



# SIKH FEDERATION (UK)

*Never flinch from performing righteous deeds*



## ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21



WORKING FOR TRUTH,  
JUSTICE AND FREEDOM.

census  
2021 - SIKH   
#makesikhscount



# OVERVIEW



## A message from the Chairman

The Sikh Federation (UK) has worked tirelessly over the last year despite the challenges presented by the pandemic. We have endeavoured to lobby politicians and use technology and our contacts across the globe to ensure that those in power in the UK understand some of our key concerns and are held to account on specific issues that matter to the community.

20 years earlier we had the vision to develop the first ever Sikh Agenda for the UK Government that was launched at the Convention in September 2001 within days of the 9/11 terror attack. Since then we have had new global challenges, especially linked to discrimination and attacks on our Sikh identity. We have however had some notable successes in defending our Sikh identity and come along way, although the re-emergence of the Taliban will create further difficulties.

Better political representation of Sikhs and the issues important to us in the UK remains an area for progress. We are seeing more political activism by younger Sikhs in different political parties and now have two Sikh Council leaders in Sandwell and Redbridge alongside our two Sikh MPs. The Labour Party has no Sikh in the House of Lords and the Labour leader is under intense pressure and expected to confirm its first Amritdhari in Parliament in the next 12 months.

The latest Sikh Manifesto 2020-25 produced by the Sikh Network focuses politicians and the community on key priorities, although new issues emerge such as the attempted extradition of three young Sikhs from the West Midlands. In the last 12 months our focus was to be on the Census 2021, the release of Jagtar Singh Johal and hate crimes targeting Sikhs where there has been much activity and work.

However, a major issue that developed is the farmers protest, the world's largest ever protest that has been admirably led by Sikhs from the Punjab. This has become the single largest challenge to the right wing BJP government and the corrupt political establishment in India. The Indian government has tried and failed to demonise the farmers who are peacefully protesting. This people led movement has exposed the Indian authorities as the farmers protest has received global attention and popularity.

Legally challenging the Cabinet Office and the Office for National Statistics for official Qaumi recognition in the Census 2021 was significant and historic. For Sikhs it was not a question of winning or losing in the High Court but doing what is right. Our battle for public bodies to collect information specific to Sikhs and making decisions on this basis continues. In the Census 2011 over 83,000 Sikhs protested against the options provided for the ethnicity question, ticked "other" and wrote "Sikh". The number of Sikhs protesting and rejecting the Census 2021 categorisation is expected to double when the initial results are released in March 2022.

An issue that will never go away is our unflinching commitment to Sikh self-determination and the re-establishment of an independent Sikh State. The Indian authorities and their supporters have been successful in using this objective to influence and mislead the UK government given its colonial past to keep the Sikh Federation (UK) at arms' length. In the last couple of years UK government engagement with Sikh organisations has gone backwards.

The Sikh Federation (UK) is however politically active, has a high public profile, well networked, supported by many in the community and privately respected for its principled stance of holding and challenging the UK government. The organisation is partnering with like-minded Sikhs in the diaspora and preparing to take the argument of the re-establishment of an independent Sikh State to a new level with different governments and at the UN. Central to this debate in the UK are the hard facts surrounding the Anglo-Sikh history.

The Sikh Kingdom of Maharaja Ranjit Singh existed for 50 years and was annexed by the British in 1849, we have Anglo-Sikh treaties and Sikh soldiers fought and died for Britain for the next 100 years. Despite the huge Sikh sacrifices in the First World War the British were responsible for the Jallianwala Bagh massacre in April 1919 and the Nankana Sahib Saka 100 years ago in February 1921. Sikhs led the independence movement and sacrificed themselves in many multiples larger than the proportion of the population. It is also a fact that in 1947 Clement Attlee's Labour Government offered Sikhs a homeland alongside India and Pakistan. Politicians and governments must be constantly reminded of this history and how much Sikhs have to offer the world with their own sovereign state.

Bhai Amrik Singh  
Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK)




## SIKH FEDERATION (UK)



# Sikh Federation (UK)

## ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021

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**ਸਲਾਨਾ ਨੈਸ਼ਨਲ ਸਿੱਖ ਕਨਵੈਨਸ਼ਨ**  
**ਸਿੱਖ ਫੈਡਰੇਸ਼ਨ (ਯੂਕੇ) SIKH FEDERATION (UK)**  
**NATIONAL SIKH CONVENTION 2020**  
 Highlighting the issues facing the Sikh Community in the UK and Internationally  
**SUNDAY 13TH SEPTEMBER 2020**

ਸਿੱਖ ਫੈਡਰੇਸ਼ਨ (ਯੂਕੇ) ਦੀ ਸਲਾਨਾ ਕਨਵੈਨਸ਼ਨ 13 ਸਤੰਬਰ ਚਿੱਕ ਮੀਡੇਵਾਡ ਤੋਂ ਹਾਕ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ, ਹਾਈ ਸਮਿਥਵਿਕ, ਸਮੇਥਵਿਕ ਵਿਖੇ ਹੋ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ।

**GURU NANAK GURDWARA, HIGH ST, SMETHWICK B66 3AP**  
 51 (Beloved) Park Sikh Assembly, Friday 11<sup>th</sup> - Shabbat Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> at 10am  
 • Open invitation to all Sikh Organisations and Community  
 • Evening Refreshments for members of the main UK Sikhland Parties  
 • A portion of the 2020-21 SFO Annual Proceeds

