



# SIKH FEDERATION (UK)

*Never flinch from performing righteous deeds*

## ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016

### HIGHLIGHTS

- First Guru Nanak Dev Ji celebration in UK Parliament
- Communities unite with widespread opposition to Modi UK visit
- Ban lifted on International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF) in UK and restrictions removed across Europe
- Progress with separate ethnic tick box for 2021 Census
- Protests by UK Sikhs highlighting injustices in India receive unprecedented media coverage
- Astonishing political pressure prevents extradition of Paramjit Singh from Portugal
- Treatment of minorities in India taken up in UK Parliament, EU Parliament and United Nations
- Sikhs receive support following evidence session in 'Campaigning for Justice' Parliamentary event
- Sikh Federation (UK) leadership invited to 10 Downing Street

WORKING FOR TRUTH, JUSTICE, FREEDOM



# Overview

## ***A Message from the Chairman***

A year ago this statement began by referring to a remarkably busy 12 months with some huge events and achievements having established the Sikh Network and developed and deployed the Sikh Manifesto. It was a difficult act to follow, but the successes since September 2015 have been equally impressive.

The focus of several high profile campaigns and successes of the Sikh Federation (UK) have been at the expense of the Indian authorities and these have not gone unnoticed. First came leading the direct opposition to the divisive visit to the UK by Narendra Modi in November 2015 that presented a specific challenge to Sikh organisations pushing for truth, justice and freedom. The Sikh Federation (UK) leadership almost stood alone in not being compromised.

The Indian authorities have used all forms of opposition, extreme tactics and restrictions, but failed to prevent our work from continuing, being widely supported and publicised. In the coming 12 months the Sikh Federation (UK) will be taking the bold step of countering curbs imposed by the Indian authorities with pressure on the Sikh media not to report on the activities and achievements of the Sikh Federation (UK).

To make matters worse for the Indian authorities they quickly experienced first hand the political strength and reach of the Sikh Federation (UK) with UK and European politicians, the UN and organisations like Free Trials International. Despite limitations on using the Sikh media we led an astonishing political effort supported by the Sikh Network to prevent Paramjeet Singh from being extradited from Portugal. UK Ministers were compelled by politicians from across the political spectrum to convince the Portuguese authorities with the assistance of Portuguese politicians to reject India's pressure for extradition exerted through Interpol. It was a hugely embarrassing experience and climb down for the Indian authorities.

The final nail in the coffin for India came with the Sikh Federation (UK) success in legally challenging the UK Government to lift the ban on the International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF) in the UK and remove all restrictions on the ISYF across Europe. There have been a number of clear signs in recent months that the lifting of the ISYF ban will path the way for the Sikh Federation (UK) to make progress with several domestic issues with the UK Government. However, we have also been active in taking the lead in developing an international political set up across the globe designed to seek support of leading foreign governments and institutions for the establishment of a Sikh homeland.

Last year we promised and have delivered a number of new branches in a number of towns and cities and this will continue in the next 12 months. It has increasingly become clear a number of youth groups are working with the Sikh Federation (UK) and several projects are underway led by the youth and sponsored by the Sikh Federation (UK).

***Bhai Amrik Singh  
Chairman Sikh Federation (UK)***

**SIKH FEDERATION (UK)**



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## ANNUAL REPORT 2015-2016

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# BUILDING A STRONGER POLITICAL VOICE IN THE UK AND ABROAD

**SIKH FEDERATION (UK) ANNUAL CONVENTION PROVES HUGE SUCCESS AND GIVES NEW POLITICAL DIRECTION**



Those attending heard the last 12 months had been a remarkable time with some huge events and achievements. By far the biggest success achieved by the Sikh community in the UK was to produce and actively use the Sikh Manifesto to make a massive positive impression.

All politicians that spoke at the Convention - Rob Marris MP, Pat McFadden MP and Margaret Ferrier MP - emphasised the significant impact of the Sikh Manifesto. It has resulted in empowering the community and raising awareness of politicians and the public of the immense Sikh contribution and issues where progress is essential.

Several speakers also spoke about the success of establishing the Sikh Network and getting it up and running. The network currently has over 2,500 participants. The core group is constantly in communication and has an excellent gender split. A quarterly newsletter is produced providing an update on activities and progress on priority issues.

Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) thanked all the volunteers of the Sikh Network and said it had a critical role with respect to the Sikh Manifesto and full support would continue to be provided by the Sikh Federation (UK).

Several speakers also reminded the Convention of the commitment by the Sikh Federation (UK) a year earlier to ensure Rob Marris was elected at the May 2015 General Election at the expense of Paul Uppal who had proved extremely disappointing. It was widely recognised that despite Labour's disappointment in securing victory in the vast majority of target marginal constituencies the Wolverhampton branch of the Sikh Federation (UK) ensured a huge proportion of Sikh voters in Wolverhampton South West backed Rob Marris to guarantee his victory.

Rob Marris MP, the Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for British Sikhs thanked all the local Sikh volunteers and voters who had helped secure his triumph. He explained the progress the Sikh Federation (UK) had already made in the summer with the Office for National Statistics around separate recognition of Sikhs as an ethnic group in the Census 2021 and plans to secure a site in central London for a permanent monument to mark Sikh sacrifices in the First World War.

Several speakers also referred to increasing recognition and respect for the Sikh Federation (UK) by Government Ministers. The close ties between the Sikh Federation (UK) and the Scottish National Party (SNP) in Scotland were reiterated by Margaret Ferrier MP. She read a personal message from



Nicola Sturgeon and spoke passionately about a number of the key demands in the Sikh Manifesto, including the UK Government military assistance under Margaret Thatcher and the need for an independent public inquiry to establish the truth.

The Sikh Federation (UK) made a number of major announcements. The first was around restructuring to have a presence in all 12 regions of the UK and expanding the organisation by opening new branches. Eight regional co-ordinators were announced at the Convention for London, South East, West Midlands, East Midlands, West of England, Yorkshire and Humberside, North West and the North East.



In another related but significant development was the growing and increasing public recognition by a number of Sikh activist youth groups working in different fields of the leading role of the Sikh Federation (UK) in virtually all major Panthic campaigns. In a major boost many indicated they now wished to work with, join and become part of the future development and eventually the leadership of the Sikh Federation (UK).

The objective is to combine the energy, professionalism and strength of the youth with the wisdom, capacity and dedication of the existing sewadars of the Sikh Federation (UK) to create an even more formidable organisation with an emerging younger leadership and following.

Further announcements concerned uniting Sikh organisations under a Panthic agenda with a firm commitment. Individual organisations would continue to retain their own distinct identity and areas of work, but also have a shared high level agenda.

The final announcement concerned delivering a bold and uncompromising stance ahead of the visit of the Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi to the UK in November 2015. Those at the convention were told some Sikhs encouraged by the Indian High Commission would be taken in by his rock star like image and want to simply be pictured with him. Others would compromise Sikhs and try and make a name for themselves with the Indian authorities on the back of his visit.

Sikhs were told Narendra Modi's high profile UK trip in November presented an opportunity to raise legitimate Sikh issues and human rights concerns with the mainstream media. The Sikh Federation (UK) publicly made clear at the Convention it was always willing to sit around the table to discuss the most important Sikh demands, but had no time for those that simply wanted their names removed from a blacklist.

At the convention the Sikh Federation (UK) made clear that when the Indian army attacked the Sri Harmandir Sahib Complex in June 1984 this laid the foundation stone for a separate Sikh homeland, Khalistan. The Indian state made that decision not the Sikhs and the BJP who are now in power in India are on record as supporting and even encouraging and wanting that attack sooner.

Those at the Convention were also reminded not to forget Narendra Modi is all for conversions of minorities and India becoming a country exclusively for Hindus by 2021. If this is what Modi is working towards, then he must be prepared to sit down and discuss Sikhs having their own homeland. A Sikh homeland will not be a sovereign nation just for Sikhs, but will allow all who live there to be respected and encouraged to practice their faith. It will allow Sikhi to be protected and the Sikh way of life and identity given to by the Gurus to be promoted across the globe wherever Sikhs live. It will also allow the universal message of the Gurus to be shared and disseminated in a way that has never been possible in the modern era. There is little doubt that as the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib Ji are understood more will accept Sikhi through their own free will.



So the clear message given to Narendra Modi at the Convention was if you want to change the relationship with Sikhs he should show some goodwill before he comes to the UK by releasing all Sikh political prisoners and promise those guilty for the Sikh Genocide in 1984 will be punished. He should also have the courage to talk to Sikhs about our rightful claim for re-establishing the Sikh homeland. What we do not want to discuss are petty matters like getting rid of the blacklist or photo opportunities with him to build personal profiles.

## 10,000 attend Annual National Sikh Convention

**AsianImage**  
The voice of the Asian community

Asian Image – 22 September 2016 (extract)

Over 10,000 Sikhs joined Rob Marris MP, Pat McFadden MP and Margaret Ferrier MP at the Annual National Sikh Convention.

The event held over the weekend was organised by the Sikh Federation (UK) at Guru Nanak Gurdwara, Sedgley Street, Wolverhampton.

Pat McFadden the MP for Wolverhampton South East and the Shadow Europe Minister alongside a number of Sikh speakers expressed views about different aspects of the Sikh Manifesto where progress is essential. Several speakers also spoke about the success of establishing the Sikh Network and getting it up and running.



## UK SIKHS COLLECTIVELY DECIDE TO CHALLENGE VISITING INDIAN PM

London – 4 October 2015

Yesterday all prominent Sikh organisations, Gurdwaras from across the UK and the youth gathered at Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Havelock Road, Southall to discuss the Sikh response and plan of action for the visit to the UK of Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi in mid-November.

In what could prove to be a historic move all Sikh organisations, Gurdwaras and the youth unanimously endorsed the detailed strategy prepared and presented by the Federation of Sikh Organisations (FSO). Those gathered had different political perspectives yet they were all impressed with the proposed strategy without a single voice of dissent. Even those with limited ambitions for the Sikh community and often start from the position of compromise had to admit there was nothing in the strategy that could be questioned.

There have been many rumours in the last few weeks about Sikhs trying to set up meetings and negotiate, including talk of Narendra Modi possibly turning up to a Gurdwara. Those that have been making such suggestions were told in no uncertain terms that the key issues that needed to be addressed by the Indian authorities were those set out in the strategy. Namely:



- Release of Sikh political prisoners
- Justice for the Sikh Genocide of November 1984
- Prosecution of police officers involved in human rights violations in Punjab
- Returning rare and priceless items stolen by the Indian Army in June 1984 from the Sikh Reference Library
- Compensation for Sikh farmers in Gujarat forced to leave and prosecution of those responsible for violent attacks against them
- UN-led inquiry into the 1984 Sikh Genocide orchestrated by the Congress Party
- Application of self-determination to the Sikhs, and the legitimate demand for a Sikh homeland, Khalistan

Context	Key Issues	Communications strategy	Meetings	Protests	Context	Key Issues	Communications strategy	Meetings	Protests
Sikh specific issues									
<b>Release of Sikh political prisoners</b> There are 84 known Sikhs political prisoners languishing in India's prisons some have been in prison for over 25 years. The list consists of 3 death row inmates, 12 life sentence inmates, 10 serving in Punjab's prisons and many have served their minimum terms, 8 senior citizens whose health has deteriorated and 55 other Sikhs held in various jails across India. They are held in solitary confinement and jail. One of the first steps for resolving political conflicts is the release of all political prisoners and a general amnesty for those that have cases pending.	<b>HUMAN RIGHTS</b> 	<b>Prosecution of police officers involved in human rights violations in Punjab</b> To resolve the political conflict with the Sikhs, resolution of the issue of the continued widespread human rights violations by India is essential. For over 30 years UN rapporteurs and independent experts as well as Amnesty International have called for an independent investigation into widespread allegations of torture, disappearances, false encounters and extrajudicial executions. It is now time for the Indian government to allow the voices to be taken seriously and measure the truth to struggle by removing such restrictions, allowing independent investigations followed by prosecutions.	<b>Compensation for Sikhs farmers in Gujarat forced to leave and prosecution of those responsible for violent attacks against them</b> In 2012 the Narendra Modi-led Gujarat government had over 20,000 acres of land belonging to Sikh farmers in Gujarat confiscated. These Sikh farmers have been left homeless and their lands are being seized under a law enacted by the Gujarat government that stopped Sikhs from owning land in the state. This case was brought to the Gujarat High Court and the state government challenged the order in the Supreme Court. In the run up to the Lok Sabha polls, Narendra Modi had promised to return the land to the Sikhs if they were evicted. However, since the May 2014 elections attacks by land mafia and goons have increased and charges have brought against Sikhs farmers for demanding their lands. These Sikhs have been forced many to flee the land they had successfully made their home.	<b>UN-led Inquiry into the 1984 Sikh Genocide orchestrated by the Congress Party</b> Calling for a UN-led inquiry into the atrocities committed by the Congress Party in June 1984, the Sikhs have been calling for justice for the last 30 years and followed and the systematic and deliberate killing of innocent Sikhs in November 1984. The UN inquiry should also look into the use by the police of criminals, torturers and酷吏 (kookas) to commit the massacre Sikhs ('millions'), widely known as Black Cats.					
<b>Justice for the Sikh Genocide of November 1984</b> The Indian Home Minister Rajiv Gandhi in late December 2014 referred to what happened to the Sikhs in November 1984 as 'Genocide' and that Justice would be meted out to the victims only when the perpetrators of the crime are punished" and that until then no criminal case will be registered against anyone. This is at odds with the recent decision in September 2015 by the Central Bureau of Investigation to give a clean chit to Jagdish Tytler.		<b>Returning rare and priceless items stolen by the Indian Army in June 1984 from the Sikh Reference Library</b> These included rare and priceless manuscripts of Guru Granth Sahib Ji, Rukmani Devi carrying the manuscript of the Guru Granth Sahib Ji, and the original manuscript of the Bhai Gurdas Ji. These items were confiscated by the Sikhs during the independence movement and books on Sikhhi and our history.	                                     <img alt="Flag of the State of Nagaland" data-bbox="715 641						

## UK SIKHS CALL INDIA'S BLUFF AND ANNOUNCE WIDESPREAD OPPOSITION TO VISITING INDIAN PM

Birmingham – 26 October 2015

On 3 October all prominent Sikh organisations, Gurdwaras from across the UK and the youth gathered at Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Havelock Road, Southall to discuss the Sikh response and plan of action for the visit to the UK of Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi in mid-November. The detailed strategy prepared and presented by the Federation of Sikh Organisations (FSO) was unanimously endorsed.

One of the other outcomes was to allow individuals that have been in contact with the Indian authorities time to ‘explore’ what if any progress they could make on the key issues approved at the meeting in advance of Narendra Modi’s visit i.e. release of all Sikh political prisoners, securing an apology and seeking forgiveness for the events of 1984 from Modi on behalf of the Indian State. As approved at the meeting the key issues were to be immediately publicised leaving no room for individuals to set their own personal agendas and compromise what had been decided.

