

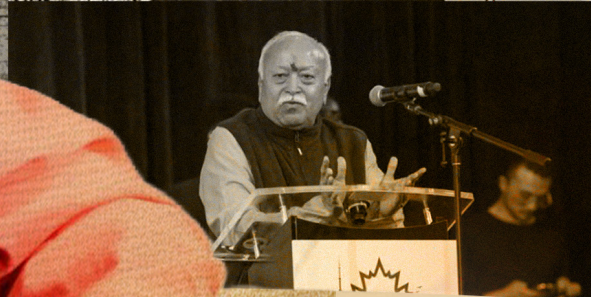
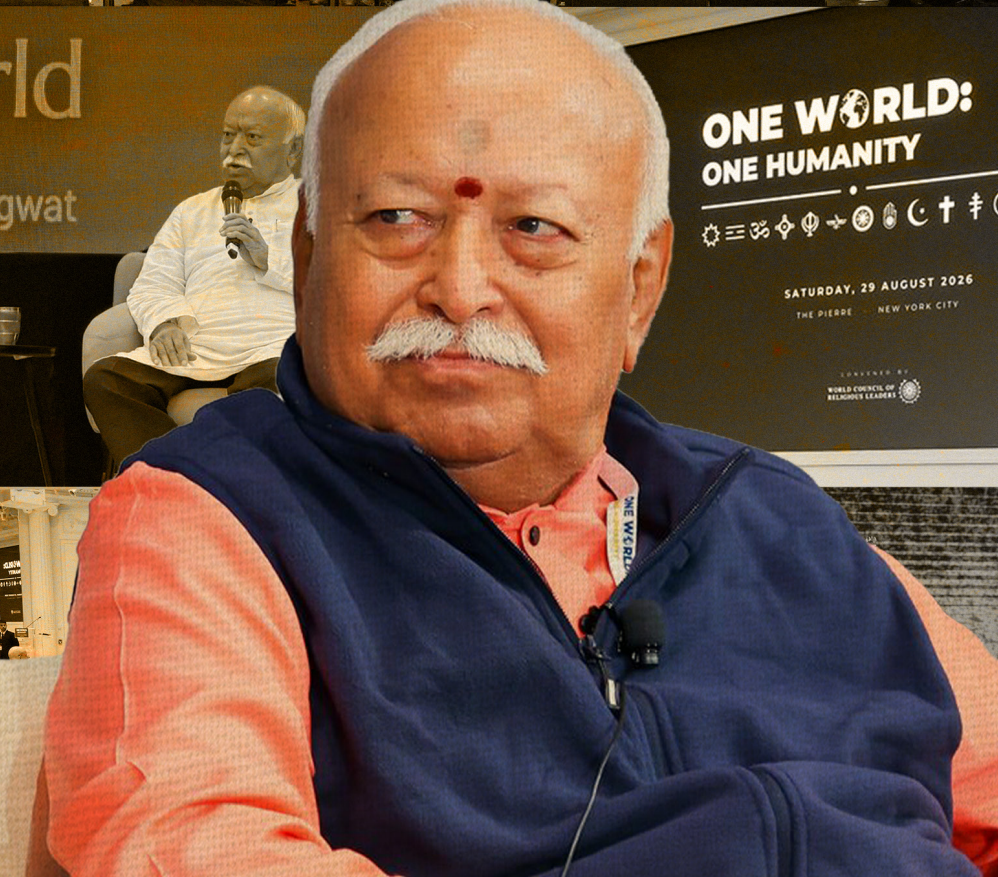
RSS for Universal Oneness

Dr. Mohan Bhagwat's Engagements in the US, Canada and the UK
(25 August - 7 September 2026)

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Universal Oneness
Celebration



BRIEF

RSS for Universal Oneness

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the US, Canada and the UK*

(25 August - 7 September 2026)

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I. Executive Summary

The Movement

- RSS is the world's largest socio-cultural movement driven by swayamsevaks (volunteers). Some 88,949 Shakhas (daily local gatherings) meet across India, with roughly 30,000 additional weekly gatherings.
- Institutions established by swayamsevaks work across education, healthcare, rural development and social service, encompassing approximately 29,000 schools, twenty large hospitals and some 130,000 service projects.
- Journeys of Bharat and the RSS are intertwined, and swayamsevaks have stood with the nation at every point of trial: Partition, the wars of 1962, 1965 and 1971, the Emergency, the violence of 1984, the Bhuj earthquake of 2001, and the pandemic, when more than 340,000 volunteers served across 67,000 locations.
- Founded in Nagpur in 1925 by Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar, the movement rests on the proposition that a nation's strength lies in the character of its people, formed not principally by institutions or authority but through the daily work of citizens who give their time in the service of society.

The Visit

- In April 2026, Sarkaryavah (General Secretary) Dattatreya Hosabale undertook engagements in the United Kingdom, the United States and Germany with academics, policymakers and public intellectuals, offering the Bharatiya experience of the RSS as a socio-cultural movement, its civilisational continuity and its tradition of service as a contribution to wider reflection on the challenges facing contemporary societies.
- Dr. Mohan Bhagwat, Sarsanghchalak (head) of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, travelled to the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom from 25 August to 7 September 2026, in the closing weeks of the centenary year.
- The engagements were undertaken at the invitation of host organisations in each country and rested on three pillars: close engagement with the Bharatiya diaspora, the articulation of the civilisational values of global harmony and civic responsibility, and sustained dialogue with the institutions of each host society on the history and worldview of the RSS.
- The visit carried a civilisational proposition: that humanity is one, that the world is one family, and that friendship with the world is the natural conduct of a people who understand this. The register changed with each setting. The substance did not.

- Truth is one, and human beings describe it in many ways according to the describer. Religions therefore differ while humanity remains one, and diversity stands not as the contradiction of unity but as its natural expression and its decoration.
- From that recognition follows an obligation. If we are one in essence, service to another is the acknowledgement of something already true, and it asks nothing of the identity, affiliation or gratitude of the one who is served.
- The world receiving this message is a world in distress. Wars are fought that neither side can conclude. Communities that lived alongside one another for generations now regard each other with fear. Trust in shared institutions has thinned, ecological limits press upon every society, families are under strain everywhere, and technologies of extraordinary power advance faster than the human institutions meant to direct them.
- These are not questions belonging to India alone, and no society will answer them in isolation. The civilisational values that have held a diverse India together across millennia, and that a hundred years of organised voluntary work has sought to renew, are placed before societies confronting the same questions, offered as experience rather than prescription.

The United States

- Dr. Bhagwat arrived in the United States on 25 August and remained until 30 August, the opening days given to interactions with the Bharatiya diaspora, community leaders, religious figures, academics and civic representatives, ahead of the two principal gatherings in New York on 29 August.
- In New York on 28 August, Dr. Bhagwat visited the historic first ISKCON temple on the Lower East Side, established in 1966, and participated in a food distribution drive that marked the 100,000th meal served under the Hunger Free New York initiative.
- On 29 August he participated as Guest of Honour at One World, One Humanity, an interfaith leadership gathering convened by the World Council of Religious Leaders, bringing together more than 150 faith leaders from diverse traditions. The morning opened in prayer offered by nine traditions in turn, each in its own tongue and its own form.
- He stated that no Hindu who wishes for the exclusion of Muslims from Bharat remains a Hindu, and that all paths lead to the same goal and every human being carries dignity.
- Recalling a Muslim man, who had asked him what a Hindu organisation speaking of Hindu Rashtra meant for them, he said he had answered plainly: that is not Hindutva.
- He described the relationship between dialogue and service as simultaneous rather than sequential, and cited the 130,000 service projects run by swayamsevaks, which serve everywhere and without discrimination.

- The interfaith gathering adopted a five-point Call to Action, committing religious leaders to begin with their own communities, stand for one another, build relationships before crisis, serve together, and take responsibility for the future.
- Later on 29 August he was Chief Guest at the Universal Oneness Celebration at Madison Square Garden, organised by the AHEAD Forum, which brought together more than 6,000 delegates from 39 states, 853 US cities and 29 countries, alongside 180 religious leaders from 30 countries, more than 250 university students and 250 partner organisations.
- The Hindu festival of Raksha Bandhan was observed at Madison Square Garden, with those present tying the sacred thread on one another's wrists, extending the bond of protection from family outward to community, nation and the natural world.
- In his keynote he said that unity and diversity are in the DNA of both Bharat and the United States, that Atman connects all beings like beads woven through a single thread, and that we are united in oneness and decorated by diversity.
- He said that people of all religious denominations live in Bharat, which by tradition has given shelter to everybody, and that those who could find no safe place elsewhere in the world found their place there.
- He spoke to the diaspora of loyalty first to their Karmabhoomi (the land of one's work), a duty owed in full and owed first, and of serving their Janmabhoomi (the land of one's origin) thereafter by living according to the values it has given them.

Canada

- Dr. Bhagwat arrived in Canada on 30 August and remained until 2 September, meeting community leaders and representatives of organisations from across the country before departing for London.
- On 31 August he delivered the keynote at Hindu Vishwa Bandhu: Embrace the World with Friendship in Toronto, at a gathering organised by CHORD with the support of more than 175 organisations.
- The occasion marked the first official visit to Canada by a serving Sarsanghchalak, a century after the movement's founding, and drew more than 2,000 participants from all ten Canadian provinces.
- The Chief Guest was the Honourable Jason Kenney, former Premier of Alberta, who observed that India's spiritual values and its unity in diversity show the way to the world. The Guest of Honour was Shri Kashmir Singh Dhaliwal of the Khalsa Diwan Society and the historic Ross Street Gurdwara, reflecting the shared dharmic inheritance of the Hindu and Sikh traditions.

- Dr. Bhagwat opened on the character of Bharat's engagement with the world, illustrated through Xuanzang and the three Nalanda students who gave their lives in the Ganga so that his books would reach China; the Maharaja of Jamnagar, who received Polish refugees whom the British had refused and is remembered in a Good Maharaja Square in Poland; and Dr. Kotnis, who left the Deccan to serve the health of the Chinese people until his death.
- Whenever help from Bharat has been sought anywhere in the world, he said, it has never been refused, and it is extended even without being asked. This is the tradition and the DNA of Bharat.
- The Bharatiya tradition, he explained, teaches not only unity in diversity but diversity as a form of oneness, a proposition he grounded in the Upanishadic account of the one that felt itself alone and chose to become many.
- Dharma, he was careful to establish, is not worship. It is sustenance, it is balance, and it is looking towards everybody as one's own.
- Bharat has never been a superpower, he said. It became Vishwa Guru by its own character, its ancestors reaching the known world of their time on foot and in small boats, conquering no country and converting no one, giving instead knowledge, mathematics, astronomy, Ayurveda and civilisational values. Those ancestors forced nothing on anyone, he added. Bharat's leaders lead from within and lead by example.
- On what the word Hindu carries, he was expansive rather than restrictive: it is bound to no single language, form of worship or way of living. Hindus respect and accept all, and those persecuted anywhere in the world have found asylum in Bharat, where Muslims, Christians, Jews and Parsis live as citizens with their distinctiveness intact.
- Prayers originating in Bharat, he observed, have never been offered for one community alone, whether for Vedic followers, Sikhs, Buddhists or Vaishnavas, but for the whole of the universe. He recalled in the same passage the Guru who gave all four of his sons for the cause of Dharma.
- Unity does not require agreement, he said, drawing on the Sangathan Sukta, which asks that our mantra and our assembly be the same, but which says of chitta only that it be together, since minds can never be identical.
- RSS was organised by Hindus for exactly this purpose and nothing else, he said: to develop, and then to give, as a bud becomes a flower and gives its fragrance to the whole atmosphere. That, he told them, is the life of a Hindu.
- He closed on the question of why one civilisation endures where others have vanished. The answer, he said, lies in fulfilling from time to time the arising needs of human society, gelling them into one humanity, and teaching them the Dharma of Seva.

The United Kingdom

- Dr. Bhagwat arrived in London on 2 September and remained until 7 September, the final leg of the visit, held under the theme Celebration of Oneness and coordinated by Integral with the support of more than 115 UK socio-cultural organisations.
- More than a hundred British Hindu and Indian organisations issued a joint statement of welcome ahead of his arrival, endorsing the five transformations as relevant to all their communities and complementary to their own objectives.
- The opening days were given to closed-door roundtables and to a gathering of prominent members of the diaspora drawn from business and politics, alongside meetings with faith leaders, academics, researchers and other public figures.
- His interfaith engagements took him to the Shree Swaminarayan Temple in Willesden, the first Swaminarayan mandir in the city, to the gurdwara of the Khalsa Jatha British Isles, the oldest established Sikh place of worship in Europe, where he was received by Shri Vikramjit Singh Sahney, Member of the Rajya Sabha, and to a Jain temple in London.
- The programme culminated on 6 September at the Oshwal Ekta Centre in Kingsbury, in a reception for community leaders and a civilisational dialogue initiated by Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh UK in its sixtieth year, with the support of Integral. Six hundred participants attended, representing 326 organisations and eleven language communities of Hindu society in Britain, much of the audience of the third and fourth generation, fully British and fully Hindu.
- The evening opened with homage to the victims of the Nepal floods, and took the form of a conversation rather than an address, with questions put by Mamta Subramanian and drawn from the audience, translated live into several Indian and foreign languages.
- Asked what has held the movement together for a century, he named a single principle: Apnapan, pure Sattvik love for everybody, which is the traditional nature of a Hindu. A Hindu is not an individual alone but is bound to family, community, society, humanity and nature.
- The word Hindu, he said, cannot be understood through any particular religious practice or way of living. It denotes a natural society that accepts and respects all diversity in the conviction that all paths lead to the same goal, and he cited the verse of the Shiva Mahimna Stotra on rivers reaching the same sea. We are also right, you are also right: that is the Hindu view.
- Uniformity is not necessary for unity. There is unity in diversity, and beyond that, all diversities are diversities of unity.
- Nation is not a translation of Rashtra, he explained. A nation forms from the compulsions of survival and enforces rules to hold itself together. A Rashtra begins with a purpose,

and the state comes afterwards. The purpose of Hindu Rashtra is to give the world one message: diversity is natural, and unity is truth.

