role, he added that "if Bharat has to play that role, Bharat has to be a self-confident, prosperous society," combining modernity with cultural ethos and civilisational values.



Members of the Indian diaspora, alongside representatives from think tanks and academia, at a community event in Chicago. The gathering followed engagements at Stanford and in Washington, D.C., as part of RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale's U.S. visit.

## ***Diaspora Conversation and Media Engagement.***

The United States visit also included a community engagement hosted by leaders of the Indian American community in the Midwest, with support from American Hindu Coalition, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad of America, the US India Security Council, and Sikhs of America, reflecting the breadth of the Indo-American community in the DC region, including Dr. Bharat Barai and Shrinarayan Chandak, with conversations on the centenary vision of RSS and the role of the diaspora in Bharat's global responsibility. In a conversation with the technology and policy researcher Bill Drexel, the Sarkaryavah developed the themes of his Stanford engagement on the relationship between civilisational reflection and the responsible direction of technology. On 24 April, in Washington, D.C., the Sarkaryavah sat for a substantive interview with Rob Schmitz of National Public Radio, marking a direct outreach by RSS to the United States mainstream media.

The conversation laid out the substance of RSS for an American audience: a hundred-year-old voluntary movement, the largest in the world, that runs 88,949 daily shakhas, that has inspired over forty nationwide institutions in education, healthcare, tribal welfare and disaster relief, that operates 29,000 schools and twenty large multi-specialty hospitals, and that has been a front runner in disaster relief and rural development for nearly a century. The Sarkaryavah responded patiently to questions on the civilisational identity of Bharat, on minorities, and on global perceptions of RSS, drawing distinctions where prevailing framings had blurred them and offering, in their place, the texture of the movement's lived practice.

The United States visit concluded on 26 April. RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale extended invitations across this audience to continue the dialogue through future visits to Bharat.

L to R: Dr. Bharat Baria, RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale and Shrinarayan Chandak in conversation with Indian diaspora at a community event in Chicago





RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale in conversation with researchers from Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP), the German Institute for International and Security Affairs.

### IX.III Germany

The third leg of the engagements brought RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale to Berlin on 28 and 29 April 2026, for two days of discussions with leading German policy institutions, individuals associated with the legislative life of the city, and the volunteers of the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh in Germany. The visit, conducted at the invitation of host institutions, was exploratory and dialogue driven in its character, in keeping with the wider register of the centenary outreach. It carried the conversations of London and Washington into one of Europe's most influential capitals, and into a setting in which civilisational reflection has long been part of public life.

The first principal engagement of the visit was a discussion at Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, the German Institute for International and Security Affairs. Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik is among the most respected think tanks in continental Europe and one of the principal sources of policy advice to the German government on questions of international affairs. The discussion at the Institute considered the place of Bharat in the evolving global order, the role of civilisational perspectives in international relations, and the contribution of civil society institutions to the building of social cohesion in democracies. The exchange reflected the maturity of contemporary German engagement with Bharat, an engagement that increasingly seeks to understand the country not only through its economic and strategic profile but through the deeper civilisational reflection that has shaped its public life.

The second engagement was at Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, the political foundation associated with the Christian Democratic tradition in Germany and one of the country's foremost institutions of civic education and international dialogue. The conversation at Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung explored sustainability across cultural and policy contexts, approaches to maintaining social cohesion in plural societies, and the broader role of civil society institutions in the present age. The German political tradition has long taken seriously the work of stiftungen, the foundations that conduct civic education and international dialogue alongside the formal institutions of government, and the conversation at Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung reflected a shared interest in the contributions that voluntary civic institutions can make to the cohesion of societies under the pressures of modernity.

Discussions were also held with members associated with the Abgeordnetenhaus of Berlin, the Berlin House of Representatives. These exchanges brought RSS's perspective into conversation with the legislative life of the city, and considered the work of civil society institutions in fostering civic responsibility, family cohesion and inter community understanding. The depth of contemporary German interest in such questions reflected the wider European recognition that the renewal of public life in plural democracies depends not only upon formal political institutions but upon the patient work of voluntary association across communities.