Those present agreed to allow these individuals a three week period until 24 October for exploring possibilities before formally announcing next steps based on what had been presented and already settled. No one was given ‘authority’ to negotiate and make decisions on behalf of the Sikh community.

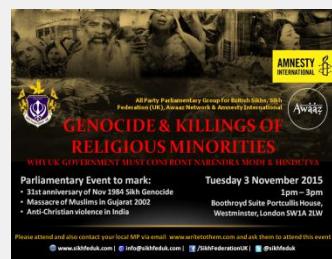
The Sikh Council UK organised a follow up meeting at Amrit Parchar Dharmik Diwan Gurdwara Sahib in Birmingham at the weekend on 24 October inviting all 200 or so of its delegates from Gurdwaras and organisations across the UK. The Federation of Sikh Organisations (FSO) also invited its members to give an update on its strategy that was already endorsed.

As anticipated individuals that have been in contact with the Indian authorities either did not attend or reported no progress with the Indian authorities. At the meeting on 24 October the FSO provided an update, including:

- further details of Narendra Modi’s itinerary, including the opposition he is facing at virtually all places he is expected to visit
- the police has been approached to arrest Modi - in 2003, an application was filed for an arrest warrant for him under section 134 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988
- contact with BBC TV to cover the anti-Modi protest in advance of his arrival and the general issues they are likely to focus on
- face to face discussions with senior figures in the Labour Party to raise relevant issues with the British Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary
- social media activity under the hashtag #ModiNotWelcome
- the need to include in the issues the recent beabdi cases of Guru Granth Sahib Ji and the killing of peaceful Sikh protesters by Indian police
- further clarification regarding the significance of the June 1984 attack, including the BJP role in encouraging the Indian army assault

### The green light was given to:

- Producing the briefing on issues to send to all MPs
- Genocide and killing of religious minorities event in Parliament on Tuesday 3 November in the Boothroyd Room between 1-3pm
- Joining in large numbers the protest outside 10 Downing Street, moving to Parliament Square on Thursday 12 November from 12 noon. Gurdwaras are to be encouraged to make announcements and arrange coaches for members of the Sangat to participate
- Raising awareness of the protest outside Wembley Stadium on 13 November from 6-10pm.



## FIRST G20 WORLD SIKH SUMMIT HELD IN THE UK

Birmingham – 30 October 2015



A World Sikh Summit of the major Global 20 countries with the largest active Sikh diaspora were invited by the Federation of Sikh Organisations (FSO) to the UK on Saturday 31 October at Guru Nanak Gurdwara, 128-130 High Street, Smethwick, Birmingham. The summit was called in preparation for the Sarbat Khalsa in Amritsar planned on the 10 November. The intentions of the summit would be shared with the Punjab Sikh leadership as key inputs and representation from the Sikh diaspora.

The event was split into two parts, a private delegates session on the Saturday, followed by an open conference on the Sunday. During the delegates session the key discussion point and agenda was:

- Short term challenges we face, including recent decisions made by the current Jathedars, calls for their resignation and actions necessary to prevent the beabdi of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji.
- Medium term considerations, including the appointment of Jathedars, establishing a better SGPC and new Government for Punjab
- Longer term ambitions, including the possibility of establishing a World Sikh Parliament, exercising our right to self determination and establishing a sovereign Sikh homeland, Khalistan

Prior to the G20 Summit, Sikhs held a mass rally at the United Nations in Geneva on Friday 30 October where thousands gathered from over 12 different countries to mark the 31st anniversary of the November 1984 Sikh Genocide and highlight the continued killings of religious minorities in India.



In a meeting organised by the Sikh Federation (UK) a memorandum for Joachim Rücker - President of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) and Prince Zeid bin Ra'ad - High Commissioner for Human Rights was handed over, covering both recent and historical injustices. These included;

Lack of justice for the Sikh Genocide of November 1984, UN-led inquiry into the 1984 Sikh Genocide, Prosecution of police officers involved in human rights violations in Punjab, Release of Sikh political prisoners, Oppression of religious and ethnic minorities in India, Recent attacks on the Sikh faith and killing of peaceful Sikh protesters and Application of self-determination to the Sikhs & demand for an independent Sikh homeland, Khalistan.



## Indian PM confronted by angry protesters in Downing Street

Guardian – 12 November 2016

Narendra Modi was greeted by noisy protests outside Downing Street as he arrived for talks with David Cameron.

Several hundred demonstrators representing Gujarati, Sikh, Tamil, Kashmiri, Nepali and women's groups chanted "Modi go home" and "David Cameron shame shame" as the Indian prime minister was welcomed at about lunchtime on Thursday.

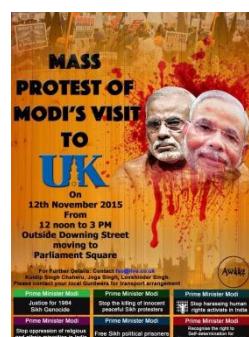
As his 29th overseas destination, the UK's lack of real interest to the Indian PM is clear, but the trip comes at a useful time for Modi

Modi, a Hindu nationalist who was elected after a landslide victory last year, was banned from the UK, US, and several European countries until 2012 after anti-Muslim riots a decade earlier in Gujarat, in which thousands died. Modi was chief minister at the time and, while he has strongly denied any involvement in the unrest, he faced severe criticism for failing to do more to intervene.

Amnesty International and other rights groups have accused his government of fostering a climate that has encouraged growing religious violence, and permitting wider human rights abuses.

Many of the several hundred protesters in Whitehall cited the 2002 riots as the reason they were demonstrating, but others raised issues of human rights, protection for women in India and accusations of injustice against Tamils, Dalits and other religious and ethnic minorities.

A delegation of Sikh protesters waved black flags and accused Modi of genocide in a provocative banner that also bore an image of Hitler. **Dabinderjit Singh, principal adviser of the Sikh Federation (UK),** said: "People genuinely fear the direction Narendra Modi is taking the country in terms of the impact on religious and ethnic minorities. What happens to the



hundreds of millions of Muslims, Sikhs, Christians and the Dalit community in India? Where will we go?"

"We think that Britain inviting Modi here is showing support for the human rights abuses against women in India," said Camille Rouse, of the Newham Asian Women's Project, which works with victims of "honour-based" violence in east London.

She said Modi had done nothing to challenge abuses against women in India. "He just looks the other way while women are being abused."

Damar Ghale, a former president of the Non-Resident Nepali Association UK, urged Britain not to sign trade deals with Modi while India implemented what he described as an illegal blockade of Nepal. "Britain has made its decision to invite him, but we are here to ensure he hears us and knows what is happening in Nepal."

A smaller group of fewer than 50 pro-Modi demonstrators, kept at a distance by police, waved Indian flags and chanted "welcome Modi". One of those supporting the prime minister, Shri



Jayu Shah, of the Friends of India Society, said: "People should respect that India is a democratic nation and he was elected by the people of India. That gives him every right to be here." Modi, he added, "is the one who is going to take India out of poverty".

The Indian prime minister can expect a warmer welcome on Friday, when 60,000 members of the Indian diaspora will pack into Wembley stadium for a rock star reception and fireworks display at which he will be greeted onstage by Cameron.

## **REVELATIONS RELATING TO SIKHS WHO MET NARENDRA MODI IN LONDON ON 12 NOVEMBER 2015**

The blunders made by Sikhs who met Narendra Modi on 12 November are grouped under the following headings:

### **Spreading lies**

i) that Panthic organisations were totally opposed to any dialogue

ii) this was the first time Sikhs have had an opportunity to raise issues with the Indian Prime Minister



Dr J.S Rai (BSCF), G.S.Kandola (SCUK), Bhai Mohinder Singh (GNNSJ) and G.S.Malhi (SGSS) at infamous Modi-Sikh meeting

### **Misleading the Sangat**

iii) by raising minor issues rejected or not mentioned at the Panthic meeting of Gurdwaras and Sikh organisations on 3 October at Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Southall, such as 'blacklists' and visas

iv) by dropping vitally important issues agreed at the Panthic meeting (presumably as a pre-condition), such as prosecution of police officers involved in human rights violations in Punjab, UN-led inquiry into the 1984 Sikh Genocide, the Sikhs right to self determination and the plight of Sikh farmers in Gujarat (and the recent desecration of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and the killing of peaceful Sikh protesters that was added to the list of issues at the follow up Panthic meeting on 24 October)

v) by issuing a false Press Release giving the impression this was 'probably' the first time Sikhs had held a meeting with the Indian Prime Minister to raise the lack of justice for Sikhs and categorically stating a number of issues were raised that it has subsequently been established were in fact not raised in the meeting or in the written proposals submitted

### **Failing to clarify**

vi) at the 3 October or 24 October Panthic meetings that pre-meetings had taken place in Delhi with the BJP General Secretary and National Security Adviser and some had very limited background knowledge of the person they agreed on behalf of Sikhs would be responsible for future negotiations

vii) some of the 'proposals' raised with the Indian authorities and Narendra Modi in writing had watered down some of the demands agreed at the Panthic meetings, such as the unconditional release of the 84 Sikh political prisoners as the first step in any conflict resolution process or the returning of rare and priceless items stolen by the Indian Army in June 1984 from the Sikh Reference Library

viii) no mandate was given for a meeting with Narendra Modi at the follow up Panthic meeting on 24 October as all relevant parties that were tasked on 3 October with 'exploring' the issues that had been agreed failed to attend the meeting or said they had made no progress

### **Failing to adhere to any internal processes**

ix) regarding a mandate to take part in the meeting or share the joint statement given to the Indian Prime Minister



## Totally failing to challenge

x) the National Security Adviser about his fabricated ‘dossier’ reported to have been handed to the British authorities maligning UK Gurdwaras, Sikh TV channels, Sikh organisations and Sikh youth and objecting to him being the person for the Indian authorities that would ‘negotiate’ with Sikhs in the future

## COMPLAINT MADE AGAINST CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATE FOR LONDON ASSEMBLY, AMANDEEP BHOGAL FOR ABSURD & OFFENSIVE REMARKS AGAINST PEACEFUL UK SIKHS

London – 19 November 2015



The Sikh Federation (UK) led calls to Conservative chairman Lord Feldman to take strong action against Conservative candidate for London assembly Amandeep Bhogal who is more known to the Indian High commission than the UK Sikh community, following an interview with an Indian News channel where he was presented as a ‘Conservative Leader’. In this interview Bhogal made a number of false, fabricated, offensive comments without any proof or substance including claims of Sikh radicalisation, extremism, links with Pakistan Intelligence Agencies and bomb making training at Gurdwaras in the UK.

His response is synonymous with classic Indian media propaganda and false allegations. In addition his views could be regarded as dangerous, provoking hatred towards the Sikh community at large

Two days later Bhogal issued a statement where he made a full apology to the UK Sikh community for hurting their sentiments and stating the Sikh community was one of the most law abiding in the UK. He went on to say that “No evidence has emerged to back up such claims, it would seem that it is nothing but media propaganda...I have visited many Gurdwaras across the country and nowhere have I seen any radicalisation or extremism amongst the congregation. What I have seen is the legitimate raising of concerns of significance to the community...It was also disappointing, that the TV Interaction, where I had stated that the known perpetrators of 1984 such as Jagdish Tytler, Sajjan Kumar and others must be brought to justice for the monstrous events of 1984 was omitted”

## UK PANTHIC ORGANISATIONS REACT TO RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN TERMS OF ISSUES OF CONCERN RAISED WITH INDIAN AUTHORITIES

London – 16 December 2015

At a recent meeting the leadership of the Sikh Federation (UK) met with other Panthic organisation representatives, including Jathedar Balbir Singh, Joga Singh and Avtar Singh Sanghera. It was agreed by all present a letter should be sent to Jasdev Singh Rai, Gurmail Singh Malhi and Gurmel Singh Kandola.

The letter points out that at various times in recent months the three of them have been trying to unsuccessfully persuade Panthic organisations to meet with representatives of the Indian authorities. The three have been told in no uncertain terms that if Indian Government representatives wish to meet Panthic organisations they can contact them directly in writing setting out the issues they wish to discuss and who will be present from the Indian Government side.

For example, they recognise the release of all Sikh political prisoners is one of the first steps for resolving any political conflict and are willing to provide legal contacts in Punjab that can assist with expediting the release.



The Panthic organisations have said that the issues that need to be discussed have been unanimously agreed by the Sikh community on 3 and 24 October when Gurdwaras and Sikh organisations were all invited to attend and are well known by the Indian authorities.

The Sikh Federation (UK) has pointed out that from meetings and correspondence they have recently had with UK politicians they understand some of these issues were formally raised with Narendra Modi by the British Prime Minister, David Cameron and the Leader of the Labour Opposition, Jeremy Corbyn. They were met with a mixed or negative reaction.

The letter strongly condemns the Joint Statement given to Narendra Modi on 12 November. It points out there was absolutely no mandate for the Joint Statement that was negotiated by them in private meetings in London and Delhi. The Joint Statement ignores many issues, but includes many irrelevant issues, like blacklists and visas, that they have personally inserted.

Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) said:

"The letter reminds them they were categorically told at the Panthic meeting on 3 October, when all three were present, that the issue of blacklists should not be raised and the implications of the undertakings they have given now need to be explained."

### **HOME SECRETARY TO LIFT BAN ON INTERNATIONAL SIKH YOUTH FEDERATION (ISYF) FOLLOWING LEGAL CHALLENGE BY SIKH FEDERATION (UK)**

London – 17 December 2015

Earlier today in debate in Parliament it was confirmed that the Home Secretary is to lift the ban on the ISYF. John Spellar, the Labour MP for Warley said in Parliament:

"I draw the House's attention to the excellent news that the Home Secretary has agreed to withdraw from legal action and will now lift the ban on the International Sikh Youth Federation, which is a very welcome Christmas present for the Sikh community. Will the Leader of the House urge her to lay before Parliament the necessary order as soon as possible so that it can be voted through speedily by both Houses?"

A number of MPs were heard saying 'hear, hear'. Chris Grayling, the Leader of the House responded by saying: 'I will certainly do that.'

The Sikh Federation (UK) applied for the ban to be lifted in February 2015, followed by a legal challenge against the Home Secretary for refusing to lift the ban.



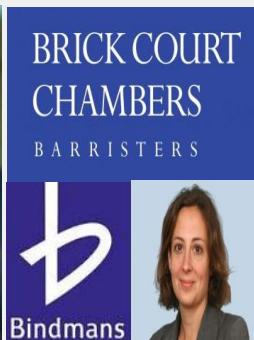
On Monday 14 December leading lawyers Bindmans LLP who represented the Sikh Federation (UK) received the following notification: 'I am instructed to inform you that the Secretary of State has decided not to defend this appeal further. A draft order will be laid before Parliament removing the organisation from the list of proscribed organisations as soon as practicable. As you will no doubt be aware, the Order is subject to the affirmative resolution procedure so must be voted for by both the House of Commons and the House of Lords.'

Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) said:



“The Home Secretary has shown courage in making this decision despite the inevitable pressure from the Indian authorities and so close after the attack in Paris. However, it also shows there was no case against the ISYF that would stand up to legal scrutiny.”