- Answering a question from British Hindus on divided loyalty, he was unequivocal: there is no conflict, and should one arise, British Hindus will go with Britain. Your Karmabhoomi is where your loyalty lies; your Janmabhoomi and Punyabhoomi are where you receive your values, and your duty is to live those values in the land where you live. Hindutva never asks anyone to betray their Karmabhoomi.
- Faithfulness to one's origin and conduct as a global citizen are not a contradiction but a logical evolution. The lesson of the day, he said, is to think globally and act locally.
- Seva does not make the one who performs it great. It is not a favour conferred, but a chance to come nearer to God, given by those who allow themselves to be served.
- Anyone working honestly and selflessly for the good of society is a swyamsevak, he said, even without any association with the RSS, and even without knowing what the letters stand for.
- Asked about the perception that Hindus are not united, he reframed the question: an audience described as diverse was, he observed, composed entirely of community leaders, entirely of Hindus and entirely of human beings, three bases of unity in what had been offered as three diversities. Emphasise what unites rather than what divides, and society will prosper and the world will be a better place.

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• *The Offering*

- Relations between Bharat and the West have long been conducted through formal channels. Trade, defence, technology and mobility constitute that conversation, and it is a necessary one. It is also incomplete. Far less has been said between Bharat as a civilisation and the societies it meets, of the ideas that sit beneath such arrangements and the people who have carried them across generations and oceans.
- This visit opened that second conversation, and it opened it between peoples. The world is genuinely curious about Bharat, and any serious inquiry into Bharat arrives before long at the RSS, a movement whose journey and the nation's have been intertwined for a century.
- A civilisation does not reach another through official channels. It reaches it through people who belong fully to both. That is what the diaspora has become across these three countries, and it is why the conversation could be held at all, and held on equal terms.
- The proposition offered to them held no contradiction between the two belongings: that a community may be wholly committed to the country it inhabits while remaining rooted in the civilisation from which it comes, and that such a community constitutes a bridge rather than a boundary.

- The exchange ran in both directions. The organisations that received him have themselves spent decades running food banks, tutoring programmes, blood drives and relief efforts in the cities where they live. Theirs is a practice, not an attendance.
- Against a world in evident distress, the RSS advances no doctrine for export and asserts no authority over another society's tradition. What it places before the world is an experience: a hundred years of building a society upward from its smallest unit, through the formation of individual character.
- That experience has assumed practical form in Panch Parivartan, the five transformations of the centenary: Samajik Samrasta, social harmony; Kutumb Prabodhan, the awakening of the family; Paryavaran, environmental responsibility; Swa, selfhood and self-reliance; and Nagrik Kartavya, civic duty.
- Each begins with the individual, passes through the family, and extends outward to the nation and to humanity. The sequence is the method as much as the order, being change that originates in a household and propagates by example rather than change proclaimed from above.
- Beneath them lies Ekatma Manav Darshan, Integral Humanism, developed by RSS thinkers as a conception of development in which body, mind, intellect and soul advance together as inseparable dimensions of a single human enterprise. From it flowed Antyodaya, the rise of the last person, which has informed Indian thinking on inclusive development for six decades.
- The question it poses is whether the systems contending for the world's future give a sufficient account of the human person. In an age when material progress has attained unprecedented levels without conferring the meaning presumed to accompany it, that question acquires renewed force.
- Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam stands at the centre of the whole. The world is one family, which is not the world made uniform. Diversity is what unity looks like when it assumes form, and seva is therefore owed to the whole rather than to those who happen to share one's name, faith or origin.
- India that is Bharat's contribution has never lain in the exercise of power. When Bharat attained greatness it did not become a superpower; it became, by the force of its own character, Vishwa Guru rather than Mahashakti. Its rise, measured on that record, portends a more united and more emancipated humanity.
- Panch Parivartan carries the learning of a century into the next. These values are not proposed to others before being practised at home: they are what the RSS instils in every swayamsevak, through the daily discipline of the shakha, and the wisdom of a hundred years of such formation is offered freely to every society confronting the same questions.

II. One Hundred Years of Selfless Seva

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) was founded in Nagpur in 1925 by Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar, a physician who saw national renewal as fundamentally a question of social character. His proposition was that a nation's strength lies in the character of its people, and that such character is formed not principally by institutions or authority, but through the daily work of citizens who choose to give their time in the service of society. The name describes the organisation: Rashtriya, national; Swayamsevak, the self-motivated, selfless volunteer; and Sangh, a coming together or association.

A century later, the RSS is the world's largest volunteer-driven socio-cultural movement. Its basic unit of activity is the shakha (a daily local gathering). Some 88,949 shakhas meet daily across India, with roughly 30,000 additional weekly gatherings. Typically lasting about an hour, a shakha combines physical activity, games, intellectual discussion, reflection and prayer. Its significance lies less in the format than in the habit it cultivates: individuals voluntarily giving their time, regularly and without expectation of reward or recognition.

That culture of voluntary participation has remained central as the RSS has grown. Its volunteers, known as swayamsevaks, are self-motivated individuals who give their time to the movement and its work. There is no formal membership fee; its office-bearers serve without remuneration, and its activities are sustained through voluntary contributions. Positions within the organisation are understood as dayitva, or responsibilities, rather than offices of authority. Leadership has passed through six Sarsanghchalaks since its founding through consensual succession, while the saffron flag, rather than any individual, remains the movement's symbolic guru.



Over the decades, its swayamsevaks have established independent institutions inspired by the ideals of the RSS, working across politics, education, healthcare, rural development and social service. These institutions operate independently of the RSS, which does not administer or manage them. The scale of this wider body of work is substantial: approximately 29,000 schools, twenty large hospitals and some 130,000 service projects are associated with organisations established by swayamsevaks. The underlying principle is seva: service understood as a social responsibility, rather than as a transaction conditioned on identity, credit, affiliation or recognition.

The history of that service is particularly visible in moments of national crisis. RSS swayamsevaks assisted displaced families during Partition; contributed to civil defence and relief during the wars of 1962, 1965 and 1971; participated in the restoration of democratic institutions during the Emergency; helped protect Sikh families during the violence of 1984; responded to the Bhuj earthquake in 2001; and, during the COVID-19 pandemic, mobilised more than 340,000 volunteers across 67,000 locations. They distributed food and essential supplies on a vast scale and, in circumstances

when many families were left without assistance, helped conduct funerals for those who had died.

The centenary, which began in 2025 and concludes in 2026, has been conceived less as an anniversary than as an opportunity for renewed service. Its principal framework, Panch Parivartan, identifies five areas of social transformation: social harmony, family cohesion, environmental responsibility, self-reliance and civic duty. The formulation is rooted in India's social and cultural experience, but the questions it addresses are universal: how societies maintain cohesion, how families and communities adapt to modern pressures, how responsibility is shared between citizens and institutions, and how material progress can remain connected to human and ecological wellbeing.



The centenary has also opened a wider international conversation. In April 2026, General Secretary Dattatreya Hosabale undertook engagements in the United Kingdom, the United States and Germany with academics, policymakers and public intellectuals. The conversations offered the Bharatiya experience of a voluntary socio-cultural movement, its civilisational continuity and its tradition of service as a contribution to wider reflection on the challenges facing contemporary societies.

The relevance of that conversation is increasingly evident. Societies across the world are confronting fragmentation, declining trust, technological disruption and renewed conflict. Digital networks can amplify both connection and antagonism, while technological change is advancing faster than many of the social institutions intended to mediate its consequences. Governments remain indispensable, but many of the pressures confronting contemporary societies ultimately concern the deeper foundations of social cohesion: trust, belonging and shared responsibility.

RSS approaches these questions from an experience accumulated over a century: that social resilience is built from the bottom up,

through the character of individuals, the cohesion of families and communities, and habits of voluntary responsibility. It does not present this experience as a doctrine for export. Rather, it offers a Bharatiya experience for reflection on questions that increasingly belong to everyone.

At its philosophical centre is an idea expressed in the ancient Indian formulation *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*: the world is one family. It does not imply uniformity. On the contrary, diversity is understood as a natural expression of an underlying unity. In this conception, *seva* acquires a broader meaning. Service is not an act reserved for those who share one's identity, affiliation or circumstance; it is an expression of responsibility towards the whole.

It is in this spirit, as the RSS's centenary enters its concluding phase, that its sixth Sarsanghchalak, Dr. Mohan Bhagwat, who has led the movement since 2009, has undertaken engagements in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom from 25 August to 7 September 2026. This brief documents the engagements undertaken during his centenary-year visit (travels).



III. The United States Visit - Universal Oneness

Dr. Mohan Bhagwat arrived in the United States on 25 August 2026 for the first leg of his centenary-year visit. Over the following five days, his engagements brought him into conversation with members of the Bharatiya diaspora, community leaders, religious figures, academics and other civic and intellectual representatives. The engagements were undertaken at the invitation of the host organisations and ranged from community interactions and institutional visits to major public gatherings.

The programme themed “Universal Oneness” brought together several strands of the wider centenary conversation. It moved between expressions of the Bharatiya civilisational tradition in the United States, engagement with the country’s religious and civic life, and conversations around the relationship between identity, diversity, social responsibility and service.

On 28 August, Dr. Bhagwat visited the historic first ISKCON temple on New York City’s Lower East Side, established by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada in 1966, and also visited The Bhakti Center nearby. The engagement came during the RSS’s centenary year and ISKCON’s sixtieth anniversary year, and coincided with the Hunger Free New York initiative reaching its 100,000th meal. Dr. Bhagwat participated in a local food distribution drive, inaugurating the 100,000th meal under the Zero Hunger New York initiative. The visit was one of several engagements during the US leg through which the Sarsanghchalak brought the RSS’s centenary-year message of social responsibility, service and universal oneness into conversation with different expressions of the Bharatiya civilisational tradition in the West.

The following day, 29 August, became the central day of the US leg. In the morning, Dr. Bhagwat participated as Guest of Honour at One World, One Humanity, organised by the World Council of Religious Leaders. More than 150 faith leaders from diverse religious and community traditions gathered for a programme centred on interfaith dialogue and the responsibilities of religious leadership in a world experiencing polarisation, conflict, distrust and despair. The gathering brought together senior representatives of different traditions without requiring them to set aside their particular theological or cultural identities.



Later that day, Dr. Bhagwat was Chief Guest at the Universal Oneness Celebration at Madison Square Garden, organised by the American Hindus for Engagement and Dialogue (AHEAD Forum). The gathering brought together more than 6,000 delegates from 39 states, 853 US cities and 29 countries. It also included 180 religious leaders from 30 countries, more than 250 university students from across the United States and representatives of 250 partner organisations. Rooted in the celebration of Raksha Bandhan, the event placed the theme of universal oneness within a distinctly Bharatiya cultural and civilisational framework, drawing upon the idea of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, the world is one family.

Taken together, the three engagements formed a progression from civilisational and spiritual consciousness, to interfaith dialogue, to a large public expression of universal oneness. The ISKCON visit placed seva and spiritual consciousness within the context of a Bharatiya tradition that had taken root in the West. One World, One Humanity brought diverse faith traditions into direct dialogue around shared human responsibility. The Universal Oneness Celebration carried the conversation into a wider public setting through Raksha Bandhan, diversity and Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam. The connection between them was not simply thematic: each offered a different setting in which the relationship between Hindutva, oneness, responsibility and seva could be explored.

Across these engagements, the emphasis was not on uniformity. The proposition was that unity and diversity can coexist, and that a strong sense of identity need not diminish the dignity or identity of others. The New York programme brought together questions that are often treated separately: how religious conviction can coexist with pluralism; how civilisational continuity can coexist with contemporary citizenship; how diaspora identity can deepen rather than divide civic responsibility; and how the recognition of shared humanity can move from an idea into practice.

The US leg of the visit concluded on 30 August, when Dr. Bhagwat departed for Canada.



III.I Visit to the First ISKCON Temple

On 28 August 2026, during his visit to the United States in the centenary year of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, Dr. Mohan Bhagwat, Sarsanghchalak of the RSS, paid a respectful visit to the historic first ISKCON temple on New York City's Lower East Side. He also visited The Bhakti Center nearby, home to the only Radha-Krishna Deities in Manhattan. The visits took place during ISKCON's sixtieth anniversary year, and Dr. Bhagwat came as a guest to honour that milestone and the tradition it represents.

The visit brought together two distinct trajectories of the Bharatiya civilisational tradition in the West. It was here, in a modest storefront, that His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada began ISKCON in 1966. Gauranga Dasa, a member of ISKCON's Governing Body Commission, received Dr. Bhagwat and spoke of what had grown from that beginning: a global network of temples, affiliated institutions and the dissemination of Vedic literature across more than eighty languages.

