

SIKH FEDERATION (UK)

Never flinch from performing righteous deeds

ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017



*More Power
Political Representation
Sikh Homeland 5Ks
Sikh Identity Human Rights
Sovereignty Truth Justice Freedom
Sikh Guruside UK Sikh Society Campaign 2021
Manifesto UK Sikh Society Campaign 2021
Code of Practice WJF More Power
Political Representation More Power*

*Sikh Identity Human Rights
Sikh Sovereignty Truth Justice
Freedom 1984 Sikh Guruside
Public Inquiry Sikh Manifesto
UK Sikh Society Campaign 2021 Code
of Practice WJF*



WORKING FOR TRUTH, JUSTICE AND FREEDOM



Overview



A Message from the Chairman.

Our achievements in the last 12 months have been historic. The profile of our activities is best summed up by national and international media coverage in three areas. Firstly, the election success of two Sikh MPs – the first Sikh woman MP and the first turban wearing Sikh MP. Secondly the wide ranging and long term impact of the findings of the UK Sikh Survey and thirdly the progress towards establishing the truth with an independent public inquiry into UK involvement in the 1984 Sikh Genocide and anti-Sikh measures taken by the British government at the request of the Indian authorities.

The next 12 months is largely about building on this success. With the All Party Parliamentary Group for British Sikhs skilfully led by Preet Kaur Gill MP we are embarking on an exciting initiative to get over 100 MPs with Sikh constituents from across the political spectrum to take greater individual and collective responsibility to progress a wide range of issues of importance to Sikhs. This strategic and co-ordinated approach is essential to safeguard UK and European Sikh interest as the UK has gone through considerable political turmoil since the Brexit vote and this is set to continue during negotiations.

Next year we will mark our 15th anniversary and it would be an excellent time to reflect with the Sikh Network and other organisations on progress made against the ten issues in the Sikh Manifesto. However, the immediate priority for the Sikh community in the UK is to get the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to recommend to Parliament a separate Sikh ethnic tick box in the Census 2021. Just prior to the Convention we have witnessed important developments and political pressure will continue to ensure Sikhs get proper recognition, fair access and treatment with regards to provision of public services.

The political, legal and public pressure for an independent public inquiry into UK involvement in the 1984 Sikh Genocide and anti-Sikh measures at the request of the Indian authorities is likely to come to a head in the next 12 months. The last 12 months have demonstrated the need for transparency. Getting to the truth on the 1984 Sikh Genocide is a much bigger issue than first thought and not simply of significance to Sikhs, but a vital matter of public importance and accountability.

Since the Amritsar revelations in January 2014 we have known our pursuit of the truth of UK involvement and assistance will ultimately lead to pressure on the international community to put India in the dock and get to the truth of the 1984 Sikh Genocide. The UK will host the Commonwealth Heads of State meeting in April 2018 where we will be working with Sikhs in some of the key Commonwealth countries, such as Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan and Malaysia to exert national pressure so issues like the 1984 Sikh Genocide and an apology from the British Prime Minister for the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh on 13 April 1919 can be discussed during bilateral meetings.

We also have an important role in the World Sikh Parliament that is also beginning to take shape and has potential for a significant international shift to help re-establish an independent sovereign Sikh homeland. Thank you for your continued support.

Bhai Amrik Singh

SIKH FEDERATION (UK)

BUILDING A STRONGER POLITICAL VOICE IN THE UK AND ABROAD

BRITISH SIKHS DELIVER A NUMBER OF KEY ANNOUNCEMENTS AT LARGEST EVER NATIONAL SIKH CONVENTION



London – 19 September 2016. The annual three-day National Sikh Convention organised by the Sikh Federation (UK) at Guru Nanak Gurdwara, Sedgley Street, Wolverhampton attracted in excess of 10,000 Sikhs from across the UK and other parts of the world. It is the largest political gathering of its kind bringing together members of the Sikh community in the Diaspora.

Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK), delivered the keynote speech. He set out what the organisation had achieved with respect to delivery against the promises made last year, the organisation's key activities and successes over the last 12 months and how it was responding to the challenges that exist and giving direction in a number of key areas.

Several UK politicians spoke about ongoing campaigns championed by the Sikh Federation (UK), the past year's mutual achievements and future promises.

The Sikh Federation (UK) announced expansion of its leadership and advisory capacity thanks to its growth across virtually all regions of the UK and bolstered presence in additional towns and cities. The team will manage the organisation's increasing international workload created by greater demands from mainstream media and a shift in working relationships with the UK Government.

DEVELOPING THE IMPROVED RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UK GOVERNMENT TO MAKE PROGRESS ON CHALLENGES FACED BY BRITISH SIKHS

London - 20 September 2016. For decades, the Indian authorities have exerted pressure on the UK Government to work only with British Sikhs not advocating for a separate Sikh homeland. A handful of Sikhs have cunningly used this to their advantage to maintain their exclusive access to UK Government officials and Ministers.

The Sikh Federation (UK) has gradually broken down these barriers over the last five years to ensure it has an equal seat at the table. This is thanks to Ministers recognising the Sikh Federation (UK) lobbying power on a range of issues and the compelling need to have proper dialogue on difficult subjects.

Initially, some officials were reluctant to change the status quo, but the last two years have proven the absolute necessity to involve the Sikh Federation (UK) thanks to its grassroots support, range of activities and mainstream media profile. The organisation's reputation enhanced further with the establishment of the Sikh Network and the development of a well thought through Sikh Manifesto.



Ministers and officials are also increasingly recognising and appreciating the wider benefits of engagement with the Sikh Federation (UK) and the Sikh Network.

National Sikh Convention delegates heard first hand of this newly improved relationship, which followed the lifting of the ban on the International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF) in the UK and Europe in March and April 2016. It was immediately visible when several Sikh Federation (UK) leadership members were, for the first time, invited within weeks to 10 Downing Street to mark Vaisakhi.

On the eve of the Convention, the UK Government called a Sikh Roundtable meeting hosted by Lord Bourne, the new Minister for Integration. Also in attendance were officials from his own department, the Home Office and Foreign Office. Discussions at the meeting were largely dominated by representatives from the Sikh Federation (UK) and the Sikh Network (who were invited for the first time in recognition of the Network's growing profile).

Officials are increasingly becoming wary that many organisations have much narrower interests and less capacity than the Sikh Federation (UK) and the Sikh Network.

BRITISH SIKH RESPONSE TO A CHANGING POLITICAL LANDSCAPE IN THE UK

London - 20 September 2016. The National Sikh Convention acknowledged that following the Brexit vote there was a rapidly changing political environment to which British Sikhs would need to respond carefully.



Those present were told the Brexit decision had introduced new challenges, but may also offer opportunities. Following the vote, many EU Member States have side-lined the UK Government, who had to decline the EU Presidency for 2017. The Sikh Federation (UK) has learnt that following the Brexit vote, relationships have changed and MEPs and officials from the UK are finding it problematic working with the EU through what is resembling a long protracted divorce.

The Sikh Federation (UK) will now focus on different ways of lobbying in the EU Parliament on a range of human rights issues. Previous reliance has been on the strength of UK Sikhs and MEPs. It will need to formulate a strategy from outside the EU on how to best influence different EU countries where the Sikh identity is challenged.

APOLOGY FROM THE BRITISH PRIME MINISTER IN PARLIAMENT BEFORE THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BRITISH MASSACRE OF SIKHS AT JALLIANWALA BAGH ON 13 APRIL 1919

London – 20 September 2016. In April 2016, a speech was delivered by Dabinderjit Singh, Sikh Federation (UK) adviser, at a Vaisakhi event in Parliament on the significance of the Khalsa.

In that speech he referenced what Justin Trudeau, the Canadian Prime Minister, had just announced on the occasion of a Vaisakhi event in Parliament Hill in Ottawa. Trudeau announced that on 18 May 2016 he would make a full apology in the House of Commons for the Komagata Maru incident of 1914.



In 2013, David Cameron visited Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar where on the occasion of Vaisakhi, 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".

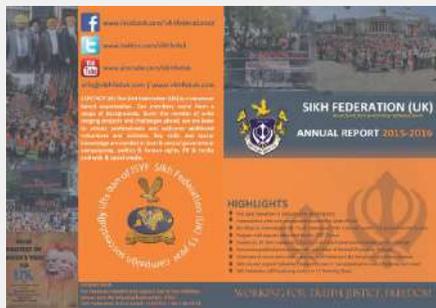
On 13 April 2019 it will be 100 years since the massacre by British soldiers in Amritsar. Dabinderjit Singh urged, the minimum the worldwide Sikh community deserved was an apology by the British Prime Minister in Parliament.

Greg Clarke, the Secretary of State at the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) listened carefully to the full speech and nodded to acknowledge the demand. DCLG and Foreign Office officials were reminded at a recent meeting on the need to make progress on this issue.

Bhai Amrik Singh, in his speech, mentioned it was made all the more painful as the Amritsar massacre of 1919 came within months of the end of the First World War where Sikhs had made sacrifices in huge numbers for the freedom of Europe.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, INCLUDING THE LIFTING OF THE BAN ON THE INTERNATIONAL SIKH YOUTH FEDERATION (ISYF)

London – 21 September 2016. Key achievements in the last 12 months were set out in the 2015-16 annual 50-page highlights booklet. The Sikh Federation (UK) is the only national Sikh organisation that has, since it was established 13 years ago in September 2003, produced an annual booklet highlighting its work.



Of the mentioned events were the G20 World Sikh Summit at Guru Nanak Gurdwara, Smethwick at the end of October before the Sarbat Khalsa in Punjab. This allowed Sikhs in the Diaspora to gather and influence the outcome on matters such as the need in the longer term for a **'World Sikh Parliament'**.

Last November we witnessed the Sikh Federation (UK) organising the first celebration of the Gurburb of Guru Nanak Dev Ji in Parliament and also saw the Sikh Lives Matter protest outside the Indian High Commission in response to disrespect of Sri Guru

Granth Sahib Ji in Punjab and the killing of innocent Sikhs that were protesting. It was ironic that the Metropolitan Police used heavy-handed tactics to clear the sit down protest by Sikh men, women and children. The police, for the first time in the UK, deployed horse mounted and riot police against peaceful Sikh protesters and were later forced to apologise. This was almost certainly because there was the desire to appease the Indian authorities on the eve of Modi's visit to the UK.

Also mentioned was the Campaign for Justice hearing in Parliament in February 2016 when a committee of senior politicians took evidence from the Sikh Federation (UK) on the Sikh experience of 1984. Senior politicians in attendance and the Chair, Shadow Home Secretary, Rt. Hon. Andy Burnham MP, commented that the Sikh Federation (UK) representative 'stole the show'. The Vaisakhi event in Parliament was also cited at the Convention as this was the first time a speech was delivered by a Sikh Federation (UK) representative in Parliament. The speech emphasised the true significance of the Khalsa and made several significant political statements, referencing Sikh political representation.



Convention delegates heard how the divisive Modi visit was designed to cause disharmony and had been used to exert pressure on Sikh media to stop publicity against the Indian authorities and to obstruct support for the annual June 1984 Remembrance and Freedom Rally. However, despite these tactics there was a huge turnout in June proving Gurdwaras and the Sangat are now emotionally attached to the annual remembrance event and will never forget the events of 1984.

The campaigns that led to significant achievements around the Modi visit provided an excellent opportunity to raise awareness of the situation in India, including treatment of minorities, the current level of intolerance and the background and crimes of Modi.

After Modi's visit came the attempted extradition from Portugal of Paramjeet Singh. Convention delegates heard how the Sikh Federation (UK), supported by the Sikh Network, showed its political strength in reaching over 250 MPs, all UK MEPs and MEPs in Portugal in a matter of days. The latter took the case up with the Portuguese Minister for Justice. Labour leader, Jeremy Corbyn was approached and persuaded to intervene and willingly assisted by taking the case up directly with the Portuguese Prime Minister.

The Sikh Federation (UK) also took the case to the UN, working with Sikhs in Switzerland, it involved Free Trials International regarding the inappropriate Interpol Red Notice. A strong media campaign in the local and national media in the UK, Portugal and India assisted in encouraging Portuguese politicians to reject India's extradition request.

By far the greatest achievement of the year was the successful legal challenge to have the ban lifted on the International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF) after a 15-year campaign. It started with a legal and political challenge that lasted for two and a half years until July 2003, followed by the setting up of the Sikh Federation (UK) in September 2003 to continue political work with the same aims and objectives.

Eventually, a successful legal challenge launched in February 2015 by the leadership of the Sikh Federation (UK) forced the Home Secretary in December 2015 to back down. Debates followed in the House of Commons and Lords in March 2016 to legally confirm the lifting of the ban. This was a historic victory that has been recognised by Sikhs across the globe. A month later, all restrictions on the organisation across Europe were lifted.

DEVELOPING AN UNDERSTANDING AND WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH LIKE-MINDED ORGANISATIONS IN PUNJAB

London – 21 September 2016. Last September the Sikh Federation (UK) welcomed the in principle decision that two pro-Khalistan organisations, Dal Khalsa & Shiromani Akali Dal (Panch Pardhani) would be joining forces and coming together.

This was formalised in May 2016 when the two organisations merged and agreed to work towards their shared goal of a sovereign Sikh state, Khalistan. They decided to carry the former name of 'Dal Khalsa' for the new organisation and Advocate Harpal Singh Cheema was appointed as its working president. Dal Khalsa's patron Bhai Gajinder Singh was made patron of the new organisation while the patron of Shiromani Akali Dal (Panch Pardhani) Bhai Daljit Singh Bittu was appointed as an adviser.

Following the merger, the Sikh Federation (UK) had two lengthy and productive meetings in Belgium and the Netherlands with Harpal Singh Cheema. Bhai Amrik Singh, Sikh Federation (UK) Chair, told reporters at the National Sikh Convention:



“We have now established an understanding and working relationship with the Dal Khalsa in Punjab as part of our political battle for justice and establishing Khalistan. Many of you would have seen the statement from the Dal Khalsa leadership this week appreciating our efforts and providing backing for the activities of the Sikh Federation (UK).”

CHALLENGES PRESENTED BY THE MODI-LED BJP GOVERNMENT AND HOW THESE ARE BEING HANDLED

London – 22 September 2016. Bhai Amrik Singh reminded Convention attendees that since Modi came to power his BJP government had made clear its concerns with three main matters as regards Sikhs in the UK. Firstly, large protests that damage the Indian image; secondly the reach of the Sikh media that is being used by the likes of the Sikh Federation (UK) to expose India and promote the re-establishment of a Sikh homeland and finally political activities detrimental to the Indian state. They have also made clear their number one target is the Sikh Federation (UK) as it leads the way on protests, media exposure and political activities.



Preventing large protests that damage the Indian image - Historically the Indian Government has been concerned with the seismic annual June protest that freedom loving Sikhs from across the globe look to as the premier event of the year in relation to commemorating June 1984. Although this protest has continued for 32 years, numbers in attendance did dip in the mid to late 1990s. However, from the 20th anniversary onwards, more or less coinciding with the establishment of the Sikh Federation (UK), the remembrance event has been taken to a new level with a greater focus on English speakers and when possible, a Freedom Rally in the iconic Trafalgar Square.

The Indian authorities have and continue to use various means to disrupt the June event with direct pressure on the UK Government, including public bodies like the Metropolitan Police and Greater London Authority (GLA) as well as the Sikh media. They have and continue to use agent provocateurs from within the Sikh community to cause disruption. For instance, they made a big push for two events on the 30th anniversary to divide the Sikh community, but were exposed and were unsuccessful.

In more recent years there have been several large protests involving thousands of protesters organised at short notice on weekdays that have attracted significant media attention and stunned the Indian authorities. These protests have troubled India as they have been linked to current incidents or campaigns in Punjab and have included stopping the execution of Bhai Balwant Singh Rajoana, the hunger strikes of Bhai Gurbaksh Singh and Bapu Surat Singh and most recently the Sikh Lives Matter protest in November.

Controlling the Sikh media - Following Modi's visit in November 2015 it is a fact that considerable pressure was applied on Sikh media to curb promotion of the annual June Remembrance March and Freedom Rally and limit the time for the Sikh Federation (UK) to publicise its work and activities. For example, the weekly TV programme presented by the Sikh Federation (UK) was suspended following Modi's visit. The Modi government have been largely successful in pressuring Sikh media. However, one look at the Sikh Federation (UK) 50-page highlights booklet shows India is unable to control other forms of media, such as the mainstream press, from covering the activities and successes of the organisation.