A consistent theme across the engagements at Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, at Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung and with members of the Abgeordnetenhaus was the recognition that Bharat and Germany, despite their distinct historical experiences, share certain structural similarities. Both societies place a premium on community orientation, both value social organisation, and both are navigating the transformation of family systems under the pressures of modernity. These parallels are not superficial; they offer a foundation for meaningful dialogue on issues ranging from social cohesion to sustainable development. RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale articulated, in this connection, the perspective of RSS on the centenary year and on the long arc of its work.

*"The vision of RSS for the next 100 years is to contribute to building sustainable societies at every level, from families to societies and environmental responsibility, grounded in shared universal values."*

Sustainability, in this articulation, was understood in its full sense: not as an environmental concern alone, but as the resilience of families, the stability of communities, and the preservation of cultural continuity over time.

The Indian diaspora in Germany was a significant presence in the conversations of the Berlin visit. The participants in the policy discussions acknowledged the highly educated and skilled profile of the diaspora, its strong economic participation, and the high household income levels that distinguish Indian families in Germany. This profile has translated into a significant contribution to the German economy, including high levels of tax contribution within diaspora communities. Yet the role of the diaspora, as RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale emphasised, cannot be confined to economic success. The Sarkaryavah underscored that the Indian diaspora living in Germany has a responsibility to participate constructively in the country's social and economic fabric. The diaspora carries with it a broader role: to engage thoughtfully with the host society, to contribute to its social cohesion, and to serve as a cultural bridge that fosters mutual respect and understanding between Bharat and Germany. In an era when migration often becomes a site of political contestation across Europe, this perspective on the constructive participation of the Indian diaspora was received with marked interest.

RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale addressing a gathering organised by the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh in Berlin to commemorate 100 years of the RSS. Over 200 HSS Germany volunteers travelled from across the country for the occasion.



Across the policy engagements, RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale outlined the role of RSS as one of the world's largest volunteer driven civil society organisations, engaged in community development, social cohesion, and grassroots mobilisation across sectors including education, service activities, and cultural initiatives. The patient work of inspired institutions in education, healthcare, tribal welfare and disaster relief was set out in some detail. The German officials showed particular interest in the Panch Parivartan framework as a programme for the revitalisation of society, beginning with the individual and the family and extending to the nation and to humanity at large. The five focus areas of social harmony, family awakening, environmental stewardship, selfhood and civic duty were recognised as universal in their underlying principles, even as they remain distinctively Bharatiya in their cultural texture.

*"The questions of social cohesion, of cultural continuity and of sustainable development,"*

the Sarkaryavah observed in the course of the discussions,

*"are questions that no society can answer for itself in isolation. They are shared questions, and the experience of every civilisation that has lived with them has something to contribute to the wider human conversation."*

In keeping with the spirit of the centenary engagements across the three countries, RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale extended an invitation to his German counterparts to continue the dialogue through future visits to Bharat. The reciprocity reflected the wider conviction of the centenary outreach that genuine dialogue between civilisations is sustained over time, not concluded in any single exchange.



RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale at the bronze statue of Konrad Adenauer on Adenauerplatz in Berlin. The statue commemorates Adenauer, the first Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany.

The community engagement of the Berlin visit took place on the second day, when RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale addressed a gathering organised by the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh in Berlin to commemorate one hundred years of RSS. The gathering brought together over two hundred volunteers of HSS Germany, who had travelled from across the country for the occasion. The setting reflected the depth and maturity of HSS Germany, which has, over the decades, become a significant presence in the cultural life of the Indian community in Germany. Addressing the volunteers, the Sarkaryavah spoke of the global outreach of Indian culture through civilisational and societal exchanges, emphasising peaceful engagement and cultural continuity. He highlighted the model of engagement that HSS represents: rooted in the cultural inheritance of Bharat while remaining open to dialogue with the host society, conducted in the spirit of seva and the universal family. The gathering was at once a centenary commemoration and a working assembly of the kind that takes place across the wider HSS network worldwide. It was, in spirit, a renewal of the bonds that connect the volunteers of HSS Germany to one another, to the wider HSS network of more than fifty countries, and to the long tradition of RSS that they carry forward in their daily work.

