Twitter Thread by Pieter Friedrich



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Dear all, I've taken cognizance of all the evidence surrounding alleged Hindutva participation in the Wednesday insurrection. My conclusion? There's not much and it's not worth getting distracted from the bigger picture.

1) An Indian Christian raised an Indian flag. Yes, I think it's safe to conclude that's a sign of Indian nationalists backing Trump. There's some circumstantial evidence suggesting he's associated with Sanghis. But it's not significant.

2) A man, apparently a "Hemant Bhatt" from New Jersey, joined the rally. But there's no obvious connection between him and Hindutva. And the presence of a single individual is not significant.

3) @Voice_For_India was present. She is a Hindutva stooge. Her presence is the most significant of that of any. But there's no evidence suggesting she was there as part of a larger crowd or mobilization.

4) There was a small group of Indians present who were all pictured together. But that's it. No identification of them. No evidence they have any Hindutva links. Totally insignificant in context of the Hindutva influence in America issue.

5) Pictures of saffron-clad Indians raising the saffron flag of RSS/Hindutva with Capitol in backdrop. People shared them suggesting the pictures were from the insurrection. But they actually appear to be from an entirely different day and event. Totally misleading.

6) After the insurrection, @RajivMessage posted a tweet calling for India to "infiltrate" both US political parties. This is deeply troubling, represents an overt call for foreign interference, and demands attention. But it was in no way linked to insurrection except by timing.

Influence of RSS/BJP and its supremacist Hindutva ideology in America is a significant and very real problem. But working against it must be evidence based. Exposing it credibly also requires many pieces of interconnected proofs, not just one-off examples.

Attention to detail, accuracy in reporting, and ensuring that claims made are based on patterns of evidence — NOT just one-off examples or single data points — is crucial to maintaining the credibility required to make progress in the struggle against the RSS and its evil agenda.

Lastly, I know strongly anti-RSS/anti-Modi Indian-Americans who support Trump (wrongly, I believe, but that's their choice). There is context to American politics that explains why some do so — and Hindutva is not part of it.

While Indians unfamiliar with American politics might understandably assume that any Indian-American who supports Trump is sympathetic to RSS (especially considering his friendship with Modi), that simply isn't true. Support for Trump is not a de facto sign of RSS sympathies.