Service was also central to the encounter. Through Hare Krishna Food Relief and affiliated programmes, ISKCON has distributed free vegetarian meals across the world, particularly in Bharat. During the visit, its Hunger Free New York project marked the serving of its 100,000th plate of free prasada. Dr. Bhagwat participated in the local food distribution drive and inaugurated the 100,000th meal.

Dr. Bhagwat's appreciation of ISKCON's work was expressed through a broader proposition concerning the relationship between spiritual consciousness and social peace:

“The world needs to develop its God consciousness, or Krishna consciousness.

Without understanding the oneness of our connection to God, there can never be peace in society.”

The proposition connects spiritual consciousness with the social consequences of recognising oneness. It also sits within the wider intellectual thread of his centenary-year visit: that oneness is not merely an idea to be affirmed, but a principle that must find expression in how people live and serve.

In the temple guestbook, Dr. Bhagwat wrote:

“An inspiring venue which brought the ‘Matchless Gift’ of Sri Krishna consciousness to the world.”

In his vote of thanks, Anuttama Dasa, a member of ISKCON's Governing Body Commission and Global Minister of Communications, connected the visit to the RSS's centenary-year framework of Panch Parivartan, particularly its first transformation, social harmony and the creation of an inclusive society free from discrimination.

He noted the convergence between that objective and the first of ISKCON's Seven Purposes as articulated by Srila Prabhupada: to help bring about "real peace and unity" in the world. He further emphasised that the question is not the religious identity to which a person belongs, but whether one is developing love of God and recognising the shared relationship of all living beings to the divine.

The visit therefore brought two movements, distinct in origin and method, into conversation around a common concern. ISKCON emerged in New York in 1966 with the purpose of carrying the Vedic tradition to the West. The RSS, founded in Nagpur in 1925, developed a tradition of voluntary socio-cultural organisation centred on character, social harmony and seva. Their histories are different, but the meeting identified a shared emphasis on harmony, the dignity of human beings and the practical expression of spiritual and civilisational values through service.



III.II. One World, One Humanity

One World, One Humanity was a high-level interfaith leadership gathering bringing faith leaders together to affirm shared humanity and to promote hope, dignity, mutual understanding and collective responsibility in a fractured world. It assembled more than 150 leaders from diverse religious and community traditions. Its purpose was not to erase theological or cultural differences but to create a serious space in which leaders could address the common challenges confronting societies and consider the distinctive responsibility of faith communities in responding to them.

A Global Interfaith Leadership Gathering

Event	One World, One Humanity
Guest of Honour	Dr. Mohan Bhagwat, Sarsanghchalak, RSS
Organised by	World Council of Religious Leaders
Venue	1345 Avenue of the Americas, New York City
Date	29 August 2026
Participants	150+ faith leaders from diverse religious and community traditions

The morning began in prayer, and the prayer was not one prayer. Guruji Dileepkumar Thankappan, Co-Chair of the Committee of Religious Non-Governmental Organizations at the United Nations, blew the conch shell. The call to prayer was taken up in turn by Rabbi Amy Roth of The New Jewish Home in New York; Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati Ji of Parmarth Niketan; Rev. Canon Natalie Hall of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh; Ms. Rachel Bayani of the Bahá'í International Community; Elder Elizabeth Araujo, a Mayan elder from El Salvador and Guatemala; Venerable Guang Guo Shih of the Ling Jiou Mountain Buddhist Society; Mrs. Fatema M. Biviji of the Interfaith Alliance of Irving; and Samani Pratibha Pragya Ji of Jain Vishva Bharati. Each offered the call of their own tradition, in their own tongue and in their own form.

The programme that followed moved through moral conscience, the bridging of divides, and action and cooperation. Senior representatives taking part included H.E. Sheikh Dr. Mohammed bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa of the Muslim World League, His Holiness Aram I of the Armenian Apostolic Church, Cardinal John Onaiyekan, Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA, Rabbi Noam Marans of the American Jewish Committee, Imam Dr. Talib M. Shareef of Masjid Muhammad in Washington, and H.H. Swami Nirmalanandanathji of Sri Adichunchanagiri Mahasamsthana Math.



The first session addressed moral conscience and the responsibility of religious leadership. The second considered the bridging of divides and the importance of relationships across religious and cultural boundaries. The third session addressed action and cooperation.

Dr. Bhagwat participated in the third session alongside Cardinal John Onaiyekan, Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie, H.H. Swami Nirmalanandanathji, Rabbi Noam Marans and Imam Dr. Talib M. Shareef. Opening his remarks, he said:

“I am not a religious scholar, nor a religious authority like you, but I am working in a society which traditionally says that religions might be different, but humanity is one. Truth is one, and humanity is a product of that truth. So humanity is one. That truth is one truth, but it is described in many ways according to the describer. Because as human beings, we are prisoners of the software that has been created in our heads.”

On religion and its purpose, he said:

“There are many religions and in today’s world religions are largely defined by rituals. And to fit in a religious discipline and to treat that path to divinity, this discipline of rituals is also necessary. But what for religion is there? It is leading us to truth. One World, One Humanity; it has to be accepted and protected.”

He also said:

“So seeking the ultimate truth, divinity, which we call by different names. Science nowadays calls it consciousness.”

On diversity, Dr. Bhagwat said:

“Diversity is a decoration for our innate unity. It has to be accepted, it has to be respected, it has to be protected.”

He continued:

“As I protect my own specific nature, I have to protect others also. Because diversity is the rule of nature. Unity is the truth behind nature.”

Addressing Hindu identity and the question of Hindu Rashtra, he said:

“If any Hindu thinks that there should be no Muslim in Bharat, he will not remain Hindu. If you want to call yourself Hindu, you must believe that all paths are leading to the same goal and that every human has dignity. There is no difference between human beings.”

He recalled being asked the question directly:

“I had a lecture, and Muslim brothers were also there. And they asked me a question: ‘You are a Hindu organisation, you say Hindu Rashtra, what about us Muslims?’ I said, ‘No, that is not Hindutva.’”

Speaking about the Bharatiya civilisational idea of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, the world is one family, he said:

“This is the traditional thought of Bharat, unity of humanity. All our leaders, at any point in time, have emphasized that too. After independence, we got the constitution, which emphasizes this, but that is not happening. Because these things do not happen through politics. I’m sorry to say, but the fact is, politics has now become a game of self-interest. And you have rightly said, where there is me and I, there is no solution. We and ours are the solution. So our experience in Bharat is that we have to start with the society.”



On the role of the RSS, he said:

“We as RSS, we think because we have this knowledge that world humanity is one it is our duty to go all over the world and tell everybody that in spite of our diversity we are one.”

He referred to the RSS’s service activities:

“One lakh thirty thousand service projects are being run by our Swayamsevaks with the help of society. They serve everywhere and serve equally without discrimination.”



On dialogue and service, he said:

“Dialogue is the first step. Service is another but not necessarily a step after dialogue. They have to happen simultaneously.”

He added:

“We are serving. And when we serve, we do not discriminate.”

He illustrated this with the 1996 air collision at Dadri in Haryana. Both aircraft were from Muslim countries, and most of those aboard were Muslims. Swayamsevaks of the RSS reached the site first and served there. When the relatives came, the volunteers helped them identify their dead. Then they arranged the last rites.

Dr. Bhagwat concluded:

“In our knowledge, traditional knowledge, all over the world, every society in its tradition has this knowledge somewhere. But now we have to create a situation wherein this knowledge prevails. And this knowledge rules the human being.”

He added:

“Knowledge of fullness. Knowledge of love. That we have to do.”

The summit concluded with a Call to Action presented by seven leaders drawn from different religious and cultural backgrounds. The Call set out five commitments: to begin with oneself and hold one's own community accountable; to stand for one another; to build relationships before they are needed; to serve together; and to take responsibility for the future, including war and peace, poverty, the shared world and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence.

The Call to Action asked each leader to undertake one specific, local and accountable action, including bringing together people who rarely meet, standing beside another community, confronting hatred where they have influence, creating opportunities for young people to cross religious or cultural boundaries, serving alongside another community, or beginning a conversation that has long been avoided.

The gathering concluded with prayers and blessings offered across the participating traditions.

Dr. Mohan Bhagwat
Full address can be
watched on:



III.III Universal Oneness Celebration

The Universal Oneness Celebration was held at Madison Square Garden on the afternoon of 29 August 2026, organised by the American Hindus for Engagement and Dialogue, the AHEAD Forum. More than six thousand delegates attended, drawn from 39 states, 853 US cities and 29 countries, alongside 180 religious leaders from 30 countries, more than 250 university students and representatives of 250 partner organisations. Dr. Mohan Bhagwat, Sarsanghchalak of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, was Chief Guest and delivered the keynote address.

Madison Square Garden, New York City

Event	Universal Oneness Celebration
Chief Guest	Dr. Mohan Bhagwat, Sarsanghchalak, RSS
Organised by	AHEAD Forum (American Hindus for Engagement and Dialogue)
Venue	Madison Square Garden, Manhattan, New York City
Date	29 August 2026
Participants	6,000+ delegates from 39 states, 853 US cities and 29 countries

Holding the celebration at Madison Square Garden brought a Bharatiya civilisational idea into one of the most recognisable public venues in the United States, expressed through culture, community and shared observance. The morning gathering at 1345 Avenue of the Americas had assembled religious leadership for deliberation. The afternoon assembled the Hindu American community, joined by religious leaders from thirty countries and by delegates from twenty-nine.

The proceedings opened with a resolution. Before the addresses began, leaders drawn from many faiths and walks of life presented the call for action of two hundred religious leaders, through which 180 leaders from thirty countries announced a five-point plan to take responsibility for the future. Its signatories commit to stand for the dignity of any community threatened with humiliation or violence, and they reject the use of religion to justify hatred, humiliation, dehumanisation or violence.



The Call to Action opens by naming the moment: cities under bombardment and families burying their children, neighbours who prayed side by side for generations now fearing one another, hatred crossing borders through screens at unprecedented speed, and trust weakening in institutions and in one another while new technologies transform how human beings communicate, understand truth, exercise power and imagine the future. It acknowledges the power of faith to heal and reconcile, and the fact that religion has sometimes been used to divide, exclude and justify violence. Both legacies are inherited, and so is the responsibility that comes with them. From there it states what its signatories hold in common:

“Every human being has dignity, no community is less human than another, and the suffering of another cannot be irrelevant simply because it is not our own.”

“Unity does not require conformity. Conviction does not require contempt. And defending the humanity of another does not diminish our own.”

“The question before us, therefore, is not simply what we believe. It is what we are prepared to do.”

Five commitments follow, stated as undertakings rather than aspirations:

1. We Will Begin With Ourselves. To examine the words, teachings, institutions and practices of our own communities first, to reject the use of religion to justify hatred, humiliation, dehumanisation or violence, and to teach that deep conviction can coexist with respect for those who believe differently. Peace begins with the courage to hold our own communities accountable.

2. We Will Stand for One Another. To speak when people are dehumanised or targeted, whether they belong to our community or another, whether near to us or far away, and to stand beside any leader who takes a principled stand for the dignity of a community not their own.

3. We Will Build Relationships Before We Need Them. To bring communities together across religious and cultural boundaries, especially the young, ahead of tragedy rather than in response to it, and to create ways for those who might otherwise meet only as strangers or adversaries to meet as human beings. The person we know is harder to hate.

4. We Will Serve Together. To turn shared values into shared work among the hungry, the sick, the displaced, the persecuted and the forgotten, and to support courageous work already underway rather than compete for recognition. Our cooperation should be visible not only in what we say together, but in what we do together.

5. We Will Take Responsibility for the Future. To use moral influence wherever human dignity is at stake, in decisions about war and peace, poverty and opportunity, the care of the shared world, and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, insisting that human progress remain in the service of human beings.

ONE WORLD: ONE HUMANITY



CALL TO ACTION

Five commitments. One shared human family.

Today we meet at another consequential moment for humanity.

We come from traditions older than nations—from scriptures, lineages, and ways of prayer that have carried billions of human beings through every joy and every catastrophe our species has known. We know the extraordinary power of faith to heal, reconcile, and inspire—and the painful truth that religion has sometimes been used to divide, exclude, and justify violence. We inherit both that legacy and the responsibility that comes with it.

As we gather, cities are under bombardment and families are burying their children. Neighbors who prayed side by side for generations now fear one another. Hatred crosses borders and spreads through our screens with unprecedented speed. Trust in institutions and in one another is weakening, even as new technologies transform how human beings communicate, understand truth, exercise power, and imagine the future.

No government, institution, or technology can carry responsibility for this moment alone. Neither can religious leaders. But there is a responsibility that is uniquely ours.

Across our different traditions, beliefs, histories, and cultures, we affirm something fundamental:

Every human being has dignity,
no community is less human than another,
and the suffering of another cannot be irrelevant simply because it is not our own.

Unity does not require conformity. Conviction does not require contempt. And defending the humanity of another does not diminish our own.

The question before us, therefore, is not simply what we believe. It is what we are prepared to do.

OUR FIVE COMMITMENTS

1. WE WILL BEGIN WITH OURSELVES.

We will examine the words, teachings, institutions, and practices of our own communities first. We will reject the use of religion to justify hatred, humiliation, dehumanization, or violence—and teach that deep conviction can coexist with respect for those who believe differently.

| *Peace begins with the courage to hold our own communities accountable.*

2. WE WILL STAND FOR ONE ANOTHER.

When another community is threatened, we will not leave it to stand alone. We will speak when people are dehumanized or targeted—whether they belong to our community or another, whether they are near to us or far away. And when one of us takes a principled stand for the dignity of another community, we will stand beside them.