The three themes that surfaced consistently across the Berlin engagements were the structural similarities between Bharat and Germany as societies that take community orientation, social organisation and family cohesion seriously; the constructive participation of the Indian diaspora in the social and economic fabric of Germany; and the contribution of civil society institutions to the building of sustainable societies in the present age. These themes echoed the conversations of London and Washington, and confirmed that the questions occupying the centenary outreach are shared across the West, even as the particular accent of each setting carries its own emphasis.

The Berlin visit concluded on the evening of 29 April 2026. Across two days, it had brought RSS into substantive conversation with two of Germany's most respected policy institutions, with members of the legislative life of the capital, and with the volunteers of HSS Germany. The wider arc of the centenary engagements, from the Royal Institute of International Affairs in London to the Stanford Faculty Club, the Hudson Institute and the diaspora communities of Washington and Chicago, and now to Berlin, had drawn into conversation a remarkable cross section of the institutions and individuals shaping public life in the Western democracies. The conversations begun in April 2026 are intended to be sustained over the years to come, in a wider dialogue between Bharat and the world that the centenary year has set in motion. The threads that bind the three engagements together are taken up in the chapter that follows.

## X. Recurring Threads across the Three Nations

The three engagements documented in the previous chapters, undertaken in London, in California and Washington, and in Berlin across April 2026, each carried their own particular character. The setting at Chatham House and the cross party dinner at Westminster, the panel at the Stanford Faculty Club and the fireside dialogue at the Hudson Institute, and the conversations at Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik and Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung were shaped by the different traditions of public life in the three countries. Yet across the differences of setting, audience and idiom, several threads ran consistently through all three engagements. These recurring threads represent the substance of what RSS Sarkaryavah Dattatreya Hosabale brought to the wider human conversation in the centenary year, and they constitute the principal civilisational contribution that the engagements offered.

### **Philosophy of oneness and the universal family.**

The most fundamental thread across the three engagements was the philosophy of oneness. Articulated most extensively in the Hudson dialogue, drawn upon at the Stanford Faculty Club, and developed in the diaspora reception in Washington and across the conversations in London and Berlin, the proposition that the whole world is one family is the philosophical ground from which the wider RSS worldview emerges. Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, the ancient Sanskrit ideal that the world is one family, was invoked across all three settings. Hindu civilisation, the Sarkaryavah argued, is by its very philosophical structure incompatible with any form of group supremacy, because the same oneness runs through all beings, both living and non-living, and the strength of the tradition lies in its capacity to see plurality as an expression of unity and unity as the ground of plurality. This philosophical proposition has practical consequences: it informs the work of seva offered without distinction of community, the conception of Bharat as a friend to all nations, and the everyday culture of the shakha in which volunteers from every background sit together and serve together.

**Integration of cultural rootedness with modern progress.** A second consistent thread was the proposition that cultural continuity and modernisation are not adversaries but conditions of one another. The image of the banyan tree, with its deep and strong roots and its many branches in which every season new sprouts and leaves and flowers bloom, was offered at the Hudson Institute and resonated across the discussions at Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung and at the academic roundtable in London. The civilisations that have

modernised most successfully, the Sarkaryavah observed, have done so while keeping their cultural and civilisational values intact and drawing inspiration from those values. In many traditions of philosophical reflection, both Eastern and Western, the deepest cultural roots and the most ambitious projects of modernisation are conditions of one another. The proposition is universal, and the experience of Bharat in this regard has something to contribute to the wider human reflection upon it.

### **Framework of Economy, Ecology and Ethics.**

A third thread, articulated most directly at the Stanford Faculty Club but echoing across the discussions in London and Berlin, was the proposition that the next generation of technological progress must be guided by a fuller framework than economic outcomes alone. The three terms, Economy, Ecology and Ethics, distil into a single phrase the conviction that material progress, ecological responsibility and moral order belong together within a single integrated horizon. The proposition was received with marked interest by the senior figures of the global science and innovation communities at THRIVE 2026, and its resonance with the conversations at Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung on sustainability, and at the International Centre for Sustainability in London, suggested that the framework speaks to a wider international concern with the responsible direction of technology in the present age.