The Sikh Federation (UK) has a huge social media presence. India cannot inhibit channels such as TV84 from covering and promoting Sikh Federation (UK) activities. However, given recent experiences everyone is expecting the Sikh Federation (UK) not to disappoint in directly responding to the pressure on existing Sikh TV channels.



Undermining political activities led by the Sikh Federation (UK): The political activities of the organisation disturb India the most. For many years, India has managed to force the UK Government to avoid the Sikh Federation (UK) because of the organisation's support for Khalistan. However, in recent years the media and political profile of the organisation has become too great and won the organisation much respect in political circles. Furthermore, the Sikh Federation (UK) has in the last two years out manoeuvred Indian intelligence officers and diplomats based in the Indian High Commission in London directly resulting in a closer relationship with the UK Foreign Office, previously prevented by Indian officials.

Lifting the ban on the International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF) has sent alarm bells ringing in Delhi. Virtually everything the Indian authorities have attempted, to undermine the Sikh Federation (UK), has eventually failed. Now, with the setting up of the Sikh Network to develop and take ownership for the Sikh Manifesto and initiatives such as the UK Sikh Survey, the Sikh Federation (UK) is fast becoming the one organisation the UK Government and politicians cannot afford to ignore. Ambitions of the Sikh Federation (UK) to bring together like-minded organisations across the globe campaigning for justice and freedom has not gone unnoticed by the Indian authorities, who will be worried by the political threat this will present.

SIKHS CELEBRATE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OPENING OF GURDWARA SAHIB SWITZERLAND, LANGENTHAL AND REVEAL INDIAN PRESIDENT PRESSURED SWISS AUTHORITIES TO TRY AND PREVENT GURDWARA OPENING

London – 30 September 2016. During the last weekend of August 2016, Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) having obtained his British passport after a long legal battle made his first trip abroad for 18 years. He chose to visit Switzerland on the 10th anniversary of the opening of Gurdwara Sahib Switzerland, Langenthal.



Bhai Dabinderjit Singh, the principal adviser to the Sikh Federation (UK) attended the opening ceremony at Gurdwara Sahib Switzerland, Langenthal ten years earlier and reminded those present that this was a project that started in 1996, 10 years before the opening. Obtaining the necessary permissions to build the Gurdwara proved extremely difficult and took a very long time. The foundation stone was eventually laid on 11th January 2001 and construction began on 25th October 2002.

Completing the build and opening the Gurdwara was not without its challenges and the Sikh Federation (UK) contributed financially to ensure the opening happened within four years. Ranjit Singh and his family led the project and were assisted by Master Karan Singh and Harminder Singh Khalsa. Together they showed a huge amount of dedication and drive to see the dream of a stunning new Gurdwara in Switzerland; popularly known to many non-Sikhs throughout Switzerland as the 'white Gurdwara'.

Years after the opening of the Gurdwara papers revealed a fabricated case lodged against Ranjit Singh, a successful businessman in Switzerland. They showed opposition to build and open the Gurdwara was coming from the Indian authorities at the highest levels. None other than Abdul Kalam who was President of India between 2002 and 2007 visited Switzerland at that time and urged the Swiss authorities to block the opening of the Gurdwara.

Switzerland was the first country in the world to sign a friendship treaty with India in 1947 and Switzerland is one of the ten largest investors in India with some 250 Swiss companies having a significant presence in India. Sikhs across the globe should be alert to the tactics used by the Indian



authorities and the lengths to which they will go to try and undermine Sikhs campaigning peacefully for a Sikh homeland.

ENCOURAGING FEEDBACK AT SIKH FEDERATION (UK) ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

London – 20 March 2017. In the third week of September every year the Sikh Federation (UK) holds its annual National Sikh Convention. The origins of the Convention can be traced back to 1984 and for many years the convention has been continuously held at Guru Nanak Gurdwara, Sedgley Street in Wolverhampton.

The Convention is organised in the same month that mainstream political parties hold their annual party conferences. As the Sikh Federation (UK) is popularly described as the first and only Sikh political party in the UK this Convention is deemed by many politicians from across the political spectrum as the annual party conference for British Sikhs.

In March 2017, the Sikh Federation (UK) held its first ever Annual General Meeting (AGM) with around 150 delegates and supporters from 8 of the 12 regions in the UK and around 20 towns and



The Sikh Federation (UK) inaugural Annual General Meeting at Guru Nanak Gurdwara Smethwick

cities. It was timed to coincide with the first anniversary of the Sikh Federation (UK) successful legal challenge to have the ban lifted on the International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF) as well as the Sikh New Year.

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

“We have had fantastic feedback about our first AGM. This will be a permanent event in our calendar in the third week of March each year. As word gets out we are convinced we will have more delegates next year and Sikhs from more regions, towns and cities across the UK will want to take part. Sharing information not in the public domain with our members and interaction through the question and answer session will be developed to make the AGM even more rewarding.”

Those present were told of the leading role of the Sikh Federation (UK) in pushing for an independent inquiry regarding UK involvement in the events in 1984 and what followed with the help of a researcher and KRW Law has substantially raised the political stakes and worldwide profile of Sikh Federation (UK) activities. Further legal action and publicity is inevitable and the current UK Government are increasingly realising this issue will simply not go away.

Progress was provided on other issues in the Sikh Manifesto, such as a separate ethnic tick box in the Census 2021, the Sikh Federation (UK) challenge of the hate crime action plan where we have established Sikhs were deliberately snubbed by specific references to Sikhs being taken out by Number 10. We are now also aware the Prime Minister’s annual race audit announced in August 2016 is expected to highlight a major data gap in central government as they are not collecting any information on Sikhs, although Sikhs are legally recognised as a race.

A number of Sikh Network representatives were present to talk about the impact of the findings of the UK Sikh Survey on different parts of government. Other updates on issues in the Sikh Manifesto such as a site in central London for a permanent monument to recognise Sikh sacrifices in the First World War and a Code of Practice on the 5Ks and dastaar were also provided.



Delegates heard about the work of the Your Seva charity and the exciting opportunities offered by KTV (Sky 858) in being able to regularly raise awareness on issues and the work of the Sikh Federation (UK), Sikh Network and Your Seva.

Video messages were recorded and provided specifically for the Sikh Federation (UK) AGM from contacts in Punjab. These included Harpal Singh Cheema, President of Dal Khalsa and its former President Harcharanjit Singh Dhama. Sikh youth leader Bhai Mandhir Singh spoke specifically about the Khalistan situation and the leading role that can be played by Sikhs in the Diaspora. Advocate Jaspal Singh Manjhpur gave an overview of the situation of all Sikh political prisoners. He has been co-ordinating the legal campaign and made clear that virtually all temporary releases to date have been



secured through unrelenting legal action. It was highlighted that the various assurances made by Modi almost 18 months ago after the infamous meeting with Sikhs in the UK in November 2015 have proved to be empty promises.

Bhai Harjinder Singh the son of former Akal Takht Jathedar and Sikh revolutionary leader Shaheed Baba Gurbachan Singh Manochahal, the founder of the Bhindranwale Tigers Force of Khalistan made a special appearance and was presented with a siropa and seva by the Sikh Federation (UK) leadership.

BRITISH SIKHS SICKENED BY INDISCRIMINATE KILLING OF PEDESTRIANS AND TERROR ATTACK ON UK PARLIAMENT

London – 22 March 2017. A terrorist killed three members of the public and wounded at least 40 other civilians as his Hyundai 4x4 vehicle careered into pedestrians in the heart of the capital outside Parliament. The man armed with a knife then entered the Parliamentary estate and stabbed to death Keith Palmer, a 48 year old police officer before the attacker was shot dead.

UK Sikhs condemn London terror attack

Times of India - 24 March 2017

AMRITSAR: Sikh bodies in the UK have condemned the terror attack on the British parliament while requesting for peace. They have also asked the community members to be more vigilant for being distinctly visible and having faced hate crimes due to mistaken identity.

Chair of the **Sikh Federation (UK)** Amrik Singh said, "Our thoughts and prayers are with the

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family of Keith Palmer, who died protecting the parliamentarians and the innocent victims who died or have been seriously injured and their families. The indiscriminate terrorist attack on civilians in Westminster is sickening and deplorable. It cannot be a coincidence that the attack was carried out on the first anniversary of the terror attacks in Brussels," he said.

MESSAGE OF HOPE: "WE MUST HAVE AN UNFLINCHING AND UNITED RESOLVE TO DEFEAT TERRORISM"

London – 5 April 2017. Relatives of those killed in the Westminster terror attack for the first time came together in the same place, along with leading politicians and members of the Royal Family in a "service of hope" at Westminster Abbey. They were joined by five representatives of the Sikh Federation (UK) and the Sikh Network.

Home Secretary Amber Rudd gave the first reading at the service. The second reading was made by Prince William. PC Jaskaran Kaur Garcha, who was featured earlier this year in the #350sikhwomen campaign by the Sikh Network gave the following reading from Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji:





“First, God created the Light, then, by his Creative Power, he made all mortal beings. From the One Light, the entire universe welled up. So who is good, and who is bad? O people, O Siblings of Destiny, do not wander deluded by doubt. The Creation is in the Creator, and the Creator is in the Creation, totally pervading and permeating all places.” (Bhagat Kabir)

Bhai Narinderjit Singh, the General Secretary of the Sikh Federation (UK) who was at the service said:

“Over a dozen Sikhs, including Sikh police officers have today taken part in the service in Westminster Abbey to show we are all united against violence and terrorism. Today was a service of hope, but our collective response to the callous terrorist attack has to be much more than hope.”

“The Sikh National Anthem and the motto of our organisation is “Never flinch from performing righteous deeds.” The main message from today should be we must have an unflinching and united resolve to defeat terrorism.”

Sikhs in Manchester offer accommodation and food after terror attack



Huffington Post – 23 May 2017

Temples opened their doors and local Sikh groups passed out food and water at vigils. Bhai Amrik Singh, chair of the **Sikh Federation (UK)**, responded to the attack in a statement on Facebook, saying: “The lives of 22, including

children have horrifically been cut short by this evil act of terror. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families of those killed and injured in this vile attack.”

Finsbury Park incident - Statement from the Sikh Federation (UK)



The Guardian - 19 June 2017

Bhai Amrik Singh, chair of the **Sikh Federation (UK)**, said: “Our thoughts and prayers are with all those affected by the appalling incident at Finsbury Park.”

“The incidents in the last three months suggest there needs to be an honest dialogue and a fundamental shift in the way government tackles all forms of hate and terror.

“Hate and terror must be stamped out by directly confronting all those who promote an ideology and philosophy based on hate and terror.

“Sikh teachings, history and the Sikh way of life offers not only hope, but direction on how to tackle hate and terror. Those making policies in governments across the globe need to draw upon belief systems and thinking designed to deal with hate and terror head on.”

SIKH FEDERATION (UK) WELCOMES EARLY GENERAL ELECTION GIVING THE OPPORTUNITY TO SEE SIKH MPs

London – 18 April 2017. Ahead of the 8 June General Election announcement, Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) stated:

“An early General Election gives political parties and the Sikh community an opportunity to address the complete lack of Sikh representation in the House of Commons.”



“We are confident this is an opportunity for the two main political parties to each have two or three Sikh candidates in winnable seats giving us the possibility of four or five Sikh MPs within the next 8 weeks.”

“We also think we could see the first Sikh woman MP and each of the parties could for the first time also have visible Sikhs in turbans becoming MPs. This should be seen as an opportunity for Sikhs to be at the heart of political decision-making in one of the most important times in recent British history.”

GENERAL ELECTION STRATEGY FOR 8 JUNE

The Sikh Federation (UK) announced its General Election strategy on 19 April, an important factor of this was to have Sikh candidates where Labour MPs chose not to stand, but where the Sikh vote mattered.



The General Election provided Sikh voters an opportunity to influence politicians and political parties seeking their votes and raising key issues that specifically concern the Sikh community.

Sikh Federation (UK)'s analysis of majorities in the top 75 target seats for Conservatives found that at least a dozen of these seats relied on the Sikh vote to elect a Conservative MP.

The Sikh Federation (UK) predicted that if the opinion polls started to shift in favour of Labour, a number of Conservative marginals, such as Derby South, Croydon Central and Bedford with a sizeable Sikh vote

would become legitimate targets.

Gurdwaras and Sikh organisations were asked to focus on a five-point plan.

A five-point agenda put forward by Sikhs in UK for the forthcoming general elections in Britain

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

The New Indian Express – 28 April 2017

CHANDIGARH: As Britain headed for general elections on June 8, the Sikh community in the United Kingdom (UK) put forward a five-point agenda for both conservative and liberal parties.

Bhai Amrik Singh's statement describing the plan:

'First better representation of Sikhs in Parliament, then the British government's official recognition of the 1984 Sikh Genocide in India, we also demand an independent public inquiry into UK government's support for the Indian authorities in the lead up to and after the 1984 Sikh Genocide. The fourth point is a full apology from the British Prime Minister for the Jallianwala Bagh massacre before the 100th anniversary in 2019. Last but not the least is getting British authorities to recognise their failure 70 years ago with regard to Sikhs and their homeland in 1947, and the death, destruction and devastation of Partition. It was the largest mass migration in human history of some 10 million people. One million civilians died in the accompanying violence as Punjab was divided in two, to create Pakistan and India.'

Bhai Amrik Singh's prediction for the election result was also promisingly accurate, "We are confident that we will see two or three Sikh MPs elected in the forthcoming polls."

Due to lobbying, Preet Kaur Gill, then Labour Councillor in Sandwell was selected by the Labour NEC interview panel to replace Gisela Stuart in Birmingham Edgbaston.

She was up against political heavyweight Neena Gill MEP, and Preet was on course to make political history in less than six weeks to become the first ever Sikh woman MP in Westminster.

The Guardian echoed The Federation's high hopes "The Sikh Federation is hoping that Britain could have its first female Sikhs MP after Labour selected Preet Kaur Gill to replace Gisela Stuart as the party's candidate for Birmingham Edgbaston."



Preet Kaur Gill hopes to be first elected woman British Sikh MP

Hindustan Times - Press Trust of India

Preet Kaur Gill, chosen as the Opposition Labour party candidate to contest in the June 8 general election hoped to become the first British Sikh woman MP in the House of Commons.

Preet Kaur said, "I am delighted I have been given the opportunity to become the next MP for Edgbaston where I was born and raised. I want to engage with the people of Edgbaston and with hard work, passion and determination I think we can achieve great things together," she said.

Preet Kaur defended a Labour majority of 2,706 (6.6%) over the other parties. She serves as a board member of the Sikh Network, which she believes has provided her with a unique platform and opportunity in the last two years to raise her political profile.

The Sikh Federation (UK), which campaigned for her, said Britain's Sikh community has high

expectations of Gill to take up issues with the government if she makes history with an entry into Westminster politics in the June polls.

Bhai Amrik Singh, the chair of the Sikh Federation (UK), said: "I have known Preet and the family for over 30 years and she will be an amazing representative for those living in Edgbaston. We have full confidence that she will become the first ever Sikh woman in the House of Commons and we will do all we can to support her succeed."

"In the last general election, we made a real difference in certain seats and the political parties know we can motivate large numbers on the ground to have an impact," he said.

The group set up a steering committee to lobby for greater Sikh representation in winnable parliamentary seats in the June 8 elections.

British Sikh hopes to become first turban-wearing MP



Times of India – 29 April 2017

LONDON: Tanmanjeet Singh, a British Sikh local politician was selected by the Opposition Labour Party as its candidate for the June 8 general election and hoped to become the first turban-wearing MP in the House of Commons.

Tanmanjeet Singh began his campaign to hold on to the Slough constituency, where previous Labour MP Fiona Mactaggart won by a majority of 7,336 (15.2 per cent) in the 2015 election.

"I am humbled to be selected as Labour's Parliamentary candidate for Slough and hope to have the honour of serving the town where I was born and raised," said Dhesi.

Dhesi was backed by representative group **Sikh Federation (UK)**, which set up a steering committee to lobby for greater Sikh representation in winnable parliamentary seats in the elections.