Jamie Potter, Partner in the Public Law and Human Rights department at Bindmans LLP, who acted for applicants seeking de-proscription, said:



“The decision of the Home Secretary to seek the de-prospection of the International Sikh Youth Federation is most welcome. However, it remains unknown why the decision could not have been made much sooner. Representatives of the Sikh Federation (UK) sought de-proscription in February. After considerable delay that application was refused, forcing them to commence formal legal proceedings. Only on the day that the Home Secretary was required to justify her position, did she agree to seek de-proscription. It is unclear what had changed since February.”

In March 2001 many politicians concluded the UK Government was under intense pressure from the Indian authorities and controversially banned the ISYF. At that time the ISYF existed in a number of other countries, but was banned only in the UK. The bans in India and Canada came later after a shift in thinking following 9/11. The decision in the UK is likely to call into question the continued ban of the ISYF in Canada.

What surprised Sikhs most across the globe about the ban in the UK in 2001 was its timing. The ban was being imposed almost 10 years after the Indian authorities claimed to have ended the armed uprising of Sikhs in Punjab. During lobbying at that time and in the months that followed politicians confirmed the ban was almost certainly to appease the Indian authorities to try and silence the Sikh voice of protest abroad and calls for an independent Sikh homeland, Khalistan.

Bhai Amrik Singh said:

“We challenged the decision in 2001 via a legal challenge that lasted nearly two and a half years. Legal advice at that time was it was impossible for any organisation to have the ban lifted. Following considerable political lobbying a decision was made to set up the Sikh Federation (UK) in September 2003 that popularly became known as the first and only Sikh political party in the UK.”

“We have continued to campaign on a wide range of issues in the last twelve years, knowing the Indian authorities have at various times called for the Sikh Federation (UK) to also be banned as we continue to highlight atrocities by the Indian State, call for justice and the establishment of an independent Sikh homeland, Khalistan. To the credit of UK politicians from across the political spectrum they have defended our right to express our views and lobby for legitimate political demands. We have won much respect from politicians and the community for our work.”

“The real story still to be told is how the Indian Government has been able to put pressure on governments abroad to try and deny basic rights to the minority Sikh community from raising its voice of opposition to atrocities in India.”

“The lifting of the ban of the ISYF is a victory for human rights and common sense and a slap in the face for the Indian regime that has created a culture of impunity for those committing human rights violations including genocide, torture, disappearances, fake encounters and extra-judicial killings.”



## BAN ON INTERNATIONAL SIKH YOUTH FEDERATION (ISYF) LIFTED AFTER 15 YEARS

**Sikh Federation (UK) will continue to be the lead political organisation and the focus of the ISYF will be on youth engagement & development**

London – 18 March 2016



Nearly 15 years ago on the evening of 27 March 2001 following a debate in the House of Lords the leadership of the International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF) through its lawyers issued a written statement that was faxed to the Home Secretary.

The statement said the ISYF “as an organisation was being suspended with immediate effect and that this decision was consistent with the organisation’s long standing commitment to lawful behaviour, and to protect its supporters in the UK.” The statement continued that “it would remain suspended until de-proscribed but would pursue lawful challenge.”

The January 2014 revelations in the ‘Amritsar papers’ provided the impetus for the leadership of the Sikh Federation (UK) to apply in February 2015 for the ISYF to be de-proscribed. It had not existed in the UK since March 2001 and was not concerned in terrorism.

In August 2015 an FOI request was made regarding the Community Impact Assessment that was completed to consider the implications if the ban was lifted. Several Sikh organisations in the UK are believed to have been asked about their opinions on the lifting of the ban on the ISYF. In October the Home Office said it was considering the request and ‘qualified exemptions’ of national security, international relations and information provided in confidence.

On 22 February 2016 a draft Order was laid by the Home Secretary before both Houses of Parliament indicating her desire to lift the ban on the ISYF. The affirmative procedure requires the formal approval of both Houses of Parliament before it becomes law. On Tuesday this week MPs in the House of Commons unanimously voted in favour of lifting the ban on the ISYF. Yesterday Peers in the House of Lords did the same and the Home Secretary will today be signing the order so it becomes law.

Bhai Amrik Singh, Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) following the vote in the Lords yesterday said:

“The Sikh Federation (UK) and the Sikh community has always maintained for the last 15 years that the ISYF as an organisation has never been involved with terrorism. The ban on the ISYF in the UK alone in 2001 was politically motivated and was to do with appeasing the Indian authorities. This is what many UK politicians on all sides have told us over the years, including past and present Ministers. We feel we have been vindicated, there is absolutely nothing wrong with peacefully campaigning for an independent Sikh homeland, Khalistan.”

“The Indian authorities claimed to have ended the armed struggle in Punjab some 10 years earlier in the early 1990s so the ban made no sense in 2001. We have it in writing that Special Branch and MI5 did not advocate the banning of the ISYF in 2001, but officials from the Foreign Office suggested to the



Sikhs in the Parliament Public gallery to hear the debate and lifting of the ban on the ISYF



then Home Secretary, Jack Straw, that a ban on the ISYF in the UK would be beneficial to relations with India.”

“The Indian authorities wanted to use proscription to silence Sikh activists in this country who were highlighting continued human rights violations and discrimination against minorities in India. We legally and politically challenged the ban and formed the Sikh Federation (UK) in September 2003. India has on several occasions called for strong action against the Sikh Federation (UK), but this has been flatly rejected - first by a Labour Government, then the Coalition Government and now the Conservative Government. Successive British governments have maintained the organisation has every right to campaign and lobby for an independent Sikh homeland as long as it does it democratically and peacefully.”

“The political lobbying the Sikh Federation (UK) has developed over the years as demonstrated most recently in stopping the extradition of Paramjeet Singh and during the debates in Parliament this week is second to none. The reputation of the organisation continues to be enhanced for its vociferous opposition to historic injustices and what is still happening to Sikhs and other minorities in India today. Many senior politicians have commented the organisation continues to win their respect due to its dedication, professionalism and principled stand to campaign for the rights of Sikhs, including the right to self determination and the call for an independent Sikh homeland, Khalistan. In the debate in the House of Lords yesterday the UK Government committed to a ‘positive relationship’ with the Sikh Federation (UK) and to clear up any past misunderstandings that may have occurred.”



“Our campaign for a Sikh homeland has received another massive boost this week with the lifting of the ban on the ISYF that we have battled for during the last 15 years. For those in any doubt the Sikh Federation (UK) that is in its thirteenth year of existence will continue to be the lead political organisation. However, now that the ban on the ISYF has been lifted this will become an organisation linked to the Sikh Federation (UK), with its leadership drawn from those youngsters that have an interest in Panthic issues and will focus on youth engagement and development.”

## Decks cleared to lift UK ban on pro-Khalistan ISYF

**hindustantimes**

Hindustan Times – 18 March 2016

The group seeking to overturn the 15-year-old ban on the International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF) said its campaign for ‘Khalistan’ had received a “massive boost” after decks were cleared on Thursday to remove ISYF from the list of proscribed organisations in Britain.

After the House of Commons approved the Terrorism Act 2000 (Proscribed Organisations) (Amendment) Order 2016 on Tuesday, the House of Lords also approved the government motion on Thursday, enabling the lifting of the ban on Friday.

Home secretary Theresa May is expected to sign the order lifting the ban on Friday.

Moving the motion in the House of Lords, minister of state in the home office Michael Bates said: “Having reviewed, with other countries, what

**The Minister for Security, John Hayes MP stated:**



*“the International Sikh Youth Federation, a separatist movement committed to the creation of Khalistan, an independent Sikh state in the Punjab region of south Asia, was established in the 1980s. We believe that it is appropriate . . . to remove the ISYF from the list of proscribed organisations. These are never easy decisions . . . but this Government are not a Government who do what is easy—they are a Government who do what is right. We think it is right that we remove the ISYF from the list of proscribed organisations . . . the order will come into force on 18 March.”*

18 March 2016 (House of Commons)

information is available about the current activities of the ISYF and after careful and appropriate consideration, the Home Secretary concluded that there is not sufficient evidence to support a reasonable belief that the ISYF is currently concerned with terrorism, as defined by section 3(5) of the Terrorism Act 2000”.



ISYF, which was previously engaged in attacks against India and Indian interests, was banned in Britain in 2001. The ISYF was launched in 1984 in Britain as the international branch of the All India Sikh Students Federation.

Bhai Amrik Singh, Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) that campaigned to overturn the ban, said after the motion was approved in the House of Lords: "We are delighted at the unanimous verdict in the House of Commons and Lords that has resulted in the lifting of the ban."

"The Sikh Federation (UK) and the Sikh community has always maintained for the last 15 years that the ISYF as an organisation has never been involved with terrorism... We feel we have been vindicated, there is nothing wrong with

peacefully campaigning for an independent Sikh homeland, Khalistan".

"The ban on the ISYF in the UK alone in 2001 was politically motivated and almost certainly more to do with appeasing the Indian authorities. This is what many UK politicians on all sides have told us, including ministers," Singh said.

The Home Office said: "The government does not condone any terrorist activity. Deproscription of a proscribed group should not be interpreted as condoning any previous activities of that group."

Bates denied in the House of Lords that the ban on ISYF was continued for so long since 2001 due to "diplomatic pressure from India". He said other countries were "engaged" before arriving at the decision to "de-proscribe" the ISYF.

## ISYF for 'peaceful' Khalistan campaign after UK lifts ban

Hindustan Times – 18 March 2016

### Britain lifts 15-year-old ban on International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF) on Friday.

A group associated in the past with terrorism against India and Indian interests said on Friday it will campaign peacefully for Khalistan after Britain lifted a 15-year-old ban on it in a move likely to infuriate New Delhi.

Minister of state in the Home Office John Hayes signed the statutory instrument relating to the Terrorism Act 2000 (Proscribed Organisations) (Amendment) Order 2016, lifting the ban on the International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF) on Friday after both houses of British parliament approved a motion this week to drop it from the list of proscribed organisations.

Indian official sources told Hindustan Times they were "disappointed" with the development.

Banned in Britain since 2001, the ISYF continues to be outlawed in India and Canada. Formed in 1984 as the international branch of the All India Sikh Students Federation.

Bhai Amrik Singh, chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) that lobbied to overturn the ban, said: "Successive British governments have maintained the organisation has every right to campaign and

**hindustantimes**



lobby for an independent Sikh homeland as long as it does it democratically and peacefully."

The group said since the ban had been lifted, the ISYF will become an organisation linked to the Sikh Federation (UK), "with its leadership drawn from those youngsters that have an interest in Panthic issues and will focus on youth engagement and development".

Singh said the Sikh Federation felt vindicated because "there is absolutely nothing wrong with peacefully campaigning for an independent Sikh homeland, Khalistan".

"The Indian authorities claimed to have ended the armed struggle in Punjab some 10 years earlier in the early 1990s so the ban made no sense in 2001," he said.

## **RESTRICTIONS LIFTED ACROSS EUROPE ON THE INTERNATIONAL SIKH YOUTH FEDERATION (ISYF)**

London - 25 July 2016

On 18 March 2016 the UK Government lifted the ban on the International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF) following a legal challenge by leading figures in the Sikh Federation (UK) and historic debates in the House of Commons and Lords.

During the debates the UK Government was pushed to take up the matter of restrictions on the ISYF in the European Union that established a list of persons, groups and entities involved in terrorist acts and subject to restrictive measures on 27 December 2001 as part of its response against terrorism after the attacks of 11 September 2001. The list included persons and groups active both within and outside the EU. These were additional measures adopted in order to implement UN Security Council resolution 1373 (2001).



Sikhs in the Parliament committee room for lobby on lifting of the ban on the ISYF with MP's & lawyers

The Sikh Federation (UK) has been informed all restrictions have now been lifted against the ISYF across Europe after the UK Government successfully took up the matter in the European Union. Federica Mogherini, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy put forward a proposal to the Council of the European Union. Following the lifting of the ban in the UK the Council determined that there were no longer grounds for keeping the ISYF on what has become known as the “EU terror list”.

The Council lifted the ban on the ISYF across Europe by adopting Implementing Regulation (EU) 2016/620 that applies to all EU Member States. This will viewed by India as another blow to its relations with the UK and Europe in trying to silence the voice of Sikhs in the Diaspora.

Bhai Amrik Singh, Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) said:

“We have now not only lifted the ban on the ISYF in the UK, but Sikhs across Europe will be delighted we have also had the ISYF removed from the EU terror list established in 2001 and last reviewed on 21 December 2015. We are now extremely confident the ban on the ISYF can be lifted in Canada. Despite misinformation the US has never imposed a ban on any Sikh organisations. India will then be the only country to retain a ban on the ISYF.”

## **SIKH MANIFESTO USED BY CANDIDATES TO SECURE VICTORY IN LONDON MAYOR ELECTION – LABOUR'S SADIQ KHAN WINS**

London - 6 May 2016

The Sikh Federation (UK) representatives along with advisors from the Sikh Network met with both leading candidates for the Mayor of London election Sadiq Khan and Zac Goldsmith, to discuss key issues that were of concern to Sikhs across London. Many of the issues were presented in the Sikh Manifesto published by the Sikh Network for the 2015 general election.



Successful Labour candidate Sadiq Khan, had also recorded a video message for the Sikh community in which he had declared 3 promises, a WW1 monument in Central London to mark the Sikh sacrifice during the wars, properly recoding Sikh hate crimes and securing Trafalgar Square for key annual Sikh events.



## **BRITISH SIKHS CALL FOR MATURE POLITICAL LEADERSHIP IN THE UK TO UNITE A DIVIDED COUNTRY**

London – 24 June 2016

Following the EU Referendum decision to leave the EU what is immediately required in the interests of Britain is economic and political stability to reassure markets. The financial and housing markets have already seen some large shocks.

Hence we welcome Prime Minister David Cameron's decision to move very quickly to announce there needs to be new leadership to negotiate the exit of the UK from the EU. He will step down in October and said it will be the new Prime Minister who will decide when to trigger Article 50 and two years of negotiation that will almost certainly result in major long term consequences. However, there is expected to be pressure from the EU that Article 50 needs to be triggered sooner rather than later to prevent months of uncertainty and prevent calls for similar moves in other EU countries.

The Conservative Party leadership race will start immediately so the Parliamentary Party can get down to two candidates in the next few weeks to put to the Conservative Party membership. A new leader is expected to be decided by the 150,000 Conservative Party members in time for the party conference in Birmingham at the start of October.



Strong feelings and fears exist around immigration and political leaders will need to stabilise the economic situation and address concerns around integration, social harmony and security.

There are also significant rumblings in the Labour Party. Jeremy Corbyn is being roundly criticised for not doing enough about why Britain needed to remain an EU member and is being held responsible by many for the huge vote in working class areas that was a factor in taking the UK out of the EU. He is facing a leadership challenge that may take shape next week. This could result in a special conference and ballot timed to have a new leader in place by September.