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**  
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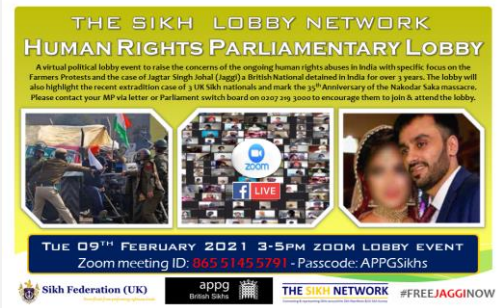
**TRUTH > JUSTICE > FREEDOM**  
 WITHOUT TRUTH THERE IS NO JUSTICE - WITHOUT JUSTICE THERE IS NO FREEDOM

**REMEMBRANCE MARCH & FREEDOM RALLY**  
**SUNDAY 6th JUNE 2021, LONDON**

Programme  
 Central London Event  
 Details to be confirmed in line with Covid Regulations

**#SIKHGENOCIDE84**  
 Organized by Federation Of Sikh Organisations (FSO)

For more information contact: **Kuldip Singh 07938 633554, Lovshinder Singh 07825 813301**



**THE SIKH LOBBY NETWORK**  
**HUMAN RIGHTS PARLIAMENTARY LOBBY**

A vital political lobby event to raise the concerns of the ongoing human rights abuses in India with specific focus on the Farmers Protests and the case of Jagtar Singh Johal (Jaggi) British National detained in India for over 3 years. The lobby will also highlight the recent extradition case of 3 UK Sikh nationals and mark the 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Nakodar Saka massacre. Please contact your MP via letter or Parliament switch board on 0202 793 3000 to encourage them to join & attend the lobby.

**TUE 09<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2021 3-5PM ZOOM LOBBY EVENT**  
 Zoom meeting ID: **865 5145 5791** - Passcode: APPGSikhs

**Sikh Federation (UK)** **appp** **THE SIKH NETWORK** **#FREEJAGGINOW**



**#StandWithFarmers #FarmerProtest**  
**Federation of Sikh Organisations (FSO)**

**KISSAN SUPPORT PROTEST**  
**CENTRAL LONDON**

In solidarity with farmers from Punjab & across India fighting for their rights & futures  
**Sunday 6 Dec 12-2pm**

**Outside the Indian High Commission London WC2B-4NA**

This protest is organised in line with current government Covid-19 restrictions so we request all attendees to respect & follow all health & safety guidelines inc face coverings & social distancing.

**FSO Contacts: Kuldip Singh 07938 633554, Lovshinder Singh 07825 813301, Joga Singh**

**WORKING FOR TRUTH, JUSTICE & FREEDOM**

# BUILDING A STRONGER POLITICAL VOICE IN THE UK AND ABROAD

## SIKH FEDERATION (UK) REVEALS POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC TO BETTER ADDRESS ISSUES IN THE SIKH MANIFESTO 2020-2025

14 September 2020 - At the Sikh Federation's annual National Sikh Convention in September 2019, where more than 15,000 participated over three days, the 10-point Sikh Manifesto 2020-25 was showcased. The Sikh Manifesto 2020-25 was released by the Sikh Network four weeks before the December 2019 General Election.



In 2019-20 two of the issues within the Sikh Manifesto – the need for a Sikh ethnic tick box in the 2021 Census and the campaign for the release of Jagtar Singh Johal dominated activities and were set out in the 2020 annual convention booklet.

Normally thousands of Sikhs from across the UK attend the Convention each year, but last year numbers at Guru Nanak Gurdwara, Smethwick were deliberately kept to an absolute minimum due to COVID-19 and the need for social distancing.

However, tens of thousands watched proceedings live on television and were told the unprecedented pandemic had significantly disrupted campaigning including lobbying, protests and face to face meetings with politicians at a local and national level.

Due to the pandemic, the Sikh community has not been able to make full use of the Sikh Manifesto 2020-25 with MPs elected in December 2019. Therefore a political engagement strategy was set out at the 2020 National Sikh Convention.

The political engagement strategy aims to provide greater focus on specific issues in the Sikh Manifesto and involve greater numbers in lobbying efforts as people can participate from home. As more can now be done virtually a broader cross-section of the Sikh community will be able to take part in political lobbying.

Themed virtual lobbies, meetings and other events have taken place each month involving dozens of MPs.



In October the focus will be on Section 4 of the Sikh Manifesto - hate crimes targeting Sikhs and the need for the UK government to formally recognise "anti-Sikh hate".

Data recently released under a Freedom of Information request shows a 40% rise in reported hate crimes since the easing of the lockdown with police chiefs warning about attacks from the far right.

Several speakers at the Convention mentioned the 19th anniversary of 9/11 and the first Sikh killed in the United States of mistaken identity being Balbir Singh Sodhi. A meeting with the police and government officials to discuss this has been organised for later this month. The first virtual lobby will be hosted by the All Party-Parliamentary Group for British Sikhs.

Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) said: "Part of the problem we want to draw attention to is the inappropriate actions of some politicians, parts of government and civil servants towards the Sikh community as a whole. Sometimes what they do is deeply offensive and their behaviour is unacceptable and xenophobic."

"This issue was highlighted in the Sikh Manifesto last year. The way the government has engaged the Sikh community and our Gurdwaras concerning COVID-19 has been downright disgraceful. This along with other examples underline how the government is going backwards."