Another Sikh in fray for June 8 UK election

Times of India – 4 May 2017

LONDON: Kuldip Singh Sahota, former councillor, fought to overturn a small Conservative Party majority of 730 (1.8 per cent) and regain the Telford constituency in the West Midlands region of England for the Labour Party.

"In terms of Sikh representation, the Conservatives have been left behind with only Paul Uppal selected for Wolverhampton South West, who is clear favourite to regain the seat from Labour, and Samir Jassal, selected in the



safe Labour seat of Feltham and Heston," **Sikh Federation UK** said in a statement.

The Times of India reported on The Federation's claims that nearly half a dozen turban-wearing Sikhs on the approved list of candidates failed to get selected centrally by the Conservative Party to contest the polls.

Rocky Gill, who had been a Barking and Dagenham councillor since 2010, was selected

for Hornchurch and Upminster, where the Conservatives had a majority of 13,074 (23.7 per cent); Manjinder Singh Kang, a solicitor, was selected for Tewksbury, where the Conservatives had a majority of 21,972 (39.7 per cent); and Councillor Bally Singh was selected for Kenilworth and Southam, where the Conservatives have a majority of 21,002 (43 per cent).

History made as first female Sikh MP elected

ITV - 9 June 2017



"History has been made tonight as the first female Sikh MP has been elected."

Preet Kaur Gill, 44, held Birmingham Edgbaston for Labour with 53.3% of the vote.

Chair of the Sikh Federation Bhai Amrik Singh was one of the first to officially congratulate Preet

Kaur "We are delighted to have the first Sikh woman MP in Preet Kaur Gill in Birmingham, Edgbaston."

"She will be a fantastic MP, a credit to the Sikh community and an excellent role model."

"Credit to the Labour Party leadership for taking the bold step of giving Sikhs the opportunity to fight for winnable seats."

itv NEWS

Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi, UK's First Turbaned Sikh Member Of Parliament

Huffington Post – 9 June 2017

Thirty-eight-year-old Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi won from the Slough constituency in the UK general elections on Friday, becoming the first turbaned Sikh member of the British Parliament.

"Slough is where it all began for me," Dhesi said in a speech shortly after the win, "a town where I was born and raised." He said it was a historic moment for Slough, and he was "humbled and honoured" to be elected MP of the town many

years later. "It is an honour beyond belief," he said.

He won more than 34,000 votes, which was double that of his closest competitor, Mark Visis from the Conservative party.

THE HUFFINGTON POST



NEW LEADERSHIP AND MEMBERSHIP OF APPG FOR BRITISH SIKHS BRINGS NEW PASSION AND ENERGY TO PROGRESS KEY ISSUES IN THE SIKH MANIFESTO

London – 15 July 2017. The APPG for British Sikhs was established 12 years ago in 2005 by the Sikh Federation (UK). In this time it was excellently chaired by Rob Marris for seven years and Fabian Hamilton MP when Rob was not an MP for five years from 2010-2015.

Preet Kaur Gill MP was delighted to be unanimously elected as the new Chair of the APPG and recorded her appreciation and that of the British Sikh community to the APPGs previous two chairs, Rob Marris and Fabian Hamilton the Labour MP for Leeds North East.





Preet Kaur Gill MP elected as Chair of APPG for British Sikhs voters. Around 30% of these constituencies have several thousand Sikh voters and 20% have well in excess of 5,000 and in some cases over 10,000 Sikh voters. 95% of the 135 MPs are Labour and Conservative, interestingly split almost 50:50. Over 90% of constituencies with over 5,000 Sikh voters are Labour strongholds.

Rob Marris will be a tough act to follow, but Preet not only brings new passion and energy, but a deep insight into key issues of interest to the Sikh community set out in the Sikh Manifesto developed and produced by the Sikh Network in January 2015. A number of important developments took place at the Annual General Meeting of the APPG held on 11 July 2017.

Firstly, the APPG is aiming for one of the largest membership of MPs with direct links to the Sikh community. The Sikh Federation (UK) and Sikh Network has produced a useful analysis of 135 MPs across the political spectrum with at least 1,000 Sikh voters.

Secondly, the APPG is aiming to share responsibilities by allocating individual projects or campaigns to Vice Chairs and allowing the chair to strategically co-ordinate activities with the support and direction of a number of experienced Sikh advisers in touch with the grassroots of the Sikh community.

Thirdly, following some debate the APPG agreed an ambitious set of priorities, including:

- Securing a separate Sikh ethnic tick box for the Census 2021
- Helping obtain a site in central London for a monument to specifically recognise sacrifices by Sikh soldiers in the First World War
- Exploring how best to influence Sikh identity issues in mainland Europe after Brexit
- Establishing a Minister-endorsed Code of Practice on the five Kakaars and turban
- Highlighting various human rights issues in relation to Sikhs linked to the events of 1984 and what followed
- Organising in Parliament an annual Guru Nanak Dev Ji celebration in November and supporting an annual Vaisakhi celebration in April

Three specific actions were decided at the AGM with respect to the Census 2021, including calling for an urgent meeting with the Office for National Statistics (ONS), a cross-party open letter to the ONS insisting on a separate Sikh ethnic tick box for the Census 2021 and arranging after the recess an Adjournment Debate on a separate Sikh ethnic tick box for the Census 2021.

Telford Tory MP Lucy Allan is made deputy of all party group for Sikhs Shropshire Star

Shropshire Star - 14 July 2017

Telford Tory MP Lucy Allan was elected vice chairman of the All Party Parliamentary Group for British Sikhs.

An APPG is an informal group of cross-party MPs who join together to pursue a particular topic or interest. APPGs have no formal place in the legislature, but are an effective way of bringing

together parliamentarians and interested parties to lobby government.

Ms Allan said: "I am absolutely delighted to be elected as vice chair for the APPG for British Sikhs.

"Telford has a vibrant Sikh community who do a great deal of good for the area. I hope to use my



position on the APPG to raise the concerns of Sikhs in Telford. I am particularly interested in campaigning to ensure that the Sikh men who fought in World War One are honoured by a permanent memorial in central London.

"I hope to promote the Three Pillars of Sikhism which involve living a life of decency, working hard and sharing wealth within the community. Many of my constituents in Telford adopt this way of life and I hope to champion this practice."

First Sikh woman MP in Britain joins key House panel



Times of India – 17 July 2017

Preet Kaur Gill became one of 11 MPs on the cross-party home affairs committee, which investigates the spending, policy and administration of the ministerial department.

Preet Kaur said "I find the subject matter in what they scrutinise really interesting and wide-ranging. I am particularly interested in child sex exploitation," said Gill, who has worked with street children in Delhi and was previously a children's services manager in Birmingham.

The committee chooses its own subjects of inquiry within the remit of the home office. Previous inquiries have looked at extremism, hate crime, immigration, asylum, human trafficking, drugs, prostitution, counter-terrorism, extradition

and the police. It publishes reports and the Government must respond to its recommendations.

As a committee member, Gill will be able to ask questions, call in ministers and ask anyone to give evidence on any topic the committee is inquiring about to hold the government to account.

"This committee deals with important matters like asylum, countering extremism, child sexual exploitation and grooming," said Bhai Amrik Singh, chair of the **Sikh Federation UK**. "Preet will have an opportunity to question the home secretary and senior officials at the home office and influence their thinking."

ਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਕੌਰ ਗਿੱਲ ਗ੍ਰਹਿ ਮਾਮਲਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਸਿਲੈਕਟ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਦੀ ਮੈਂਬਰ ਬਣੀ

ਲੰਡਨ, 18 ਜੁਲਾਈ (ਮਨਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਬੱਧਨੀ ਕਲਾਂ)-ਬਰਤਾਨੀਆ ਦੀਆਂ ਤਿੰਨ ਵੱਡੀਆਂ ਰਾਜਨੀਤਕ ਪਾਰਟੀਆਂ ਦੇ 11 ਮੈਂਬਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਗ੍ਰਹਿ ਮਾਮਲਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਸਿਲੈਕਟ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਦੇ ਮੈਂਬਰ ਬਣਾਇਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਮਹਿਲਾ ਮੈਂਬਰ ਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਕੌਰ ਗਿੱਲ ਵੀ ਸ਼ਾਮਿਲ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਦੇਸ਼ ਦੇ ਹੋਮ ਆਫਿਸ ਅਤੇ ਪਬਲਿਕ ਬਾਡੀ ਨਾਲ ਮਿਲ ਕੇ ਦੇਸ਼ ਦੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਲਈ ਅਹਿਮ ਭੂਮਿਕਾ ਨਿਭਾਉਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਗ੍ਰਹਿ ਮਾਮਲਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਸਿਲੈਕਟ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਦੀ ਨਵੀਂ ਚੇਅਰਪਰਸਨ ਈਵੈਟ ਕੂਪਰ ਨੂੰ ਬਣਾਇਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਮੁੱਦਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਚੁਣ ਕੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਜਾਂਚ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਅਧਿਕਾਰ ਰੱਖਦੀ



ਜੁਥਾਨੀ ਸਬੂਤ ਇਕੱਠੇ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਸਬੰਧਿਤ ਗਰੁੱਪਾਂ ਤੇ ਵਿਅਕਤੀਗਤ ਤੌਰ ਸਬੂਤ ਇਕੱਠੇ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਜਾਂਚ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਇਕ ਰਿਪੋਰਟ ਤਿਆਰ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਕਾਰਵਾਈ ਲਈ ਅੱਗੇ ਸੋਪਦੀ ਹੈ। ਗ੍ਰਹਿ ਮਾਮਲਿਆਂ ਦੀ

ਸਿਲੈਕਟ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਤਿਆਰ ਕੀਤੀ ਹਰ ਰਿਪੋਰਟ ਦਾ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਦੋ ਮਹੀਨਿਆਂ ਅੰਦਰ-ਅੰਦਰ ਜਵਾਬ ਦੇਣਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਸਿੱਖ ਫੈਡਰੇਸ਼ਨ ਯੂ.ਕੇ. ਦੇ ਚੇਅਰਮੈਨ ਭਾਈ ਅਮਰਿਕ ਸਿੰਘ ਗਿੱਲ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਦੇਸ਼ ਦੀ ਇਕ ਅਤਿ ਮਹੱਤਵਪੂਰਨ ਬਾਡੀ ਹੋਮ ਅਫੇਅਰ ਸਿਲੈਕਟ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਲਈ ਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਕੌਰ ਗਿੱਲ ਦਾ ਚੁਣੇ ਜਾਣਾ ਸਾਡੇ ਲਈ ਮਾਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਗੱਲ ਹੈ।



House of Commons
Home Affairs Committee



DEFENDING AND PROMOTING THE SIKH IDENTITY

Police urged to apologise after 55 arrested and armed officers sent to Sikh temple protest



ITV News – 16 September 2016

Sikh community leaders have accused police of over-reacting to a peaceful demonstration after 55 protesters were arrested at a temple and armed officers attended.



The Sikh Federation UK (SFUK) urged Warwickshire Police to apologise for its "disproportionate" response to reports that a group carrying blades and wearing masks had forced their way into Leamington Gurdwara.

After being called to the Gurdwara Temple shortly after 6.45am on Sunday morning, Warwickshire Police sent armed officers as they believed the 55 men were carrying "bladed items".

After several hours police arrested 55 men on suspicion of aggravated trespass, seized ceremonial blades, and one non-ceremonial weapon.

In a statement the SFUK said the men had walked into the Gurdwara to protest against an interfaith marriage being carried out as a Sikh religious ceremony.

"We stand with those who peacefully protested against the actions of the Management Committee at Leamington Gurdwara.

It now materialises the police were told masked men forced their way into the Gurdwara carrying a range of bladed items other than Kirpans, that are worn at all times by initiated Sikhs, and it may have been suggested they were holding hostages...

This was a small group of young protesters who justifiably objected to an interfaith marriage that was to be carried out as a Sikh religious ceremony" SFUK National Press Secretary, Gurjeet Singh

Warwickshire Police said that they "responded accordingly" after reports that the men were "carrying a range of bladed items, some of which were initially described as not being for ceremonial use".

Secretary general of the Sikh Council UK, Gurmail Singh, said that the protest had occurred because the marriage ceremony was reserved for two Sikhs, but an interfaith marriage had been carried out.

It was unpleasant. I think peaceful demonstrations, I have no issue with that. Even if it is at a wedding, as long as it's peaceful. It's not ideal. We don't want to spoil anybody's special day.

I think the issue here is that the management committee which books these weddings needs to also reflect on what they are actually doing.

There is nobody opposed to inter-racial, inter-ethnic weddings, that's not an issue. But when you are talking about a religious law, ordinary people don't have the right to change something. The view remains that that wedding ceremony is reserved for two Sikhs.



GOVERNMENT U-TURN ON SIKH REGIMENT REFLECTS THE XENOPHOBIA RUNNING THROUGH POLITICS FOLLOWING THE BREXIT VOTE

London – 4 October 2016. In February just before the General Election Mark Francois, the Armed Forces minister said in Parliament that Lieutenant General Sir Nicholas Carter, the Chief of the General Staff was examining proposals to create a Sikh regiment and the proposal ‘may well have merit’.



Speaking during defence questions, Conservative former defence minister Sir Nicholas Soames urged ministers to "do away with political correctness" and raise a Sikh regiment.

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

"We welcomed the announcement in Parliament in February 2015. The U-turn yesterday by Sir Michael Fallon at a Conservative Party conference fringe event will disappoint many British Sikhs and Conservative Party supporters."

"The Defence Secretary on the one hand states Sikhs "make great soldiers" but we believe his announcement yesterday has more to do with the atmosphere of xenophobia in the political world following the Brexit vote or the racist culture in the armed forces."

"He should face the British Sikh community and have the courage to explain his decision when Parliament returns. We are convinced politicians on all sides will challenge him. Where there is a will, there is always a way."

"100 years ago tens of thousands of turban wearing Sikhs were good enough to die for the freedom of Europe. It is shameful some politicians today refuse to recognise British law established exactly 50 years ago protects Sikhs and the law lords have ruled they are more than just a religion."

"Is Sir Michael seriously suggesting it is wrong for any organisations to set up any groups with an emphasis on a particular religion or is he simply worried about racism in the armed forces?"

SIKHS AND POLITICIANS MARK GURU NANAK DEV JI GURPURAB EVENT IN UK PARLIAMENT

London - 17 November 2016. Guru Nanak Dev Ji's Gurburab was celebrated at the Houses of Parliament for the second year running. The Sikh Network, the Sikh Federation (UK) and the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for British Sikhs organised a befitting evening. Numerous politicians and professionals were in attendance.

The event was opened with a tribute to Sir Mota Singh, the first ethnic minority judge who had recently passed away. The keynote speaker was Ramnik Pal Singh Randhawa, a scholar who shared Guru Nanak Dev ji's message on leadership. Eshmit Kaur, a poet, expressed in moving words her tribute to Guru Nanak Dev ji, in a poem called 'Tu hi'. Renowned Kirtan singer, Manika Kaur recited two beautiful religious hymns/shabads.



The event saw representation from all political parties. Rob Marris MP, the Labour MP for Wolverhampton South West and the Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for British Sikhs provided an update on the work of the APPG.