The SNP leader Nicola Sturgeon has also made clear that there is a real possibility of a second referendum on Scottish independence. Speaking after all 32 local authorities delivered a vote to Remain in Scotland, the First Minister welcomed that Scotland sees its future as part of the EU. The SNP manifesto for May's Scottish Parliament election said there should be another ballot if there was a "significant and material" change in circumstances from the 2014 vote, such as Scotland being taken out of the EU against its will.

The new Conservative leader will not need to hold the General Election until May 2020. However, it is possible the new leader could choose to hold an election much earlier - either in May 2017 or even in autumn of this year. An early General Election would present an opportunity for Sikhs to assess progress against key issues raised in the Sikh Manifesto and use it to not only get commitments, but practical changes for the benefit of the Sikh community. These would be around proper recognition by public bodies of the need for fair provision of public services to Sikhs, greater statutory protection and

The new Conservative leader will automatically become Prime Minister, because he or she will have the support of Conservative MPs in the House of Commons. The next Prime Minister working with other politicians will face a huge challenge in not only the EU negotiations, but also to address the deep divisions that have become apparent during the referendum and reflected in the results.



rights around the 5K's and Sikh turban and tougher action against those responsible for hate crimes directed at Sikhs and our places of worship.

Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) stated:

"Although we supported 'remain' in the EU campaign, recognising our wider responsibility towards fighting for the rights of Sikhs in mainland Europe who face increasing discrimination we respect the overall result that the majority of the British public has taken that the UK should leave the EU. This however presents us and any future UK Government with a new challenge of how we can appropriately influence mainland Europe when it impacts on our rights when we travel there and the rights of Sikhs in mainland Europe who we can not abandon."

"This vote means politics are being quickly reshaped in the UK and we may have another General Election sooner rather than later. Mature political leadership is required that will unite a divided country. Sikhs in the UK will play a full part by facing up to the short to medium term challenges, but also the opportunities that lie ahead."

## UK Sikh Federation Expresses Concern And Anger About Leaving EU



The Link Paper – 9 July 2016

Sikh Federation (UK) representatives visited the Netherlands, Germany and Belgium in the last few days and met with Sikh representatives and the Sangat from across Europe, including France.



Sikhs in mainland Europe expressed deep concerns at the UK leaving the European Union and the impact this would have on Sikh rights in mainland Europe and the ability to effectively lobby at the European Parliament and make an impact at the European Commission on a wide range of issues without direct input and support from UK MEPs, the UK appointed Commissioner and Sikhs in the UK.

The Sikh Federation (UK) explained it had been active in the EU on Sikh issues for more than a decade and campaigned from day one for the UK to remain in the EU recognising a decision to leave would create bigger challenges for Sikhs across Europe. However, the referendum in the UK on 23 June had delivered an outcome that will mean the organisation will have to find different ways of directly supporting Sikhs in mainland Europe and working with the UK Government and embassies of EU countries to influence them

where Sikhs experience discrimination, attacks or hate crime.

Sikhs in mainland Europe said they were dismayed and expressed anger at those from the UK that claim to be a Sikh voice in Europe who sat on the fence until the eve of the vote on such an important issue for the Sikh community. They unanimously condemned them and other Sikh organisations or individuals who had campaigned to leave the EU putting self interests before Sikh community interests.

One prominent Sikh leader from mainland Europe said: "We are grateful to the tremendous support we have had from the Sikh Federation (UK) for over a decade and their assurances that they will continue to support us and lobby for Sikhs despite the decision in the UK to leave the EU."

"On the other hand we have only seen some so-called representatives from the UK once in mainland Europe and that was around 5 years ago. They had big plans and made promises, but they do not even have activities to show on issues that impact on us let alone any progress to point to. They lack all credibility with Sikhs in mainland Europe and many have questions about some of their controversial activities in the UK linked to their reported support for the international structure of the SGPC and dealings with the National Security Adviser and meeting with Narendra Modi. We are waiting for these people to show their faces in mainland Europe and experience the wrath of the Sangat who they have failed."

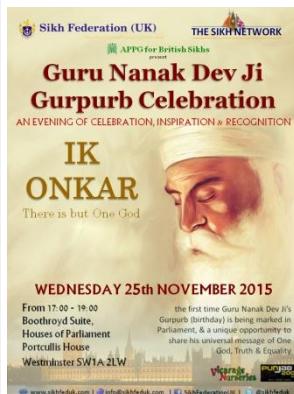


# DEFENDING AND PROMOTING THE SIKH IDENTITY

## Guru Nanak Gurpurab: Sacred Sikh festival to be celebrated in UK Parliament for the first time

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS TIMES

International Business Times - 23 November 2015



British Sikhs will be celebrating the birthday of the first Sikh Guru in British Parliament for the first time on 25 November. The event is being organised by the Sikh Federation UK, the Sikh Network and the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for British Sikhs.

Around 50 MPs and Lords are expected to attend the Guru Nanak Gurpurab celebrations, alongside leaders from other religious faiths. The Bishop of Manchester David Walker and Ibrahim Mogra of the Muslim Council of Britain are among those attending, while the Vatican is believed to have sent its greetings for the occasion.

A spokesperson for the Sikh Network said: "It is the first time that Guru Nanak Dev Ji's birthday is being marked in Parliament and it is a unique opportunity to share his universal message of one God, truth and equality."

Prominent British Sikhs are also believed to be attending the celebrations, including the first and only Sikh government minister, Parmjit Singh Dhanda. The Labour Party's Rob Marris, MP for Wolverhampton South West, was elected as chairman of the APPG for British Sikhs, which was formed almost 10 years ago to tackle issues relating to Sikhs living in the UK.

The APPG has worked on a number of issues concerning the welfare of British Sikhs, including introducing separate ethnic monitoring of Sikhs, a separate ethnic tick box for Sikhs, and the implementation of a monument in London to highlight the Sikh sacrifices during the First World War.

The UK's first ever national Sikh memorial for those who fought during the First World War was unveiled in Staffordshire on 31 October. More than 100,000 Sikhs fought during the war and a one minute silence was observed during the unveiling of the memorial to commemorate those Sikhs who lost their lives.

Prime Minister David Cameron has previously acknowledged the contribution made to the UK by British Sikhs, saying: "Sikhs have made an incredibly positive difference to the UK. One that is truly historic and enduring."

## In a first, Gurupurb to be celebrated at UK Parliament - Titled as 'Guru Nanak Dev Ji Gurpurb Celebration - an evening of celebration, inspiration and recognition'.

The Indian Express – 17 November 2015

The gathering is scheduled to be held on November 25 from 17:00 to 19:00 at House of Parliament, Portcullis House.

**The All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for British Sikhs along with The Sikh Network and Sikh Federation (UK) have organised the Gurupurb celebrations- the birthday of first Sikh guru- Guru Nanak Dev Ji on November 25 at the Houses of Parliament, UK.**

It would be for the first time that the occasion will be marked in UK Parliament at Portcullis House,



where Sikhs would gather to remember teaching of Guru Nanak Dev Ji.

The celebrations have been titled as 'Guru Nanak Dev Ji Gurpurab Celebration- an evening of celebration, inspiration and recognition'.

The chairman of Sikh Federation (UK), the Sikh NGO cum political party working in UK since 2003- Amrik Singh Gill said that the APPG decided to hold this celebration in the House of Commons UK and it is being supported by the Sikh Federation (UK).



The spokesperson of The Sikh Network, an open collaboration of Sikh activists working in UK and

the organisers of the Gurupurab event at UK Parliament, in a statement issued said, "It is the first time that Guru Nanak Dev Ji's birthday is being marked in Parliament and it is a unique opportunity to share his universal message of One God, truth and equality."

The gathering is scheduled to be held on November 25 from 17:00 to 19:00 at the House of Parliament, Portcullis House.

Earlier this year, Rob Marris, MP Wolverhampton South West was elected as chairman of the APPG for British Sikhs. The APPG was established almost ten years back in UK to highlight the issues of Sikhs settled in UK with the government.

As the part of Sikh Manifesto, the three main items which APPG has taken up for welfare of Sikhs in UK include: separate ethnic monitoring of Sikhs and separate tick box for Sikhs in the Census 2021, allocation of a suitable site in central London for a permanent monument to highlight Sikh sacrifices in World War- I and exerting pressure on France and Belgium to stop discrimination against Sikhs wearing turbans.

## Stop using the term 'Asian' to describe Rotherham gang: British Sikh group

The New Indian Express - 29 February 2016

LONDON: A Sikh group in Britain has urged the media and politicians to stop describing the Rotherham grooming gang, which was handed combined sentence of more than 100 years for sexual assault on women, as "Asian".

**Sikh Federation (UK) said the use of term "Asian" for the Rotherham gang is too vague and "besmirches" other communities, The Independent reported on Sunday.**

Rotherham gang is a group in Britain, including four Pakistani men and two British women who groomed, raped, prostituted and abused teenage girls in Rotherham town of England and were handed combined prison sentences of 103 years on Friday.

It was found that at least 1,400 girls had been sexually exploited in Rotherham over a 16-year period.

THE NEW  
**INDIAN EXPRESS**

Bhai Amrik Singh, chairman of the Sikh Federation UK said he hoped their combined prison sentences of more than 100 years would give a measure of justice to "victims that have endured more than a decade of violence and horrific sexual abuse".

"One of the demands in the Sikh Manifesto that we published a year ago before the General Election was that the government should encourage public bodies and the media to abandon the use of the term 'Asian' when describing perpetrators for reasons of political correctness," Singh was quoted as saying.

"If the four men that have been found guilty and carried out the abuse were Pakistani Muslims, this is how they should be described and not called Asian," he added.



## SIKH NETWORK ISSUES 'TURBAN GUIDANCE' FOR AIRPORTS WORLDWIDE

26 February 2016

The Sikh Network, a UK based organisation has produced guidelines for airports on how to respectfully treat the Dastaar (Sikh turban). The guidelines have been issued following two recent high profile incidents of disrespect of the Dastaar at airports in Mexico City and San Francisco.

In a press statement, Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) said:

"The Sikh Federation (UK) was instrumental in working with the UK Government between 2010 and 2013 in establishing the new procedure and allowing it to be used across Europe. The procedure not only ensures the highest level of security, but also fully respects Sikhs wearing the Dastaar and others wearing headwear for religious or cultural reasons."



"The universal guidance is an important first step, but will need to be accompanied by appropriate training for security staff at airports and for suitable equipment and facilities to be readily available."

The two recent incidents in Mexico City and San Francisco involved Sikh actor Waris Ahluwalia who was barred from getting on a AeroMexico flight to New York because of his Dastaar and Toronto-based Sikh comedian Jasmeet Singh, better known online as 'JusReign' who was forced to take off his turban at San Francisco airport.

The guidelines prepared by the Sikh Network in conjunction with the Sikh Federation UK are available online.

## PM DAVID CAMERON INVITES SIKH FEDERATION (UK) LEADERSHIP TO 10 DOWNING STREET TO MARK VAISAKHI

London – April 2016

When Narendra Modi came to the UK in November 2015 David Cameron went out of his way to try and secure £9bn in trade deals. He tried his best to ignore Modi had de-facto been banned from the UK for 10 years.

However, at the official press conference BBC correspondent Justin Rowlatt and Nicholas Watt from the Guardian demonstrated they were prepared to ask difficult questions of Narendra Modi and David Cameron about Modi's record.

The British Prime Minister, David Cameron and the Leader of the Labour Opposition, Jeremy Corbyn did however behind closed doors raise a number of the human rights issues highlighted by the Sikh Federation (UK). The Sikh Federation (UK) has said it has been told Modi did not take kindly to criticisms and reacted negatively.

**STEP 1**  
Passenger goes through the walk-through metal detection (WMTD) equipment / scanner; if security alarm is triggered or staff or not satisfied with the security check move onto step 2

**STEP 2**  
The passenger asked to go through a full body scanner if available OR a hand held metal detector (HHMD) / scanner be used to conduct a localised scan. This to be followed by a swab testing device (Explosive trace detection (ETD) equipment). The swab should not have been previously used, a fresh swab should be used each time. If the security alarm is triggered or staff feel that there remains a genuine suspicion move onto step 3

**STEP 3**  
Take the passenger to a secure and private room, call a supervisor and re-perform the HHMD and ETD tests. If either of these prove positive either conduct a hand put down of the Turban, if the passenger agrees (showing respect to the Turban by wearing gloves) or ask the Sikh passenger to remove his or her Turban ensuring the search is conducted with dignity and respect. A mirror should be available and time allowed for the passenger to tie their Turban.



Sikh Federation (UK) leadership in No.10 Downing St with Priti Patel for PM's Vaisakhi event



Since Modi's visit the Indian authorities have had two major setbacks. First came the arrest of Paramjeet Singh in Portugal, but the failure to secure his extradition because of a massive political campaign spearheaded by the Sikh Federation (UK).



We have also seen the Sikh Federation (UK) successfully challenge the ban on the International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF) and have the ban lifted after 15 years.

Today the Sikh Federation (UK) leadership, including its Chair Bhai Amrik Singh and General Secretary, Bhai Narinderjit Singh along with a number of other Sikh Federation (UK) representatives have been to 10 Downing Street to mark Vaisakhi following an invitation by Prime Minister David Cameron.

Today's invites signal publicly the UK Government acknowledges it will be having a new relationship with the Sikh Federation (UK). It also means the Indian authorities need to genuinely address key issues raised by the Sikh Federation (UK) or the organisation will continue to prevent India making progress on the international stage.

## **SIKH FEDERATION (UK) SPOKESMAN MAKES POWERFUL SPEECH IN PARLIAMENT TO EMPHASISE THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE KHALSA**

London 19 April 2016

Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh

On Vaisakhi Sikhs celebrate the creation of the Khalsa, what the Khalsa stands for and its huge significance not only to Sikhs, but to the human race.

Increasingly Sikhs in the Diaspora take the message of the creation of the Khalsa to non-Sikhs. Today the significance of the Khalsa has been recognised by Prime Ministers, Presidents & Heads of States across the globe.

Last week Sikhs once again marked Vaisakhi at 10 Downing Street as well as at Gurdwaras up and down the country. As Sikhs in the room will know, in Canada a huge celebration took place in Parliament Hill in Ottawa.

Guru Nanak Dev Ji explained the importance of equality of all human beings, regardless of gender, birth or creed. He stressed the need for social responsibility and an active concern for others, particularly the oppressed.

The creation of the Khalsa by the 10th Master, Guru Gobind Singh Ji was the culmination of a process of social and spiritual uplift began more than two centuries earlier by Guru Nanak Dev Ji. Guru Gobind Singh Ji created a unique identity for the Khalsa or 'saint soldiers'. They were ordained not only to have the Panj Kakkars, or 5 Ks, but to be educated and compassionate, dedicated to the service of others and to pursue justice for all people of all faiths.

Through the visible manifestation of the Khalsa, Guru Gobind Singh Ji declared that forever more the Khalsa would be fearless in standing up for religious freedoms, committed to fight discrimination and also willing to challenge oppression even when it meant risking ones own life. He urged the Khalsa not only to fight for their own freedom but the freedom of others.