3. WE WILL BUILD RELATIONSHIPS BEFORE WE NEED THEM.

We will bring our communities together across religious and cultural boundaries—especially our young people—not in response to tragedy, but before it. We will listen to those we have misunderstood, and create ways for people who might otherwise meet only as strangers, stereotypes, or adversaries to meet as human beings.

| *The person we know is harder to hate.*

4. WE WILL SERVE TOGETHER.

We will turn shared values into shared work. Across traditions and borders, we will serve where suffering is immediate: among the hungry, the sick, the displaced, the persecuted, and the forgotten. We will support courageous work already underway rather than compete for recognition.

Our cooperation should be visible not only in what we say together, but in what we do together.

5. WE WILL TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FUTURE.

We will use our moral influence wherever human dignity is at stake—in decisions about war and peace, poverty and opportunity, the care of our shared world, and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence. We will insist that human progress remain in the service of human beings, and that technology strengthen rather than diminish dignity, truth, freedom, and human connection.

A global declaration matters only if it becomes local action.

These commitments do not end when this gathering ends. We will remain connected, support one another when leadership is difficult, and hold one another accountable for what we pledge here. And each of us will carry these commitments home.

We therefore ask every leader gathered here to undertake one concrete action: bring together people who rarely meet; stand beside a community other than your own; confront hatred where you have influence; create an opportunity for young people to cross a religious or cultural boundary; serve alongside another community; or begin a conversation that has been avoided for too long.

Choose one. Or create another. But make it specific.

Give it a place, a purpose, and a path forward. Tell us what you intend to do. Then tell us what you did.

We are not naive. Religious leaders alone cannot end wars, eliminate hatred, or reverse every injustice. But neither are we powerless. Every religious leader influences a community. Every community touches another. Every act of courage makes another act of courage possible.

One World. One Humanity. Not because we are all the same. Not because we agree on everything. But because our dignity is shared, our futures are connected, and the world we leave behind will be shaped by what we choose to do now.

Beginning with ourselves.

Standing for one another.

Serving together.

Taking responsibility for the future.

THIS IS OUR CALL TO ACTION.

Raksha Bandhan was then celebrated at The Stage, Madison Square Garden. Envelopes had been placed on the seats across the venue before the programme began, and the audience was invited to open them, turn to those beside them, whether long known or newly met, and tie the sacred thread on one another's wrists. Honoured guests and speakers were presented with rakhis on stage, and a woman tied a rakhi on Dr. Bhagwat's wrist as a vow of protection, trust and mutual respect. Organisers spoke of harmony as an active choice rather than a passive belief, and the ceremony was conceived in that spirit: six thousand people, drawn from twenty-nine countries and 853 cities, performing the bond rather than hearing it described.

Raksha Bandhan, the Hindu festival of the sacred thread, honours the bond between a brother and a sister, in which the rakhi carries a pledge of protection. Observed across the arena, it was offered as an expression of a wider truth, that the bonds of a family reach outward to communities, to societies, to humanity and to the natural world.

Speaking to its meaning, Dr. Bhagwat returned to the word itself:

“Today, celebrating this Raksha Bandhan, we have to remember that we tie the rakhi, that bandhan, that binding. What is that binding? It doesn't limit you. When you take the responsibility of others, it liberates you.”

He began his address simply:

“We are here to celebrate the oneness. It is very apt that we have gathered here in New York to do that. And I have come here from Nagpur in Bharat to share with you today's joy and today's spirit.”



He then placed two national vocabularies side by side:

“When we say America, the United States of America, one word is often discussed frequently: pluralism. And when we say Bharat, another word, another phrase, is discussed: unity in diversity. For Bharat, this unity and this diversity, both are in its DNA. Nations are not merely geographical entities. In the design of this universe, nations have to carry out a duty.”



“In America one word is discussed pluralism, for Bharat it is unity in diversity which is in our DNA. Every nation has a destiny to fulfill. What is the destiny given to Bharat? Bharat is there to realise, and from time to time make the world realise this unity in diversity. We are one, and due to diversity, that oneness is decorated. So, diversity has to be celebrated, has to be respected, has to be accepted. And at the same time, we must keep in mind this feeling of oneness.”

“Unity and diversity are in the DNA of both Bharat and the United States of America.”

On the duty a nation carries, he invoked Swami Vivekananda:

“Nations are not merely geographical entities. In the design of this universe, nations have to carry out a duty. Swami Vivekananda said, Every nation has a message to deliver. Every nation has a mission to accomplish. Every nation has a destiny to fulfil.”

“Swami Vivekananda said that every nation has a message to deliver, a mission to accomplish, and a destiny to fulfil. Bharat is there to realise, and from time to time make the world realise this unity in diversity.”



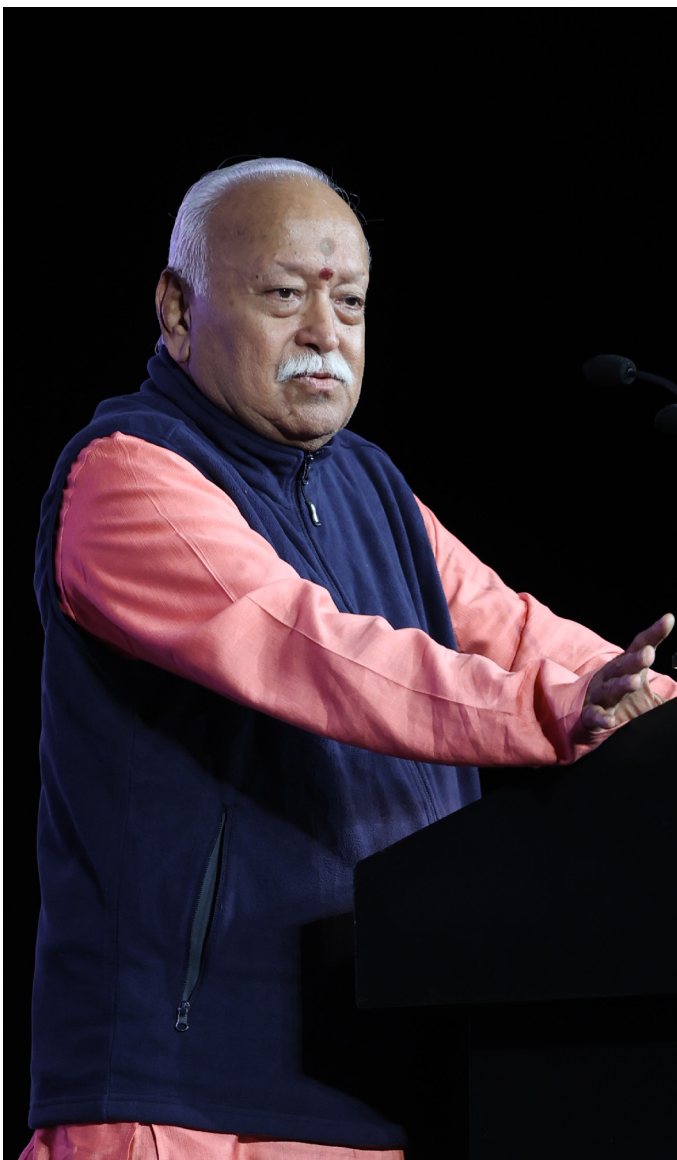
He then spoke of diversity and its relationship to oneness:

“We are one, and due to diversity, that oneness is decorated.”

“Diversity is natural, and unity is truth. That we must understand and shape our life according to this.”

He observed that human beings do appear different:

“Many times, we may think that how can we say that we are one? We appear different. So many nationalities, so many languages, so many religions, so many styles of living. We appear different. We are different. Scientifically we learn how we are different. How are we different? Each of us has to take his meal separately. If I am not hungry, it doesn't mean you are not hungry. If I have satisfied my hunger, if I had my lunch, that doesn't mean you had your lunch. You have to lunch separately. You have to earn separately. You have to spend separately.”



He then turned to the faculty that distinguishes human beings:

“Human beings can think, and that is a quality. That is a blessing but in what way you think, that is important. Thinking human beings who know right and wrong have the responsibility for sustaining the entire world. If you think in the right way, you go nearer to God. If you think in wrong way, you go nearer to animal kingdom. Nar karni kare to nar ka Narayan ban jaaye, when a human performs noble deeds, a human can become divine. The direction is important. And the man who shapes his life according to the right direction becomes a responsible citizen of this kingdom of God.”

“There is one speciality that makes human beings different from animals: Thinking. If human beings think rightly, they can sustain the whole world.”



And to what lies beneath apparent difference:

“In spite of different bodies and everything being different, there is something within that is same. We belong to each other.”

“Atman is the truth that connects us all. In spite of our different bodies, different attires, different verses, everything being different, like the beads in a necklace woven through single thread. This Atman is in everybody and it connects us all.”

The Sarsanghchalak also elucidated that the objective of Bharat is to let the whole world feel that the Atman is the intrinsic one which is the same in all, and that pluralism can be duly celebrated only after the realisation of Atman.

“Unity of existence, that is our truth.”

“It is our vision to see the world is one.”

On the many paths by which that truth is sought:

“Different paths which men take through different tendencies, various though they appear, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee, as the different streams have their sources in different places all mingle their water in the sea.”

He spoke of Bharat’s history of receiving others:

“In Bharat, people of all religious denominations live. By tradition, Bharat has given shelter to everybody. Those who could not find a safe place in the world came to Bharat, where they found their place.”

He then distinguished between two tendencies:

“There are two tendencies. One tendency is: live and let live. Another tendency is: live, and let only those live who obey us. Those who say, if you obey us, we will protect you, protection is raksha in Sanskrit, in Hindi. So, those who protect only those who obey are Rakshasas.”

“There are others who say, ‘No matter whether you obey or not, hear me or not, what is your opinion, what you think about me, or how useful you are to me, these are very minor things. The major thing is that we are all human beings. We have to sustain life, and so we have to live with fraternity.’”

Saintly figures of Bharat, he said, pray for the ending of the feeling of enmity from the minds of evil people.

On the work of the RSS:



“One lakh thirty thousand service projects are being run by our Swayamsevaks with the help of society. They serve everywhere and serve equally without discrimination.”

On the question of what is owed, he observed that we remember our duty towards our parents, and that we owe the same to the environment. Before you eat, there has to be agriculture in the world. We owe everything to someone else, and so we need to give back.

“We have taken everything from the world, so we have to give back to the world. How much we earn is not important; how much we distribute is important. We have to give back. That is our Parampara. Bharat expects from you that you carry forward its idea of life. This is a model of sustainable way of living.”

On the purpose of human life:

“Human life is not purposeless. It is not meaningless. It is not a simple coincidence. Human life is given to give this knowledge to everybody and live that knowledge for our own liberation, for the benefit of the world.”

“Human life is given to give this knowledge to everybody and live that knowledge for our own liberation, for the betterment of the world. That is the mission Bharat has to accomplish. That is the message Bharatiyas world over have to give by their own example, not by preaching, by practice. That is the destiny of Bharat.”

“From the Himalayas to the sea, we have one duty: to give this knowledge to the world. In Bharat, the duty is to realise the truth.”

“Bharat has given you the idea of life.”

“The duty of a Bharatiya is to give this message to the world through practice, not through preaching.”

To the Bharatiya diaspora in the USA, he said they should be loyal to their Karmabhoomi, and that after doing that obligatory duty, if the urge remains to do something for their Janmabhoomi, then live with the values that Bharat has imparted to you. That is the expectation of Bharat.

“We should create at our own place the models of the world we want.”

He closed on Dharma, describing it as the principle which unites everything, which upholds everything, which does not cause a rift, and which balances everything, which is the middle path.

“Dharma is the rule through which the universe is sustained. Dharma is the rule through which human beings can manage the quality of life. The middle path is Dharma.”

“Our destiny is to give that to the world, and the solid foundation on which this dharma is perceived is the oneness, the unity of existence. That is our truth.”

“We are united in oneness and decorated by diversity. Diversity is natural and unity is Truth. We celebrate diversity as the decoration of oneness.”