In November the focus will be on Section 7 of the Sikh Manifesto - the campaign for the release of 33-year old Scot, Jagtar Singh Johal from West Dumbarton. The UK Government needs to do much more for Mr Johal and his family. This will coincide with Jagtar's third anniversary of being abducted, tortured and held in an Indian jail. During which time the Indian authorities have failed to present any evidence in court to justify his continued detention.

## Faith leaders challenge England lockdown ban on communal worship **theguardian**

Guardian – 3 November 2020 (extract)

Letter to PM signed by senior religious figures says there is no scientific basis for ban in new coronavirus restrictions

England's most senior faith leaders have challenged the government's decision to ban communal worship during the second lockdown, telling Boris Johnson there is no scientific basis for the move.

In a marked change of tone from the lockdown earlier this year, the faith leaders say: "We strongly disagree with the decision to suspend public worship during this time."

Continuation of public worship is essential, the leaders of the Church of England, Catholic church and orthodox Judaism, along with Muslim, Hindu, Sikh and Pentecostal representatives, told the prime minister in a joint letter.

Sikhs have raised concerns about Bandi Chhor Divas and Guru Nanak Dev Ji's Gurburab, two holidays in November when most Sikhs attend their Gurdwara. "It appears the government ignored the needs of the Sikh community," said Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the **Sikh Federation (UK)**.

## NUMBER 10 REFUSING TO SHARE EVIDENCE ON BANNING COMMUNAL WORSHIP DESPITE PRESSURE IN PARLIAMENT

4 November 2020 - The Prime Minister and Health Secretary were challenged today in the Commons on a lack of consultation with faith communities before imposing the second lockdown restrictions.

Keir Starmer, the leader of the opposition said: "I want to turn to the question of faith, which has already been raised. These regulations will have a serious impact on faith communities and places of worship. There is real concern across faiths about the lack of consultation, and I hope that the Government can urgently address that, including by convening the places of worship taskforce."



Sir Graham Brady, the chairman of the Conservative Backbench 1922 Committee who voted against the second lockdown regulations questioned if the government had the right to ban acts of collective worship.

Theresa May, the former Prime Minister who abstained expressed her concerns about “making it illegal to conduct an act of public worship” and the “unintended consequences”. She accused the Government of choosing statistics to support its Covid-19 policies rather than basing them on the data.



**The UK Government must respect Places of worship as essential**



Boris Johnson, the Prime Minister said: “it is an awful thing to restrict people’s ability to worship in a communal way” and “allowing private worship . . . for many people . . . will not be enough”.

However, the Prime Minister’s official spokesman responding to the criticism said it “wasn’t possible to go any further” than permitting private prayer in places of worship.

He continued: “The Government doesn’t take imposing further restrictions lightly, but this action is vital in tackling the spread of the virus.”

“We’ll continue to work closely with senior faith leaders and the places of worship taskforce, as we have done throughout the pandemic.”

However, Downing Street indicated the evidence for the decision to ban religious services would not be published.

Bhai Amrik Singh said: “As far as Sikhs are concerned the places of worship taskforce is a complete waste of time.”

“Unbelievably government intentionally chose a non-practising Sikh barrister who has never been involved in the management of Gurdwaras to sit alongside the likes of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Chief Rabbi.”

“The Sikh community pressure forced him to resign within a week of his appointment. Government in response has stubbornly refused to officially replace him on the taskforce more than 5 months later.”

“Sikh organisations, that the government has worked with for many years, have direct contact with Gurdwaras and would have challenged the government. These organisations continue to all be overlooked in terms of not only the taskforce, but also the Sikh roundtable meetings with the Faith Minister.”

The Prime Minister’s comments in Parliament that the “best I can say is that in all reality, if we approve this package of measures tonight, we have a very good prospect of allowing everybody to return to communal worship in time for Christmas and other celebrations in December” shows he has no sense of the impact on other faith communities.

We have two of the most important and well attended events in the Sikh calendar that fall in this second lockdown period. Bandhi Chhor Divas on 14 November and Guru Nanak Dev Ji’s Gurpurb on 30 November. Sikh community needs and concerns are being totally ignored.



## CENSORSHIP ON FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM



11 November 2020 -The level of censorship Sikhs face on Facebook and Instagram is getting ridiculous. The Sikh Federation (UK) Facebook Page was unpublished on 10 November 2020. We have operated our page for many years without any complaint or warning.

A week earlier many Sikh organisations, including Gurdwaras our main religious institutions, such as Guru Nanak Darbar Gravesend and Guru Nanak Gurdwara, Smethwick and individual Sikhs were targeted with similar censorship.

This week #Sikh has been blocked and Instagram has blocked #FreeJaggiNow that highlights the treatment of 33-year old Jagtar Singh Johal who has been tortured and imprisoned in India for over 3 years.

Sikhs are a minority in every country where they live and are targeted and persecuted in India where most Sikhs live.

We have written to Facebook given its reputation for free expression, empowerment, inclusion and support to marginalised communities. Those who are responsible for this censorship that is damaging the Facebook reputation are outsourced providers with Indian connections that need to be immediately investigated and appropriate actions taken.

Note: Following a meeting with senior executives at Facebook the Sikh Federation (UK) Facebook page was unblocked in mid-April 2021. However, meetings continue as certain restrictions continue limiting access.