Many still do not understand the true concept of the Khalsa. Guru Gobind Singh Ji understood the power he was giving to the Khalsa, when he said: 'Khalsa maero roop hai khas, Khalsa mehi ho karo nivas.' Guru Gobind Singh Ji declared Khalsa is my true form, Within the Khalsa, I abide.



Dabinderjit Singh OBE speaking at Vaisakhi event in Speaker of the House – John Bercow's private rooms

He transferred his authority to two institutions the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji (the Sikh Holy scriptures) and the Khalsa Panth. There is no better democratic structure than the Khalsa Panth that Sikhs, Governments and policy-makers alike need to understand, appreciate and respect.

Traditionally we have rightly been proud in the UK for all the hard fought rights we have won regarding the Sikh identity. But the Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is posing a new challenge to the British political system and Sikhs in Britain.

He can joke and say; "I have more Sikh Ministers than Modi" by having four Sikhs in his Cabinet, including the high profile appointment of Defence Minister. However, it also raises the focus on the broader question of political representation of Sikhs in the UK.

In Canada Sikhs comprise around 2% of the population, but more than 5% or 17 of the 338 MPs elected last November were of Sikh origin, including 5 turban wearing Sikhs. In the UK Sikhs comprise around 1% of the population, but we have no Sikhs in our Parliament of 650. We are not yet seeing sufficient progress to encourage more Sikh men and women, especially visible Sikhs to enter politics at the highest level.

Last week Justin Trudeau announced at the Vaisakhi celebration in Parliament Hill that he will on 18 May make a full apology in the House of Commons for the Komagata Maru incident from 1914 when over 350 passengers – nearly all Sikhs and British subjects – were denied entry, starved of food and water for two months with the ship eventually being forced to return to India.

In 2013 David Cameron visited Jallianwala Bagh, in Amritsar where on the occasion of Vaisakhi on 13 April 1919 soldiers of the British Indian army fired at more than 10,000 unarmed men, women and children who had gathered. During his visit he described the Amritsar massacre as "a deeply shameful event in British history, one that Winston Churchill rightly described at that time as monstrous. We must never forget what happened here and we must ensure that the UK stands up for the right of peaceful protests".

In 3 years time on 13 April it will be 100 years since the massacre by British soldiers in Amritsar. The minimum the worldwide Sikh community deserve is an apology by the British Prime Minister in Parliament.

Every Sikh partakes in Ardaas at least twice each day. The Ardaas uses the words: 'Raj Kerga Khalsa, Akee Rae Na Koi' - Literally translated this means the Khalsa shall rule, and no one shall be defiant.

It represents the Khalsa Panths expression of sovereignty and anyone familiar with the power of the Ardaas knows its inevitability and it will come true.

Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh



## Manchester United bomb scare: Twitter fury as supporter blames Sikh football fans

**YAHOO!**  
NEWS

Yahoo News - 16 May 2016

Amid the bomb scare and evacuation at Old Trafford Stadium on 15 May, an Arsenal fan took to Twitter to place blame on a group of Sikh football fans, prompting instant backlash. 'Arsenal Craig' posted an image of the men with a caption that read: "Bomb threat at Old Trafford, I know where my investigation would start."

The user has since deleted his tweet, however, a screenshot was still circulating on the morning of 16 May. Hundreds of football fans have hit out at the Arsenal supporter, with many even urging the police to get involved.



Arsenal Craig  
[twitter.com/arsenal\\_craig](http://twitter.com/arsenal_craig)



Bomb threat at Old Trafford, I know where my investigation would start



from Getty Images. The Sikh men are well known within the football community for being lifelong Manchester United fans, even featuring in an advert for the football club and prompting a Facebook page about them, which now has nearly 20,000 likes.

Many football fans have continued to condemn his actions hours after the tweet was deleted and

some have called for him to be banned from attending further Arsenal games. **The Sikh Federation UK, one of the largest Sikh organisations in the UK, has also joined in the debate, reminding 'Arsenal Craig' that "ignorance like this gets Sikhs killed".**

Thousands of fans were left disappointed on 14 May as Old Trafford Stadium was evacuated and the club's last game of the Premier League season was abandoned. A controlled explosion was carried out at the stadium. However, Greater Manchester Police confirmed that the bomb was not real and had been a training device left by a private company during a training exercise involving explosive search dogs.

Assistant chief constable John O'Hare from the Greater Manchester Police said: "Whilst this item did not turn out to be a viable explosive, on appearance this device was as real as could be, and the decision to evacuate the stadium was the right thing to do, until we could be sure that people were not at risk."

Manchester United's vice chairman, Ed Woodward, has said that the club will be investigating the incident and thanked the police for their support, as well as the response from fans of both teams involved. The cancelled game has been rescheduled for 17 May at 8pm GMT, with fans being offered refunds as well as free tickets to the reschedule game.

## Kohinoor diamond: British Sikhs accuse Indian lawyer of lacking 'basic knowledge of history'

International Business Times – 19 April 2016

British Indians have accused Indian Solicitor General Ranjit Kumar of lacking a "basic knowledge of Sikh history" after the Supreme Court in New Delhi was told that the Kohinoor diamond belongs to the UK. Kumar said that the diamond was "gifted" to the East India Company by the former rulers of Punjab and was "neither stolen nor forcibly taken away".

Solicitor Kumar's statement stated that the Kohinoor diamond was voluntarily given to the British by Maharaja Ranjit Singh. However, British Sikh groups have argued that this could not have

**INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS TIMES**

been the case as the diamond was reportedly a gift to "compensate for the Anglo-Sikh wars", which took place many years after the Maharaja died.

**Bhai Amrik Singh, chair of the Sikh Federation UK, told IBTimes UK: "British media would be advised to seek advice of British Sikh scholars and activists rather than rely on incorrect information supplied by Indian Solicitor General Ranjit Kumar, who clearly lacks basic knowledge of Sikh history."**

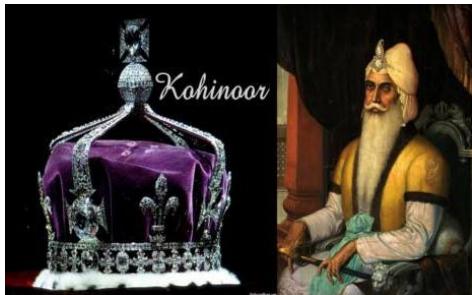


The Sikh Federation UK has said that when Punjab was annexed by the British in March 1849, the ruler at the time was not Maharaja Ranjit Singh but his youngest son, Maharaja Duleep Singh. Its argument goes on to state that the son was 10 years old when the last Anglo-Sikh Treaty of Lahore was signed and that he had been "duped into handing the Kohinoor over to Queen Victoria".

The Kohinoor diamond has been part of the British crown jewels for 150 years and has become an emotional issue for many Indians who claim that it was stolen by the British during their rule in the subcontinent.

Despite a number of appeals to have the diamond returned to India, successive British prime ministers have refused to do so, with David Cameron saying that it would set an "unworkable precedent". In 2010, Cameron said: "If you say yes to one you suddenly find the British Museum would be empty."

However, a statement from the Sikh Federation



UK noted: "When it comes to custody of the Kohinoor diamond, successive British prime ministers have referred to the Anglo-Sikh Treaties to justify it as a spoil to war. The Indian Solicitor General and the Indian government have also acknowledged the Anglo-Sikh Treaties.

"However, both governments should also admit when India and Pakistan were created the British hastily exited and reneged on the Anglo-Sikh Treaties that should have also resulted in a Sikh kingdom."

## UK Sikh body against giving Kohinoor back to India

Times of India – 24 July 2016 (extract)

Amritsar: India's quest to bring back the Kohinoor diamond from the UK has faced opposition from a Sikh body based in that country. Sikh Federation (UK) has written a letter to British Prime Minister Theresa May and foreign secretary Boris Johnson and expressed "strong opposition" to the idea of returning the jewel to India.

The UK-based NGO's chair, Amrik Singh, told TOI on Saturday that they had also sought a meeting with the British PM and Johnson to

**TOI**

discuss Anglo-Sikh Treaties with a 25-member international council of Sikh bodies. "We hope the PM and foreign secretary will meet with the representatives of the council that represents Sikhs worldwide to discuss Anglo-Sikh Treaties, as we strongly oppose the return of the Kohinoor to India," said Amrik Singh.

On Friday, foreign minister Sushma Swaraj, Union culture and tourism minister Mahesh Sharma and cabinet secretary P K Sinha held a meeting and decided to approach Britain to bring back the famed diamond.

## SIKH FEDERATION (UK) INVITED TO SPEAK AT FAMOUS BELFAST FESTIVLE - FEILE AN PHOBAIL, ON AMRITSAR MASSACRE & UK GOVERNMENT ROLE

Belfast – 12 August 2016

The Sikh Federation (UK) have been working with the Relatives for Justice organisation in Northern Ireland, who represent families who have suffered at the hands of the UK Government during the troubled times in the Northern Ireland conflict.

There are many parallels for the Northern Irish and Sikh struggles against the states oppression, demonisation, infiltration and human rights abuses. Recent revelations



from government archives discovered in 2014 shocked the UK Sikh community as they learnt of the UK Govt direct complicity and involvement in one of the most bloody and painful massacres in recent history, in Operation Bluestar and the deadly Indian Army assault on the sacred Sri Harmandir Sahib often called the Golden Temple in Amritsar in 1984. The documents revealed how the SAS were sent to Amritsar to help plan an attack at the behest of the Indian govt and obsession with increasing arms trade by the then Thatcher Government. This arrangement between PM Thatcher and PM Gandhi continued as the latter insisted on tighter controls and measurers against the UK Sikh population who were calling for justice for the genocides of June and November 1984.

The UK government implemented a number of civil rights restrictions and anti-sikh measures in attempts to please the Indian Authorities and continued to offer military support and assistance to further strike down the Sikh nation in the troubled Punjab. During this decade they happily turned a blind eye to mass human rights violations, even worse may have been complicit in providing tactical and operational training to conduct them.

Such revelations were less shocking to the Irish as they have witnessed and experienced very similar and worse treatment by the UK Thatcher Government and hearing about other communities examples offered some small level of vindication to both our causes, as we both strive for Truth Justice & Freedom.

This was the subject of the talk and presentation provided by the Sikh Federation (UK) at the famous Belfast Feile. During the trip they visited and walked the International Wall of Murals and also met with Sinn Fein politicians and advisers outside the Belfast HQ.

## SIKHS MAKE PROGRESS ON SEPARATE ETHNIC MONITORING IN THE CENSUS

London – 17 August 2016

The Sikh Federation (UK) have held a number of meetings with senior management at the Office for National Statistics (ONS) the independent body responsible for the national Census. It is widely believed that the 2021 census will be the last given the huge effort and cost. The Sikh Federation (UK) has campaigned for many years to have a separate ethnic tick box for Sikhs, a claim that is supported by the UK Sikh community and vast majority of politicians.



Separate ethnic monitoring is a key demand in the Sikh Manifesto produced by the Sikh Network following a nationwide consultation. This issue has also been made a priority by the APPG for British Sikhs and was reaffirmed at the Sikh Manifesto 1 Year On Refresh event in Parliament on 17 May, where ONS was represented.

In a recent meeting on 17 August ONS discussed the consultation results and shared their plans on how they intend to

Test the Ethnicity question in the 2017, inculding a separate ethnic tick box. We agreed that the Sikh Federation (UK) would be involved in the testing at the various stages to assist and provide quantitative and qualitative data. Following the 2017 Test the ONS will present its Census White Paper to Government around 2019 for approval for the Final Census Questionnaire.



# RAISING AWARENESS & CAMPAIGNING FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

## HEART-BREAKING SCENES OF THE KILLING OF PEACEFUL SIKH PROTESTERS IN PUNJAB SHOW LITTLE HAS CHANGED SINCE 1984

London – 14 October 2015

Following the desecration of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, the Sikh Holy scriptures or the living Guru of the Sikhs, at Bargari village in Faridkot district tens of thousands of peaceful Sikh protesters had pitched their tents in Kotkapura town since Monday.

Protesters also blocked the Moga-Ferozepur national highway at Dagru village, and the Moga-Kotkapura highway at Samalsar and Rode villages demanding the arrest of those responsible for tearing off more than 100 pages of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and scattering them throughout Bargari village.

The protests came amid the uproar over the recent pardon of Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh and the alleged involvement of his followers in the desecration, although they have emphatically denied any connection.



In shocking scenes this morning the Punjab Police used lethal force against the peaceful Sikh protesters while they were undertaking their morning prayers in Kotkapura. The police initially used batons to attack the peaceful protestors and then resorted to use of water cannons to try and disperse protesters.

Later they opened fire with live ammunition killing a number of unarmed Sikh protestors and injuring dozens of others. Two of those killed have been identified as Kishan Singh, 45, of Niami Wala village and Gurjit Singh, 20, of Sarawan village. In appalling and horrific scenes hundreds of Sikhs exercising their democratic right to peacefully assemble and protest were beaten, dragged away and arrested reminding everyone little appears to have changed since 1984 in terms of a disregard for Sikh lives and police brutality.

In a damage limitation exercise the Punjab Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal later ordered a judicial inquiry by a high court judge to probe the desecration incident and its aftermath, besides giving assurances that exemplary punishment would be awarded to perpetrators of the “dastardly act”. Deputy Chief Minister Sukhbir Singh Badal announced Rs 1-crore reward to any person giving information leading to the arrest of those who committed the act of sacrilege.

Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) said:

‘We condemn the killing of unarmed peaceful protestors in Punjab today and pray for those critically injured. Many have been beaten and abused and hundreds of Sikhs have been arrested today for simply demanding action against those who desecrated Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, our living Guru.’



'We have had Sikhs contact us from across the globe urging us to take the lead in insisting on extremely tough action against police officers responsible for the killings and brutality. There is talk of offering rewards for information identifying police officers involved in the killings and naming and shaming police officers leading the brutality.'

## POLICE ACCUSED OF DELIBERATE HEAVY HANDED TACTICS AND FAILING TO PLAN FOR PEACEFUL SIKH PROTEST IN LONDON

London – 22 October 2015



For over 30 years Sikhs have demonstrated numerous times outside the Indian High Commission in London and worked closely with the police to ensure they only need a minimum presence. There has never been any violence,

let alone arrests. Several thousand Sikhs have protested in recent years and the police have closed roads to accommodate the large numbers highlighting human rights violations in India.

The Metropolitan Police contacted leading Sikh organisations on Monday 19 October to enquire about the peaceful sit in protest planned for 22 October and they were told the date, time and location. They were also told that at least 500 protesters were expected. With this sort of number of protesters expected, the number of coaches organised and advertised the police should have been better prepared to facilitate a peaceful protest.

Sikhs have been achieving much larger numbers in protests in recent times so the police normally arrange for barriers to be put up so only half the Aldwych, which is a one-way street is closed to traffic. With the number of protesters who turned up they had little choice but to overflow into the road.