Full address can
be watched on

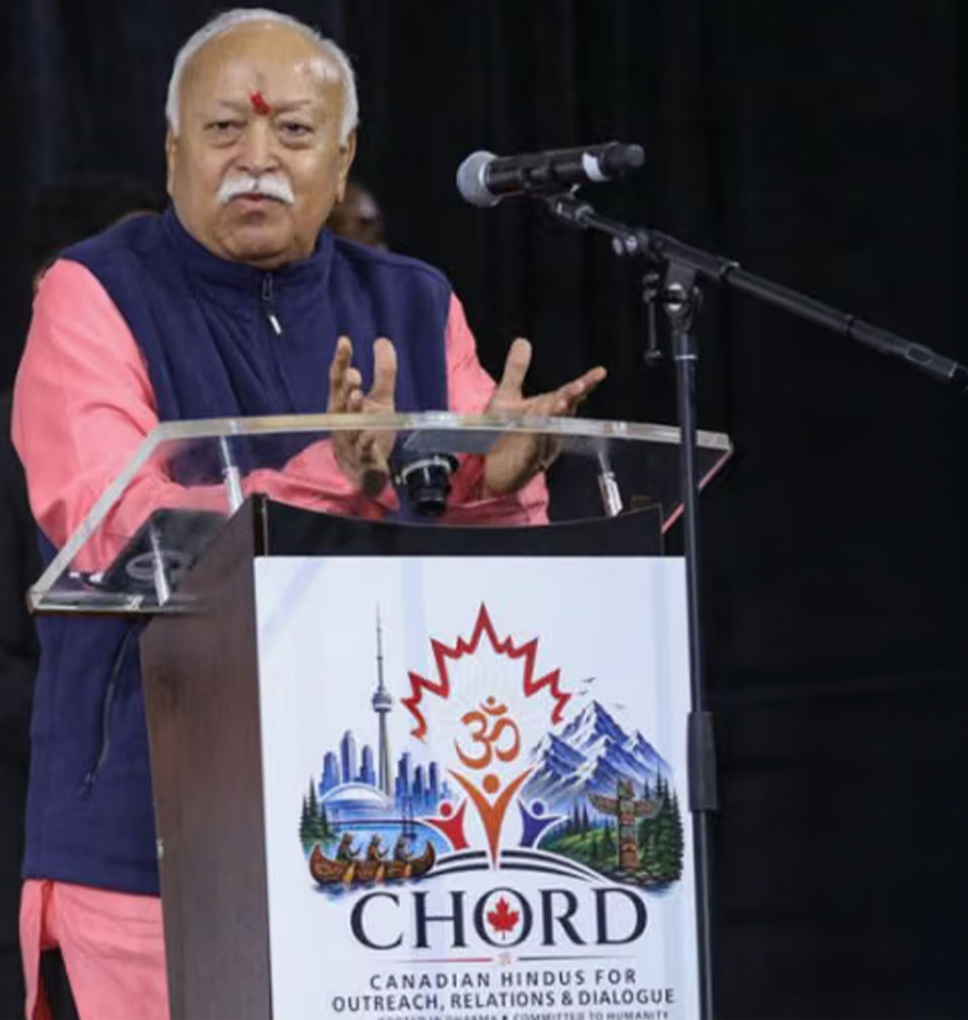


IV. The Canada Visit - Hindu Vishwa Bandhu

Dr. Mohan Bhagwat arrived in Canada on 30 August 2026, following the conclusion of the United States leg of his centenary-year visit. He was received in Toronto by members of the Canadian Hindu diaspora, and over the following two days met community leaders and representatives of organisations from across the country before departing for London on 2 September for the final leg of the visit.

The central engagement was Hindu Vishwa Bandhu: Embrace the World with Friendship, held in Toronto on 31 August. Organised around the timeless Hindu civilisational ideal of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, the world is one family, the event celebrated Hindu identity and heritage while emphasising the importance of meaningful engagement, mutual respect and contribution to the wider Canadian society.

CHORD, Canadian Hindus for Outreach, Relations and Dialogue, convened the gathering with the objective of strengthening outreach, fostering constructive relationships and creating greater dialogue between Canadian Hindus and the broader Canadian society. CHORD seeks to bring the diversity and contributions of Canada's Hindu community into mainstream conversations while encouraging greater understanding between communities, faiths, institutions and generations.



IV.I A Gathering on Friendship and Oneness

Hindu Vishwa Bandhu was a landmark gathering of the Canadian Hindu community, bringing together more than 2,000 participants from all ten provinces across Canada for an evening centred on friendship, dialogue, belonging and shared responsibility. It was organised by CHORD with the support of more than 175 organisations.

Event	Hindu Vishwa Bandhu
Keynote Address	Dr. Mohan Bhagwat, Sarsanghchalak, RSS
Chief Guest	The Hon. Jason Kenney, former Premier of Alberta
Guest of Honour	Shri Kashmir Singh Dhaliwal, Khalsa Diwan Society
Organised by	CHORD (Canadian Hindus for Outreach, Relations and Dialogue)
Venue	Toronto, Canada
Date	31 August 2026
Participants	2,000+ from all ten provinces, with 175+ supporting organisations

The keynote address was delivered by Dr. Mohan Bhagwat, Sarsanghchalak of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. The Chief Guest was the Honourable Jason Kenney, former Premier of Alberta and former federal Cabinet Minister, who observed that India's spiritual values and its unity in diversity show the way to the world. The Guest of Honour was Shri Kashmir Singh Dhaliwal, representing the Khalsa Diwan Society and the historic Ross Street Gurdwara, reflecting the strong and longstanding bonds between Hindu and Sikh communities in Canada.

Dr. Bhagwat began with a story. The Chinese traveller Xuanzang had come to Bharat, studied at Nalanda, and gathered books to carry home for the betterment of his people. Crossing the Ganges by boat with three young students of Nalanda, he was caught in a storm, and it became clear the boat would sink unless the load was lessened. The boatman told him to let go of his luggage. There were tears in his eyes: a lifetime of work, and knowledge meant for his own country, about to be lost. The three students assured him not to worry. The boatman wants to lessen the weight, they said, and we will lessen it without harming your books. One after another they jumped into the Ganges and gave their lives, so that China would receive the knowledge.

This was not an isolated instance. During the Second World War, Polish refugees fled their country and crossed the seas to Bharat, which was not yet independent, and the British refused them asylum. The princely state of Jamnagar was then independent, and its ruler called them: come here, settle here, I will protect you until your country is free for you to live in. Somewhere



in Poland there is a Good Maharaja Square. Dr. Kotnis went from the Deccan to China to care for the health of its people and worked there until his death. When people were trapped in a recent Middle East war, Bharat's military aircraft went and rescued the citizens of seven countries, not Bharatiyas alone.

“Whenever there was crisis anywhere in the world and help from Bharat was sought, Bharat never said no. And without even calling for help, it helps. This is the tradition. This is the DNA of Bharat.”

He then turned to the song the gathering had heard, and to the line it opens with: Hindu jage toh vishwa jagega. Hindu sada se vishwa bandhu hai. The Hindu has always been that. Jada chetana apna maana hai: the inanimate and the animate, both are ours. Human beings, animals, plants and forests, mountains and rivers. In all of them one common principle is found. That is the vision, and it is a trained vision, taught to see the unity underlying the diversity.

“So in Bharat, diversity is never a problem for unity. Because our tradition tells us, not only unity in diversity, diversities of unity.”

The ground of that claim is a verse from the Upanishads. The single entity, the ultimate reality, felt that it was alone and had to become many. Eko aham bahusyam. And then it became many.

“So all the diversities are expression of unity, so that we, who have to live for some years on this earth, should not be bored. We have to serve, accept, respect this diversity, because it is expression of unity, it beautifies it, it is the decoration. We celebrate it. But while we go through this unity, through this diversity, we always see the unity.”

In Bharat there have been many castes, many creeds, many languages. Nothing is single.

“We don’t say all are one, we say all is one. Because we know, nature expression of reality is diverse. Diversity is natural, unity is the reality. You have to tackle with natural, keeping in mind the reality. That is the ancient ethos of Bharat.”

He illustrated the distinction between appearance and reality through the story of Raja Janak of Mithila, who dreamt one night that he had lost his kingdom, been made prisoner, insulted, and exiled in rags before sunset on pain of death, with no one permitted so much as to offer him water. He reached a choultry late at night where free food was given, was told nothing remained, scraped a handful of burnt rice from a cooking pot, and sat by the well to eat it. A bird swooped and snatched the rice from his hand. He cried out in despair and woke, and found himself a king again, with servants running to ask what had happened.



He asked them one question, and would ask no other: was that true, or is this true? No one understood. His ministers came, his queen came, and the court began to think he had gone mad. At last Maharshi Yajnavalkya was called. He asked the king to narrate both the dream and the waking. Then he asked: when you were in tattered rags, afraid for your life, tired and hungry, was this here? No. And now that you are king again, was that here? No. But when you were defeated and exiled, were you there? Yes. And now that you are king, are you here? Yes.

“But then, that was not here, this was not there, so this is false. But you were there, and you are here, we experience all these things, but they are changing, they are Maya, the differences are Maya. We have to go through them, we have to deal with them materially, but actually there is no difference, humanity is one.”

The Rishis, he said, did not arrive at this as a theory. They experienced it: that existence is one, expressed in diverse ways through nature, and that everything created by the divine has one task, to express the beauty and piety of the divine through various forms, shapes and colours.

“And because everything is divine, everything is one, if we think that this is mine, and that is yours, that is not good, that is narrowness. Those who are broad minded, those who are knowledgeable, Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, whole earth is one family.”

The relationship this establishes is not one of ownership.

“This means that everything that is, is ours, not as an owner, as a brother, everything is divine, so everything has equal dignity, equal weight, everyone has equal dignity, equal weight, and everyone in material world happens to be different by body, by shape, by colour, but really it is one, so it is our duty to serve others, and we have got this knowledge which also gives you unfading permanent happiness, satisfaction.”

That duty, he explained, cannot be discharged by individuals alone, and this is why Bharat came into existence as a nation. He cited the Vedic account: Bhadram ichchhanta rishayah svarvidah, tapo dikshamupasedur agre. Tato rashtram balam ojashcha jatam. The well-meaning Rishis who knew the enigma of creation undertook a difficult penance for the betterment of the world, and from that came the nation, its vigour and its strength.

“Bharat has always performed this duty, whenever Bharat became big it never became a superpower, it became a glorious country, yes one may call Bharat superpower at that time, but it was not superpower, it served the world, by its own character it became Vishwaguru not Mahashakti. So rise of Bharat means more united more emancipated humanity.”

He described the journeys of Bharat's ancestors. When there were no roads, no boats, no aircraft and no motor vehicles, only bullock carts and horses, they travelled the regions from Mexico to Siberia. They crossed the Himalayas on foot, went to China, to Siberia and Mongolia, and reached Southeast Asia by small boats. The known world of that time was reached by them.

“And what did they do? They conquered no country, they converted nobody, wherever they went they gave knowledge, they

gave mathematics, they gave astrology, they gave the Ayurveda, they imparted the civilizational values.”

What returns from that history is a form of recognition. Dr. Murali Manohar Joshi, visiting a Shinto temple in China, offered Namaskar at the sanctum, as a Bharatiya naturally does at any place of worship, whether of a Bharatiya sampradaya or of Islam, Christianity or the Parsi faith. An old Chinese woman watching him came forward and asked whether he was a Hindu. He said yes. She offered Namaskar.

“This happens; what our ancestors did for us they earned this prestige. Now the question is whether we stand true to that prestige or not.”

The world, he said, needs it. There are conflicts. Ecology and environment are in danger. Nations exist, and nations quarrel, so that the progress of one may mean calamity for another. Scientific progress of a kind never witnessed in human history is now at our command, and the question is what it is used for.

“We split atom. Clean energy is on second place, weapons of mass destruction, they are with the priority. We used atom first for those.”

Between the happiness of the individual and the health of society there appears to be a standing conflict, and he proposed that a third way is required, one that is in fact very old.

“When I say Hindu the word Hindu cannot be defined by any specific language through any specific worship or through any living style, all these are there, these are the diversities of human beings. Hindus respect all, Hindus accept all, they don’t mind. Anywhere in the world if someone was persecuted he got asylum in Bharat only. Read this, you will find it. Many came to Bharat from outside as aggressors but they still thrive there with all their specialities intact, they are now Bharatiya citizens. Muslims are there, Christians are there, Jews also in small number, Parsis are there. Many people come to Bharat for asylum, not only that, they come for knowledge also, we give it.”

“Whenever there was any dilemma for any human being it came for guidance to Bharat and Bharat has provided ample guidance, correct guidance. That is our history, that is our duty.”

He then addressed the diaspora directly, and the instruction had two halves that do not compete.

“Those who have any relation with Bharat, they may be today settled all over the world, citizens of different countries, because they are from Bharat they have to be honest contributing citizens of that country, at the same time they have to provide this world view to the world that everything is one.”

On Dharma he was precise about what the word does not mean.

“All the religious streams in Bharat they ultimately talk of Dharma, that is not worship, that is sustenance, that is balance, that is looking towards everybody as their own.”

The Rishis, he noted, advise that even a successful worldly life does not require the mad race after artha and kama. Attend to sustenance and balance, and those will follow of themselves. Dharmat arthashcha kamashcha. Why not serve that Dharma, since Dharma sustains everything?

“In all our prayers, we do not wish, Oh God, please do something for the Vedic followers, do something for Sikhs, for Buddhas, for Vaishnavas. We say, sarvatra sukhinah santu. All our prayers originated in land called Bharat, but never were for only Bharat. They were for whole of the universe.”