### 'Censorship' as Instagram removes campaign to free Jagtar Singh Johal



The National – 27 November 2021

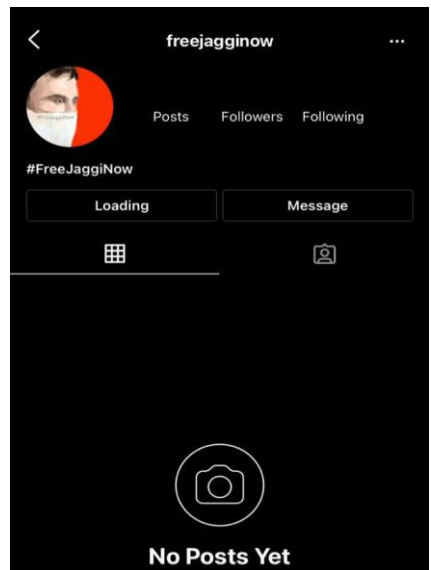
Social media giant Instagram has been accused of censorship after the company wiped the page for a Scottish man who has been detained without trial in India for over three years.

Jagtar Singh Johal has been held in custody since 2017 and claims he's been tortured by the Indian authorities.

The Dumbarton man, known to friends as Jaggi, was taken from the street just a fortnight after his Indian wedding.

The #FreeJaggiNow campaign, co-ordinated by his solicitor brother Gurpreet Singh Johal, has used social media to push for his release, generating support around the world. Now it has accused Instagram of "silencing" its work after its page on the popular platform was deleted.

Gurpreet told The National: "Social media has allowed us to let Jagtar's voice be heard and



amplified by people around the world, from Bollywood singers to Canadian politicians.

"Indian authorities have tried to suppress Jaggi's voice, now Instagram actually has. We are highly disappointed."

Gurpreet says he was given no warning prior to the action on the account and still does not know why it was taken.

The National contacted Instagram but received no response to by the time we went to print. The last post from the account contained information about Jaggi's 139th pre-trial preliminary hearing.

The blogger is accused of funding an assassination plot and while authorities initially said they had all the evidence they needed to prosecute him, none of that has yet been put before a court.

Addressing the account Preet Kaur Gill MP said there is "very worrying selective censorship taking place".

Gurpreet said: "If they were going to take any action against the page, we should have received a warning. We haven't even had an explanation.

"As far as I am aware, we have not breached any of its rules."

## Heartbreak as 'true pillar' of Derby Sikh community dies of Covid

DerbyshireLive

He has been described as a 'larger-than-life figure'

Derbyshire Live 24 November 2020

People are in mourning after a "true pillar" of the Derby Sikh community died from Covid-19.



Jagir Singh, who was a well-known figure among followers of the religion in Derby and further afield, died earlier this month.

The 71-year-old, who has been described as a "larger than life figure" was taken ill after developing Covid-19 pneumonia.

Sadly Mr Singh, who lived in Sinfin, passed away on November 7 this year.

Jas Singh Khatkar paid tribute to Mr Singh, saying he will be remembered as "a straight talking and honest man who stood by every word he spoke".

He said: "It is with great sadness that the Derby Sikh community, as well as the wider international Sikh community are mourning the loss of a larger-than-life figure and leader, with the recent passing of Jagir Singh, 71, of Sinfin, Derby.

"Mr Singh has been a true pillar of the Sikh community not only in Derby but across the length and breadth of Britain.

"Following the attack on Sri Darbar Sahib (Golden Temple) Amritsar in 1984 which left a deep impression on his heart and mind he devoted his life into community service.

"He offered his boundless support in everything from community activism, youth football & sports to political lobbying in support of human rights.

"Jagir Singh was at the forefront in volunteering and donating money to support the families of the fallen heroes of the Sikh faith."

He added that Mr Singh's diagnosis and illness came on suddenly.

"However throughout his final days Mr Singh remained high spirited, strong and focused on his message to his family to never waver or neglect their service to the Sikh community or in the remembrance of Sikh martyrs," he said.

Mr Singh is survived by his wife, four children and 11 grandchildren.





## MISSED OPPORTUNITY TO LIFT RESTRICTIONS FOR THE GURPURB OF GURU NANAK DEV JI ON 30 NOVEMBER



26 November 2020 - We had written to the Communities Secretary to suggest with Advent Sunday on 29 November and the Gurburb of Guru Nanak Dev Ji on 30 November it would be a massive positive gesture of respect to people of faith if the current lockdown could be eased a few days earlier from 29 November for places of worship.

Gurdwaras have always required washing of hands and cleanliness before Covid-19 and have gone to extreme lengths to make Gurdwaras Covid-secure. Gurdwaras have been safe for the congregation (Sangat) with one-way systems, social distancing restrictions and our own safety rules for many months.

The timing of the second lockdown has already impacted on Bhandi Chhor Divas that coincides with Diwali on 14 November and the Gurgaddi of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji (the recognition of the Sikh Holy scriptures as a living Guru) on 16 November.

The government have missed this opportunity and Sikhs will have unnecessary restrictions on the Gurburb of Guru Nanak Dev Ji on 30 November. The video messages from the Prime Minister, Leader of the Opposition and others on the Gurburb that we may get could have been very upbeat if some common sense had been used by the government but will now be a muted celebration.

### Khalistan supporter's nomination to UK House of Lords delayed, says Sikh group

hindustantimes

Hindustan Times – 24 December 2020

Dabinderjit Singh Sidhu, Principal Adviser to the **Sikh Federation (UK)**, was to be one of the new political peers, but his name was missing when the list was released by Downing Street on Monday.

The controversial nomination of a Khalistan supporter to the House of Lords has been delayed and its announcement is expected in January, campaign group Sikh Federation (UK) said on Wednesday.

His potential appointment raised hackles in sections of the Indian community in the UK and New Delhi.