For some strange reason the police appeared ill-prepared. The police should explain why they thought barriers were not necessary. The fact the Indian High Commission was closed for the Indian holiday of Dussehra that marks the triumph of good over evil was no excuse for a lack of policing as road closure was expected to be the main issue.

The sit in protest was planned in part to recreate the horrific scenes from a week ago when the Punjab Police used lethal force against thousands of peaceful Sikh protesters undertaking their morning prayers and exercising their democratic right to peacefully assemble and protest the desecration of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, our Holy Scriptures and living Guru.



Horse mounted and RoI police with dogs deployed at peaceful sit down protest outside Indian Embassy

What was planned in London was simply a sit in protest, but the Metropolitan Police clearly had other plans, including the use of extreme heavy handed tactics against men, women and children. Whilst there were no barriers, riot police and horse mounted officers were quickly on the scene.

Even after horses marched into crowds of women and children Sikhs remained largely peaceful, but young Sikh men pushed the police lines back. One officer then snatched a Sikh flag broke the stick holding it and threw them on the ground. This was hugely disrespectful and provocative and designed



to get a reaction. Police officers then forced their way into protesters to make arrests and stamped on some of those sitting down further aggravating the situation.



Several Sikhs liaised with Chief Inspector Nick Collins and it was agreed police officers would not attempt to remove any Sikh Kakkars (articles of faith). However, Sikh turbans and Kirpans were forcibly removed without provocation. This was a challenge to the honour of the Sikhs and hugely disrespectful. Despite calls by community leaders to allow women and children to leave the 200 or so penned in by the police they did not allow this to happen for several hours.

In another incident three young teenage girls and boys were pinned against a bus by 15 officers and were totally disrespected and had their Kirpans removed. There was no need for this, especially after all were dispersing. Some were upset that Chief inspector Nick Collins failed to take action having witnessed police aggression, assault and denial of human rights himself.

Many non-Sikh onlookers were astonished at the heavy handed reaction of the police to the peaceful Sikh protest. Some agreed to give their views and have been filmed.

Some believe the provocation, show of force by the police and arrests was deliberate with the visit next month of the controversial Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi in mind. He makes his first trip to the UK following a 10-year ban and will be facing huge protests wherever he goes so the police may have been sending a message to protesters and appeasing the Indian authorities at the same time.

### Sikh Lives Matter: Sikhs demand apology from Metropolitan Police over removal of protester's turban

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS TIMES

International Business Times – 5 November 2015

An apology has been issued by the Metropolitan Police regarding policing tactics during a Sikh Lives Matter protest in London last month. A Met Commander admitted police actions had been "disrespectful" and it is believed an internal



Commander Mak Chishty  
Metropolitan Police Service

investigation has been launched into the matter.

However, following the apology, representatives of the Sikh community have expressed their disappointment that it did not cover the removal of a Sikh man's turban by police officers during the protest. Commander Mak Chishty apologised for the actions of a police officer breaking a Sikh flag

and another incident where police officers removed Kirpans (ceremonial knives) from protesters during their arrest.

A spokesperson for Sikh Federation (UK) told IBTimes UK: "As far as the Sikh community is concerned an apology regarding the way the turban of a Sikh was disrespectfully thrown to the ground by a police officer is needed as soon as possible."

Members of the Sikh community convened with the Met on 28 October to voice their concerns over policing tactics during the protest, which took place on 22 October outside the Indian High Commission. Sikh representatives raised the issue of "heavy handed" riot tactics being used by the police during a peaceful demonstration. Many believe that the Indian High Commission pressured British authorities to "deliberately use excessive force" against protesters in light of the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's upcoming visit to the UK. However, the Met allegedly denied



the suggestion that external pressure had been placed on them.

It is also alleged that two Sikh media channels were threatened with arrest unless they handed over their equipment to the police. Journalists from Sangat TV and Akaal Channel claim to have had their filming equipment confiscated for one week. The Sikh community urged the Met to launch a formal investigation in addition to their internal investigation. They believe that the matter should be referred to the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) or that the IPCC should be asked to oversee the internal investigation.

The Sikh Federation (UK) is also calling for formal disciplinary action to be taken against the officer who "deliberately disrespected the Nishan Sahib", officers who "did not follow orders" about the removal of religious items, the officer who removed the protester's turban, as well as any officers who are found to have "used excessive force" or "racially abusive" behaviour.

During the apology issued by the Met, Commander Mak Chishty said: "I would like to reassure our Sikh community that no disrespect or offence was ever intended and I apologise for any distress, hurt or offence that has been caused."

The protest in central London turned unpleasant when police clashed with demonstrators while attempting to break up a roadblock that had

brought traffic to a standstill. One police officer suffered an injury to the head during an altercation and had to be taken to hospital. However, it is believed that all 20 protesters who were arrested have been released without charge. According to organisers of the protest, the Met have not ruled out the possibility that the injury could have been the result of a clash of heads with another officer or another officer's police baton.

The Metropolitan Police are yet to respond to IBTimes UK's request for comment on the allegations.

### **Significance of the Sikh turban**

"The Dastaar, as the Sikh turban is known, is an article of faith that has been made mandatory by the Sikh Gurus. It is not to be regarded as mere cultural paraphernalia. When a Sikh man or woman dons a turban, the turban ceases to be just a piece of cloth and becomes one and the same with the Sikh's head."

"The turban as well as the other articles of faith worn by Sikhs have an immense spiritual as well as temporal significance. The symbolisms of wearing a turban are many from it being regarded as a symbol of sovereignty, dedication, self-respect, courage and piety, but the reason all practising Sikhs wear the turban is just one - out of love and obedience to the wishes of the Sikh Gurus." - Davinder Singh, Advisor to the Sikh Federation (UK)

## **GROWING POLITICAL PRESSURE ON PORTUGAL TO DROP EXTRADITION PROCEEDINGS AGAINST SIKH MAN FROM BIRMINGHAM**

**Foreign Secretary advised to take urgent action and reunite political refugee with his family in Britain and prevent extradition from Portugal to India**

London – 29 December 2015



More than 160 MPs have been contacted by constituents across the UK in the last 5 days to pressure Philip Hammond, the Foreign Secretary to demand the Portuguese authorities reunite a 42-year old man with his family in the West Midlands.

The political campaign is being spearheaded by the Sikh Federation (UK) by far the most active grassroots Sikh organisation in the UK for the last 30 years who with the help of organisations like the Refugee Council believe they can secure the support of well over 200 MPs from across the political spectrum.



**Over 160 MPs confirmed as contacted by constituents in last 10 days seeking release of Paramjeet Singh from detention in Portugal and for him to be reunited with his family in the UK**

**Cabinet Members contacted to take up #SaveParamjeetSingh**



**Shadow Cabinet Members contacted to take up #SaveParamjeetSingh**



**Over 160 MP's contacted by the Sikh Federation (UK) letter campaign in support of P.S.Pamma**

On 18 December Paramjeet Singh was detained by Portuguese Immigration and Border Service (SEF) officers at a hotel in the Algarve under an international arrest warrant for extradition to India issued by Interpol.

Indian media sources claim Paramjeet Singh is wanted for questioning by police in relation to a conspiracy that resulted in the 2009 death of Rulda Singh, head of the Rashtriya Sikh Sangat, a wing of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).

The RSS is a Hindu nationalist paramilitary group that has been involved in extreme violence, including acts of terrorism and been banned several times in India. This includes when RSS member Nathuram Godse assassinated Mahatma Gandhi in 1948. The most recent ban was in 1992 after the demolition of the Babri Masjid. The RSS has clear Hindutva objectives and the Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi trained with the ultranationalist right wing Hindu group.

This case was already investigated in the UK in an 11 month joint investigation with Indian and British police in 2010. UK police officers even travelled to India, but the evidence was unsatisfactory for Paramjeet Singh to be charged. In an initial court hearing on 21 December in Portugal the authorities were given until 4 January 2016 to present evidence for Paramjeet Singh's extradition.

Paramjeet Singh is a hard working family man who was granted political asylum in the UK more than 15 years ago due to fears he would be persecuted, tortured and subject to degrading treatment if he was to return to India. The British authorities granted Paramjeet Singh asylum as they were convinced his life would be in danger if he returned to India. His elder brother was tortured in jail and was subsequently killed in a case which remains unsolved and a number of other family members were also killed.

He was on the first day of a family holiday to Portugal accompanied by his wife and four children who are all aged under 12. It is understood he last visited Portugal two months earlier and is believed to have business interests that have taken him to Portugal a number of times where he has previously never had any difficulties.

There is almost no doubt that his detention in Portugal is due to pressure following Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi's visit last month to the UK and a follow up meeting he had a week later in Delhi with the Interpol Secretary General Jürgen Stock and it was reported Indian investigative agencies requested assistance with extraditions.

In November, following a 10-year ban by the British authorities the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the UK with much fanfare and was met with considerable opposition highlighting the growing intolerance and treatment of minorities in India. He reacted angrily to protests against him and issues raised by BBC correspondent Justin Rowlatt and Nicholas Watt from the Guardian in the official press conference with David Cameron.

The Prime Minister and the Leader of the Labour Opposition, Jeremy Corbyn are also understood to have formally raised a number of concerns in their meetings with Narendra Modi and were met with a



negative reaction. Narendra Modi handed David Cameron a ‘dossier’ demanding action against the Sikh community – names of Gurdwaras (places of worship), Sikh organisations, Sikh TV channels and several individuals where India raised concerns were reported in the Indian press. One of those named was Paramjeet Singh.

The UK Government has a direct responsibility for Paramjeet Singh who is being unfairly held in Portugal and been in prison for the last 11 days. He travelled to Portugal on holiday with his family using a travel document issued by the UK Government under the 1951 Refugee Convention.



EU member states have to date taken a firm stand prohibiting extradition to a country still retaining the death penalty. India continues to send people to the gallows with the last hanging earlier this year in July 2015. The European Parliament has passed a number of resolutions on the use of the death penalty in India and with respect to Professor Devinderpal Singh Bhullar who was illegally deported from Germany in 1995, sentenced to death and still remains in prison. These resolutions have been sent to the Portuguese Parliament and can not be ignored.

The Sikh Federation (UK) is also leading the lobby at the European level with MEPs across Europe, approached Federica Mogherini, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the Subcommittee on Human Rights.

Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) said:

“There should be no question of his extradition to India by Portugal given he has been granted political asylum in the UK. In fact Britain should be insisting upon his immediate return to the UK to be with his family and where he has been given indefinite leave to remain.”

“This case raises much broader political issues, including the political sovereignty of the UK in such matters and the rights of those that have been given political asylum by the UK Government to freely travel abroad, especially in EU countries.”

“There is a risk this sets a worrying precedent that allows foreign governments to take similar actions against others that have been granted political asylum and is a major cause of concern.”

“The UK Government alongside Portugal could stand accused of a violation of the European Convention on Human Rights if Paramjeet Singh was extradited to India where he will almost certainly be subject to torture and possible death.”

“We applaud the efforts of Paramjeet Singh’s MP John Spellar who has received dozens of enquiries and support from other MPs. Several Conservative MPs, including Ministers, have suggested the Foreign Secretary urgently meet with us, Paramjeet Singh’s wife and his lawyers or at least issue a public statement calling for Paramjeet Singh’s immediate return to the UK.”

### Sikh terror suspect case goes to United Nations

Express and Star – 7 January 2016

Campaigners hoping to get a Smethwick terror suspect returned to the UK have taken their case to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The Sikh Federation (UK) and Swiss-based Movement Against Atrocities and Repression

### Express & Star

organised a meeting at the High Commissioner’s office in Geneva about the case of Paramjeet Singh. Paramjeet Singh was arrested in Portugal and is fighting against extradition to India to face murder and bombing charges.



The Sikh Federation (UK) claim Paramjeet Singh has been unfairly imprisoned in Portugal at the request of the Indian authorities since 18 December.

Bhai Amrik Singh, Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) said: "Given the decision of the court in Portugal yesterday to extend the period of detention by another 22 days we have called on the working group to launch an 'urgent action' procedure in this case.

"We have explained the additional period is to allow the Indian authorities more time to produce evidence on the extradition of Paramjeet Singh to India where he will almost certainly be subject to torture and possible death."

The British Government granted Paramjeet Singh asylum in 2000 as the authorities were convinced his life would be in danger if returned to India.

His elder brother was tortured in jail and subsequently killed in a case which remains unsolved.

Bhai Amrik Singh added: "Despite over 200 UK MPs having been contacted by constituents in the last two weeks we believe the British authorities have thus far not done enough for Paramjeet Singh and his family by ensuring he is returned to the UK.

"They have been far too slow in sharing relevant information with the Portuguese authorities, such as why they have given protection to Paramjeet Singh and what would happen to him if he was extradited."

The Sikh Federation (UK) alleged that if Paramjeet Singh is extradited to India it believes the UK as well as Portugal will have violated the European Convention on Human Rights.

Scores of UK MPs contacted have said they understand the wider ramifications of Paramjeet Singh's case.

## Foreign Secretary cancels meeting expected to address Paramjeet Singh case

ITV News – 31 January 2016

The Foreign Office have confirmed that foreign secretary Philip Hammond has cancelled a meeting in which he was expected to address the case of a West Bromwich father wanted in India over allegations of murder and terrorism.

Paramjeet Singh was arrested in Portugal in December and is being threatened with extradition. He's wanted by the Indian government over alleged links to a murder and two explosions in 2009.

He denies any involvement and has been granted refugee status in Britain.

The Foreign Secretary was expected to visit Sri Guru Singh Sabha on Havelock Road in Southall, one of the largest Sikh Gurdwaras in Europe.

"The Foreign Secretary had to regrettably postpone his plans due to EU reform talks and an overseas visit." – Foreign Office spokesperson

Reacting to the cancellation, the Sikh Federation (UK) issued a statement saying the community is 'deeply disappointed' at the change of plans:



"The Sikh community is deeply disappointed that the Foreign Secretary has pulled out at the last minute."

"We were hoping to hear from Philip Hammond himself that the Foreign Office were doing all they could and making it clear to Portugal that Paramjeet Singh must be returned to the UK without delay. Instead there is speculation that the Indian authorities are putting unreasonable pressure on the UK Government." – Bhai Narinderjit Singh, General Secretary of the Sikh Federation (UK)



## **PARAMJIT SINGH TO RETURN TO THE UK FROM PORTUGAL**

London – 12 February 2016

The Sikh Federation (UK) is delighted to announce that Paramjeet Singh has been released today by the Portugal authorities, and will very soon be back in the UK with his family.

On behalf of Paramjeet Singh and his family we would like to thank all those who participated and supported in the political and legal campaign and pressure to secure Paramjeet Singh's release and stop the illegal extradition to India.



Amrik Singh with Paramjeet Singh thanking

Sion Simon MEP  
This is very embarrassing and shameful for the Indian authorities who played every card to have Paramjeet Singh extradited to India to face more falsified charges, especially following Prime Minister Modi's visit to the UK in November 2015, where he was reported to have delivered a fictitious intelligence dossier to the UK government on alleged activities of UK Gurdwaras, TV channels and community members including named individuals such as Paramjeet Singh.

