

India in Uproar Over Russian Book Ban

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A Hare Krishna member playing a trumpet during a protest outside the Russian consulate in Kolkata on Monday. **Rupak De Chowdhuri**

NEW DELHI — Angry Indian lawmakers forced parliament to close Monday and protesters gathered outside a Russian consulate over a Siberian trial calling for one of Hinduism's most holy books to be put on a list of banned literature that includes Hitler's "Mein Kampf."

The case filed by Tomsk prosecutors says a translation of the "Bhagavad Gita" is extremist because it insults nonbelievers.

"We will not tolerate an insult to Lord Krishna," members of parliament shouted, until the house speaker adjourned parliament for several hours.

The "Bhagavad Gita" takes the form of a conversation between Hindu god Krishna and a prince called Arjuna prior to a battle. Its philosophical insights were praised by Albert Einstein and form a bedrock of the Hindu belief system.

India and Russia enjoy close diplomatic and defense ties, and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh returned from an annual visit to Moscow over the weekend. Lawmakers demanded

to know whether he had raised the issue of the trial with Russian officials.

The translation up for trial is called "Bhagavad Gita as It Is," and is central to the global Hare Krishna movement. Members of the movement link the case against the text to the Russian Orthodox Church, which they claim wants to limit their activities.

Dozens of Hare Krishna adherents in orange robes shouted slogans and danced outside the Russian consulate in the eastern Indian city of Kolkata.

India's foreign minister will address parliament on Tuesday about the government's position with regard to the "Bhagavad Gita" case.

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