ਬਰਤਾਨੀਆ ਦੀ ਸੰਸਦ 'ਚ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਪੁਰਬ ਮਨਾਇਆ

ਲੰਡਨ, 19 ਨਵੰਬਰ (ਮਨਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਬੰਧਨੀ ਕਲਾਂ)-ਬਰਤਾਨੀਆ ਦੀ ਸੰਸਦ ਵਿਚ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਪੁਰਬ ਮਨਾਇਆ। ਦਾ ਸਿੱਖ ਨੈਟਵਰਕ, ਸਿੱਖ ਫੈਡਰੇਸ਼ਨ ਯੂ.ਕੇ. ਅਤੇ ਆਲ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਪਾਰਲੀਮੈਂਟਰੀ ਗਰੁੱਪ ਵਾਰ ਸਿੱਖਜ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਸਭ ਤੋਰ 'ਤੇ ਕਰਵਾਏ ਗਏ ਇਸ ਸਮਾਗਮ ਵਿਚ ਯੂ.ਕੇ. ਭਰ ਤੋਂ ਰਾਜਨੀਤਕ, ਧਾਰਮਿਕ, ਸਮਾਜਿਕ, ਵਪਾਰਿਕ ਅਤੇ ਵੱਖ-ਵੱਖ ਭਾਈਚਾਰਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਆਗੂ ਹਾਜ਼ਰ ਹੋਏ। ਇਸ ਮੌਕੇ ਸਰ ਮੋਤਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਸ਼ਰਧਾ ਦੇ ਫੁੱਲ ਭੇਟ ਕੀਤੇ ਗਏ। ਕੰਜਰਵਟਿਵ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਦੇ ਲੰਡਨ ਰਣਬੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੂਰੀ ਨੂੰ ਆਏ ਮਹਿਮਾਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਜੀ ਆਇਆ ਕਿਹਾ। ਅਮਰੀਕ ਸਿੱਖ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਆਗੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਮਨੁੱਖਤਾ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ, ਸੱਚ, ਨਮ ਸਿਮਰਨ, ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਨ ਅਤੇ ਵੱਡ ਕੇ ਛਕਣ ਦਾ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਇਸ਼ੀਰ ਕੌਰ ਨੇ ਤੂੰ ਹੀ ਕਵਿਤਾ ਗਾਇਨ ਕੀਤੀ। ਮੋਨਿਕਾ ਕੌਰ ਨੇ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਨਿਹਾਲ ਕੀਤਾ। ਇਸ ਮੌਕੇ ਐੱਮ.ਪੀ. ਅਤੇ ਆਲ ਪਾਰਲੀਮੈਂਟਰੀ ਗਰੁੱਪ ਵਾਰ ਸਿੱਖਜ ਦੇ ਚੇਅਰਮੈਨ ਰੋਬ ਮੌਰਿਸ ਨੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਦੇ ਕੰਮਕਾਜ ਤੋਂ ਜਾਣੂ ਕਰਵਾਇਆ। ਐੱਮ.ਸੀ. ਮਾਰੀਆ ਮਿਲਰ, ਸੈਡੇ ਖਸਾਨਾ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਜੌਨ ਮੈਕਡਾਨਾਲ, ਐਂਗਲੋ ਰੋਬਰਟਸਨ ਆਦਿ ਨੇ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਪੁਰਬ ਦੀ

ਵਧਾਈ ਦਿੱਤੀ। ਇਸ ਮੌਕੇ ਵੱਖ-ਵੱਖ ਖੇਤਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਯੋਗਦਾਨ ਪਾਉਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਲਈ ਕੰਮ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਐਵਾਰਡ ਪ੍ਰਦਾਨ ਕੀਤੇ ਗਏ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਜਸਬੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਠਵਾਲ, ਹਰਲੀਨ ਕੌਰ ਨੂੰ ਖੇਡਾਂ ਲਈ, ਨਿੱਕ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੇਦੋਲਾ ਸਿੱਖਿਆ, ਨਿੰਦਰ ਜੋਹਲ, ਸੋਦੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਖੱਖ, ਫਿਲ ਮਿਲਰ ਚੱਜਕਾਰ ਅਤੇ ਪੱਤਰਕਾਰ, ਰਵਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ ਏਡ, ਜਗਮੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੈਨੇਡਾ, ਡਾ. ਜਗੀਰ ਕੌਰ ਅਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਵੈੱਲਫੇਅਰ ਐਂਡ ਅਵੇਅਰਨੈਸ ਟੀਮ ਨੂੰ ਪੁਰਸਕਾਰ ਪ੍ਰਦਾਨ ਕੀਤੇ ਗਏ। ਇਸ



ਬਰਤਾਨਵੀ ਸੰਸਦ ਵਿਚ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਪੁਰਬ ਮੌਕੇ ਸਨਮਾਨਿਤ ਸਿੱਖ ਸ਼ਖ਼ਸੀਅਤਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਰੋਬ ਮੌਰਿਸ, ਅਮਰੀਕ ਸਿੰਘ ਗਿੱਲ, ਤਨਮਨਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਚੌਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰ।

ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਪੁਰਬ ਸਬੰਧੀ ਸਮਾਗਮ ਅੱਜ
ਲੁਵਨ (ਬੈਲਜੀਅਮ), 19 ਨਵੰਬਰ (ਅਮਰਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਭੋਗਲ)- ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਮਾਤਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਕੌਰ ਗੰਟ, ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਸੰਗਤ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸੰਤਰੂਪਨ ਵਿਖੇ 20 ਨਵੰਬਰ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਪੁਰਬ ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਹਿਯੋਗ ਨਾਲ ਮਨਾਇਆ ਜਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਘਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਮੁੱਖ ਸੇਵਾਦਾਰਾਂ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਕਿ ਭੋਗ ਉਪਰੰਤ ਵੱਖ-ਵੱਖ ਭਾਗੀ ਜਥੇ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦਾ ਨਿਰਲ ਕੀਰਤਨ ਕਰਨਗੇ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਬਰੰਸਲਜ ਵਿਖੇ ਵੀ ਨਿੱਗੀ ਸਟੇਸ਼ਨ ਕੋਲ ਇਕ ਹਾਲ ਵਿਚ 20 ਨਵੰਬਰ ਨੂੰ ਹੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਪੁਰਬ ਮਨਾਏ ਜਾਣ ਦਾ ਸਮਾਚਾਰ ਹੈ।

ਮੌਕੇ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਬਰੀਸਾ ਮੋਅ ਦੀ ਮੁੱਖ ਸਲਾਹਕਾਰ ਜੇਨਾਥਨ ਹੋਲੀਵੈਲ ਨੇ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਤੌਰ 'ਤੇ ਸ਼ਮੂਲੀਅਤ ਕੀਤੀ। ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਇਲਾਵਾ ਮਨਕੋਵਲ ਸਿੰਘ, ਭਾਈ ਅਮਰੀਕ ਸਿੰਘ ਗਿੱਲ, ਭਾਈ ਦਬਿੰਦਰਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ, ਤਨਮਨਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਚੌਸੀ, ਐੱਮ.ਪੀ. ਜੌਹਨ ਸਮੇਲਰ, ਐਲੋਕਸ ਸਲਮੇਨ, ਵੈਲੋਰੀ ਵਾਜ਼, ਖਾਲਿਦ ਮਹਿਮੂਦ ਆਦਿ ਹਾਜ਼ਰ ਸਨ।

Rt. Hon. Maria Miller, the Conservative MP for Basingstoke, acknowledged Guru Nanak's vision for equality. She also spoke of the importance of the UK Sikh Survey developed by the Sikh Network.

Rt. Hon. John McDonnell, the Shadow Chancellor and MP for Hayes and Harlington, spoke passionately about the importance to find the truth behind the British Government's involvement in the Sikh Genocide of 1984. He referred to the Sikh Manifesto, stating: "we will not desist until we get the truth" and called for a fully independent inquiry. He went on to say if we are celebrating anything today on Guru Nanak Dev Ji's Gurburb one of the essential teachings is the need for truth and justice and concluded "I give you this commitment we will continue to campaign until we secure an independent inquiry and until we secure truth and justice."

Angus Robertson, then Deputy Leader for the Scottish National Party (SNP) commended Sikh engagement, acknowledging Charandeep Singh as the first Sikh SNP candidate standing for the Scottish Parliament in 2015.

Baroness Lorely Burt, represented the Liberal Democrats, paid tribute to Sikh soldiers who fought in both World Wars and the importance of Sikh representation in Parliament.

David Lelliott, British Deputy High Commissioner for Chandigarh, shared his experience of the Sikh community in both Punjab and across the UK and thanked them all for their unified generosity.



Jas Singh of the Sikh Network provided a short update on the Sikh Manifesto and findings from the UK Sikh Survey.

The event ended with a recognition award ceremony. The following were awarded for their contribution in their own fields of work.

- Contribution to Politics – Jasbir Singh Athwal, Councillor in Redbridge
- Contribution to Sports – Harleen Kaur, World Martial combat silver medalist 2016
- Contribution to Education – Nick Singh Kandola, Executive Chair of the Khalsa Academies
- Contribution to Business – Ninder Johal, fmr President Black Country Chamber of Commerce
- Contribution to Media – Sandip Singh Khakh, Dharam Seva records
- Contribution to Human Rights – Phil Miller, Researcher and journalist
- Contribution to Charity & Selfless Seva– Ravinder Singh from Khalsa Aid
- Recognised Organisation – Sikh Welfare & Awareness Team (SWAT)
- Recognised International Contribution – Jagmeet Singh, Canadian Member of the Provincial Parliament in Ontario
- Recognised Lifetime Achievement – Dr Jagir Kaur Sekhon OBE former Cllr & Mayor of Greenwich

Mankamal Singh from the Sikh Network said: “it is great to be marking Guru Nanak Dev Ji’s Gurburb in Parliament, as he was not only the founder of the Sikh faith, but also the first Sikh activist. As Sikhs around the world celebrate in Gurdwaras, this year we are delighted to be also celebrating it in the UK Parliament, keeping to the Sikh tradition of Miri Piri.”

UK SIKH SURVEY EXPECTED TO SHAKE UP APPROACH BY GOVERNMENT AND POLITICIANS TO NEEDS OF BRITISH SIKHS

London – 24 November 2016. The findings from the UK Sikh Survey 2016, the largest and most comprehensive ever Sikh survey in the UK with over 4,500 respondents will be released tomorrow.

The Sikh Network who developed and managed the survey, supported by the Sikh Federation (UK) and other leading organisations has gone to great lengths to get responses from Sikhs across the spectrum in terms of their identity.

There are many important messages emerging from the survey that are of much wider interest. The report groups these messages under four themes:

1. Sikh identity
2. Discrimination, hate crime and grooming
3. Education, employment and contribution to society
4. Political activism and representation

The UK Sikh Survey report will be sent by the Sikh Federation (UK) to all Government Departments and MPs tomorrow morning with a formal university launch in the West Midlands by academics involved in analysing the results of the survey. Stakeholders from across government are in the process of being invited to a cross government ‘surgery’ next month, hosted by the Department for Communities and Local Government to tackle key issues emerging from the survey.

The findings are already being used. The Rt. Hon. Maria Miller, the former Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport and former Minister for Women and Equality who is currently the Chair of the Women and Equalities Select Committee has used information on discrimination from the UK Sikh



Network. It provides a comprehensive picture of the community, say the authors.

The biggest faith group was Christians (59.5%), followed by Muslims (4.4%) and Hindus (1.3%). Jews and Buddhists each form 0.4% of the population.

The survey found that more than two-thirds of Sikhs were born in Britain and nine out of 10 describe their nationality as British. The overwhelming majority reject being described as Indian or Asian.

A majority (58%) do not wear a turban, yet almost all (94%) would welcome a statutory code of practice for those who do and those who adhere to the 5Ks - kesh (uncut hair), kara (steel bracelet), kanga (wooden comb), kachha (special underclothing) and kirpan (ceremonial sword).

Sikhs form one of the most highly educated groups, with 58% having a degree or equivalent. Unemployment among Sikhs is almost half the general UK jobless rate, with more than one in five self-employed. They have the highest rate of owner-occupation for any group in the UK, at 92%.

In the last general election, 82% of Sikhs voted compared with the national average of 66%. They are five times more likely to be members of a political party than the general population. Yet there are no Sikhs sitting as MPs in the current parliament, although there are three Sikhs in the House of Lords. Only one in nine feels parliament effectively represents them.

'Many Sikhs in UK reject being called as Indian or Asian'

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

The Economic Times - 25 November 2016

LONDON: Many Sikhs in the UK reject being described as "Indian" or "Asian" and would prefer a separate ethnic category created for a Sikh identity, according to the findings of the **UK Sikh Survey 2016** released today.

The annual survey by the Sikh Network, involving 4,500 respondents from across the UK, also found that the community continues to face discrimination and hate crimes.

"This report contains the network's findings and is intended to assist government departments, other public bodies and political parties to understand existing trends and developments of the British Sikh community.



19 out of 20 Sikhs reject being described as 'Indian' or 'Asian'

"19 out of 20 Sikhs reject being described as 'Indian' or 'Asian'; 93.5 per cent of Sikhs would welcome the inclusion of a separate ethnic tick box for

Sikhs in the Census 2021; and more than 94 per cent of Sikhs would welcome a Statutory Code of Practice for the five Ks [kesh, kara, kanga, kachha and kirpan] and Sikh turban," the survey concludes.

It also highlights some "serious" implications for UK-India relations, with a majority of respondents

calling for an "independent public inquiry" into the actions of the UK government in the lead up to and after the June 1984 Operation Blue Star action at Golden Temple in Amritsar.

"92 per cent think there should be an independent public inquiry to establish the full facts about UK government involvement in the attack on Sri Harmandir Sahib in 1984," the report says.

It says Sikhs in Britain continue to face discrimination and hate crimes with almost one in five having encountered discrimination in a public place over the past year and one in seven directly experiencing workplace discrimination.

"Sikhs have remained 'invisible' to the government since 9/11 despite increased levels of discrimination and hate crimes targeting Sikhs. There are many important messages in the report around the unique British Sikh identity; discrimination, hate crime and grooming; education, employment and contribution to society and political activism and representation," **Sikh Federation (UK)** said.

The report found that Sikhs who wear religious iconography or clothing are most likely to experience abuse, with men in turbans more vulnerable than women.

The most common places where discrimination is experienced are airports and public transport.





The survey also notes that hate crimes against Sikhs are "wrongly" recorded as Islamophobic incidents by police, leading to a distortion of data.

It highlights that Sikhs form one of the most highly educated groups in the UK, with 58 per cent having a degree or equivalent. Unemployment among Sikhs is almost half the general UK jobless rate, with more than one in five self-employed.

MINISTERS IGNORING HATE CRIME DIRECTED AT SIKHS

1 December 2016. When Theresa May became Prime Minister, Amber Rudd Home Secretary and Sajid Javid the Secretary of State at the Department for Communities and Local Government, the Sikh Federation (UK) wrote to all three about hate crime directed towards the visible Sikh community.



For Sikhs this was not a new phenomenon following the Brexit vote, but something that raised its ugly head at the national and international level more than 15 years ago following 9/11, but has not been properly acknowledged by successive British governments.

The Sikh Federation (UK) was therefore dismayed when the Hate Crime Action Plan was issued several weeks later in July and appeared to have been written as though the estimated 750,000 British Sikh community did not exist.

The organisation wrote to Amber Rudd and Sajid Javid who jointly issued the Hate Crime Action Plan about Sikhs being ignored and results emerging from the UK Sikh Survey on the scale of hate crime directed towards Sikhs. It has now been over four months since the letter, but neither have formally responded.

When Sikh Federation (UK) and Sikh Network representatives met Home Office and DCLG officials at the Sikh roundtable meeting at DCLG on 12 September chaired by Lord Bourne they were embarrassingly unable to respond to the specific issues raised.

The Sikh Federation (UK) requested an urgent response to the letter dated 27 July 2016 and a specific written assurance from the Home Secretary that the government takes the security of the Sikh community seriously and what specific measures and funding for the visible Sikh community is being put in place to ensure their safety.

Rt. Hon. Maria Miller wrote to Amber Rudd and John Manzoni on 15 November regarding discrimination experienced by members of the Sikh community at the hands of police officers that must be impacting on the lack of hate crimes being reported.

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

“More than 30 years ago Sikhs were legally recognised by the Law lords, the highest court in the country, as a “race” and afforded protection. However, whilst individual Sikhs have been successful to prosecute in cases of direct and indirect discrimination the community as a whole has continued to suffer in silence.”

“The Prime Minister announced in late August that ‘race audits’ would be conducted within 12 months. Given the way the Home Office and others have dealt with hate crimes directed towards Sikhs we expect the Home Office to come up short and give new meaning to the term ‘institutional racism’.”



UK SIKH SURVEY SUGGESTS POLITICAL PARTIES AND POLITICIANS ARE FAILING BRITISH SIKHS

London – 1 December 2016. The Sikh Federation (UK), often referred to as the one and only Sikh political party, was set up 13 years ago in September 2003 to ensure Sikhs played an active part in mainstream politics.