### **Constructive participation of the Indian diaspora.**

A fourth thread, developed across all three countries, concerned the role of the Indian diaspora in its countries of residence. The diaspora today is no longer to be understood through the older prism of remittances and economic

contribution alone. It is highly educated, professionally accomplished and economically influential, distinguished in many of its host countries by the highest household income levels and by significant tax contributions. Yet, as the Sarkaryavah emphasised across all three settings, the role of the diaspora extends well beyond economic success. The diaspora carries the responsibility of participating constructively in the social and economic fabric of its host societies, of serving as a cultural bridge between Bharat and the wider world, and of demonstrating, through everyday conduct, the values of mutual respect and constructive engagement. This articulation is particularly relevant in an era when migration often becomes a site of political contestation across the Western democracies.

**Role of civil society in sustaining social cohesion.** A fifth thread was the recognition that civil society institutions have a central role to play in sustaining social cohesion in the present age. Whether at the academic roundtable in London on RSS and Civic Institutions, at the Hudson Institute in conversation on volunteerism and seva, or at Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung on civil society and sustainability, the conversation returned to the proposition that the formal institutions of democracy require the support of voluntary civic institutions to function well. RSS, as one of the largest volunteer driven civilisational movement in the world, brought to these discussions the experience of a hundred years of patient grassroots work. The civic traditions of every Western democracy are looking, in the present age, for renewed sources of voluntary commitment, and the experience of RSS, gathered patiently across a century, has something to contribute to that wider search.

**Framework of Panch Parivartan.** A sixth thread, developed across all three engagements, was the framework of Panch Parivartan, the five centenary transformations through which RSS now seeks to contribute to the revitalisation of society and the welfare of humanity. Samajik Samrasta, social harmony and cohesion; Kutumb Prabodhan, family awakening; Paryavaran, environmental stewardship; Swa, selfhood and self-reliance; and Nagrik Kartavya, civic duty. The five

transformations were recognised across the three countries as distinctively Bharatiya in their cultural texture and universally applicable in their underlying principles. They speak not only to the needs of Bharat but to the needs of every society that seeks to renew itself in the present age. The mechanism of their realisation, beginning with the individual and the family and extending through them to the nation and ultimately to humanity, ensures that the work of transformation is grounded in the everyday lives of ordinary people rather than confined to the deliberations of distant institutions.

**Patient correction of misperceptions.** A seventh thread, developed most pointedly at the Hudson Institute and in the engagements with American media but resonating across all three countries, was the patient correction of misperceptions about RSS. The Sarkaryavah engaged Western framings without rancour, drawing distinctions where prevailing categories had blurred them and offering, in their place, the texture of the movement's lived practice. RSS is the largest voluntary organisation in the world. It runs 88,949 daily shakhas across Bharat. It has inspired forty nationwide institutions in education, healthcare, tribal welfare and disaster relief. It has been a front runner in disaster relief and rural development for nearly a century. It is consistently open to all without distinction of caste, community or background. To engage with RSS responsibly is to engage with what it does and what it stands for, not with a caricature drawn from a distance. The intent of the centenary engagements was not advocacy but conversation; the offering, on the part of RSS, was the texture of its own experience for whatever it may contribute to the wider human reflection upon shared questions.

**Hundred years of RSS as a model for global good.** An eighth thread, present implicitly throughout all three engagements, is the proposition that the hundred years of RSS itself stands as a contribution to the wider human conversation about civic life in the present age. A movement that has sustained one hundred years of continuous voluntary action, that has refreshed itself from the bottom up through the ordinary work of the shakha across decades of upheaval,

that has grown from a small founding gathering in a Nagpur park to a presence in every state of Bharat with one hundred and ten thousand local units, that has inspired forty nationwide institutions in every major domain of public life, and that has done all of this without paid employment, without compulsory membership and without external funding, has, by the mere fact of its existence, demonstrated possibilities that the civic traditions of every country can learn from. The journey itself, from 1925 to 2026, is offered to the wider human family as a model of patient civilisational endeavour and of the welfare of all beings to which voluntary commitment can be directed. The substance of the model lies not in any particular feature taken in isolation but in the integration of cultural rootedness, voluntary discipline and unbroken continuity that the journey of RSS has embodied across a century.