The group said in a statement, "Our understanding is (Labour leader) Keir Starmer recommended Dabinderjit to fill one of the nominations given to the Labour Party by the prime minister.

"The House of Lords appointments commission carried out all the necessary checks and concluded weeks ago Dabinderjit was of good standing in the community and had no concerns on his past conduct that would call into question his appointment to the House of Lords as a Labour peer."



## British-Sikh community upset after Labour Party delays Sikh leader's House of Lords announcement

The News International – 27 December 2020

The British-Sikh community in the United Kingdom has been reportedly upset with the Labour Party after a prominent Sikh leader and human rights activist's announcement to the UK House of Lords was delayed.



According to a news report by Geo.tv, a row has broken out after Dabinderjit Singh Sidhu, Principal Adviser to the **Sikh Federation (UK)**, was about to be announced as one of the new political peers last Tuesday but his name was missing when the list was released by Downing Street although leading journalists were given his name in the morning.

As per reports, the announcement of Dabinderjit Singh Sidhu, a strong supporter and advocate of Sikh causes, was dropped but the Sikh Federation (UK) said in a statement that the nomination of Sidhu to the House of Lords has been delayed and the announcement is expected in January.

"Our understanding is (Labour leader) Keir Starmer recommended Dabinderjit to fill one of the nominations given to the Labour Party by the prime minister. The House of Lords' appointments commission carried out all the necessary checks and concluded weeks ago [that] Dabinderjit was of good standing in the community and had no concerns on his past conduct that would call into

question his appointment to the House of Lords as a Labour peer," the Sikh Federation said in the statement.

"Dabinderjit's name then went to the prime minister and Buckingham Palace for the formal sign-off. The Formal sign-off had been obtained and the only matter outstanding was a public announcement," it added.

The Sikh Federation's statement noted that minutes before the list was released on Monday, Labour decided to delay Dabinderjit Singh Sidhu's announcement as a peer.

"Much has been made in the Indian media of Dabinderjit's support for the re-establishment of an independent Sikh state. This should not be a matter of concern for Labour as there are many MPs and Lords who have strong personal views in relation to Kashmir, Palestine, and the establishment of other independent states," the statement added.

Indian media has published several fake stories to discredit Dabinderjit Singh linking him to banned Khalistan groups but Dabinderjit Singh Sidhu has never been a member of the International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF) which is banned in India but not in Europe.

Voicing support for Dabinderjit Sikhs on social media, leading Sikh businessman Professor Peter Virdee wrote:

"Representation in the House of Lords bridge grassroots communities closer to Parliament. Dabinderjit has been working for decades on Sikh issues. Disappointed at how peer nominations for credible community candidates can be discarded last minute based on a few small voices."

In a strong statement addressed to Labour leader Sir Starmer, the Sikh Network said it expected Labour to honour the original, positive, and correct decision to appoint Dabinderjit, an executive at the National Audit Office (NAO), as a UK Labour peer.

It said: "The scandal to withdraw can be forgotten and forgiven once he's reconfirmed."

Taking to Twitter, the Sikh Network condemned the "shameful attack to discredit Dabinderjit, one of UK's most active and prominent volunteers



who has worked tirelessly to protect and defend Sikh identity, human rights and raised the political voice & influence of UK Sikhs."

Ravinder Singh, Chief Executive of Khalsa Aid, said: "Witch hunt continues against Sikhs who are politically active and are British citizens! This time it is Dabinderjit who is being targeted! I hope Keir Starmer doesn't allow pettiness to cloud his judgement on Dabinderjit Singh."

Dabinderjit Singh has voluntarily supported the UK All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for British Sikhs for the last 15 years on behalf of the Sikh Federation UK.

The organisation worked hard for the election of the first Sikh Labour MP Preet Kaur Gill and the first turban-wearing Sikh, Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi.

An Indian publication wrote that Dabinderjit Singh's appointment was dropped due to pressure from the Indian community and that "a major diplomatic situation has been averted ahead of British Prime Minister Boris Johnson's visit to India in January as Chief Guest for the Republic Day celebrations."

While Dabinderjit Singh's appointment was delayed, British Pakistani Wajid Khan, former Labour Member of the European Parliament (MEP) for North West England and Founder of Labour friends of Kashmir, was raised to the House of Lords as a Labour peer.

Sikh groups have pointed out that if Wajid Khan—who is vocal about human rights violations in Kashmir—can be appointed by the Labour Party, then why not an advocate of the Sikh rights.

Gillian Merron, the Chief Executive of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, also faced opposition by some Labour MPs but their announcements were not delayed, it has been reported.

Dabinderjit Singh has not made any statement but on Twitter, he said: "Many thanks for the hundreds of messages of support from across the globe. I have been overwhelmed with thousands of messages and phone calls of support from Gurdwaras, Sikh organisations and individuals across the political spectrum and across the globe who recognise my public service and contribution to the Sikh community over the last two decades. I hope I will one day be able to repay the massive support and well wishes."

## SIKH COMMUNITY EAGERLY AWAIT DABINDERJIT SINGH'S CONFIRMATION AS A LIFE PEER IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS



1 September 2021-The Labour Party has no Sikh representation in the House of Lords and Dabinderjit would become the first Amritdhari (fully practising) Sikh in the UK Parliament.

Keir Starmer, the Labour Leader came to Guru Nanak Gurdwara, Smethwick in March 2020 prior to the lockdown. In an interview he was asked about representation. Without prompting Keir Starmer spoke about the importance of Sikh representation and the absence of any Sikhs representing the Labour Party in the House of Lords that needed to be addressed.