The Sikh Network was set up two years ago to develop, produce and co-ordinate delivery of the Sikh Manifesto before the 2015 General Election released the findings of the UK Sikh Survey.

The UK Sikh Survey indicates the Sikh Federation (UK) has been successful in ensuring Sikhs register and turnout to vote in large numbers, with an estimated turnout of 82% at the last General Election compared to 56% for all BME voters.

The survey, also for the first time, provides information on the extent to which the Sikh Federation (UK) has encouraged Sikhs to become members of political parties and finds Sikhs are five times more likely to become members of the mainstream political parties.



Although at the 2015 General Election there were 41 minority ethnic MPs, 14 more than in the previous Parliament, there were no Sikh MPs for the first time since 1992. Ironically the one Sikh MP, Paul Uppal lost his seat in Wolverhampton South West in May 2015 as the Sikh Federation (UK) successfully campaigned to have him unseated for failing to adequately represent the Sikh community on key issues and because he was a poor MP.

Whilst much of the public focus at the time was on Paul Uppal losing his seat to Labour’s Rob Marris the Sikh Manifesto was effectively used to also unseat other Conservative MPs in Ilford North and Brentford and Isleworth despite a national swing towards the Conservatives and away from Labour.

The UK Sikh Survey however highlights political parties are failing to connect with large numbers of Sikh voters. Despite the large number of Sikhs who join political parties the survey indicates the proportion who identify with a party ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ strongly is at 35% and lower than the national average of 41%. However, the proportion who felt no identification with a political party is a staggering 39% and much higher than the national average of 15%. Overall this suggests around 10% of Sikhs associate so strongly with political parties that they chose to become members, but on the whole the political parties are struggling to get the vast majority of Sikh voters to identify with them.

Sikhs have no MPs in Parliament and there are only three Sikh Lords, two Conservatives and one cross-bencher. Only one in nine or 11% of those responding to the UK Sikh Survey indicated that they felt the UK Parliament (Commons and Lords) effectively represented them as a Sikh, although a quarter were not sure. 77% of those responding to the UK Sikh Survey indicated their political engagement and interest would be increased if there were more Sikh MPs & Peers.

Over 72% of those who responded to the UK Sikh Survey believe their local MP has been either ineffective or not very effective since the May 2015 General Election on Sikh issues set out in the Sikh Manifesto.

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

“The UK Sikh Survey provides invaluable information to the Sikh community, politicians and political parties.”



“Sikhs can be proud they are turning out in record numbers to use their right to vote and joining the mainstream political parties in large numbers. However, the survey suggests political parties and politicians are failing British Sikhs.”

“Political parties are out of touch and do not appeal to many in the community especially those under the age of 50 and many individual politicians are neglecting to take up many serious issues that impact on the Sikh community.

“Politicians need to raise their game and the parties need to make sure there are also Sikh representatives in Parliament in the Commons and Lords that will make sure these issues are properly addressed.”

'Lack of representation in parliament is concerning': Sikhs on living in the UK



The Guardian – 5 December 2016 (extract)

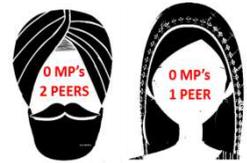
Guardian readers shared their experiences of being a British Sikh and whether the situation has changed over the years.

Almost one in five Sikhs has experienced discrimination in a public place over the last year, according to the UK Sikh Survey 2016.

The Sikh Federation, who published the survey, said British Sikhs have been “invisible to the government since 9/11,” and found that those who wear religious clothing, such as the *dastar*

(head covering), are most likely to experience abuse.

The survey found more than two-thirds of Sikhs were born in Britain and nine out of 10 describe their nationality as British. The overwhelming majority reject being described as Indian or Asian. Sikhs are five times more likely than the average to be a member of a political party, however there are currently no Sikhs in parliament.



POSITIVE CROSS-GOVERNMENT MEETING TO DISCUSS THE UK SIKH SURVEY

London – 20 December 2016. Recently there has been widespread national and international media coverage about the UK Sikh Survey 2016.

Today the Sikh Network that developed and managed the UK Sikh Survey 2016, the largest and most comprehensive ever survey of UK Sikhs held a cross-government meeting with representatives from the Cabinet Office, Home Office, Department for Communities and Local Government, Department for Education, Government Equalities Office, Mayor of London’s office and the Association of Chief Police Officers, National Community Tension Team.



Presentations were given by five representatives of the Sikh Network. Dabinderjit Singh gave the introduction and presented the section on the Sikh identity. Sukhvinder Singh reported on discrimination, hate crime and grooming. Manvir Singh described the many positives emerging from the UK Sikh Survey in terms of education, employment and contribution to society. Randeep Singh provided context in terms of political activism and representation. Gurmukh Singh introduced the 45-minute discussion and question section.

The discussions began with a focus on the Sikh success story of integration and respect for British values, whilst



maintaining the distinct Sikh identity and Sikh way of life. It has been suggested different parts of government may wish to point to the Sikh community as a role model community with respect to 69% of Sikhs being born in the UK, 91% have British nationality, Sikhs are the least likely to be unemployed, the huge number of Sikh sacrifices in the two World Wars, a very high level of Sikh political activism in terms of voter turnout and membership of political parties, the highest levels of educational attainment, a huge level of charitable contributions and the greatest levels of home ownership.

Focus then turned to the pressing need for a Code of Practice for the 5Ks and turban to tackle discrimination and ignorance. A proposal based on Equalities and Human Rights Commission guidance has now been put forward and is anticipated to get senior Ministerial support.

The position on hate crime had shifted and plans were now in place to acknowledge the problem of Sikhs being targeted and the need to tackle under-reporting and incorrect recording by police forces.

It was pointed out the UK Sikh Survey has highlighted many limitations of the Census 2011 data with regards to Sikhs that could only be addressed by the Census 2021 having a separate Sikh ethnic tick box. The conversation touched upon the low level of political representation in the Commons and Lords for Sikhs in comparison to other faith communities and the importance of government needing to work with grassroots Sikh organisations. In conclusion there was a short discussion on the need for the annual race audit of public services ordered by the Prime Minister, Theresa May in August 2016 needing to specifically consider Sikhs as a legally recognised and protected group.

Sikhs in UK hail Theresa May's message on Gurburb

Times of India - 7 January 2017

TOI



AMRITSAR: The Sikh community has hailed the message of British Prime Minister Theresa May on the occasion of 350th birth anniversary of Sikhs' 10th master Guru Gobind Singh Ji.

UK-based **Sikh Federation's** Amrik Singh

on Friday said, "It is good to see she is receiving timely advice from her special adviser on religious matters. The adviser had attended the well-organized Guru Nanak Dev Ji's birth anniversary

celebrations by the Sikh Federation (UK) and Sikh Network in Parliament in November. We hope this marks a better and more productive relationship between the government and the British Sikh community," he said.

A part of May's message read, "Today marks a very special anniversary for Sikhs in the United Kingdom and around the world: 350 years since the birth of Guru Gobind Singh. I know millions of people will be reflecting on his great achievement, the establishment of the Khalsa, and what it represents - people standing up for equality, respect and fairness, and helping those less fortunate than themselves."

UK Sikhs seek 'separate identity' in next census

Times of India - 21 February 2017

TOI

AMRITSAR: Sikhs in the UK are hopeful of securing a separate ethnic tick box for the community in the next Census in 2021 even as the community is already recognized as a separate religion in the optional religious question introduced in the Census 2001.



Gurjeet Singh, national press secretary of **Sikh Federation (UK)**, told TOI on Monday that Sikh organizations and Gurdwaras came together at the time of the Census 2011 to demonstrate the strength of feeling in the Sikh community by urging the Sikhs to reject existing categories like Indian and use the write-in option by ticking other and writing Sikh.



He said that Office for National Statistics (ONS) had confirmed nearly 84,000 Sikhs in the Census 2011 had 'protested' by doing that. This number is several times higher than any other group using the write-in option, like Kashmiris were around 25,000.

He claimed that Sikh Federation, Sikh Network

and the All Party Parliamentary Group for UK Sikhs had been working closely with the ONS for the last two years and leading the campaign. "ONS has carried out several consultations in last two years and in 2017 are carrying out a number of tests and research before reaching a final decision later this year and presenting proposals to Parliament in the Census White Paper in 2018, before approval in 2019," Gurjeet added.

Chair of the Sikh body, Amrik Singh said, "We have started our awareness campaign to ensure as many Sikh households as possible, probably around 2,000 each in Hounslow and Wolverhampton take part in the survey. We are in the process of liaising with MPs, local councillors and Gurdwaras to provide any assistance necessary with those who require help in completing the online survey as we would during the Census itself."

He further said that they had been in contact with both MPs for Hounslow - Ruth Cadbury and Seema Malhotra - and three MPs for Wolverhampton - Rob Marris, Pat McFadden and Emma Reynolds - who were supportive of the demand for a Sikh ethnic tick box.

SIKHS FROM ACROSS EUROPE MEET IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT TO AGREE A TWO-YEAR STRATEGY FOR MEASURES TO SAFEGUARD THE SIKH IDENTITY BEFORE THE UK EXITS THE EUROPEAN UNION

London – 19 July 2017. Sikh representatives from across Europe met at the European Parliament yesterday and agreed a number of actions aimed at safeguarding the Sikh identity in Europe. The conference explored the Kirpan issue in Italy, developments of the World Sikh Parliament and the political campaign for establishing a Sikh homeland.

With the UK setting negotiations to exit the European Union, the Sikh Federation (UK) convened an urgent meeting of Sikh representatives from across Europe to start developing a strategy in relation to defending the Sikh identity.

Representatives from each country shared the challenges it faced. As each country faced different challenges this led to an agreed action that representatives from a dozen countries will produce a first draft of a standard position paper on the situation in their country to agree at the national level. The papers will set out challenges faced regarding Sikh identity, hate crimes, mistaken identity post 9/11, best practice community examples to address challenges and relevant public organisations to involve and lobby. These papers would be consolidated into a Europe-wide report that can be used at the national and European level and as the basis for the next Europe-wide conference.



Harpal Singh Cheema, the President of Dal Khalsa, highlighted the political situation in Punjab and outlined the exciting development of the World Sikh Parliament. The Sikh Federation (UK) proposed a number of actions at country level linked to support for the right to self determination and political campaign for establishing a Sikh homeland, Khalistan.



These focused around developing links and collaboration with:

- well respected and recognised nationalist movements that have credibility in respective countries, such as the Scottish National Party;
- three of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, directly in the UK and France and via respective embassies for these countries and the USA in individual countries – the next conference in six months time would elaborate on links with the other two permanent members - China and Russia that are currently being progressed by the Sikh Federation (UK); and
- politicians and political parties on the right to Sikh self determination setting out the historic and based on experiences the current case for Sikh independence.



Once again Sikhs from across Europe were grateful for how the authorities in the European Parliament fully respected the right of large numbers of Amritdhari Sikhs to enter Parliament openly wearing their Kirpans despite increased security following several terrorist incidents across Europe, including Brussels.

Sikhs in Europe discuss religious identity issues

TOI

Times of India - 19 July 2017

AMRITSAR: Sikh representatives from across Europe recently met at the European Parliament to discuss actions aimed at safeguarding the Sikh identity in Europe. Besides, they also discussed about the Kirpan issue in Italy.



Gurjeet Singh informed that to aid discussions and develop a strategy, countries across Europe were divided into four categories: countries with well-established Sikh communities where Sikh identity issues were reasonably well understood; countries with secular policies where Sikhs had been experiencing significant difficulties; countries with Sikh communities that were growing and had been establishing themselves in more recent times; and countries with governments that had right-wing policies and practices where Sikhs need to remain vigilant.

He informed that using the above groupings, the challenges faced with regards to the Sikh identity were explained by representatives from each country. "It was clear that the challenges faced by Sikhs in each country were different and required a variety of interventions," he said.

Gurjeet Singh of Sikh Federation, UK, told TOI that with UK starting negotiations to exit the European Union in motion, an urgent meeting of Sikh representatives from across Europe was convened to start developing a strategy in relation to defending the Sikh identity.

"We will hold similar conferences across Europe at least every 6 months for the next two years," he said.

Sikhs from Italy, representing the National Dharam Parchar Committee, gave a historic perspective on the Kirpan issue and the recent controversial developments. "They provided useful evidence on the lack of iron content of the Kirpan that has been proposed, compared to existing Kirpans that made it absolutely clear that Jathedar of Akal Takht Giani Gurbachan Singh should never have even entertained the current proposal" he said.



RAISING AWARENESS & CAMPAIGNING FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

SIKH LEADER CAMPAIGNING FOR KHALISTAN SECURES BRITISH PASSPORT AFTER LONG LEGAL BATTLE

London – 29 September 2016. Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK), more than 40 years after coming to the UK has eventually secured his British nationality after a long and costly legal battle in the High Court where Theresa May, the then Home Secretary and now the Prime Minister was forced to back down.



Within the British Sikh community he has been by far the most significant personality over the last 30 years and has often been invited to give leadership and resolve internal community conflicts. In 2011, he was given the first and only life-time achievement award by the Sikh Channel – this was a prestigious award for an outstanding individual who has made a significant contribution to the Sikh community over many years.

He is a successful businessman who has been living with his family in Southampton since he moved to the UK in 1976 with a Masters degree in Politics from Panjab University, Amritsar. His wife has been a British national all her life and their two sons and grandchildren were all born in the UK and are also British nationals.

He has met Tony Blair, David Cameron and Theresa May as well as HM Queen. He is also well known to past and present local politicians from all the main political parties. He has known John Denham, the former Home Office Minister, for nearly 30 years and is also friends with veteran Labour MP Alan Whitehead. Caroline Nokes his local Conservative MP has often been to his house and attended family functions. Her predecessor Liberal Democrat Sandra Gidley was also someone who visited him at home and kept close ties with him given his high profile in the British Sikh community.

Soon after the June 1984 Indian army Genocide at Sri Harmandir Sahib the Indian authorities coerced the Thatcher-led government to introduce restrictions on Sikh activists, especially those vocal on the demand for a separate Sikh homeland, Khalistan. Papers released since January 2014 under the 30-year rule continue to reveal how India pressured the UK in that period with promises of trade deals and almost certainly until the present day to take anti-Sikh measures.

Restrictions on British nationality became apparent in 1985 when a number of leading Sikh activists, who were law abiding and lived in the UK for many years were denied British nationality, this included Bhai Amrik Singh. Despite several applications for British nationality from the mid-1980s to 2007 he was always denied this right that many of us take for granted.

In 2000, his Indian passport expired and the Indian High Commission refused without reason to issue him with a new passport.

In June 2013 Bhai Amrik Singh employed lawyers and applied for British nationality again. He submitted a comprehensive dossier of evidence with his application, including copies of the passports of his wife, children and grandchildren.

He was pleased when he was granted citizenship on 3 October 2013. After the citizenship ceremony, the certificate was returned due to the Home Office having made a typographical error in relation to the date of birth. The ceremony coordinator told Bhai Amrik Singh to complete the ceremony and return

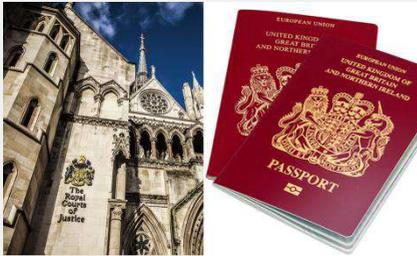


the certificate to the Home Office thereafter as it was a simple administrative matter on their part that should be rectified.

For over seven months Cameron Clarke Lawyers acting for Bhai Amrik Singh chased the Nationality team at the Home Office. Eventually they responded in late May 2014 stating they had made a mistake and the granting of naturalisation that was issued was declared null and void by the Home Secretary. The Home Office said they would make a fresh consideration of the application and said a decision would be made within four weeks of 22 May 2014.

Many will be aware, Bhai Amrik Singh was extensively quoted in mainstream media following the revelations in January 2014 of UK involvement in advising the Indian authorities on the Genocide at Sri Hamdandir Sahib in June 1984. Was it just a coincidence that the granting of naturalisation was declared null and void following the Sikh Federation (UK) criticism of the internal review being unsatisfactory and after calls for an independent public inquiry?