**Reciprocity of the dialogue.** A final thread that ran through all three engagements was the reciprocity of the dialogue. In each country, the Sarkaryavah extended invitations to his officials to continue the conversation through future visits to Bharat. The conversation initiated in April 2026 was understood across the three settings as the beginning of a longer dialogue rather than as its conclusion. The aspiration is that these exchanges, informal yet substantive, will deepen the mutual understanding from which the wider work of global good can grow.

Taken together, these nine threads represent the substance of what the centenary engagements brought to the wider human conversation in April 2026. They are the threads of a civilisational dialogue that RSS now offers to the world, in the spirit of contribution rather than advocacy. At the heart of the offering is the long arc of the movement itself, a hundred years of patient civilisational endeavour, sustained through voluntary commitment alone, oriented from beginning to end towards the welfare of all beings and the global good. The conversations of April 2026 are part of that wider offering. They will continue to be drawn together in the dialogues that the centenary year has set in motion, in the conviction that the questions facing every society in the present age are shared questions, and that the experience of every civilisation that has lived with them, including the hundred-year experience of RSS, has something to contribute to the wider human reflection upon them.

## **XI. Observations**

The engagements documented in this brief invite reflection on what they signify, both for the centenary year of RSS and for the wider conversation between Bharat and the world. Their importance lies less in immediate outcomes or headline announcements than in the quality of the questions they raised and the conversations they opened. In the closing observations that follow, the wider significance of the centenary engagements is set out in the spirit of the engagements themselves: factual, dignified and oriented towards the welfare of the wider human family.

### ***Deepening of people to people and societal connects.***

The conversations of April 2026 represent, in their cumulative effect, a deepening of the people to people and societal bonds that have long carried the relationships between Bharat and the wider world. The deepest connections between societies are formed not in any single register alone but across many at once, in the conversations between scholars, in the friendships between communities, in the reflections of civic institutions, in the everyday lives of diaspora families, and in the patient work of dialogue between civilisational traditions. The diffusion of international engagement into think tanks, cultural institutions, diaspora networks and civil society organisations, alongside the inherited registers of inter-country relations, is among the defining features of the present age. RSS, as one of the largest civil society institutions in the world, has begun to contribute to this wider conversation. The engagements at Chatham House and at the Hudson Institute, at Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik and at the academic roundtable in London, are themselves contributions to the people to people and societal fabric on which the deeper relationships between nations rest.

### ***World is curious about Bharat.***

A second observation is that the world today is genuinely curious about Bharat. The curiosity is broad and patient. It enters through different doorways. Some come to Bharat through yoga, now part of the daily rhythm of millions of households across the world. Some come through the Kumbh Mela and the wider experience of dharmic gatherings. Some come through the rapid economic and technological emergence of the country, with attention drawn to the scale and confidence of a civilisation now reasserting itself in the global economy. Some come through the depth and continuity of philosophical reflection that Bharat brings to the questions of the present age, including questions of ecology, of artificial intelligence, of family, of community and of meaning. The curiosity reflects a wider recognition that the conversation about humanity's future cannot afford to leave out the contributions of one of the oldest continuously living civilisations of the world. The centenary engagements were received in this spirit. Across the three countries, scholars, policy thinkers, business leaders, technologists and members of the diaspora alike approached the dialogue with an interest that was at once serious and open. The centenary year, in this sense, has met a moment in which the world is asking the right questions of Bharat, and Bharat is in a position to begin to answer them.

### ***Maturation of the Indian diaspora.***

A third observation concerns the maturation of the Indian diaspora as a constituency of global significance. Across the three countries visited, the diaspora has emerged not only as a community of remarkable economic and professional accomplishment but as a serious interlocutor in the cultural and civic life of its host societies. Its educational profile, its professional achievement, its economic

participation and its cultural confidence together constitute a constituency that is now shaping the conversation between Bharat and the wider world in fundamental ways. The constructive participation of the diaspora in the social fabric of its host societies, and its role as a cultural bridge between Bharat and the West, were recognised across all three engagements. The diaspora is no longer to be understood through the older prism of remittances. It is now, in many respects, a co-architect of the people to people relationship between Bharat and the West. movement that has sustained one hundred years of continuous voluntary action, without paid employment, compulsory membership or external funding, is itself a substantial contribution to the wider human conversation about what voluntary civic life can be.