Less than 8 months later in early November 2020 Keir Starmer decided to nominate Dabinderjit a senior public servant for the last 33 years for a life peerage. Dabinderjit is also an articulate, well-known and highly respected figure in the British Sikh community.

Dabinderjit went through a thorough vetting process by the House of Lords Appointments Commission (HOLAC) that was completed on 3 December 2020. The Prime Minister on the Commission's advice recommended him for a life peerage that Her Majesty the Queen approved.



# ਐਨ ਮੈਕੇ 'ਤੇ ਟਲੀ ਭਾਈ ਦਬਿੰਦਰਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਿੱਧੂ ਦੀ ਬਰਤਾਨੀਆ ਦੇ 'ਹਾਊਸ ਆਫ਼ ਲਾਰਡ' ਵਜੋਂ ਨਿਯੁਕਤੀ

ਖ਼ਾਲਿਸਤਾਨੀ ਪੱਖੀ ਹੋਣ ਕਾਰਨ ਨਾਂਅ ਕੱਟੇ ਜਾਣ ਦੀ ਚਰਚਾ

ਲੰਡਨ, 24 ਦਸੰਬਰ (ਮਨਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਬੱਧਨੀ ਕਲਾਂ)-ਬਰਤਾਨੀਆ 'ਚ ਸਿੱਖ ਜਥੇਬੰਦੀ 'ਸਿੱਖ ਫੈਡਰੇਸ਼ਨ ਬਰਤਾਨੀਆ' ਦੇ ਮੁੱਖ ਸਲਾਹਕਾਰ ਵਜੋਂ ਵਿਚਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਭਾਈ ਦਬਿੰਦਰਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਿੱਧੂ ਨੂੰ ਲੇਬਰ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਦੇ ਲੀਡਰ ਕੀਰ ਸਟਾਰਮਰ ਵਲੋਂ 'ਹਾਊਸ ਆਫ਼ ਲਾਰਡ' ਲਈ ਨਾਮਜ਼ਦ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ, ਜਿਸ ਨੂੰ ਨਿਯੁਕਤੀ ਕਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਨੇ ਵੀ ਮਨਜ਼ੂਰ ਕਰ ਲਿਆ ਸੀ, ਪਰ ਲਾਰਡ ਦੀ ਨਿਯੁਕਤੀ ਐਲਾਨਨਾਮੇ ਤੋਂ ਕੁਝ ਸਮੇਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਹੀ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਨਾਂਅ ਆਰਜ਼ੀ ਤੌਰ 'ਤੇ ਜਨਵਰੀ ਤੱਕ ਮੁਅੱਤਲ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਗਿਆ। ਦਬਿੰਦਰਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਰਤਾਨੀਆ ਦੇ ਰਾਸ਼ਟਰੀ ਅੰਕੜਾ ਸੰਗ੍ਰਹਿ (ਐਨ ਏ ਓ) ਵਿਚ ਉੱਚ ਅਹੁਦੇ 'ਤੇ ਕੰਮ ਕਰਦੇ ਸਨ ਅਤੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਲੱਖ ਪੌਂਡ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਧ ਤਨਖ਼ਾਹ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਇਸ ਨਵੀਂ ਨਿਯੁਕਤੀ ਤੋਂ ਕੁਝ ਘੰਟੇ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਹੀ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਆਪਣੀ ਨੌਕਰੀ ਵੀ ਛੱਡ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਸੀ। ਭਾਈ ਦਬਿੰਦਰਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਾ ਨਾਂਅ ਜਾਰੀ ਸੂਚੀ 'ਚ ਸ਼ਾਮਿਲ

ਕਰਨ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਜਾਰੀ ਹੋਈ ਆਖ਼ਰੀ ਸੂਚੀ 'ਚ ਹਟਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਗਿਆ, ਜਿਸ ਨੂੰ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਬਰਤਾਨੀਆ ਦੀ ਸਿਆਸਤ 'ਚ ਵੱਡਾ ਵਿਵਾਦ ਖੜ੍ਹਾ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਮੀਡੀਆ ਰਿਪੋਰਟਾਂ 'ਚ ਕਿਹਾ ਜਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਨਾਂਅ ਖ਼ਾਲਿਸਤਾਨ ਪੱਖੀ ਹੋਣ ਕਰਕੇ ਕੱਟਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ, ਪਰ ਕੁਝ ਸੂਤਰਾਂ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਲੇਬਰ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਵਲੋਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਨਾਂਅ ਆਰਜ਼ੀ ਤੌਰ 'ਤੇ ਵਾਪਸ ਲਿਆ ਹੈ, ਜਦਕਿ ਆਖ਼ਰੀ ਫ਼ੈਸਲਾ ਜਨਵਰੀ 'ਚ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ। ਉੱਧਰ ਸਿੱਖ ਫੈਡਰੇਸ਼ਨ ਬਰਤਾਨੀਆ ਵਲੋਂ ਜਾਰੀ ਬਿਆਨ 'ਚ ਚੇਅਰਮੈਨ ਭਾਈ ਅਮਰੀਕ ਸਿੰਘ ਗਿੱਲ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਭਾਈ ਸਿੱਧੂ ਨੇ ਕਦੇ ਵੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਫੈਡਰੇਸ਼ਨ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਵੀ ਅਧਿਕਾਰਤ ਅਹੁਦਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੰਭਾਲਿਆ ਅਤੇ ਨਾ ਹੀ ਉਹ ਕਦੇ ਇੰਟਰਨੈਸ਼ਨਲ ਸਿੱਖ ਯੂਥ ਫੈਡਰੇਸ਼ਨ ਦੇ ਮੈਂਬਰ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਸ: ਦਬਿੰਦਰਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੀ ਨਾਮਜ਼ਦਗੀ ਰੱਦ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ, ਸਗੋਂ ਜਨਵਰੀ ਤੱਕ ਮੁਲਤਵੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ।



On 22 December 2020 sixteen new peerages were publicly announced and Dabinderjit was notified at 11am on that morning that his name would be included in the public announcement at 2pm.