A decision to refuse the application was eventually made on 21 July 2014 stating Bhai Amrik Singh was “not of good character”. He appealed to the Special Immigration Appeals Commission (SIAC) as suggested within 10 days of the refusal.



At the directions hearing in October 2014 the SIAC judge was so perplexed by the U-turn and final decision by the Home Secretary that he suggested Bhai Amrik Singh’s solicitor and barrister should apply for judicial review in the High Court. A judicial review application was made and accepted by the High Court.

In November 2014, Home Office lawyers resorted to employing delaying tactics insisting on the outcome of the Hyaj, Bakijasi and Kaziu v Home Secretary case in the Court of Appeal before proceeding any further. The Court ruled in favour of the Home Secretary on 12 November 2015, but it soon emerged this case was not at all relevant as the facts were very different. Ironically, at around the same time the Indian authorities indicated through intermediaries it was willing to issue Bhai Amrik Singh an Indian passport. He politely refused.

In a separate legal challenge by the leadership of the Sikh Federation (UK), including Bhai Amrik Singh, the Home Secretary confirmed on 14 December 2015 that she would be recommending to Parliament that the ban on the International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF) be removed. On 22 December 2015 the Home Secretary conceded that her original decision on 3 October 2013 to grant citizenship was correct and her subsequent decisions in May 2014 and July 2014 were wrong. The ordeal did not end there, with a further delay of nine months before a passport was eventually issued in September following threats to take the matter back to the High Court.

Following the issue of the British passport Cameron Clarke Lawyers acting for Bhai Amrik Singh said:

“All the tiresome hard work, dedication, diligence and perseverance of Amrik Singh and Tony Shergill of Cameron Clarke Lawyers has paid off and provided Amrik Singh with the freedom to travel overseas which so many British nationals take for granted. It is a great day for justice and the truth has prevailed.”

Rob Marris MP, the then Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for British Sikhs and an adviser to the Sikh Federation (UK) stated:

“The withdrawal of citizenship was shocking. The UK Government was of course legally entitled to refuse his application on the basis of evidence. The UK Government was not entitled to withdraw its acceptance of his application for a minor technical mistake (a mistake of the government’s making) to



enable it to have a second bite of the cherry. In the legal sense, that withdrawal was unequivocal. In the everyday sense it was just plain unfair. I am pleased that this unfairness has been rectified – after all, fairness is a key part of being British!”

SIKH FEDERATION (UK) STATEMENT FOLLOWING TENSIONS BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN

London – 29 September 2016. Bhai Amrik Singh, Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK): “If India and Pakistan go to war it would be a worldwide disaster. Using their nuclear arsenal would leave tens of millions dead within the first week. Over two billion people worldwide would face the risk of severe starvation due to the impact of nuclear war on the climate.”



“We are worried about extreme politicians on both sides with fingers on the nuclear button. They are dangerous and irresponsible and cannot be trusted with over 250 nuclear warheads between them.”

“We have been raising these concerns for almost 20 years and urging world powers to take tough action before it is too late. Only 12 months ago, when Narendra Modi came to the UK we warned David Cameron that those in power in India were fanatical and a threat to world peace. However, countries like the US, France and the UK have simply been concerned with trade and turning a blind eye to the treatment of minorities.”

“We met UK Foreign Office Ministers around 12 years ago when the possibility of war between India and Pakistan was last on the cards and discussed the importance of countries supporting a sovereign Sikh state that would provide an important buffer. They may now realise what we were suggesting was worth serious thought.”

“It was explained the Sikh homeland was on either side of the border and it would be destroyed along with virtually all Sikh religious institutions. It would be like the June 1984 Sikh Genocide but a hundred times worse. Sikhs across the globe would lose all their history, loved ones and ancestral homes.”

“UK Ministers at that time were also worried that it could lead to unrest in the UK as Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims could turn on each other given what they would be witnessing.”

THOUSANDS OF SIKHS ARRESTED IN PUNJAB AS THERESA MAY FLIES INTO DELHI

London – 6 November 2016. On 10 November a Sarbat Khalsa (assembly of all Sikhs) is scheduled to take place at Talwandi Sabo (Bathinda), although developments in the last 48 hours make this much more difficult. The gathering last year on the same day held in Chabba village on the outskirts of Amritsar attracted an estimated 500,000 Sikhs.



The large turnout last year was on the back of several incidents of desecration of the Sikh Holy Scriptures, the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and the killing and brutal beatings by Punjab police of Sikhs peacefully protesting against the desecrations a few weeks earlier. Besides indiscriminate firing, police used water cannons, tear-gas, and lathi charges to disperse protesters conducting morning prayers.

It has been widely reported that the police has today been conducting raids across Punjab and have arrested or rounded up at least 1500 Sikhs, including many of the organisers mobilising support for the Sarbat Khalsa to prevent a high turnout.



There are claims that the police has uprooted the tents the Sarbat Khalsa organisers erected for the main event and the district administration on Saturday denied permission to use the planned 63 acre site for holding the Sarbat Khalsa stating law and order concerns. An appeal has been filed in the Punjab and Haryana high court seeking permission for the Sarbat Khalsa, but it looks as though the legal hurdles and the heavy handed tactics may prevent the Sarbat Khalsa from taking place.

A spokesman for the Sikh Federation (UK) said: “We condemn in the strongest terms the Badal-BJP Punjab Government for the crackdown ahead of the Sarbat Khalsa planned for 10 November. The ruling alliance believe they are on their way out and fear all forms of opposition ahead of the assembly polls early next year. They have shown they have no respect for the tradition of holding a Sarbat Khalsa that was started by the tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh Ji at times of hardship or conflict.”

UK SIKH SURVEY: IMPLICATIONS FOR UK-INDIA RELATIONS

London – 25 November 2016. The findings from the UK Sikh Survey 2016, the largest and most comprehensive ever Sikh survey in the UK with over 4500 respondents released today have been widely reported in the mainstream media in the UK.

There are many important messages in the report around the unique British Sikh identity; discrimination, hate crime and grooming; education, employment and contribution to society and political activism and representation.

UK politicians received a copy of the report before the formal university launch in the West Midlands by academics involved in analysing the results of the survey.



There are potentially also serious implications for UK-India relations. By all unofficial accounts the recent visit by Theresa May to India was a disaster as she refused to shift on the issue of visas irrespective of the impact on future trade. The last section of the findings report for the survey looking at the relevance to Sikh Manifesto issues has some worrying statistics for India that will not be lost on UK politicians. Apart from 19 out of 20 Sikhs rejecting being described as ‘Indian’ or ‘Asian’ the responses to the last three sections of the Sikh Manifesto reproduced below will worry Indian Government officials:

Section 8 - Independent public inquiry into UK Government action in the lead up to and after the 1984 Sikh Genocide

- 92% think there should be an independent public inquiry to establish the full facts about UK Government involvement in the attack on Sri Harmandir Sahib in 1984
- 92% think the independent public inquiry should also cover actions the UK Government has taken against the Sikh community at the request of India from raising its voice of concern
- 85% believe the UK Government has been influenced by the Indian Government in its unfair treatment of Sikh political and religious activists



Section 9 - UN-led inquiry into the 1984 Sikh Genocide

- More than 97% have no or limited confidence in promises by the Modi led Indian government to prosecute those involved in the Sikh Genocide in 1984 or the Badal led Punjab Government to prosecute police officers involved in torture and fake encounters.
- 93% think the UK Government should support a UN-led inquiry into the 1984 Sikh Genocide

Section 10 - Application of self determination to the Sikhs

- 92% of Sikhs are owner/occupiers the highest for any group in the UK
- 98% believe that every Sikh has the right to determine their own future as a basic human right
- 89% think the UK Government has a historic and moral responsibility towards Sikhs and their right to self determination

UK GOVERNMENT CONDEMNED ON HANDLING OF APPLICATION TO HAVE BAN LIFTED ON INTERNATIONAL SIKH YOUTH FEDERATION (ISYF)

Sikh Federation (UK) representatives who made application praised by leading lawyer

London – 22 December 2016. David Anderson QC, the independent reviewer of terrorism legislation in the last of his six annual reports released earlier this month into the operation of the Terrorism Acts, has heavily criticised the UK Government on its handling of the application to have the ban removed on the International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF).



The UK's outgoing terror watchdog David Anderson QC in his 142-page report outlined standards that have to be followed when handling applications for deproscription and which he claims were not met in the case of the application made on behalf of the International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF) in February 2015.

In a damning indictment he has pointed out that “remarkably, the Government presented no evidence to Proscribed Organisations Appeal Commission (POAC) in favour of its own position. Indeed it elected not to defend the case in December 2015, on the final day appointed by POAC for the submission of such evidence. Given the opportunity to state in Parliament whether new evidence had come to light by December 2015 . . . the Government declined to do so.”

David Anderson QC has made clear: “Without resorting to legal action, the ISYF would remain a proscribed organisation today” despite the complete absence of evidence. “The ISYF was fortunate to have both the resources to take the case to POAC, and sympathisers willing to put their head above the parapet. This will not be true of other organisations.”

Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) said: “The leadership of the Sikh Federation (UK) decided to challenge the UK Government and prove there was no evidence to retain the ban on the ISYF.”

“We were confident of a victory as we have discovered increasing evidence in the last two years under the 30-year rule of how the Indian authorities have in effect been using promises of trade since the mid-1980s and ‘blackmailing’ the UK Government to take wholly inappropriate and extreme anti-Sikh measures.”



“Many of these measures have been through the British intelligence services and police who have been working hand in glove with their Indian counter parts. We will do our best in 2017 to start to reveal the truth behind the Anglo-Indian conspiracy against the Sikhs.”

“The actions taken collectively by the British and Indian authorities against the minority Sikh community are a complete disgrace given the huge contribution and sacrifices by Sikhs for freedoms in both the Indian sub-continent and Europe.”

“Ever since the ban in March 2001 we have kept in close contact initially with Lord Carlile of Berriew CBE QC who held the position of terror watchdog for nine years and David Anderson QC for the last six years. As leading lawyers familiar with the politics they have understood and sympathised with our position.”

INDIAN INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES AGAINST LEADING BRITISH SIKH EXPOSED

London – 26 January 2017. The Tribune article published earlier this week under the title: ‘Khalistan leader potential flashpoint in India-UK ties’ was an extremely poor piece of journalism and an attempt to discredit Dabinderjit Singh Sidhu, a leading British Sikh activist. The article also tried and failed to create doubts in the minds of senior politicians and key parts of the British establishment that have great respect for the British Sikh community.



Dabinderjit Singh Sidhu OBE, advisor to SFUK

The article has however succeeded in exposing the extent of Indian intelligence activities in the UK against British Sikh activists that is of great concern and highlighted the sorts of pressures exerted on the British authorities against the Sikh Federation (UK) for exercising the right of freedom of expression in its political demand for a Sikh homeland. The Tribune journalist, Ashis Ray, better known as a Test Match commentator, who is a close confidant of the Indian authorities also distorted and misquoted Dr Adrian Hunt, an expert in counterterrorism law at the University of Birmingham.

In a direct communication with Dabinderjit Singh, Dr Adrian Hunt expressed his concern and confirmed writing to the Tribune and the journalist to complain he had been misquoted and his comments were used out of context.

In his complaint he has said he was afraid the “way you have misquoted me in this article, and connected that misquote with Dabinderjit Singh Sidhu, does not reflect the ethos” of the Tribune to publish “news and views without any bias or prejudice of any kind”.

Dabinderjit Singh Sidhu is an adviser to the Sikh Federation (UK) and one of the most highly respected and decorated Sikhs in the British establishment. He became the equivalent of a senior civil servant at a very young age some 17 years ago and no other Sikh has reached a more senior level in government circles.

A Sikh Federation (UK) spokesman said: “The Indian regime and intelligence fear that someone of his profile and seniority has unequivocal and forthright views of not only the Sikhs right to self determination, but the establishment of a Sikh homeland. As a practising Sikh he has never hesitated to express views condemning the blatant abuse of human rights in India or elsewhere. Since the Tribune article was published he has been inundated with calls and messages of support from Sikhs and non-Sikhs across the globe.”



The Tribune article demonstrates Indian intelligence is clearly getting very desperate having failed to discredit him directly with his employers, British intelligence (MI5), the British Government (Cabinet Office and Foreign Office) and the Leader of the Opposition over what appears to be a campaign extending over many years. They have now as a last resort and worried Dabinderjit could end up in the House of Lords opted to “planting stories like this” said one British MP. The same MP continued by stating tongue-in-cheek he never knew Dabinderjit was “so pivotal to UK/India relations”.

Dabinderjit Singh is well known and admired as a Sikh activist across the globe and this has not gone un-noticed by the Indian authorities. The Vancouver Sun reported nearly nine years ago that the previous Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had written to the Canadian Prime Minister, Stephen Harper to try and prevent Dabinderjit Singh from visiting Canada without success. In a serious rebuttal of the Indian position Stephen Harper speaking in Bangalore publicly acknowledged in 2012 that “merely advocating for Khalistan was not a crime”. He added that “we can’t interfere with the right of political freedom of expression.”

“The Tribune failed to report that in 2000, he was awarded an OBE for his contribution to equal opportunities, after 9/11 he was asked by the Metropolitan Police in New Scotland Yard to become an independent adviser and, as part of his work on Defence related matters in the UK and as a UK representative in Europe, he has received the highest level of security clearance.”

“Dabinderjit is not just an advocate for Sikh rights, but an important commentator who is often called upon by many to give advice on a wide range of issues from a Sikh community perspective.”

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY MUST RECOGNISE AND RESPOND TO INCREASING THREAT AND CHALLENGE OF EXTREME HINDU NATIONALISM IN INDIA

Right wing Indian politicians, cricketers and Bollywood stars join in abuse and fail to distance themselves from rape and death threats against dead army man’s daughter, 21-year old Gurmehar Kaur for her stance on peace and free speech

London - 1 March 2017. The Sikh Federation (UK) following the abuse and threats targeting 21-year old Gurmehar Kaur has written to the five permanent members of the United Nations and appealed to the international community to recognise the increasing threat and challenge of Hindutva.



Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) said: “The international community and governments across the globe need to come together, recognise and stand up to the rising threat of extreme Hindu nationalism being openly promoted by the ruling establishment in India.”

“Indian politicians and officials appear to be able to intimidate and silence many individual governments with their threats, often linked to trade with India.

Only countries like the United States and China are strong enough and prepared to openly criticise those running India, but it requires a collective effort to tackle the rising threat.”

“The BJP ruling party openly supports extreme actions by right wing Hindu groups. Today a 21-year old Sikh student is not only being intimidated and ridiculed, but openly threatened with rape and murder. Those hounding her are being protected and encouraged by those with power and influence. She is standing up for peace and free speech while governments are choosing to coward away and be silent.”



Boris Johnson apologises after discussing alcohol in Sikh temple

theguardian

The Guardian – 17 May 2017

Boris Johnson has apologised after he caused a “livid” reaction in a worshipper in a Sikh temple by discussing his enthusiasm for a boost in the whisky trade, apparently without realising that alcohol is forbidden under Sikh teachings.

The Foreign Secretary, who is widely seen as having been side-lined during the election campaign over his perceived propensity for gaffes, was visiting a Sikh temple in St George in Bristol when he made remarks about ending tariffs on whisky traded between the UK and India.

In a BBC recording of the event, a female worshipper can be heard taking him to task, asking: “How dare you talk about alcohol in a Sikh temple?” After the unidentified woman also told him about alcoholism in her family, he apologised several times.

Johnson was visiting the Shri Guru Nanak Prakash Singh Sabha Gurdwara in Bristol in an

effort to woo voters from the city’s large Sikh community.

Bhai Narinderjit Singh, general secretary of the Sikh Federation, said that “no politician in his right mind” would speak in a Gurdwara about a trade deal involving alcohol. “It is a requirement that Sikhs should not consume any intoxicants. Anyone (Sikh or non-Sikh) who has consumed alcohol or has tobacco on them is not allowed to enter a Gurdwara, Sikh place of worship. There are signs up in all Gurdwaras.”

Singh said “Boris Johnson should know much better - after all, he is the foreign secretary, and his mother-in-law is a Sikh.”