### ***Relevance of voluntary civic traditions to the present age.***

A fourth observation concerns the wider international interest in voluntary civic traditions. Across the three countries visited, scholars, policy thinkers and legislators showed sustained interest in the work of RSS as one of the largest volunteer driven civilisational movement in the world, with one hundred and ten thousand local units, hundreds of thousands of volunteers, and forty inspired institutions working in every major domain of public life. The interest reflected a wider recognition that the renewal of public life in the present age depends upon voluntary commitment alongside formal institutions. The civic traditions of every Western democracy are looking, in this age, for renewed sources of voluntary commitment, and the experience of RSS, gathered patiently across a century, has something to contribute to that wider search. The example of a movement that has sustained one hundred years of continuous voluntary action, without paid employment, compulsory membership or external funding, is itself a substantial contribution to the wider human conversation about what voluntary civic life can be.

### ***Integration of cultural inheritance with technological capability.***

A fifth observation concerns the proposition, developed most fully at the Stanford Faculty Club, that scientific and technological progress must be guided by a fuller framework than economic outcomes alone. The three terms Economy, Ecology and Ethics drew sustained interest from the senior figures of the global science and innovation communities. They speak to a wider international concern with the responsible direction of technology, particularly in the age of artificial intelligence. The experience of Bharat, with its long civilisational reflection on the relationship between knowledge and ethics, has something to offer to the wider human conversation about how scientific advancement might be guided in the years ahead. The proposition that traditional knowledge systems deserve a serious place in the gathering of humanity's intellectual heritage, and that the future of artificial intelligence is more abundant when it can draw upon the full range of human reflection rather than upon a narrow slice of it, is among the most significant contributions of the centenary engagement.

### ***Character of the dialogue.***

A sixth observation concerns the character of the dialogue itself. Across the three settings, the conversations were marked by candour, mutual respect and a shared interest in the conditions that allow great civilisations to flourish. The Sarkaryavah engaged Western framings without rancour, drawing distinctions where prevailing categories had blurred them and offering, in their place, the texture of RSS's lived practice. The conversations were not advocacy in any narrow sense; they were the kind of patient civilisational exchange in which one tradition offers its own experience for whatever it may contribute to the wider human reflection upon shared questions. This register of engagement, dignified and substantive, may itself be among the most enduring contributions of the centenary year. It models a form of conversation between societies that is neither defensive nor combative, neither apologetic nor assertive, but grounded in the conviction that genuine dialogue between civilisations is itself a form of seva.

## ***Significance of Panch Parivartan.***

A seventh observation concerns the framework of Panch Parivartan, the five centenary transformations of social harmony, family awakening, environmental stewardship, selfhood and civic duty. The five transformations were recognised across the three countries as universal in their underlying principles, even as they remain distinctively Bharatiya in their cultural texture. The mechanism of their realisation, beginning with the individual and the family and extending through them to the nation and ultimately to humanity, ensures that the work of transformation is grounded in the everyday lives of ordinary people rather than confined to the deliberations of distant institutions. The framework offers, in compact form, the integration of cultural rootedness with global responsibility that has been the principal theme of RSS reflection across its hundred years. As the centenary year continues, Panch Parivartan may prove to be among the most lasting offerings of RSS to the wider human conversation.

## ***Journey of RSS as a model of global good.***

A further observation concerns the wider significance of the hundred years of RSS itself. Beyond any particular thread of conversation drawn out at Stanford, Hudson, Chatham House or Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, the long arc of the

movement, sustained without break across a century of national and global upheaval, stands as a contribution in its own right. The patient cultivation of voluntary commitment over many years and across many generations; the consensual succession of leadership without internal schism; the steady building of forty inspired institutions across every major domain of public life; the unbroken continuity of the daily shakha in over one hundred thousand locations; the emphasis throughout on duty over privilege and on service over recognition; together these constitute a model of what voluntary civic life can be when oriented towards the welfare of all beings and the global good. Civilisational journeys of comparable continuity are rare in the modern world. The journey of RSS, offered to the wider human family in this centenary year, is itself among the contributions of the moment.