The Sikh Federation (UK) has been challenging India and the UK Government on this so called dossier, while others who met with Modi have been pained to defend India by arguing no dossier or information was provided by India. This case is a landmark statement that justice and freedom cannot be bought or sold by the corrupt Indian state as easily as it once was.

## **CAMPAIGN FOR JUSTICE EVENT IN PARLIAMENT HEARS ABOUT THE SIKH EXPERIENCE**

London - 9 February 2016

The Campaign for Justice event took place in Parliament on 9 February and was hosted by Rt Hon Andy Burnham MP, the Shadow Home Secretary, Maria Eagle MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport and Baroness Doreen Lawrence (the mother of Stephen Lawrence).

Many other prominent MPs and Peers also took part, including Tom Watson MP, the Deputy Leader of the Labour Party, John McDonnel MP, the Shadow Chancellor, Rt Hon Lord Falconer, the Shadow Lord Chancellor and Shadow Secretary of State for Justice and Shadow Home Office Ministers Lyn Brown And Jack Dromey.

Dabinderjit Singh OBE, the principal adviser to the Sikh Federation (UK) and an advisor to the Sikh Network was the first to give evidence. His opening statement (reproduced below) had a visible impact on the politicians listening and national media representatives that were present in large numbers. A number of politicians supported the call for an independent judge led inquiry to look into how trade with India has resulted in anti-Sikh measures and were interested to see evidence of how the Cabinet Secretary had misled Parliament in February 2014 about the 'Amritsar papers'.



He was followed by Eileen Turnbull representing the Shrewsbury 24 campaign and Barbara Jackson from the Orgreave campaign. Later politicians heard from Alastair Morgan, from the Justice for Daniel campaign and Jacqui Hames, from Hacked Off. All campaigns carried a similar message of the challenges in obtaining justice.

### **Opening statement in the Parliamentary hearing:**

I am grateful for the opportunity to address you today. By far the biggest single event in my lifetime was the June 1984 Indian army assault on the Sikhs' holiest of holy places, Sri Harmandir Sahib, which many refer to as the Golden Temple Complex.

The attack with tanks and artillery was unprecedented and will go down in history as one the biggest blunders ever made by an Indian Prime Minister. Up to 150,000 Indian army troops were sent to Punjab, the Sikh homeland, all communications were cut; and the media and journalists expelled.

The scene was set to unleash a level of terror aimed at the minority Sikh community that has never been seen in post-independence India. India made sure that no one will ever know the scale of the Genocide across the Punjab, or even at Sri Harmandir Sahib, where over 11,000 pilgrims never claimed their shoes.



Successive British Governments whilst acknowledging the tragic loss of life and the pain and suffering caused to the worldwide Sikh community have argued this was an internal matter for India. The January 2014 revelations under the 30 year rule completely changed that.

The Cabinet Secretary, Sir Jeremy Heywood, met and told a group of Sikh representatives at the end of January 2014 that both David Cameron and William Hague the then Foreign Secretary were 'shocked' to learn of the UK role in the 'massacre'. The words 'shocked' and 'massacre' were used by Sir Jeremy Heywood, but were whitewashed from his report published less than a week later no doubt conscious of the reaction from India.

What David Cameron did when the revelations emerged was immediately announce an internal review. His first objective was damage limitation. He therefore asked Sir Jeremy Heywood to complete the internal review quickly. The scope was also deliberately kept narrow to give the outcome required.

David Cameron also ordered a review by Sir Alex Allan (former chairman of the Joint Intelligence Committee). His report released when Parliament was in recess in 2014 said: "the release that led to the setting up of this review was a mistake." His opinion echoed that of Sir Jeremy Heywood, who had described the original disclosures as "inadvertent". In other words, the Sikh community and the public at large was never meant to have known that a British special forces officer carried out a military mission in Amritsar, months before a major massacre of pilgrims.

The implication of these revelations and reports is government departments have become far more careful about what they release. This year the number of Downing Street papers from the mid-1980s has fallen by 90% preventing proper scrutiny of a "divisive period" in British politics. Only 58 Downing Street papers were released in December 2015 compared with around 500 papers released in every previous December since 2010.



The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has a vast backlog of files (over half a million) and will fail to meet its declassification deadlines. FCO files on India from 1983, 1984 and 1985 are still unavailable to the public, over thirty years later, and at a time when the government's transparency agenda had introduced legislation that promised a streamlined "20 year rule".

Far from reassuring the community and the public at large, these reviews have deepened our sense of betrayal. Despite these obstacles, we decided to conduct our own investigation of the available declassified material at the National Archives. Our findings produced by Phil Millar, the original researcher who came across the papers, contradict the conclusions reached by Sir Jeremy Heywood and demonstrate the need for a full independent investigation to uncover the truth.

Our report not only demonstrates how India successfully used promises of arms deals to pressure the UK Government to assist in the Genocide of Sikhs in 1984, but also took actions to try and discredit and silence the minority Sikh community in Britain from raising its voice of opposition. The disturbing story that has still to be told is the Indian establishment made lucrative trade and arms deals contingent on the UK implementing anti-Sikh measures that we believe still continue to this day.

The minority Sikh community therefore faces state discrimination on the one hand and racism from right wing groups on the other. When our report is released it is expected to include some explosive disclosures. I would be happy to answer questions.

## **INDIAN REGIME FACING INCREASING CHALLENGE FROM BRITISH POLITICIANS**

11 February 2016

Earlier this week Fabian Hamilton the Leeds North East MP and former Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for British Sikhs and now Shadow Foreign Minister responsible for relations with India signalled a new era of challenge against India.



After being approached by the Sikh Federation (UK) he has tabled a Parliamentary Question for the Foreign Secretary asking about the dossier produced by Ajit Doval, the National Security Adviser and handed to the British authorities when Narendra Modi met David Cameron on 12 November last year. On the same day Greg Mullholland a Liberal Democrat MP asked the Foreign Secretary to make a statement on the treatment of Sikhs campaigning for human rights in India.

Fabian Hamilton is also due to meet representatives of the Sikh Federation (UK) to discuss a range of issues in relation to India.

The issues will include: Sikh political prisoners, the lack of justice for the Sikh Genocide, bringing perpetrators of human rights abuses in India to justice when they travel abroad and exercising the Sikhs right to self determination. Fabian Hamilton has also confirmed he has the conflict in Kashmir high on his list of priorities.

Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) said: "We have worked closely with Fabian since 2010 and he has very clear and unequivocal views on human rights abuses in India and supports our right to self determination. In his new role he also has a focus on the United Nations as well as India so we will explore how we can take issues forward. He is not afraid to speak his mind and we are confident he will be an asset in our fight for justice."

When Narendra Modi delivered his speech in the British Parliament the Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn chose to stay away. He also refused to attend Modi's welcome party at Wembley Stadium. Instead he had a meeting with Modi before he left Britain and raised concerns regarding the treatment and



experience of Sikhs in India and about the growing intolerance in India. It is understood Modi who is accustomed to being praised by foreign leaders found himself confronted by a man with a well-established reputation for moral authority and was offended.

As far as British politicians from across the political spectrum are concerned the Paramjeet Singh case has completely back-fired on the Indian authorities. Their back door attempt to extradite someone that the UK has given asylum and protection has been roundly condemned. The Sikh Federation (UK) has had correspondence not only from leading politicians from the opposition, like Jeremy Corbyn, but also Cabinet Ministers, like Rt. Hon. Justine Greening and the former leader of Liberal Democrats and former Deputy Prime Minister, Rt. Hon. Nick Clegg. Privately the majority of British politicians are united in their scepticism of Narendra Modi's government and the way they are promoting intolerance and targeting minorities.

Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) added: "We recognise the limitations on UK Government Ministers from publicly condemning India, but we are continuing to win the arguments. The leadership of the Labour Party and Scottish National Party are standing shoulder to shoulder with us in our campaigns. Privately we are confident politicians from Western countries will increasingly stand up to the growing intolerance and threats presented by the Indian regime."

## **SIKHS ACROSS EUROPE RAISE KEY CONCERN ON EVE OF NARENDRA MODI'S TALKS AT EU-INDIA SUMMIT IN BRUSSELS**

London – 28 March 2016

The Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected in Brussels in two days time for the European Union-India Summit to discuss bi-lateral trade despite the terrorist attacks of 22 March 2016.

The Sikh Federation (UK) that leads on political engagement in the UK and Europe has written to the European Commission and all 751 MEPs on behalf of the Federation of Sikh Organisations (Europe) to raise key concerns of the 1-million strong Sikh community across the EU.



A number of issues have been raised with Federica Mogherini, the European Union's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the European Commission. A meeting has been requested with the European External Action Service (EEAS) who deal with India.

Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) said: "Since Narendra Modi came to power in May 2014 there has been a disturbing rise in the level of intolerance. Gross human rights violations in India aimed at religious and ethnic minorities, women and people of lower caste are a daily occurrence. Surveys now regard India as one of the most intolerant places in the world."

"Last year President Barack Obama in a speech in Delhi made a plea for religious freedom or warned India could break up. Fifteen months later the break up of India into a number of independent sovereign states is a distinct possibility given the direction in which it is being taken."

The visit of Narendra Modi provides an opportunity to raise legitimate concerns about the treatment of Sikhs and other minorities in India. EU Member States and politicians across the globe are increasingly becoming aware of the worrying developments taking place in India. The actions of the right wing Indian regime pose a genuine threat to international stability and world peace that can not be ignored by the EU when negotiating trade deals.



All MEPs have been sent a briefing produced by the Sikh Federation (UK) on key matters of concern first produced for UK politicians when Modi visited the UK in November last year.

It highlights a number of important issues including:

- a UN-led inquiry into the 1984 Sikh Genocide and justice for the victims by punishing the perpetrators of these crimes against humanity;
- prosecution of Indian police officers responsible for torture, disappearances and false encounters in Punjab; and
- the legitimate demand for Sikh self determination, including the re-establishment of an independent Sikh homeland, Khalistan.

The press release issued by the Sikh Federation (UK) relating to the debate on religious freedom in India that took place in the House Lords on 17 March 2016 has also been sent to all MEPs.



In November 2015 Narendra Modi visited the UK after a de-facto international ban that lasted more than 10 years. The letter to Frederica Mogherini states:

“The EU sees human rights as universal and indivisible. It actively promotes and defends them both within its borders and when engaging in relations with non-EU countries like India. This was most recently illustrated in the last few months when India failed in its attempt to extradite a political refugee from the UK, Paramjeet Singh. India misused an Interpol Red Notice by having him illegally arrested and imprisoned in Portugal when he travelled there on holiday with his family.”

“The EU is founded on a strong engagement to promote and protect human rights, democracy and rule of law worldwide. It holds a strong and principled position against the death penalty; its abolition is a key objective for the Union’s human rights policy. Unfortunately India has gone backwards in this respect and returned to the barbaric act of death by hanging.”

“Sustainable peace, development and prosperity cannot exist in India without respect for human rights, such as self-determination where EU Member States are leading the way. France, Germany and the Netherlands continue to challenge India at the UN Human Rights Council to withdraw its ‘reservation’ that self determination does not apply to the people of India. All EU Member States working with UN Security Council members, who we are also in contact with, should collectively take up this matter at the United Nations given the deteriorating human rights situation in India.”

### **BLACKLIST ISSUE IS A TRAP BEING USED BY INDIA TO CAUSE CONFLICT**

London – 1 April 2016

Following the Sikh Genocide in 1984, many Sikhs abroad protested and the Indian intelligence agencies determined hundreds of leading Sikhs that came on their radar were ‘anti-national’ and started what has popularly come to be known as the ‘blacklist’. Indian intelligence agencies handed over the blacklist to Indian embassies and High Commissions across the world.

The existence of the blacklist became known in the early 1990s, after some Sikhs abroad were denied entry into India. The blacklist is maintained by the Foreigners Division of the Ministry of Home Affairs, and for obvious reasons is not in the public domain. It is a secret list of names the Indian government maintains to try and manipulate overseas Sikhs who are barred from entering India. The Indian authorities have also pressured foreign governments to stop some of the same Sikhs travelling between the UK, Canada and USA to build the lobby for an independent Sikh homeland, Khalistan.



Some prominent individuals who were once deemed leading ‘anti-nationals’ in the UK have in recent years been making regular visits to India and are now all of a sudden singing the praises of Narendra Modi as some sort of saviour. The strong suggestion is they have been compromised, have been made to pledge their allegiance to India and completely stopped campaigning for Khalistan and/or agreed to maintain a façade of support for Khalistan possibly in return for supplying information and doing India’s dirty work by trying to cause conflict.

A joint statement by the senior leadership of the Sikh Federation (UK) said:

“The Khalistan movement has been boosted in recent months with India’s failure to extradite Paramjeet Singh Pamma and the lifting of the ban on the International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF). The Indian authorities are now worried and desperate since these developments have followed Narendra Modi’s high profile visit to the UK last November and are deliberately using the blacklist issue to try and cause conflict and turmoil.”

“We will not allow India to use the blacklist issue as a trap to damage the Khalistan movement. Indian media reports suggesting names have been removed from a secret blacklist is a pointless tactic to try and discredit individuals. It is a gimmick and only becomes an issue if those individuals who are no longer on the secret blacklist, have passports and/or visas and travel to India without experiencing any difficulties. If they all of a sudden start to disagree with protests against India and ignore key issues this will be seen as a sign that they have abandoned the Khalistan struggle and will rightly be suspected of having pledged their allegiance to India.”



The senior leadership of the Sikh Federation (UK), its Chair, Vice Chair, General Secretary, Chief Organiser and Press Secretary have all not visited India since Operation Bluestar in June 1984, despite having lost family members who have passed away. Unlike others they have stuck to their principles and remained focused on the key demands. They alongside others such as Dal Khalsa UK leader Manmohan Singh have reiterated that they are fully committed to the goal of establishing an independent Sikh homeland, Khalistan and have no plans whatsoever to visit India. It is therefore irrelevant if they are or are not on a blacklist maintained by the Indian authorities.

Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair and Bhai Narinderjit Singh, the General Secretary have been denied British nationality for the last 30 years, which is now expected to change with the lifting of the ban on the ISYF. Bhai Amrik Singh has not had a passport for the last 15 years and Bhai Narinderjit Singh also does not have a valid passport. Bhai Kuldip Singh, the Vice Chair is unable to travel to India having had several family members killed, including his father and cousin, and who came to the UK 25 years ago in 1990 where he has been granted political asylum. Bhai Hardish Singh, the Chief Organiser and Bhai Gurjeet Singh, the Press Secretary have British passports, but have never travel to India since 1984.

With Narendra Modi visiting the UK in November 2015 a meeting of representatives of Gurdwaras and Sikh organisations in the UK was held on 3 October 2015 at Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Southall.