Sikhs offer refuge after London Bridge terror attack

The Telegraph

Daily Telegraph - 4 June 2017



Over 25,000 Sikhs are expected to congregate in Trafalgar Square at noon to remember the 1984 Sikh massacre.

last night and this morning we have come to the mutual decision that the event today (Sunday 4 June) will continue.

"This sends a strong message to all terrorists that they will never stop us remembering the tens of thousands of Sikhs who lost their lives in 1984.

"It will also be an opportunity to remember and to stand shoulder to shoulder with the innocents killed and injured in the last few weeks in Manchester and London."

The Sikh Federation (UK) wrote: "Having discussed arrangements for the Remembrance and Freedom event with the Metropolitan Police

OVER 25,000 GATHER TO REMEMBER VICTIMS OF 1984 SIKH GENOCIDE

London – 4 June 2017

- On the eve of General Election legal and political pressure to be increased for independent public inquiry into Margaret Thatcher’s complicity in the 1984 Sikh Genocide and anti-Sikh measures against British Sikh activists
- International pressure to be increased for a UN-led investigation into the 1984 Sikh Genocide



- Renewed efforts to present a case under international law for the establishment of an independent Sikh state, Khalistan to act as a buffer between India and Pakistan
- One-minute silence for all the innocent civilians killed in 1984 Sikh Genocide, Manchester and last night in London



The event was split into three core sections: Truth, Justice and Freedom.

Truth focused on the need for 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. Further details were revealed about the ongoing legal action and political campaign for an independent public inquiry to get to the truth of UK involvement.

The Labour Party committed in its 2017 General Election manifesto to hold an independent public inquiry into the actions of the UK Government and confirmed the inquiry will also address restrictions imposed on British Sikhs in the UK.

Justice focused on the need for a UN-led investigation into the 1984 Sikh Genocide. Attendees came to know that according to the definition of Genocide in Article 2 of the UN Convention on Genocide 1948 the series of events in June 1984, the killings and disappearances in the months that followed and the systematic and deliberate killing of innocent Sikhs in November 1984, separately and collectively constitute Genocide.

The Sikh Federation (UK) disclosed at the rally in Trafalgar Square they have been lobbying the five permanent members of the UN Security Council for a UN-led inquiry into the atrocities committed by the Indian authorities in 1984.

Freedom focused on the right to self-determination being a basic human right founded in international law and absolutely fundamental to the protection of individual rights. Attendees heard how 70 years ago in 1947 and despite a number of extant Anglo-Sikh friendship treaties Britain illegitimately divided the Sikh homeland during the disaster of Partition and created India and Pakistan.

For more than 35 years, the Sikhs made substantial efforts aimed at securing greater rights within India.



The demands for greater autonomy for Punjab were not only violently rejected by the Indian State but have been crushed with Indian state terror. India has refused to change its Constitution and have legal safeguards for the culture, language and religion of the Sikhs and lost the right to rely on the territorial integrity argument by oppressing the minority Sikh community.

Following the recent criticism of India at the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the Narendra Modi-led Indian Government at the UN Human Rights Council that UN member states have an appetite to push for accountability and change.



SIKHS APPEAL TO FIVE PERMANENT MEMBERS OF UN SECURITY COUNCIL TO INVESTIGATE THE 1984 SIKH GENOCIDE AND RECOGNISE THE DEMAND FOR A SEPARATE SIKH HOMETLAND, KHALISTAN

London – 7 June 2017. The Federation of Sikh Organisations (FSO) has written to the five permanent members of the UN Security Council on the 33rd anniversary of the Indian army attack on the Sri Harmandir Sahib Complex in Amritsar in June 1984 and the 1984 Sikh Genocide.



The letter addressed to the next British Prime Minister has been copied to the United States of America, Chinese, French and Russian Governments. The letter states: “the Sikh campaign for Truth, Justice and Freedom is an international campaign requiring the support of foreign governments and the international community.”

The letter calls on the next British Prime Minister to hold an independent public inquiry to get to the truth of UK involvement in the 1984 Sikh Genocide. The letter states: “The British Sikh response to the revelations (in January 2014) was not to respond by using violence, but use peaceful democratic means such as protests, legal challenge and political pressure to get to the truth. In turn we need the UK Government to respect our approach and enter a meaningful dialogue at Ministerial level on how best to deliver the truth of UK involvement and assistance from the international community to expose the Indian authorities for failing to deliver justice for the 1984 Sikh Genocide.”

The five permanent members of the UN Security Council have been urged to push for a UN-led inquiry into the atrocities committed by the Indian authorities in 1984 and for UN rapporteurs and independent experts to carry out independent investigations into the torture, disappearances, false encounters and extra-judicial executions.

The letter in reference to the right to self determination and the demand for an independent Sikh state continues: “The UK Government working with other permanent members of the UN Security Council has a historic, legal and moral responsibility towards the Sikhs to help through diplomatic means and respect for international law to resolve a conflict that still continues.”

The Sikh Federation (UK) is a prominent member of the FSO and its Chair, Bhai Amrik Singh said:

“The wider public see the Sikh community as a role model community and appreciate they are tolerant, hard working and peace loving people who deserve the support of the international community for a UN-led investigation into the 1984 Sikh Genocide and recognition of our demand for an independent Sikh state, Khalistan.”

SIKH NATIONALISTS TO DEVELOP ALLIANCE WITH NATIONALIST MOVEMENTS ACROSS THE GLOBE

London – 13 July 2017. The Sikh Federation (UK) arranged for Advocate Harpal Singh Cheema, the President of Dal Khalsa to meet UK Parliamentarians yesterday. The first meeting was with Alison Thewliss the Scottish National Party (SNP) MP for Glasgow Central who earlier this week also became one of the seven Vice Chairs of the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for British Sikhs.

The issue of self determination was discussed and an invitation was extended by Harpal Singh for SNP politicians to visit the Sikh homeland. The Sikh Federation (UK) mentioned that a series of conferences on self determination would be organised across the globe on the rise of nationalist movements around the world and further details would be given at the European Parliament event next Tuesday.





Harpal Singh spoke about his experience of having spent some 15 years in prison without trial or successful conviction in the USA (10 years) and India (5 years) and the torture he witnessed and experienced in jail in India. Sikh Federation (UK) representatives explained what happened in 1947 and how killings and human rights abuses by the Indian authorities for the last 40 years and a lack of justice had legitimised and turned a demand for greater autonomy in the 1970s to a popular demand for Sikh independence in the 1980s.

Later the group were joined by Preet Kaur Gill, the newly elected Labour MP for Birmingham Edgbaston and new chair of the APPG for British Sikhs. A number of other issues were discussed with Alison Thewliss and Preet Kaur Gill in relation to Scotland such as a separate ethnic tick box for Sikhs in the Census in Scotland, a site for a monument in Glasgow (or Edinburgh) to recognise Sikh sacrifices in the First World War, an independent public inquiry linked to the 1984 Sikh Genocide and a Code of Practice for the five Kakaars and Sikh turban in Scotland, issues that the Sikh Federation (UK) discussed with Nicola Surgeon the leader of the SNP in April 2015.

The group also briefly met John Spellar, the Labour MP for Warley who first became an MP in 1982 and has been a leading figure for several decades in raising the full range of human rights issues impacting Sikhs, especially in Punjab. Others the group were introduced to included Kezia Dugdale, the leader of the Scottish Labour Party (who recently stepped down) where the above issues in relation to Sikhs and Scotland were also discussed. The group briefly met Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi, the newly elected Labour MP for Slough as they were leaving Parliament.

SIKHS ASK DEEPER QUESTIONS INTO THE ROLE OF THE BRITISH IN PARTITION AS THE 70th ANNIVERSARY OF 1947 IS MARKED

London – 15 August 2017. The general coverage of partition on TV and Radio has been much more detailed this year than in previous years. Furthermore the media have focused on the atrocities committed by all parties through the programmes aired to mark the 70th anniversary. However many key questions have been left unaddressed and remain outstanding and of significant importance.



Firstly the overall responsibility and accountability of the mass killings and tragedies was a direct result of the flawed and rushed exit by the British to expedite the transition by 12 months with little planning and understanding of the impact of borders and messaging to the impacted communities. Furthermore using a crude and ill conceived method to create the Radcliffe line of borders without any community consultation or survey was at best a dereliction of duty and at worst complicity in an orchestrated mass human disaster.

Rather than being celebrated and hailed as a great exchange of power, Lord Mountbatten as well as the British Indian establishment should all be held to account for their negligence and role in the largest ever displacement of people (14 million) resulting in a massacre of over 1 million. Surprisingly there is no public inquiry into the role of the British as well as that of leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru and Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

Second the offer of the Sikh Homeland of Punjab of the original Sikh Kingdom that was discussed by the British with certain Sikh leaders and various offers of government support and structures were



discussed. Unfortunately those leaders failed to reclaim the Sikh sovereignty, largely against the will of the people and aligned with the treacherous congress leaders who later deceived and betrayed all Sikhs.

However this does not absolve the British from the legal treaties it made with Maharaja Ranjit Singh and the Sikh rulers at the time. History is testimony that the Sikh Kingdom was annexed by the British authorities in 1849 and was unlawfully divided between India and Pakistan in 1947. The movement and struggle for Sikh sovereignty and independence started again in 1947 and has continued to the present day.

The same Sikh freedom fighters who were once called and treated as terrorists by the British were lauded national heroes by all of India, heroes like Shaheed Bhagat Singh. Today it is Saint Soldiers like Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala who are called terrorists by that same India that Sikhs sacrificed so much for its freedom. It seems a common theme that those in power in India perpetrate mass violence towards Sikhs with impunity.

CAMPAIGNING FOR TRUTH OF 1984 OPERATION BLUESTAR

Files on Sikh massacre are withdrawn 'to hide SAS role'

THE  TIMES

The Times - 4 November 2016



India's crushing of Sikh dissent in the 1980s, The Times has learnt.

Whitehall papers released to the archive this summer were recalled abruptly last month, days after the **Sikh Federation (UK)** wrote to Boris Johnson, the Foreign Secretary, saying that they had uncovered "delicate information" concerning "UK military assistance to India".

A researcher working for the Federation at the Kew archives found a note referring to the possibility of an SAS involvement after "an Indian request for military assistance in the setting up of a National Guard for internal security duties".

The note, marked confidential, was written on 3 July 1984, a month after a notorious Indian army assault on Sikh militants at the Golden Temple in Amritsar in which thousands of people were killed.

The letter was written by a civil servant in the Foreign Office's South Asia department and

copied to Ministry of Defence officials and the High Commissioner in Delhi.

Sikh community leaders claim that the memo points to a British role in the crackdown on Sikhs throughout the 1980s.

Files removed include papers about a meeting between Mrs Gandhi and Margaret Thatcher, British defence sales to India and Sikh demonstrations in Britain.

The discovery of the note referring to the SAS raises questions about the integrity of a 2014 Whitehall review by Sir Jeremy Heywood, the Cabinet Secretary, which said that British assistance to India at the time was limited to a visit by a military adviser in February 1984.

Sir Jeremy's review concluded that Britain's military advice to India was "a one-off" that was "not sustained". It also found that a Ministry of Defence file on military assistance to India over the Golden Temple operation had been destroyed in November 2009.

Lord Hague of Richmond, when he was foreign secretary, told the Commons that the review had examined 23,000 documents from December 1983 to June 1984 and "found no evidence . . . that any other form of UK military assistance was given to the Indian authorities".



A spokesman for the Sikh Federation (UK) said the new discovery in the National Archive undermined that statement and the Heywood review and the Foreign Office's decision to

remove files from the archive bore the hallmarks of a "cover-up". A government spokesman defended the Heywood review and said that the files would be returned "in full" to the archive.

Did the SAS kill at Amritsar? Foreign Office hastily recalls files 'detailing UK role' in notorious Indian army crackdown on Sikhs



Daily Mail – 4 November 2016



A note, seen by the MailOnline, found by a researcher reportedly referred to the possibility of SAS involvement after 'an Indian request for military assistance in the setting up of a National Guard for

internal security duties'.

In 2014, it was revealed that Britain may have had a role in Operation Blue Star, which sent shockwaves through India and the Sikh community.

A review called for by David Cameron was criticised as having too narrow a scope, and concluded that the UK provided expert military advice after an urgent request from the Indian Intelligence Co-Coordinator.

After the discovery of the 'delicate information' in the archives, human rights lawyers have written to the Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson on behalf of **the Sikh Federation** asking for another review.

A statement released on the Sikh Federation's Twitter said: 'On the eve of her critical trade visit to India, she [Mrs May] is being pressured to come clean about the role played by the SAS in the Sikh genocide in the 1980s.'

'There is increasing evidence that Margaret Thatcher's administration worked more closely with the Indian government than was known at the time.'

'Vital new documents have been removed from the National Archives.'

'There should be a full, independent investigation into these matters.'

Labour Party asks PM Theresa May to clarify Britain's role in 1984 Operation Blue Star

Labour party said that Britain's Sikh community deserves to know the truth in the wake of allegations by Sikh Federation that the UK Foreign Office had removed files with 'evidence' of British involvement in the operation.

Labour Party asks PM Theresa May to clarify Britain's role in 1984 Operation Blue Star



The Indian Express - 5 November 2016

The UK's Opposition Labour party called on British Prime Minister Theresa May to "come clean" about the role played by Britain in Operation Blue Star before her three-day visit to India starting from Sunday. Labour party Deputy Leader, Tom Watson, said on Friday that Britain's Sikh community deserves to know the truth in the wake of allegations by **Sikh Federation UK** that the UK Foreign Office had removed files with "new evidence" of British involvement in the military operation on Golden Temple in June 1984.

"Before her visit to India, Theresa May must come clean about the role played by the UK in the attack on the Golden Temple in 1984 and subsequent events. There is increasing evidence that Margaret Thatcher's administration worked more closely with the Indian government than was known at the time," Watson said in a statement.

Watson added: "David Cameron's previous inquiry failed to reveal the full facts and we now



learn that vital new documents relating to the massacre have been removed from the National

Archives by ministers. The revelation that these new documents exist suggest that Parliament may have been inadvertently misled by a former Foreign Secretary. "After over 30 years of demanding answers, Britain's Sikh community deserves to know the truth, no matter how

embarrassing it is for the current government. After the failure of the Cabinet Secretary's internal inquiry, there should be a full independent investigation into these matters."

Sikh Federation UK claims the latest note it found, marked confidential, was written on July 3, 1984, a month after the operation, which points to a more prominent British role.