However, what followed was inexplicable and bizarre to say the least. Dabinderjit's name was leaked by a government source to Robert Peston, the ITV Political Editor who tweeted the same day that he contacted a leading figure in the Hindu community close to the Indian Government who said they would be outraged by the appointment.

The leak resulted in an appalling campaign of hate and scaremongering initiated by right wing pro-India groups and individuals. The hate campaign was sponsored by the Indian authorities and was not just against Dabinderjit as a leading Sikh activist but also against the Sikh community and those advocating for greater Sikh rights.

Minutes before the expected public announcement and to Dabinderjit's complete astonishment his name was disappointingly withheld from being made public although due process had been followed and completed involving the nomination by the Labour Leader, the Prime Minister's recommendation and the Crown's approval.

The Sikh Federation (UK) has consulted leading constitutional lawyers who have suggested if legal action was taken the courts would require disclosure and uncover officials acted unlawfully in preventing the public announcement after the PMs recommendation and Crown's approval.

It is understood haters reached out to certain pro-Indian elements, including named office bearers for Sikhs For Labour who along with others directly and indirectly pressured the Labour leader's office and senior officials in the Labour Party to pull the public announcement.

Much has been made in the Indian media of Dabinderjit's support for the re-establishment of an independent Sikh State that was annexed by the British in 1849. Sikh soldiers fought and died for Britain for the next 100 years, led the independence movement in India and in 1947 Clement Attlee's Labour Government offered Sikhs a homeland alongside India and Pakistan.

When the Labour leader recommended Dabinderjit for a life peerage In early November 2020, Dabinderjit's strongly held views would have been very well known to him, his office and dozens of senior Labour politicians.



It is also hypocritical as there are also many MPs and Lords who have strong personal views in relation to Kashmir, Palestine and the establishment of other independent states.

It is understood after Dabinderjit's name was leaked an internal witch-hunt within Labour, that has been described by some as racist, kicked off. At best this was two weeks for all those opposing Dabinderjit to make allegations after the official vetting and appointment process had been completed.

Nothing new emerged with only two minor issues being raised with Keir Starmer's outgoing Chief of Staff. Dabinderjit is understood to have fully addressed these the same day they were put to him in mid-January 2021. He and the Sikh community have been in limbo awaiting the public announcement that was expected in July 2021 when peerages are normally announced each year.

At least half a dozen official complaints were made to the Labour Party in January 2021 by Gurdwaras, Labour councillors and party members who are supporting Dabinderjit that are still being investigated and have not concluded.

Dozens of Labour MPs, including Shadow Cabinet members and other senior figures from all sections of the party, all major Gurdwaras from across the UK, leading Sikh organisations and activists and over 70% of all Labour Sikh councillors contacted Keir's office in Dabinderjit's support after it emerged his name was withheld.

In the coming weeks pressure will be on the leader's office and the new chief of staff to put matters right and confirm Dabinderjit as a life peer when the next public announcement is made that is likely to be later this year.



The public announcement and taking up a position in the House of Lords will end a fantastic 33-year long career at the National Audit Office (NAO) where Dabinderjit has been a highly regarded Director for nearly 22 years in a politically restricted role.

The NAO nominated Dabinderjit for an OBE in 2000 for his work on equal opportunities and appreciated his wider contribution and representation of the Sikh community. There are many Permanent Secretaries, Chief Executives, Non-Executive Directors and Senior Civil Servants who he has

worked with and appreciated his challenge and advice over the last two decades.

The experience Dabinderjit has gained at the NAO into the workings of the UK Government, EU and United Nations bodies where he has worked provide an excellent professional background to fully participate and add value in the scrutiny role in the House of Lords.



## ਸਿੱਖ ਫੈਡਰੇਸ਼ਨ (ਯੂ.ਕੇ.) ਵਲੋਂ ਜਨਰਲ ਇਜਲਾਸ



ਸਿੱਖ ਫੈਡਰੇਸ਼ਨ ਯੂ. ਕੇ. ਜਨਰਲ ਇਜਲਾਸ 'ਚ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਸਿੱਖ ਆਗੂ | ਤਸਵੀਰ: ਮਨਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਬੱਧਨੀ ਕਲਾਂ