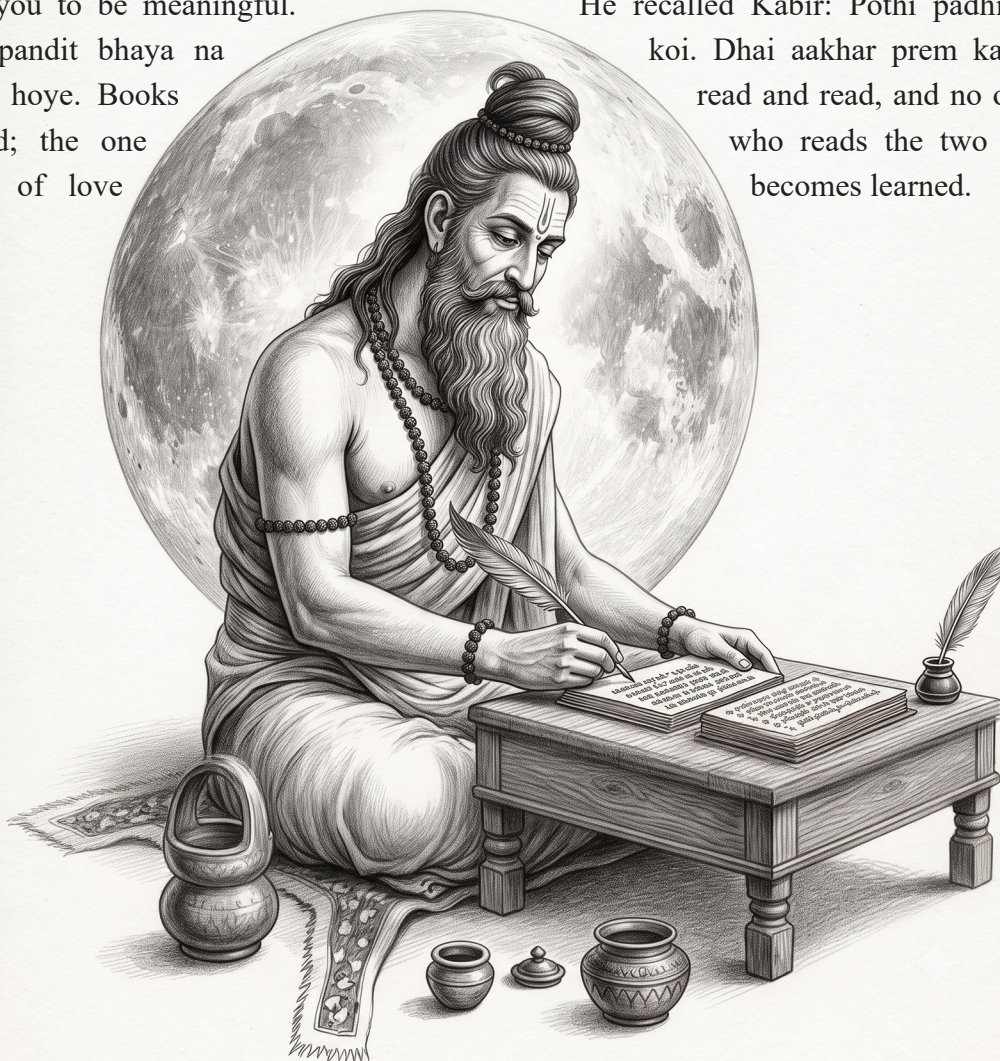
He was equally clear about method.

“Our ancestors went abroad, in every country. They never forced anything. We are the leaders who lead from within and lead by example.”

The task, therefore, is to build in every country a society that is exemplary, in which life is not only successful but meaningful. He told of a painter who came to his guru at Shantiniketan for blessings before beginning his career, and was told: I will not give you blessing to be successful, I will bless you to be meaningful.

mua, pandit bhaya na
pandit hoye. Books
learned; the one
letters of love

He recalled Kabir: Pothi padhi padhi jag
koi. Dhai aakhar prem ka, padhe so
read and read, and no one became
who reads the two and a half
becomes learned.



“Four letter words are shunned in English, I know that. But there is one word, love. Love for humanity. We are all one. Our interest cannot collide.”

He gave the principle a soldier's form. On a battlefield a squadron had been decimated, the dead lying among the wounded, and the general among the wounded. Those who came to help brought water to the general first. He told them to stop. My lance corporal is there, he is also wounded. Give him water. Sir, they said, you are my officer. I am your officer, he replied, but thy need is greater.

“Why can't we think like that? On the resources of the world. Why I should claim first? All quarrels are resolved. This message has to be given. This is the need of the hour.”

What is required is not the settling of who is right.

“Whether you are right, whether I am right. Both are right. And both have some wrongs. What we need is to introspect, correct ourselves, live together.”

He drew on the Sangathan Sukta, and on a distinction its composers made deliberately. Sangacchadhvam samvadadhvam. Let our mantra be the same, let our assembly be the same, let our minds be the same. But when the verse reaches chitta, it does not say the same. It says saha chittam esham, together.

“That Chitta can never be the same. And problem arises from that difference. Quarrels take birth in that different Chitta. So they did not use same because it is impossible. It is unnatural. They said, Saha Chittamesha. Okay, there are many opinions, there are many kinds, there are many tendencies, there are many likings, many dislikings. But anyway, we have resolved to be together. In spite of what we are. And what others are. That is our prarthana.”

The same principle governs the relationship to the natural world. In the ancient method of agriculture in Bharat, the soil never became infertile. For ten thousand years it was ploughed, sown and reaped, and its quality remained.

“The pesticides our farmers manufacture in their own home, in the quantity they need, they do not kill these pests. It regulates these pests. It checks. But that is also life. They don’t kill. Ahimsa. This truth we have. Oneness of existence. And therefore, Ahimsa. I will not, by my words or deed, harm anybody, anybody’s mind even.”

He then set the gathering an experiment he had proposed in New York the day before.

“You try to take your meal before a hungry person without driving him out, without giving him a single roti. Just you take your lunch or dinner and he is standing there, begging for the food, staring at your full platter

with hungry eyes. Can you take your meal? You will either drive him away or give something and make him away. Or you will just close the door. Or turn around. You cannot see that fellow and take your food. You can do that experiment. Nobody can do it. Because we are all human beings.”

That capacity, he said, is what distinguishes human beings, and it rests on the innate unity already present everywhere. An animal cannot feel it. An animal knows only that it is born and must live until death, and that hunger must be filled by whatever means. Only a human being can set aside food for tomorrow, and only a human being can either snatch food from others or distribute it. What decides between the two is direction.

“If a man does it, he becomes Narayana. And if that direction is not proper, a man becomes a male animal. That also happens. Hindu society provides that direction.”

He described the widening circle in which that direction is practised. An individual who does not benefit his family is not thought a good person. A family, however prosperous, that does not benefit its village is not considered a good family. The village that gives brave jawans to the army and reformers to society is considered an ideal village. The circumference of belonging expands, and the ideal is the one who says that the universe is his home.

“And those who live for whole universe, even if they wear only one-line cloth, many kings and many leaders and everybody, vidvans, they prostrate before him. He is the best honoured person in Bharat.”

The memory of a civilisation shows what it honours. Bharat has had kings, and it remembers the king who went to the forest for fourteen years to keep his word, whose name a small child in a village knows though the calculations place him eight thousand years ago. It has had men of great wealth, and it remembers the one who gave everything he had to Rana Pratap to fight for independence. It has had many gurus, and it remembers the guru who gave all four of his sons for the cause of Dharma.

“Pitawariya te lal chaare wale, oh Hinda teri shaan bache. This is the shaan of Hind. We are inheritors of

this inheritance. We have to upgrade ourselves so that we are the fitting inheritors.”

He named the duty plainly, and named his own organisation's place in it.

“Then we say Hindu Vishwabandhu. In two small words, everything is summarized. But because it is congested in a formula, we have to know the formula, what it means.”

“Why I am speaking this? I am in Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. You know that.

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh was organized by Hindus exactly for this purpose. And nothing else. We have to develop ourselves. We have to become like a flower. The bud converts into flower and gives its fragrance to whole atmosphere. So we get developed and we get devoted, dedicated into human cause. That is the life of Hindu.”

He asked the gathering not for agreement but for a resolve, and set the bar where it could be met.

“I hope today, before leaving this place, you in your mind, take some resolve. You cannot become Bhagwan Ram. You cannot become like our ancestors in a night. Overnight you cannot do that. But two small steps you can take. Per a week, per a month, per a year. Whatever time you want to take. Do some small improvements. So that you become a more enlightened human being. You become a more serving being.”

He noted that many are engaged in this work, and that the Sangh is one among them, not the only one. He closed on the line of Iqbal that asks why one civilisation endures where others have vanished.

“Yunan Misr Roma sab mit gaye jahan se, kuch baat hai ki hasti mitati nahi hamari. What is that thing which makes us eternal? This is that thing. To fulfill from time to time the arising needs of human society by making them, gelling them into one humanity. And teaching them the Dharma of Seva.”

The message of the Canada visit was the one carried in the gathering's name. To be Hindu Vishwa Bandhu, a friend to the world, is not a departure from tradition but its natural expression. The evening said as much in its own composition: 2,000 people from ten provinces, 175 supporting organisations, Hindu and Sikh Dhamra together, and a former Premier of Alberta as Chief Guest. On 2 September, Dr. Bhagwat departed for London, for the final leg of the centenary-year visit.

Dr. Mohan Bhagwat
Full address can be
watched on:



V. The United Kingdom Visit - Celebration of Oneness

Dr. Mohan Bhagwat arrived in London on 2 September 2026 for the final leg of his centenary-year visit, remaining in the United Kingdom until 7 September. The theme of the London programme, Celebration of Oneness, completed a sequence carried across three countries. In New York it had been Universal Oneness. In Toronto it had been Hindu Vishwa Bandhu, to be a friend to the world. In London it was the celebration of that same oneness, and the programme continued the message carried from the United States through Canada: the RSS's experience of selfless service and social harmony, and its vision of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, the world is one family.

The wider London programme was led and coordinated by Integral, a UK-based organisation that brings together leaders and communities to strengthen dialogue, collaboration and long-term relationships within the United Kingdom and between the United Kingdom and India. More than 115 UK-based socio-cultural organisations joined Integral in welcoming Dr. Bhagwat to the UK and in supporting the wider programme of engagement during his visit.

A statement of welcome was issued ahead of his arrival by representatives of British Hindu and Indian organisations, community groups and civil societies, signed by more than a hundred bodies including the Hindu Council UK, the Hindu Forum of Britain, Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh UK, the National Council of Hindu Temples,

the World Council of Hindus UK, Chinmaya Mission UK and the National Hindu Students Forum, alongside regional associations, temple networks, women's organisations, student bodies, professional groups and community trusts from across the country.

The signatories welcomed the five transformations or Panch Parivartan set out for the centenary, describing them as relevant to all the communities represented and complementary to the objectives of the civil societies that signed: social harmony and cohesion, the importance of the family as a unit within society, selfless service, environmental stewardship, and the diligent



performance of civic duties. They noted that Dr. Bhagwat, trained as a veterinary doctor, has dedicated his life as a pracharak, a full-time worker serving society and making society his family, and that he has consciously widened his interactions beyond the RSS by engaging with interfaith gatherings, spiritual leaders, thought leaders, policymakers, think tanks and international conferences well outside the movement's traditional base.

During the visit Dr. Bhagwat met faith leaders, academics, researchers and other public figures. His interfaith engagements took him to the Shree Swaminarayan Temple in Willesden, to the gurdwara of the Khalsa Jatha British Isles, and to a Jain temple in London. The programme culminated on 6 September at the Oshwal Ekta Centre in Kingsbury, in a reception for community leaders and a civilisational dialogue held under the theme Celebration of Oneness. The event was initiated by Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh UK, established in Britain in 1966 and marking its sixtieth year, with the support of Integral. Six hundred participants attended, representing 326 organisations from across the United Kingdom.



V.I Visit to Shree Swaminarayan Temple, Willesden

Dr. Bhagwat began the United Kingdom leg of his visit with interfaith engagement, and his first stop was the Shree Swaminarayan Temple in Willesden.

The temple was the first Swaminarayan mandir established in London. In 1975 a disused church on Willesden Lane was bought by the community and renovated, and on the auspicious day of Sharad Purnima, 11 October 1975, Acharya Tejendraprasad Pande installed the murtis of Swaminarayan, Nar Narayan Dev, Radha Krishna Dev, Hanuman and Ganesh.

The building has grown with the community it serves. As the number of satsangis increased, an adjoining property was acquired, and the mandir came to house Gujarati language classes, a library and activities for young people alongside its daily worship. It stands today under the Nar Narayan Dev Gadi and remains a principal socio-cultural and spiritual centre for the Hindu community of London.

Dr. Bhagwat offered prayers at the temple and met its authorities and community leaders. The conversation turned on the civilisational values of Sanatan Dharma and on the vision of unity the RSS has carried through its centenary year.



V.II Visit to Khalsa Jatha British Isles Gurdwara

Dr. Bhagwat also visited the gurdwara of the Khalsa Jatha British Isles, the oldest established Sikh place of worship in the United Kingdom and in Europe. The Khalsa Jatha was formed in London in 1908 to promote religious and social activities among the Sikhs who had settled in Britain, and was affiliated in the same year to the Chief Khalsa Diwan of Amritsar.

In 1911 the Jatha acquired a house in Putney, its opening ceremony performed by Maharaja Bhupindra Singh of Patiala, and in 1913 it took the lease of 79 Sinclair Road in Shepherd's Bush, where it remained for more than half a century. Weekly diwans began in 1953 and a full-time Granthi was appointed the following year. As funds were raised the Jatha purchased Norland Castle on Queensdale Road, in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, and the present gurdwara was inaugurated there on 7 December 1969, on an occasion that coincided with the five hundredth anniversary of the birth of Guru Nanak Dev.

The domes were added in the early 1990s and the building has been refurbished several times since. It houses a youth centre, classrooms and a small museum recording the history of Sikhs in Britain, and its langar, in the manner of every gurdwara, serves a free meal to any visitor regardless of background.

Dr. Bhagwat was received on arrival by Shri Vikramjit Singh Sahney, Member of the Rajya Sabha, together with several prominent leaders of the Sikh community. He offered prayers in the



main hall, and the discussion that followed concerned the building of long-term relationships and unity within the wider British Indian community.