ਸਾਕਾ ਨੀਲਾ ਤਾਰਾ 'ਚ ਬਰਤਾਨਵੀ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਦੀ ਭੂਮਿਕਾ ਦੀ ਸ਼ੱਕ ਨੂੰ ਵਧਾਉਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਹੋਰ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਲੀਕ

- ਸੱਚ ਨੂੰ ਛੁਪਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਜਨਤਕ ਕੀਤੇ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਮੁੜ ਹਟਾਏ
- ਸਿੱਖ ਫੈਡਰੇਸ਼ਨ ਯੂ ਕੇ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਬਰਤਾਨਵੀ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਭੇਜਿਆ ਕਾਨੂੰਨੀ ਨੋਟਿਸ

ਲੰਡਨ, 4 ਨਵੰਬਰ (ਮਨਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਬੱਧਨੀ ਕਲਾ)- ਬਰਤਾਨੀਆ ਦੀ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਮਹਿਲਾ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਮਾਰਗਰੇਟ ਥੇਚਰ ਅਤੇ ਭਾਰਤ ਦੀ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਮਹਿਲਾ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਇੰਦਰਾ ਗਾਂਧੀ ਦੀ ਦੋਸਤੀ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਭਰ 'ਚ ਮਸ਼ਹੂਰ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਜੂਨ 1984 ਵਿਚ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ 'ਤੇ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਫੌਜ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਕੀਤੇ ਗਏ ਹਮਲੇ ਤੋਂ 30 ਸਾਲ ਬਾਅਦ ਬਰਤਾਨੀਆ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਦੇ ਜਾਰੀ ਹੋਏ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਦੋਵਾਂ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਮੰਤਰੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਦੋਸਤੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਹਿਰਦਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਵਲੰਧਰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਸ੍ਰੀ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ 'ਤੇ ਕੀਤੇ ਗਏ ਹਮਲੇ 'ਸਾਕਾ ਨੀਲਾ ਤਾਰਾ ਆਪਰੇਸ਼ਨ' ਵਿਚ ਬਰਤਾਨਵੀ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਦੀ ਭੂਮਿਕਾ ਸਬੰਧੀ ਨਵੇਂ ਜਾਰੀ ਕੀਤੇ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕੌਮੀ ਪੁਰਾਤੱਤਵ ਕੇਂਦਰ ਤੋਂ ਹਟਾ ਲਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਜਿਹਨਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਸੰਕੇਤ ਮਿਲਦੇ ਸਨ ਕਿ ਸਾਕਾ ਨੀਲਾ ਤਾਰਾ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਵੀ ਬਰਤਾਨੀਆ ਨੇ ਭਾਰਤ ਦੀ ਮਦਦ ਕੀਤੀ ਸੀ ਪਰ 2014 ਵਿਚ ਸਾਬਕਾ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਡੇਵਿਡ ਕੈਮਰਨ ਦੇ ਦਿਸ਼ਾ ਨਿਰਦੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਹੇਠ ਹੋਈ ਸੱਚ ਸਬੰਧੀ ਜੰਗਿਰਟ ਸਰ ਜੇਮੀ ਹੋਅਰੂਡ ਨੇ ਤਿਆਰ ਕੀਤੀ ਸੀ, ਜਿਹੜੀ ਸਾਬਕਾ ਵਿਦੇਸ਼ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਵਿਲੀਅਮ ਹੇਗ ਨੇ ਸੰਸਦ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਰੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਸੀ, ਇਕ ਝੂਠਾ ਦਾ ਪੁਲੰਦਾ ਸੀ। ਬਰਤਾਨੀਆ ਦੇ ਕਾਨੂੰਨ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਹਰ 30 ਸਾਲ ਬਾਅਦ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਦੀਆਂ ਖੁਫੀਆ ਡਿਫੋਰਟਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਜਨਤਕ



ਭਾਰਤ ਜਾਣ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਥੈਰੇਸਾ ਮੇਅ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਜਵਾਬ ਦੇਵੇ-ਟੌਮ ਵਾਟਸਨ

ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਜਦੋਂ ਸਾਕਾ ਨੀਲਾ ਤਾਰਾ ਵਿਚ ਬਰਤਾਨੀਆ ਦੀ ਭੂਮਿਕਾ ਦਾ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਵਾਰ ਪਤਾ ਲੱਗਾ ਉਦੋਂ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਫੈਡਰੇਸ਼ਨ ਯੂ. ਕੇ. ਕਾਨੂੰਨੀ ਅਤੇ ਖੋਜ ਪੱਖਾਂ 'ਤੇ ਕੌਮ ਕਰ ਰਹੀ ਸੀ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿ ਸਚਾਈ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਆ ਸਕੇ। 1984 ਦੇ ਹੋਰ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਵੱਲੋਂ 26 ਅਗਸਤ 2016 ਨੂੰ ਜਾਰੀ ਕੀਤੇ ਗਏ ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਮੁੜ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ 'ਤੇ ਭਾਰਤ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਕੀਤੇ ਗਏ ਤਬਦੀਲ ਅਤੇ ਬਰਤਾਨੀਆ ਦੀ ਦਖਲ ਅੰਦਾਜ਼ੀ ਸਬੰਧੀ ਕੁਝ ਸਬੂਤ ਮਿਲ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਫੈਡਰੇਸ਼ਨ ਦੇ ਮਾਹਿਰਾਂ ਨੇ ਤੁਰੰਤ ਨੋਟ ਕੀਤਾ ਅਤੇ ਜਿਉਂ ਹੀ ਇਸ ਮਾਮਲੇ ਨੂੰ ਵਿਦੇਸ਼ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਦੇ ਧਿਆਨ ਵਿਚ ਲਿਆਉਣ ਲਈ 13 ਸਤੰਬਰ ਨੂੰ ਚਿੱਠੀ ਲਿਖੀ ਤਾਂ ਬ੍ਰਿਟ ਹੀ ਵਿਉਂਤਬੰਦੀ ਨਾਲ 21 ਸਤੰਬਰ ਨੂੰ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨੇ ਫਾਈਲਾਂ ਹਟਾ ਲਈਆਂ ਅਤੇ 30 ਸਤੰਬਰ ਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਮੀਟਿੰਗ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ 13 ਅਕਤੂਬਰ ਦੀ ਤਾਰੀਖ ਰੱਖ ਲਈ, ਜੋ ਕਿਸੇ ਸਿਰ ਨਾ ਚੜ੍ਹੀ। ਵਿਦੇਸ਼ ਮੰਤਰਾਲੇ ਦੇ ਅਧਿਕਾਰੀ ਇਸ ਸਬੰਧੀ ਗੱਲਬਾਤ ਅੱਗੇ ਨਾ ਤੌਰ ਸਕੇ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਫਾਈਲਾਂ ਹੀ ਗਾਇਬ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤੀਆਂ ਗਈਆਂ ਸਨ। ਸਿੱਖ ਫੈਡਰੇਸ਼ਨ ਦੇ ਚੇਅਰਮੈਨ ਭਾਈ ਅਮਰੀਕ ਸਿੰਘ ਗਿੱਲ ਅਤੇ ਸਲਾਹਕਾਰ ਦਬਿੰਦਰਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਕਿ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਫਾਈਲਾਂ ਵਿਚ 3 ਜੁਲਾਈ 1984 ਨੂੰ ਨੈਸ਼ਨਲ ਸਕਿਊਰਿਟੀ ਗਾਰਡ ਸਬੰਧੀ ਅਹਿਮ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਸੀ। (ਬਕੀ ਸਫ਼ਾ 15 'ਤੇ)

Sikh campaigners seek release of UK files on Golden Temple **theguardian** assault

The Guardian - 28 December 2016

Secret government files said to hold details of British involvement in an assault on Sikhism's holiest shrine that killed hundreds of people should be released to the public, campaigners have urged.

Members of the **Sikh Federation** believe the documents will show there was a greater level of cooperation between the British and Indian governments over the latter's attempts to clear

militants from the Golden Temple in the summer of 1984 than has previously been acknowledged.

They have launched an appeal to the information tribunal, due to be heard next year, to try to force through the release of the files under freedom of information laws, having been thwarted in their attempts thus far.



"The public has a right to know the truth about what happened 30 years ago. We believe these files are being held back – not for security reasons but for political reasons that would prove embarrassing to the Conservative party, since it was Margaret Thatcher and her discussions with the Indian regime," said Davinder Singh, of the Sikh Federation.

The federation wants greater transparency over Britain's involvement in the Indian government's effort to drive Sikh militants seeking a separate homeland out of the Golden Temple in Amritsar – the religion's most holy site.

The Indian government has put the death toll from the action, named Operation Blue Star, at about 400 people, whereas Sikh groups say many more were killed – including pilgrims – when the then-prime minister, Indira Gandhi, sent in the troops. More than 100 Indian soldiers died.

Campaigners believe the closed files will shed more light on the extent of Britain's involvement.

One of the four files relates to "UK/Indian relations: situation in Punjab; activities of Sikh extremists", as well as a visit to the UK by Rajiv Gandhi, who took office after his mother, Indira Gandhi, was assassinated by two of her Sikh bodyguards in October 1984 in retaliation for the Amritsar attack.

Another file covers meetings between Margaret Thatcher and an aide to Indira Gandhi, as well as the latter's assassination and Thatcher's visit to India to attend her funeral. The final document is entitled simply: "India: political".

Some of the information has already been released to the National Archives, while other portions have been withheld from the public.

A Cabinet Office spokesperson said: "The first tier tribunal will consider this case in the new year and it would be inappropriate to comment any further."

Operation Blue Star: Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn demands fresh probe into UK's alleged role **FIRSTPOST.**

First Post PTI - 10 January 2017

London: UK's Opposition Labour party leader Jeremy Corbyn has written to British Prime Minister Theresa May calling for a "fresh, independent investigation" into Britain's alleged involvement in the "appalling" Operation Blue Star in 1984.

Corbyn's letter to Downing Street, dated 4 January, follows what he describes as "significant representations" from a wide range of representatives from the British Sikh community demanding details of the full extent of the UK's alleged role in the military action on Golden Temple in 1984.

1984 AMRITSAR MASSACRE



"COMMISSION AN INDEPENDANT INVESTIGATION"

- Jeremy Corbyn
to UK Prime Minister
Theresa May

"Given concerns regarding the effectiveness and integrity of the January 2014 review, I believe we

must consider a fresh, independent investigation into this episode in British history.

"It is clear to me from my discussions with Sikh groups in the UK that there remains significant resentment that over the 30 years since this most appalling event, questions remain about the role which the UK played," his letter reads.

Corbyn's letter notes: This review was felt by many to be inaccurate and the presentation of its conclusions to Parliament in February 2014 to be misleading. A valuable opportunity to bring greater transparency to this was lost with the recall of 33 FCO [Foreign & Commonwealth Office] India files from 1984, which had only been released late in August 2016 after 32 years (contrary to the 30-year rule).

"This recall came within a matter of weeks of the files being released, depriving those interested of the opportunity to fully review their contents – and sending a signal that the government is not committed to transparency."

Making a reference to May's India visit last November as highlighting the importance she attaches to "building and maintaining positive



relations with India," Corbyn called on the British PM to revisit the issue and commission an "independent investigation" and re-release the recalled files in the interest of transparency.

Meanwhile, **Sikh Federation (UK)** welcomed the move with its chair Bhai Amrik Singh expressing his gratitude to Corbyn.

"We are grateful the Labour leader has written to Theresa May to call for a fresh, independent investigation and deliver the British public transparency. British Sikhs will continue to call for transparency and this can only be delivered through an independent investigation that has full access to all relevant papers," he said.

Sikh group calls for inquiry into UK's role in 1984 Operation Bluestar

hindustantimes

Sikh Federation (UK) has been working on a report titled 'Sacrificing Sikhs: The need for an investigation', which claims to have evidence regarding the full extent of the UK's alleged role in the military action.

Hindustan Times - 10 February 2017

A UK-based Sikh group has written to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office demanding a public inquiry into Britain's alleged involvement in the 1984 Operation Bluestar.

Sikh Federation (UK) has been working on a report titled 'Sacrificing Sikhs: The need for an investigation', which claims to have evidence regarding the full extent of the UK's alleged role in the military action.

"It is of crucial public importance that the allegations are investigated, in an effective and transparent manner," reads the letter, addressed to Indian-origin Foreign Office Minister Alok Sharma, in charge of India and the Pacific.

The letter goes on to claim that the 2014 Heywood Review, set up by then Prime Minister David Cameron into the exact nature of British involvement in Operation Blue Star, was "flawed" as it did not consider certain "directly relevant" material.



The FCO acknowledged the receipt of the letter, written by the group's solicitors KRW Law last month. "The Foreign and Commonwealth Office is considering the points raised in your letter. You will receive a full response shortly," the letter dated February 2 reads.

Labour MPs, Sikh body for full disclosure

Times of India - 22 Julv 2017

Labour MPs, Sikh body for full disclosure

TOI

IP.Singh@timesgroup.com



Jalandhar: Reacting to the recent disclosure in the UK's declassified files, **Tanmanjeet Singh Dhese**, the first turbaned Sikh MP in the UK



“Clearly this would suggest that the Heywood review was a whitewash - he had access to these files but failed to mention that Britain briefed India's top brass on counter-insurgency.”

PREET KAUR GILL | MP from Edgbaston

parliament, said full disclosures should be made about the actions of the country in relation to the Operation Bluestar in Amritsar in 1984.

Speaking to TOI over the phone from UK, Dhese said the UK government was trying to cover up and the fresh

revelations vindicated their earlier stand that Tory government had pushed the things under carpet three years ago too.

Researcher Phil Miller in his 'Vice' article quoted first woman Sikh MP of UK and chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for British

Sikhs, Preet Kaur Gill, saying, "Clearly this would suggest that the Heywood review was a whitewash - he had access to these files but failed to mention that Britain briefed India's top brass on counter-insurgency."

Amrik Singh Gill, chair of Sikh Federation UK, said,

"It now emerges chief of army staff (COAS) General Vaidya, who led the Indian army operation in 1984, received confidential briefing on counter-insurgency the same year.

Sadly this suggests there was direct British army involvement in assisting in the 1984 Sikh genocide. With a third of files being kept secret, the foreign office is doing its best to hide the truth, but the picture that is gradually emerging suggests it is only a matter of time before ministers are forced to agree to an independent judge-led public inquiry."

"It is clear to us the Hey-

wood review was woefully inadequate. We believe a majority of MPs are on our side with the Labour Party and Scottish National Party now on record, and a sufficient number of Conservative MPs having previously told us they support our campaign," the Sikh Federation leader said.

Both Dhese and Gill are Labour MPs. In its manifesto, Labour had promised to hold public inquiry into British actions during events of 1984 in India. Labour deputy leader Tom Watson had also been strongly raising the issue for making full disclosures in this regard.



The Golden Temple's long-buried secrets

The Times – 5 August 2017

Whitehall's drift towards keeping files classified fuels conjecture about our role in the Amritsar massacre.

Thirty-three years ago Margaret Thatcher sent an SAS officer to advise the Indian government on its efforts to expel Sikh militants from the Golden Temple in Amritsar. Four months later, in June 1984, the Indian army launched Operation Blue Star, an all-out assault on Sikhism's holiest place, in which hundreds died.

The name of the SAS officer has not been released. The extent of British involvement remains a matter of conjecture and wild conspiracy theory. Despite Sikh demands for clarity many of the key files remain sealed. It has now emerged that the Foreign Office is withholding almost a third of its files on India from 1985, part of a deeply disturbing trend towards historical concealment.

Official secrecy ebbs and flows in a way that is unique to Britain, with its long-running ambivalence over what should, or should not, be made public.

For a brief time that culture appeared to be over. The Freedom of Information Act in 2000 reversed the presumption of secrecy in favour of disclosure wherever possible.

Now the tide is flowing back in the opposite direction.

Increasingly, not as matter of policy but through a reactionary instinct, your government is becoming more secretive. The impact of this is twofold: it makes officials feel less accountable but at the same time gives rise to conspiracy theories that are frequently baseless. Nothing illustrates that more clearly than the continuing battle over the



1984 assault on the Golden Temple, a pivotal moment in Sikh history and the source of continuing anger in the Sikh community.

The secrecy has merely added fuel to a conspiracy theory that is almost certainly wrong. Rather than backing the military assault on the temple Britain was under pressure from India to provide other help, notably furnishing intelligence on Sikh militancy in the Punjab and Britain.

Allowing historians access to the Golden Temple files is the only way to lance the boil of conspiracy that claims Britain played a central role in the operation.

After three decades the files relating to the Golden Temple assault cannot have any impact on national security. Britain should release all its files and so should India. This would be a symbolic demonstration of openness and understanding to mark the 70th anniversary of Indian independence. Because the more you hide as a government, the more the public assumes you have something to hide.

SIKH FEDERATION (UK) CONTINUES THE PURSUIT OF THE 1984 TRUTH

Note: In the above sub-section we have reproduced extracts from a number of media articles in the last twelve months about the campaign for an independent public inquiry into UK involvement in the 1984 Sikh Genocide and anti-Sikh measures taken by the British government at the request of the Indian authorities.

A combination of invaluable archive research, combined with legal support from KRW Law and strong political support at the highest levels have increased public pressure that the UK Government must address. The next 12 months will be critical as there is a need for transparency. This is an issue that will not go away and is of huge significance to Sikhs and the wider public. It will also lead to pressure on the international community to ask serious questions of the Indian authorities.





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 by taking an increasing interest in mainstream politics in the UK.

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 Khalistan.

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 and the UK Sikh Survey. 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 plan to 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.

SIKH FEDERATION (UK)

WORKING FOR TRUTH, JUSTICE AND FREEDOM



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

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. Key skills and sector knowledge are needed in local & central government, politics & lobbying, human rights, PR & media and web & social media.



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