## ***Reciprocity of the centenary outreach.***

A further observation concerns the reciprocity of the dialogue. In each country, the Sarkaryavah extended invitations to these officials to continue the conversation through future visits to Bharat. The conversation initiated in April 2026 was understood, across all three settings, as the beginning of a longer dialogue rather than as its conclusion. The aspiration is that these exchanges, informal yet substantive, will deepen the mutual understanding from which the wider work of global good can grow. The centenary engagements are, in this sense, the opening of an arc rather than a discrete event.

The hundred years of RSS, completed in October 2025 and culminating on Vijayadashami of 2026, are being marked not by display but by deepened service. The reflections and experiences accumulated across this hundred years, and the journey of the movement itself as a model of patient civilisational endeavour, are being offered, in the spirit of contribution to the welfare of all beings and the global good, to humanity at large. The engagements of April 2026, in the United Kingdom, the United States and Germany, are part of that wider offering, and the conversations begun in those settings are intended to be sustained over the years to come.

## XII. List of Acronyms and Glossary

The following list is provided for the convenience of readers who may be encountering some of the terms and institutions referred to in this brief for the first time. Sanskrit and Hindi terms are followed by their literal meaning and the contextual sense in which RSS uses them.

- RSS:** Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh  
**HSS:** Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh  
**ABVP:** Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad  
**BMS:** Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh  
**VHP:** Vishwa Hindu Parishad  
**MRM:** Muslim Rashtriya Manch (National Muslim Forum)  
**RIM:** Rashtriya Isai Manch (National Christian Forum)  
**Rashtriya Sikh Sangat:** National Sikh Association  
**FIIDS:** Foundation for India and Indian Diaspora Studies  
**GSIF:** Global Science Innovation Forum  
**CIHS:** Centre for Integrated and Holistic Studies

- Sarsanghchalak:** Head and Highest position of moral and ideological guidance within RSS.  
**Sarkaryavah:** General Secretary of RSS.  
**Sah-Sarkaryavah:** Joint General Secretary of RSS.  
**Akhil Bharatiya Prachar Pramukh:** Chief Spokesperson  
**Pracharak:** Full-time, unpaid volunteer of RSS.  
**Swayamsevak:** Self-motivated volunteer of RSS.  
**Akhil Bharatiya Pratinidhi Sabha:** Apex council of RSS.

### *Sanskrit and Hindi Terms*

- Atmanirbharta:** Self-reliance.  
**Bharat:** Historical name of India.  
**Bharat Mata:** Mother India.  
**Bharatiya:** Of or relating to Bharat.  
**Bhagwa Dhvaj:** The saffron flag, revered in RSS as the supreme guru of the movement.  
**Dayitva:** Responsibility.  
**Dharma:** The righteous moral order.  
**Guru Dakshina:** Voluntary offering made by swayamsevaks to fund the work of RSS.  
**Hindutva:** Hinduness; the cultural and civilisational ethos of Bharat.  
**Hindu Rashtra:** A nation rooted in the shared civilisational ethos of Bharat.  
**Karyakarta Mandal:** Working assembly of functionaries.  
**Kutumb Prabodhan:** Family awakening.  
**Naari Shakti:** Women's power.  
**Nagrik Kartavya:** Civic duty.  
**Panch Parivartan:** The Five Transformations

**Paryavaran:** Environmental.  
**Rashtra:** Nation, in the deeper civilisational sense.  
**Samajik Samrasta:** Social harmony.  
**Samanvay:** Coordination committee of RSS-inspired organisations.  
**Samaj:** Society.  
**Samskruti:** Tradition and culture (loosely).  
**Sanatan / Sanatana Dharma:** The eternal; the eternal way.  
**Sangh:** Association, coming together.  
**Seva:** Selfless service.  
**Shakha:** The daily or weekly local gathering of swayamsevaks.  
**Shatabdi Varsh:** Centenary year.  
**Swa:** Selfhood.  
**Swadeshi:** Of one's own country.  
**Swatantrata:** Independence  
**Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam:** The whole world is one family.  
**Vijayadashami:** Hindu festival of Dusshera.  
**Vishwaguru:** World guide.

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