The visit continued a thread that had run through the journey from its earlier legs. In Toronto, the Guest of Honour at Hindu Vishwa Bandhu had been Shri Kashmir Singh Dhaliwal of the Khalsa Diwan Society and the historic Ross Street Gurdwara. In his address there, Dr. Bhagwat had recalled the guru who gave all four of his sons for the cause of Dharma, and had observed that prayers originating in Bharat were never offered for one community alone but for the whole of the universe. Hindu and Sikh are bound by common Gurus and by a shared dharmic inheritance, and the reception at the oldest gurdwara in Europe expressed in London what the Toronto platform had expressed a week earlier.

V.III London - A Celebration of Oneness

The London programme culminated on 6 September in a reception for community leaders and a civilisational dialogue held under the theme Celebration of Oneness, at the Oshwal Ekta Centre in Kingsbury. The event was initiated by Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh UK, a Hindu social and cultural organisation established in Britain in 1966 and marking its sixtieth year, with the support of Integral. Six hundred participants attended, representing 326 organisations from across the United Kingdom.

HSS UK has, over six decades, become a significant presence in the everyday social life of the Hindu community in Britain, and the scale of participation reflected the breadth of the institutional fabric that community has built across the country. Among those represented were the bodies that had signed the statement of welcome ahead of the visit: temple networks, regional and linguistic associations, student and professional forums, women's organisations, medical and heritage groups and community trusts, drawn from England, Wales and beyond. Much of the audience was of the third and fourth generation, fully British and fully Hindu.

Event	Celebration of Oneness
In dialogue with	Dr. Mohan Bhagwat, Sarsanghchalak, RSS
Moderated by	Mamta Subramanian
Initiated by	Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh UK, with the support of Integral + 326 orgs
Venue	Oshwal Ekta Centre, Kingsbury, London
Date	6 September 2026
Participants	600, representing 326 organisations across the UK

The evening opened with homage to the victims of the Nepal floods, observed in silence and followed by the Shanti Mantra. Eleven language communities of Hindu society in Britain took part in the gathering. Melodious Dharma, a group of swayamsevaks and sevikas in the United Kingdom, offered a rendition on the theme of Ekta me Anekta, unity in diversity, celebrating that diversity in song.

The format was not an address but a conversation. Mamta Subramanian put questions to Dr. Bhagwat, many of them submitted by members of the audience and attributed to them by name, and the proceedings were translated live into several Indian and foreign languages.

Asked what Dr. Hedgewar had seen that others had not, and what element of the movement had survived a century, Dr. Bhagwat named one thing.

“If I have to mention a single principle, I would mention Apnapan, pure, Sattvik love for everybody. That is the traditional nature of a Hindu.”

“A Hindu is not an individual alone. A Hindu is connected with family, community, society, and humanity. A Hindu not only worships, but also loves nature.”

That love, he said, is the basis both of unity and of progress, and it is the foundation on which the whole building stands. Some suppose the work to be centred on the self. It is the reverse.

On what Hindu civilisation brings to a turbulent world, he set out the proposition that underlies the rest.

“All Hindu thoughts have been based on this single theme. Existence is really one. It appears to be diverse. Diversity is our nature. So we have to accept them, we have to respect them. But we have to deal with diversities keeping in mind that these are the various decorations of unity of existence. One has become many, therefore many are respected. All is one. On this basis, we deal with everything.”

100 - Hindu Civilisation,
at & The World



From this he drew a practical consequence.

“Conflict management becomes very easy when we think about a solution. If we think with enmity, we say, I will not give anything to anyone. So, live and let live, and let others live.”

The same reasoning extends to the natural world. We are part of nature, he said, not its conqueror, and our progress must add to its progress rather than come at its expense.

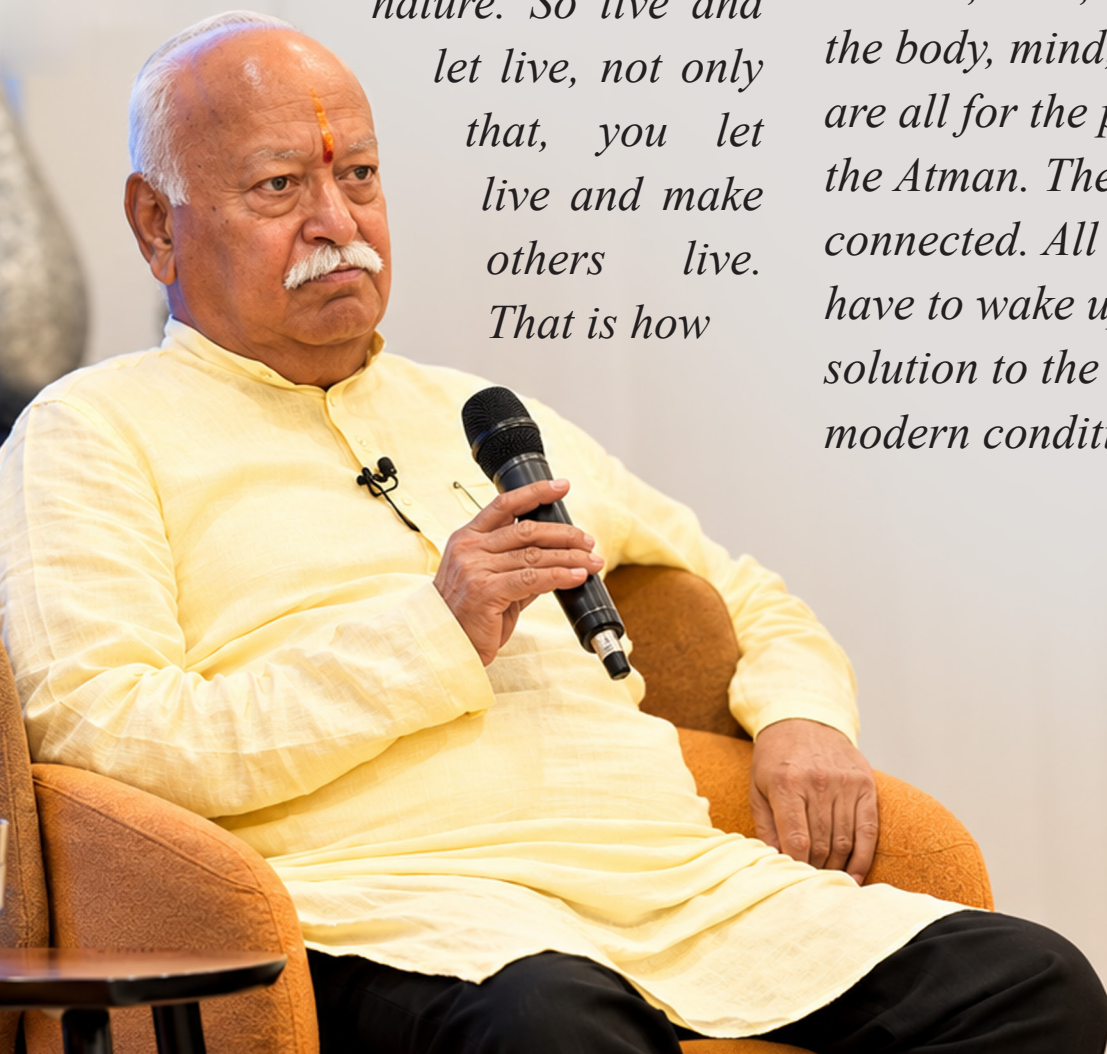
“There are solutions for us, but they also promote the protection of nature. They do not lead to destruction of nature. So live and let live, not only that, you let live and make others live. That is how

our thought processes evolve. So Hindus have to give this balance to the world.”

He observed that inherited models of thought are incomplete on this point, since individualism leaves society unattended while socialism raises the question of individual rights, whereas the individual, society, humanity and nature can advance together. The connecting principle is the unity of existence, which some call Brahma and some Shunya.

“Artha and Kama go together with the goal of liberation. Society and humanity progress together with nature.”

“Sharir, Man, and Buddhi, the body, mind, and intellect, are all for the progress of the Atman. The world is connected. All are one. We have to wake up and give this solution to the world in the modern condition.”



He cited the verse from the Shiva Mahimna Stotra:

**रुचीनां वैचित्र्यादृजुकुटलि नानापथजुषां
नृणामेको गम्यस्त्वमसपियसामरणव इव॥**

(Just as water from different sources, flowing through different paths, ultimately reaches the same sea, people may follow different paths, but their ultimate goal is one.)

“Uniformity is not necessary for unity. There is unity in diversity, but further I say that all diversities are diversities of unity. So when we look at that unity, then we can respect and accept all diversity. That thought is Hindu thought. That kind of nature is Hindu nature. That has been history of Hindu society and Bharat.”

From Bharatvarsha every kind of thought has emerged, from the atheist to the theist, and each holds its own way while granting the same to others. No one need convert anyone.

“We are also right; you are also right. That is the Hindu view.”

The word cannot therefore be confined to a particular community, form of worship, panth or standard of living. Whoever thinks in this way shares that path.

On the second word he was equally precise, and drew a distinction a Western audience rarely encounters.

“Nation is not a translation for Rashtra.”

A nation, he explained, is formed where people come together through similarity of language or governance or faith, and enforce rules to keep themselves together, a formation arising from the compulsion of survival.

Rashtra begins elsewhere. Its first component is not a ruler or a state but a purpose, and the state comes afterwards.

“The purpose of Hindu Rashtra is to give this message to the world: Diversity is Natural, and Unity is Truth.”

The Rishis, having reached that principle and found in it a happiness that does not fade, concluded that it could not be carried by one person or one small community. An entire nation had to be created and prepared for the task. He cited the Vedic account of well-meaning Rishis who knew the science of this world and undertook a hard penance, from which came the nation, its strength and its vigour. Kings and kingdoms came later, and changed many times over, while the nation itself endured.

“The meaning of Rashtra is that we should live a life such that people of all nations look to us and derive a way to live their own lives for the fulfilment of the purpose of their own nation.”

Because of what the experience of nationalism has left in the world’s memory, he added, a fear attaches to the word. This is not that. When such a nation rises it produces no dictatorship and no war. It creates peace, it creates bliss, and it holds to nature.

Two questions came from the audience on the position of British Hindus. Raj of Wellingborough Town Council asked what the Sangh expects of a British swayamsevak should British and Indian interests ever diverge, and how that charge is to be answered without silence or apology.

“There is no conflict. If, at all, such a situation arises, it is obvious that British Hindus will go with Britain. Exceptions may happen, but Hindutva is clear on this. Your karmabhumi is where your loyalty lies. Your janmabhumi, or the land of your origin or birthplace, and your Punyabhumi are where you receive your values. You have to live those values in your Karmabhumi, serving the land where you live.”

“Hindutva never asks to betray your karmabhoomi.”

Mahendra Singh of the South Asia Chamber of Commerce and Industry asked how younger generations of the diaspora might translate Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam into practical economic, social and humanitarian partnerships between Bharat and the countries where they live.

“We can remain honest to our Karmabhoomi and at the same time serve humanity all around.”

If spare means and spare time remain after that duty is discharged, he said, no one prevents their being given to Bharat, and many institutions exist through which service can be offered globally.

“The lesson of the day is: Think Globally, Act Locally.”

Faithfulness to one’s origin and conduct as a global citizen are not in contradiction but a logical evolution: as an individual prospers the family benefits, as a family prospers the locality benefits, and so it continues outward, until the development of a nation benefits the whole world.

He noted that such understanding was once transmitted through ordinary practice. Children in Bharat were told not to touch trees after evening because the trees were sleeping, a claim for which scientific evidence has only lately arrived, and festivals in which plants and animals are worshipped instilled a concern for the wellbeing of nature long before it was called ecology. Such traditions exist across the world, he said, and we should learn from all of them.

Asked what gives him confidence about the generation now coming forward, his answer was unhesitating.

“I trust the future generations more as they have urge to make this world a better place. Give them the goal and not the method. They will achieve the goal of universal morality and prosperity rapidly.”



The older generation carries experience and, with it, caution. The young do not.

“The older generation has experience, but the younger generation, if they feel that something is right, they simply do it. They are not bothered about the consequences because they are young.”

Asked for a story from the ground, he told of a hostel run by the Sangh in a forest area, and of an illiterate boy from an interior village who came seeking employment and found none. He lived three days among the boys of the hostel, then offered to clean, fetch water and cook for whatever could be paid. Those running the hostel told him honestly that they went from home to home asking alms to keep it open and could not pay him enough. Thirty rupees a month was all that could be managed, and he agreed to take it quarterly. When the hundred and twenty rupees came at the end of four months, he returned the money and said he would work without pay.

Asked why, he explained that he had met a man passing through, a pracharak, who had told him he had studied twenty-two years, had no family, travelled from place to place inspecting the work, and received nothing for it.

“He is a learned fellow from a well-to-do family. He can serve the country. I am not from a well-to-do family. But still I can serve my country. Why should I take payment?”

The boy stayed fifteen years. Dr. Bhagwat recalled a leader who had once asked him what inspires him when there are no role models to be found. That, he said, is his answer: if a man with nothing, in dire need of a livelihood, could set aside his own desires and work fifteen years, why should he not.

That story led into what he considers the right understanding of service.

“Seva is not something that makes you great. It is not Upakara, and it is not something that you are giving as compensation to humanity.”

“Seva is your chance to get near to God. They are giving you the chance to serve; you are not doing anything for them. So, Seva should be done with this attitude.”

