



Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia Inc.

World Hindu Council

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MEDIA RELEASE

HakenKreuz banned and Swastika Recognised in Australia

In a significant victory for Hindu organizations, the Australian state of Victoria has recognised the cultural and historical significance of the Hindu Swastika symbol.

The Summary Offences Amendment (Nazi Symbol Prohibition) Bill 2022 was introduced by the Victorian Government, which makes it a criminal offense to intentionally display the Nazi symbol Hakenkreuz in public. Once the bill comes into effect, anyone who intentionally displays the Nazi symbol in public faces penalties of up to almost \$22,000, 12-month imprisonment or both.

At the same time, the Bill allows the Swastika symbol to be used and displayed recognising the significance it holds for Hindus, Jains, Buddhists, and other Dharmic communities. It identifies Swastika as an ancient and sacred symbol of peace and good fortune for Hindus and other sister religions.

The attorney general Jaclyn Symes differentiated between the Nazi Hakenkreuz symbol and the Hindu Swastika symbol as she said that legislation will come into effect a year after passing to allow for a community education campaign to raise awareness of the origins of the religious and cultural swastika, its importance to the Buddhist, Hindu, and Jain communities and its distinction from the Nazi symbol.

The Swastika, a Hindu sacred emblem, was originally mentioned in the Vedas. The swastika is made out of the words 'su', which means "good," and 'asti,' which means "to be." In other terms, bliss. It can be traced back 6,000 years to rock and cave drawings.

VHP (Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia) and HOTA (Hindu Organizations, Temples and Associations) Forum in Victoria played a significant role along with other Hindu/ Bharatiya community organizations in ensuring that the significance of Swastika was recognised, and not equated with the Nazi symbol.

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