A number of key issues were set out by the Federation of Sikh Organisations (FSO) that it was agreed should be conveyed by different means to the Indian regime – via direct written communications, briefing the UK Government and politicians, raising awareness by presenting issues to the mainstream media and through protests. The ‘protagonists’ that have subsequently been discovered to have been secretly discussing matters with Indian intelligence officers in London and Delhi accepted these were the key issues and raised no objections whatsoever at the time.



Support & acceptance by UK Sikhs of the true Panthic Issues defined of the key issues, such as:

- The legitimate demand for Sikh self determination, including the establishment of an independent Sikh homeland, Khalistan confirmed by the Sarbat Khalsa in April 1986;
- A UN-led inquiry into the 1984 Sikh Genocide and justice for the victims by punishing the perpetrators of these crimes against humanity; and
- Prosecution of Indian police officers responsible for torture, disappearances and false encounters in Punjab.

The Sikh Federation (UK) met with other Panthic organisation representatives and wrote to each of the protagonists on 15 December 2015 to point out they had compromised the agreed Panthic position, caused considerable division and controversy and had no mandate as they were not pursuing the main Panthic demands.

Many are of the view that the protagonists are being used by the Indian authorities to try and manipulate public opinion by emphasising dialogue can achieve results in certain areas. This is why they are concentrating on the personal matters of blacklists and obtaining visas to travel to India. They are then trying to link this to the emotive issue of the release of Sikh political prisoners, which is long overdue and simply the first step of addressing any political conflict.

The protagonists and Indian authorities however are increasingly recognising from the widespread opposition to Narendra Modi, the failed extradition of Paramjeet Singh Pamma and the lifting of the ISYF ban that the Sikh nationalists abroad are becoming an increasing political force that will simply not go away. There is a now a greater international interest and scrutiny on what the right wing Indian regime is doing with respect to minorities. The specific Panthic demands are on the table and sooner or later will all need to be addressed by the Centre and Punjab government. With elections planned for 2017 time is running out for those currently in power – both the BJP and the Akalis.

They were also specifically told in writing as well as orally on 3 October by the FSO that the issue of blacklists and having the right to freely travel to India should be viewed as personal matters and a minor issue. Blacklists and visas should not be raised as a Panthic issue as it was clear it was about individual rights that the Indian authorities would almost certainly try and use to manipulate and compromise individuals. However, all the protagonists no doubt prompted by their continued contacts with Indian intelligence officers have persisted

with the blacklist issue, but remained totally silent on communication or progress on some

## **PROF. DEVINDERPAL SINGH BHULLAR RELEASED ON PAROLE FOR 21 DAYS**

Amritsar - 23 April 2016



Prof Bhullar and his wife Bibi Nayneet Kaur at Sri Darbar Sahib 2016

A young Prof Bhullar and his wife Bibi Nayneet Kaur before arrest 1994

A day after the release of political Sikh prisoner Bhai Gurdeep Singh Khera, Prof. Devinderpal Singh Bhullar's parole for 21 days was approved by the Punjab government. Prof. Bhullar was released from the detention center at Guru Nanak Dev Hospital approx 8:30pm following completion of necessary documentation. Prof. Bhullar's release from jail was being awaited keenly by the Sikh masses since the dropping of TADA charges against him. He was greeted by his wife Bibi Navneet Kaur, and together their first stop was darshan at Sir Darbar Sahib before going to the parental home of his wife in Amritsar.

Prof. Devinderpal Singh Bhullar was framed under Terrorism and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act (TADA) in a case of killing nine bystanders in a 1993 car bombing intended to kill Maninderjeet Bitta (Youth Congress leader), and was sentenced to death. The Supreme Court of India had commuted his death sentence to life Imprisonment on 31 March 2014, on ground of suffering from Schizophrenia. He has spent over 20 years in prison with 13 years on Death Row.

The Sikh Federation (UK) have actively lobbied the UK and European governments since Prof Bhullar's arrest and detention in India from 1995. We have organised protests, demonstrations, across Europe and at the United Nations in Geneva as well as many specific Political awareness campaigns with Human Rights organisations globally.

Whilst the Sikh Federation (UK) warmly welcomes Prof. Devinderpal Singh Bhullar's release as well as the release of all other Sikh political prisoners, we also remain cautious of the temporary nature and conditions of such releases. For us and the wider Sikh community only unconditional and permanent release will be truly accepted, and we will all continue to work to that goal. We also acknowledge the sacrifice and struggle of Bapu Surat Singh Khalsa and the tireless efforts of Sikh community have defeated prolonged injustice by the Indian government.

Sikh activist Bhai Papalpreet Singh said that the release of Prof. Bhullar has become possible due to more than year long struggle of Bapu Surat Singh Ji Khalsa. He added that the Punjab government has been committing immense atrocities on Bapu Surat Singh Khalsa since the very first day of his struggle. “Bapu Ji has endured a lot of physical and mental torture by the state but he didn’t give up his stance for the release of political Sikh prisoners,” he added.

A collage of images used for a protest poster. It includes a photograph of a person behind bars, a lit candle, and a portrait of a man with a beard wearing a turban. The overall theme is one of political imprisonment and human rights advocacy.

## TENS OF THOUSANDS MARCH THROUGH LONDON TO MARK THE 1984 AMRTISAR MASSACRE AND SIKH GENOCIDE



London - 5 June 2016

Tens of thousands of Sikhs from across the UK gathered in central London on Sunday 5 June to commemorate the 32nd anniversary of the June 1984 attack on the Sri Harmandir Sahib Complex. Sikhs gathered at Reformers Tree, Hyde Park and then marched through central London to a mass Freedom Rally at the iconic Trafalgar Square.

The attack with tanks and artillery was unprecedented and will go down in history as one of the biggest blunders ever made by an Indian Prime Minister. Up to 150,000 Indian army troops were sent to Punjab, the Sikh homeland, all communications were cut; and the media and journalists expelled.

The scene was set to unleash a level of terror aimed at the minority Sikh community that has never been seen in post-independence India. India made sure that no one will ever know the scale of the Genocide across the Punjab, or even at Sri Harmandir Sahib, where over 11,000 pilgrims never claimed their shoes.

The theme of the event will be **Truth, Justice and Freedom**.

**Truth** will focus on the need for both a UN-led inquiry into the 1984 Sikh Genocide and a judge-led independent public inquiry into UK involvement in the attack and anti-Sikh measures against the British Sikh community and activists following pressure from the Indian authorities in return for trade.



The findings of the investigation conducted by the Sikh Federation (UK) will be used in the next 12 months to increase political pressure for a judge-led independent public inquiry to uncover the truth into UK involvement in the 1984 Sikh Genocide and anti-Sikh measures against the British Sikh community and Sikh activists in the UK.

Researcher Phil Miller addressed the Freedom Rally and reveal that far from reassuring the British Sikh community and the public at large there has been a deliberate cover up that has deepened the sense of betrayal.



**Justice** focused on the actions of the Indian authorities since 1984 and more recently the Modi-led Indian Government and the BJP supported Punjab government. The freedom rally made it clear to the



Ishmet Kaur delivering a powerful Spoken word performance

Indian authorities and different governments have been given plenty of time and opportunity to deliver justice, but they have been shown to be unwilling as well as incompetent.

In November 2015 when Modi made his first infamous visit to the UK as the Indian Prime Minister he completely side-stepped the issue of a public apology to the worldwide Sikh community

for the role of the Indian authorities in the 1984 Sikh Genocide. His speech in Wembley where he spoke highly of the contribution of Sikhs and made specific reference to rebuilding a relationship with the Sikhs has been exposed as an empty gesture.

He has subsequently failed to even deliver on the simplest of related demands. For example, in October 2015, before Modi's visit to the UK, Sikhs demanded the return of rare and priceless items stolen by the Indian Army in June 1984 from the Sikh Reference Library. These included rare and priceless manuscripts of Guru Granth Sahib Ji (the Sikh holy scriptures), Hukamnamas (orders by the Sikh Gurus) carrying signatures of the Sikh Gurus, documents related to the Sikh Raj and Sikh contribution during the independence movement and books on Sikhi and our history.

Now even those self-appointed protagonists are back tracking from their initial press releases and admitting the infamous meeting as a failure and that there is little or no progress on the watered down issues that were discussed.

A clear message was delivered at the Rally that true freedom is the only form of justice that will be acceptable to the Sikhs.

**Freedom** focused on the need to continue the campaign for the right to self-determination and demand for an independent Sikh homeland, Khalistan given the failure to deliver the truth or any justice. The June 1984 attack on the Sri Harmandir Sahib Complex laid the foundation stone for Khalistan. 30 years ago on 29 April 1986 the Sarbat Khalsa (very large gathering of Sikhs) took place at Sri Akal Takht Sahib (the throne of the timeless one and a symbol of Sikh political sovereignty) and passed the historic Khalistan Declaration for an independent Sikh State.

Guest speaker Mark Thompson, director of Relatives for Justice, a Belfast-based regional human rights NGO supporting victims and survivors of the conflict in Ireland, in which he also lost a brother and a cousin. He drew parallels between the Sikh and Irish conflict and the need for steel and determination without compromise in leadership to steer the nation through the most difficult challenges. Something demonstrated by Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness and was the overriding success factor in the Irish conflict progressing to a power share assembly and peace in the region.



Despite the many painful lessons in our Sikh history, we continue to make the same mistakes and allow easy infiltration and distractions to divert our attention, split our strength and question and distrust our true panthic leadership and active organisations. We have witnessed attacks on our Sri Guru Granth Sahib, Gurdwaras, our People, Gurbani, Maryadha (code of conduct), our Religious preachers and our institutions. We must remain steadfast in these troubles and dark times, as our faith also proudly demonstrates that those who remain and stick to their principles and goals, will ultimately succeed and be respected by all.

## **British-Sikhs protest Hindu 'terror group' Chief Mohan Bhagwat UK visit to 'spread hate'**

**INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS TIMES**

**The Sikh Federation UK has accused the RSS of being a 'significant threat' to religious minorities in India.**

IBT News - July 29 2016

British-Sikhs are set to stage a protest against the chief of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a Hindu nationalist parliamentary group in India. The protest against Mohan Bhagwat will take place on 30 July during his visit to the UK,



where he has been addressing Hindus from Britain and Europe.

Bhagwat told the Press Trust of India that he would be attending a number of gatherings of Hindus that have been organised to mark the golden jubilee celebrations of the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (HSS), which has drawn inspiration from his RSS group. However, some British-Seekers have hit out against the decision to allow Bhagwat into the UK, accusing him of "spreading hate".

Gurjeet Singh, spokesperson for the Sikh Federation UK, told IBTimes UK: "Following Indian government pressure the terror group chief has been allowed to enter the UK and spread religious and ethnic hate at a European-wide conference. The RSS presents a significant threat to religious and ethnic minorities in India with the

declaration that they will ensure India becomes a Hindu Rashtra by 2021."

Singh noted that the RSS group has been banned in India several times, including when their member Nathuram Godse assassinated Mahatma Gandhi in 1948 and after the demolition of the Babri Masjid in 1992. Some have also blamed the RSS for forcing thousands of people to convert to Hinduism, while attacking Dalits, Muslims and Christians since Narendra Modi became Prime Minister in 2014.

Singh said: "Groups like the RSS have an objective of attacking the Sikh faith so it leads to its eventual assimilation and is driving a campaign to convert Muslims and Christians to Hinduism by force. Intolerance and attacks against women have reached epidemic levels in India."

Protests against the RSS chief are due to take place on 30 July from 1pm GMT at the Hertfordshire County Showground near Luton. This is where Bhagwat will be speaking for the HSS anniversary celebrations and the event is expected to be the first time that he has ever addressed such a big gathering of Hindus in the UK.

RSS sources told the Press Trust of India that the event aims to "bring all like-minded Hindus together from across Europe", as well as encourage the younger generations to "connect with their cultural heritage". They also said that it would allow Bhagwat to present the "perfect model" of the "Hindu-family" to countries around the world.





## ABOUT US

The Sikh Federation (UK) is a non-governmental organisation, that is a pressure group and often referred to as the first ever Sikh political party in the United Kingdom. The Sikh Federation (UK) is based on the 'miri-piri' principle, the Sikh principle that temporal and spiritual goals are indivisible.

The organisation was established in September 2003 with the aim of giving Sikhs a stronger political voice, defending & promoting the Sikh Identity and campaigning for human rights.

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To work closely with each of the main political parties in the UK to promote relevant issues set out in the Sikh Agenda for the UK Government.

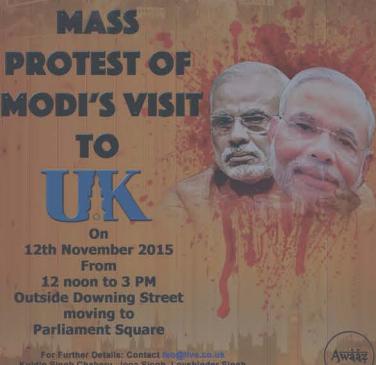
The main areas of work for the Sikh Federation (UK) are:

- ⦿ Promote the Sikh religion, philosophy and way of life - working within the Sikh community and with local and national government;
- ⦿ Promote sporting and educational activities as well as relevant cultural issues directly associated with the Sikh way of life;
- ⦿ Campaign for human rights issues impacting on Sikhs in the UK and abroad - working with human rights groups, non-governmental organisations and politicians; and
- ⦿ Argue the case for the right to self-determination for the Sikhs and lobbying politicians, the UK Government, official representatives of foreign governments in the UK, the European Parliament and at the United Nations for the establishment of an independent sovereign Sikh homeland.

## THE SIKH NETWORK

The Sikh Network was independently established in August 2014 as an open collective of Sikh activists and professionals from all backgrounds and organisations. The primary output of the Sikh Network is to monitor progress and set strategic direction for the Sikh Manifesto 2015 -2020. The Sikh Federation (UK) fully acknowledge the need for such networks and fully supports the Sikh Network's activities in both Panthic and political areas.

The Sikh Network report progress via a quarterly newsletter and hosting relevant professional events throughout the year. Individuals in the Sikh Network have an opportunity to fully participate and contribute to the Sikh Manifesto, even those who wish to remain in the background and do not belong to any Gurdwara or organisation. For further information: [www.thesikhnetwork.com](http://www.thesikhnetwork.com) [info@thesikhnetwork.com](mailto:info@thesikhnetwork.com) [facebook/TheSikhNetwork](https://facebook.com/TheSikhNetwork) [twitter@TheSikhNet](https://twitter.com/TheSikhNet)



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[info@sikhfeduk.com](mailto:info@sikhfeduk.com) | [www.sikhfeduk.com](http://www.sikhfeduk.com)

**CONTACT US:** The Sikh Federation (UK) is a volunteer based organisation. Our members come from a range of backgrounds. Given the number of wide ranging projects and challenges ahead, we are keen to attract professionals and welcome additional volunteers and activists. Key skills and sector knowledge are needed in local & central government campaigning, politics & human rights, PR & media and web & social media.



#### DONATE NOW

For monetary donations to support any of the initiatives please note the following bank details: HSBC  
Sikh Federation (UK) Account: 51692992 | Sort: 40-43-03