He recalled Ramakrishna Paramahansa correcting Vivekananda on precisely this point, telling him that he spoke as though he stood at some higher level and was conferring a benefit, when in truth God was giving him the chance to wash his sins by serving. Shiva bhava Jiva. He then offered a Marathi verse on what service should finally produce.

“One who gives should keep on giving, one who receives should keep on receiving; while receiving, one fine day, you should receive the hands of the giver and become a giver yourself.”

Old models of social organisation, he added, remain available but must be developed in conformity with the times, and that is work for the younger generation. Some things are eternal and cannot change. Everything else should. What appears as a new model rests on the same base, and the challenge for Hindus now is to present it, in the ordinary conduct of individual life, family life, professional life and social life, to the world.

On the work of swayamsevaks he was brief, since the extent of it does not summarise.

“Swayamsevaks are active in virtually every sphere of human life, making it difficult to summarize the full extent of their work. Even those who oppose us for political reasons recognize the value of our work and the contribution of swayamsevaks. From time to time, they seek our cooperation and engage in dialogue with us. This reflects the broad acceptance of our work across society.”

The method is to network without quarrelling over the banner and without taking credit. Where others are already working, they are helped and kept ahead, and things are allowed to happen in their name. Where nobody is doing anything, the work is done.

“If you become a swayamsevak, you will have a relative in every development work, whom you don't know yet.”

The definition he offered of who counts as one was notably wide.

“If you are working honestly and selflessly for the good of society, we consider you a swayamsevak, even if you have no dialogue or association with us, do not work with us, and do not even know what RSS stands for.”

Asked what wisdom he would leave for the next hundred years, he answered first with a matter of pace.

“Before the seventh generation, the work of organising Hindu society should be completed.”

Organising society, he explained, means consolidating its strength while each part retains its identity and its own way of working, cooperating rather than obstructing. Where that atmosphere exists, society takes care of everything else. The instrument is Panch Parivartan, and he named its five parts: social harmony; the family, and its transmission of Sanskriti and Samskar; care for the environment, expressed in three habits any household can adopt, Pani Bachao, Plastic Hatao, Ped Lagao; Swabodh, knowing who one is and taking pride in it, and on that basis respecting who others are, since society runs on interdependence and Swadeshi is not the closing of doors but the capacity to stand alone should the need arise; and civic discipline. Swayamsevak have begun these five in their own lives and their own families, and now carry them into society.

The final question observed that the room held six hundred people from 326 organisations, and asked, given a perception that Hindus are not united, what the essence of unity is. His answer reframed the question.

“Now my description of the audience will be different.

You started that there are diverse people from so many organizations. I will first say they are all community leaders, that is the commonality. Then they are all Hindus and they are all human beings. So three diversities so stated, I gave you three bases of unity.”

“If you look to the audience, or to society in general, human society in general, yes, there is diversity, it is natural, we have to move through it. But you give your emphasis on what unites us. Instead of what divides us. If we do that, our communities, society will prosper. And world will be a better place.”

Dr. Mohan Bhagwat
Full address can be
watched on:



The answer he gave to that last question was the answer he had been giving in three countries for thirteen days. In New York it had been Universal Oneness, in Toronto Hindu Vishwa Bandhu, and in London a Celebration of Oneness, and beneath the different names the proposition had not moved. Diversity is natural and unity is the truth beneath it, which is why the room could be described as diverse and as one in the same breath. Six hundred people from 326 organisations and eleven language communities had gathered to hear it, most of them born in Britain, and what was asked of them was not that they choose between the country they belong to and the civilisation they come from, but that they carry the second into the first.

VI. RSS, An Offering to the World

Between 25 August and 7 September 2026, in the closing weeks of the centenary year, Dr. Mohan Bhagwat carried the experience of a hundred years to three countries. The visit rested on three stated pillars. The first was diaspora engagement, meaning close interaction with communities of Indian origin, faith-based networks and cultural associations. The second was the projection of core values, namely global harmony, civic responsibility and the idea of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam. The third was dialogue with mainstream institutions in each host society on the history and worldview of the RSS, and on Hindu society and Bharat more broadly.

Each setting expressed the same proposition in its own register. In New York, before 175 faith leaders of many denominations and religions, it was expressed as service that does not ask whom it serves, and as the insistence that dialogue and service must proceed together rather than in sequence. At Madison Square Garden, before six thousand people from thirty-nine states and twenty-nine countries, it was expressed through Raksha Bandhan, the thread tied between siblings extended outward from family to community to nation and to the natural world, a Hindu festival carrying a universal claim. In Toronto, at the first official visit to Canada by a serving Sarsanghchalak, it was expressed as Hindu Vishwa Bandhu, friendship offered to the world, and grounded in the record of ancestors who reached the known world of their time and conquered no country. In London, under the theme Celebration of Oneness, it was expressed in interfaith engagement, at the first Swaminarayan mandir in the city and at the oldest gurdwara in Europe, and in a gathering that drew more than 310 community organisations from across the United Kingdom.

The coalition that received him was itself part of the message. The partner organisations in New York carried roots in India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, the Caribbean and East Africa, bringing together Gujarati, Tamil, Bengali, Nepali, Telugu and Malayali communities alongside families whose journeys had run through Trinidad, Fiji and Kenya. Different routes, one river. No single organisation sat at the head table. Two hundred and fifty bodies that have spent decades running food banks, tutoring programmes, blood drives and relief efforts in American cities were not an audience assembled to listen. They have their own long practice to describe, and the exchange ran in both directions.

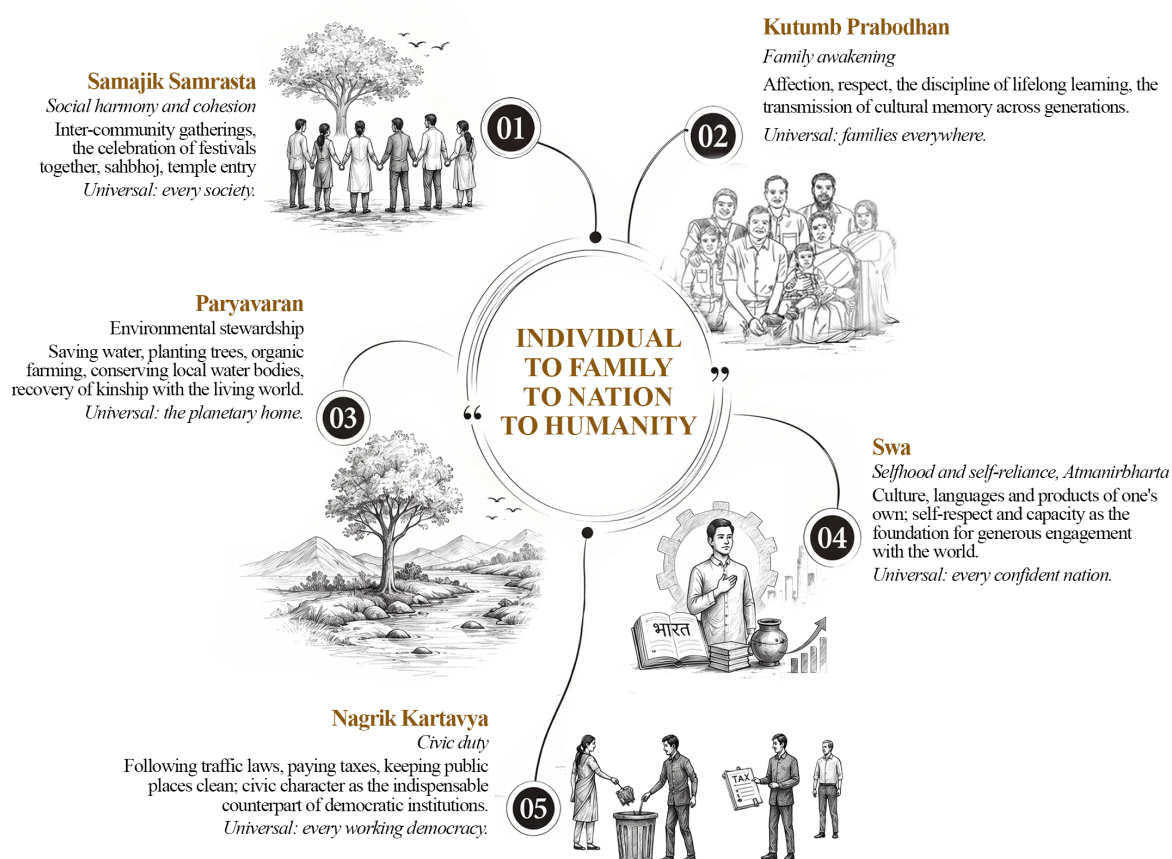
Relations between Bharat and the West have been conducted for decades in the language of states. Trade agreements, defence cooperation, technology partnerships and visa regimes are the substance of that conversation, and it is a necessary one. It is also incomplete. There has been far less dialogue with Bharat as a civilisation, with the ideas that sit beneath the state and the people who carry them across generations and oceans. The visit was an attempt at that second conversation, and it was possible because the diaspora has come of age. Communities of Indian origin in all three countries have grown in size, professional standing and civic participation, and are no longer only recipients of cultural transmission. The proposition

offered to them was that a community can be wholly committed to the country it lives in while remaining rooted in the civilisation it comes from, and that such a community becomes a bridge rather than a boundary.

The questions that made the encounter a dialogue rather than a lecture are open questions everywhere. Wars are being fought that neither side can plainly win. Communities that lived alongside one another for generations now regard each other with suspicion. Hatred moves across borders through a screen faster than any institution was built to answer it, and trust has thinned at precisely the moment when technologies of extraordinary power are changing how human beings communicate, establish what is true, exercise authority and imagine the future. Artificial intelligence is being built now, and the question of whose knowledge it inherits and whose purposes it serves will be settled within a decade. Ecological limits are no longer theoretical. Families are under strain in every society. Material progress has reached unprecedented levels without delivering the meaning that was assumed to accompany it.

Against these the RSS brings no doctrine for export and no claim of authority over another society's tradition. It brings an experience: a hundred years of building a society from its smallest unit upward, through the character of individuals rather than the capture of institutions, sustained without salaries, compulsory membership or external funding.

That experience has taken practical shape in Panch Parivartan, the five transformations. Each begins with the individual, passes through the family, and extends outward to the nation and to humanity. That sequence is the method as much as the order, being change that starts in a household and spreads by example rather than change announced from above.



Samajik Samrasta, social harmony. In any large and diverse society, difference can harden into distance. This work asks the individual to regard every other member of society as kin, and proceeds through common gatherings, shared festivals and the ordinary business of daily life until inherited barriers thin and friendships form across them. Harmony understood this way is not the suppression of diversity but the flowering of unity within it.

Kutumb Prabodhan, awakening the family. Families rest on affection and trust, and everywhere under modern conditions they are under strain. The work begins inside the household, in respect among parents, children and elders, in the habit of lifelong learning, and in the passing on of cultural memory. Nations are made of families, and families that come apart leave a nation weaker than any adversary can.

Paryavaran, environment. Outcomes depend finally on how individuals, families and communities behave towards the natural world, and not only on protocols framed at distant conferences. The emphasis is on what ordinary people can actually do: use less energy, save water, plant trees, take up organic farming, restore the pond in their own locality. Adopted by one household these are small things. Adopted by millions they are a considerable force. The sensibility they draw on is old in Indic civilisation and has counterparts in traditional cultures the world over, being a kinship with the living world rather than a licence over it.

Swa, selfhood and self-reliance. Swa begins with an individual's relationship to his own cultural inheritance and a family's transmission of its language and traditions. It is not the closing of doors. It is the maintenance of self-respect and capacity. A society with its own languages, its own products and its own cultural memory meets other societies from a position of dignity, and cooperation, trade and intellectual exchange proceed on a stronger footing because of it.

Nagrik Kartavya, civic duty. Democratic institutions, wherever they exist, require citizens of character in order to work. This asks the individual to take the ordinary practices of citizenship seriously, treating them as duties owed rather than impositions borne. Without civic character, formal institutions turn brittle. With it, they hold.

Beneath these five sits the philosophical contribution the movement regards as its most distinctive. In 1965 Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya propounded Ekatma Manav Darshan, Integral Humanism, holding that body, mind, intellect and soul must advance together as inseparable dimensions of a single human enterprise. From it flowed Antyodaya, the rise of the last person, which has shaped Indian thinking on inclusive development for sixty years. Upadhyaya was asking whether the systems then contending for the world's future gave a full enough account of the human person. In an age when the search for meaning has grown urgent, the question speaks with renewed force.

Two features of the method deserve stating plainly. The movement has worked by habit, lived practice and example across generations rather than by reform imposed from above, which is slower and more durable and avoids the resistance that imposed reform provokes. And it has been done without compulsory membership, without outside funding and without anyone being paid for the work.

The framing of Panch Parivartan is recent. The work is a hundred years old. The principles are not particular to Bharat, and they are offered freely to every society asking the same questions.

Bharat's contribution, on this understanding, has never been the exercise of power. When Bharat became great it did not become a superpower; it became, by its own character, Vishwa Guru rather than Mahashakti. The rise of Bharat, on that record, means a more united and more emancipated humanity. What was carried to New York, Toronto and London was not a programme to be adopted but an account of what one civilisation has learned about holding a society together, resting throughout on a proposition that predates the movement by millennia and belongs to no one exclusively:

“Religions might be different, but humanity is one. Truth is one, and humanity is a product of that truth.”

Wisdom of a hundred years of selfless seva is what the movement has to offer, and it is offered freely.

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