Sikh Disinformation Lab

MISLEADING

OpIndia report on New York flag incident assessed as misleading by Sikh Disinformation Lab review

An OpIndia article republished on DailyHunt asserts that Sikh demonstrators "belonging to banned terror outfit 'Sikhs for Justice'" desecrated the Indian flag during an RSS address in New York. The Lab's review classified the item as disinformation, with a verdict nuance of "misleading" and a finding that it contains inaccuracies.

PUBLISHED
31 August 2026

SOURCE POSTED
30 August 2026

NARRATIVES
Portraying Advocacy for Khalistan as Terrorism

THE CLAIM

New York: Khalistanis belonging to banned terror outfit 'Sikhs for Justice' desecrate Indian tricolour during RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat's address

THE ANALYSIS

What was published

On 30 August 2026, an article headlined "New York: Khalistanis belonging to banned terror outfit 'Sikhs for Justice' desecrate Indian tricolour during RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat's address" was published under the OpIndia English masthead and distributed through the news aggregator DailyHunt (dailyhunt.in). The item is in English and originates in India.

The captured text opens by placing the events at Madison Square Garden in New York, where, it states, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat delivered an address on Saturday 29 August. The article then asserts that "pro-Khalistani Sikhs associated with the Khalistani terrorist group Sikhs for Justice (SFJ) desecrated the Indian national flag to oppose" the event.

What it claimed

The piece makes three linked assertions in its headline and opening lines: that a flag desecration occurred outside or during the Bhagwat address; that the individuals responsible were "Khalistanis"; and that those individuals belonged to, or were associated with, Sikhs for Justice, which the article describes as a "banned terror outfit" and a "Khalistani terrorist group."

The organisational attribution is presented in the headline as established fact rather than as an allegation or as a claim sourced to any identified authority.

What the review found

The Lab's analyst recorded the item as **disinformation**, with a verdict nuance of **misleading** and a factual-accuracy rating of **contains inaccuracies**. Severity was assessed at 2 on the programme's five-point scale, indicating a lower-impact item rather than one assessed as likely to cause acute harm.

The review assigns the item to the Portraying Advocacy for Khalistan as Terrorism narrative, one of the recurring narrative families the Lab tracks in which Sikh political expression and protest activity abroad are framed as the work of a proscribed terrorist organisation.

The analyst's file does not contain a written debunk narrative, and this publication therefore does not set out point-by-point findings on each element of the article. The Lab is publishing the verdict as recorded. The classification of "misleading" with inaccuracies present reflects an assessment of the article as published — in particular its framing of identified individuals as members of a named organisation — and should not be read as a finding on any single factual detail not addressed in the review.

Context

The Lab monitors the recurring pattern in which participants at Sikh demonstrations in Canada, the United States and elsewhere are attributed, without evidence presented in the reporting itself, to Sikhs for Justice or to "Khalistani terror" networks. Attribution of that kind carries consequences for individuals who may have no organisational affiliation, and for the wider community whose lawful political expression is reframed as terrorism-linked activity.

The Lab will update this entry if the analyst's file is supplemented with a full debunk record, or if the publisher issues a correction or clarification.

Verdict: Disinformation — misleading; contains inaccuracies. Severity 2 of 5.

SOURCES

01 https://m.dailyhunt.in/news/india/english/opindia+english-epaper-opinden/new+york+khalistanis+belonging+to+banned+terror+outfit+

02 The Lab's analyst review record (flagged item, published 2026-08-30; status: Disinformation; nuance: Misleading; severity 2; factual accuracy: contains inaccuracies; the Portraying Advocacy for Khalistan as Terrorism narrative)

Sikh Disinformation Lab

About Sikh Disinformation Lab

Sikh Disinformation Lab is an independent, evidence-based programme founded and hosted by the World Sikh Organization of Canada. It monitors, analyses and publicly documents disinformation affecting Sikhs.

The Lab examines claims against evidence, publishes assessments with that evidence attached, and tracks coordinated campaigns over time. Every published assessment names what was claimed, where it appeared, what the review found, and what that assessment rests on. Where an item makes several distinct claims, each is assessed separately.

Assessments are made against the methodology framework in force at the time of publication. That framework is public, versioned, and reviewed at each phase gate; a material change produces a new version rather than a silent edit. The full method is published at sikhdisinfolab.ca/method.

Corrections are dated entries, never silent edits. Where a published assessment is found to be wrong or incomplete, the correction is recorded against it and listed at sikhdisinfolab.ca/corrections. If you believe something published here is inaccurate, write to the programme and it will be reviewed.

Assessments are the responsibility of Sikh Disinformation Lab.

This project has been made possible with support from the Government of Canada.

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