ਜਾਰੀ ਰੱਖਣ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਮਹੀਨਾਵਾਰ ਪ੍ਰੋਗਰਾਮ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਜ਼ਰੂਰਤ ਹੈ। ਵਾਈਸ ਚੇਅਰਮੈਨ ਭਾਈ ਭੁਲਦੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਚਰੇਤੂ ਨੇ ਪੰਥਕ ਸੋਚ ਵਾਲੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਸੰਸਥਾਵਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਸਾਂਝੇ ਪ੍ਰੋਗਰਾਮ ਆਯੋਜਿਤ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਕਿਹਾ। ਮੁੱਖ ਸਲਾਹਕਾਰ ਦਫ਼ਤਰੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ 20 ਸਾਲਾਂ ਦੀ ਲਾਬਿੰਗ ਦੇ ਤਜਰਬੇ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਹਰੇਕ ਮੁੱਖ ਰਾਜਨੀਤਿਕ ਪਾਰਟੀਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਕੰਮ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਰਾਜਨੀਤਿਕਰਣਨੀਤੀ ਤੈਅ ਕੀਤੀ। ਜਨਰਲ ਸਕੱਤਰ ਨਰਿੰਦਰਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਮੈਂਬਰਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਇੱਕ ਸਵਾਲ-ਜਵਾਬ ਸੈਸ਼ਨ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨਗੀ ਕੀਤੀ। ਐਮ.ਪੀ. ਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਕੌਰ ਗਿੱਲ ਨੇ ਯੂ ਕੇ ਅਤੇ ਯੂ ਐਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਕਿਸਾਨ ਅੰਦੋਲਨ ਪ੍ਰਦਰਸ਼ਨਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਰਾਜਨੀਤਕ ਗਤੀਵਿਧੀਆਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੀਤੇ। ਇਜਲਾਸ 'ਚ ਭਾਈ ਦਲਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਿੱਟੂ, ਜਸਪਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਮੰਦਪੁਰ, ਗੁਰਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੌਹਲ, ਕੈਲੀਫੋਰਨੀਆ ਤੋਂ ਡਾ. ਹਰਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਲਿੱਤਰਾਂ, ਹਰਪਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਚੀਮਾ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਤੋਂ, ਮਾਸਟਰ ਕਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਤੇ ਹਰਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਸਵਿਟਜ਼ਰਲੈਂਡ, ਯੂਨਾਨ ਤੋਂ ਹਜ਼ਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ, ਯੂ.ਐਸ.ਏ. ਤੋਂ ਗੁਰਮੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਅਤੇ ਡਾ. ਪ੍ਰਿਤਪਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਕੈਨੇਡਾ ਤੋਂ ਅਮਰਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਮਾਨ ਨੇ ਸਮੂਹੀਅਤ ਕੀਤੀ।

ਲੰਡਨ, 15 ਮਾਰਚ (ਮਨਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਬੱਧਨੀ ਕਲਾਂ)-ਸਿੱਖ ਫੈਡਰੇਸ਼ਨ ਯੂ. ਕੇ. ਦੇ ਸਾਲਾਨਾ ਜਨਰਲ ਇਜਲਾਸ 'ਚ ਇੰਗਲੈਂਡ ਭਰ ਦੇ ਵੱਖ-ਵੱਖ ਸ਼ਹਿਰਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਦੇਸ਼ ਵਿਦੇਸ਼ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਡੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ 'ਚ ਸਿੱਖ ਆਗੂਆਂ ਨੇ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਲਿਆ। ਸਿੱਖ ਫੈਡਰੇਸ਼ਨ ਯੂ.ਕੇ. ਦੇ ਚੇਅਰਮੈਨ ਭਾਈ ਅਮਰੀਕ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਵੇਂ ਸਾਲ ਦੀ ਆਮਦ 'ਤੇ ਇੰਟਰਨੈਸ਼ਨਲ ਸਿੱਖ ਯੂਥ ਫੈਡਰੇਸ਼ਨ ਤੋਂ 5 ਸਾਲ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਪਾਬੰਦੀ ਹਟਾਈ ਗਈ ਸੀ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਕੋਰੋਨਾ ਮਹਾਂਮਾਰੀ ਦੀ ਚੁਣੌਤੀ ਦੌਰਾਨ ਕੀਤੀਆਂ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀਆਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਵੀ ਦੱਸਿਆ। ਭਾਈ ਹਰਦੀਸ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਕਈ ਪ੍ਰਾਜੈਕਟਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਮੁਹਿੰਮਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਲਈ ਬ੍ਰਾਂਚਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਮੈਂਬਰਾਂ ਦਾ ਧੰਨਵਾਦ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਸਥਾਨਕ ਲਾਬਿੰਗ ਨੂੰ

## SIKH FEDERATION (UK) TERMS REPORT OF COMMISSION ON RACE AND ETHNIC DISPARITIES AS DISAPPOINTING AND WHITEWASH

2 April 2021-Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) said “The Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities 264-page report published today is hugely disappointing and a whitewash.”

“As far as we are concerned institutional discrimination exists and has been exposed further during the pandemic.”

“We responded to the consultation, but the report fails to acknowledge many of the specific issues we raised relating to the Sikh community.”

“Institutional discrimination against Sikhs continues un-recognised and un-addressed, including the discrimination against Sikhs reinforced by the Census 2021.”

“Despite responses from the Sikh community the report makes virtually no mention of Sikhs although we are a legally recognised ethnic as well as religious group, but this may be explained by the make-up of the 12-member Commission that has no Sikh representation.”

“We are hugely disappointed the Commission has overlooked public bodies are collecting no data whatsoever on Sikhs to monitor disparity as highlighted by the PMs Race Disparity Audit.”

“Some of the recommendations on achieving inclusivity, such as an inclusive curriculum, use of data and moving away from the term BAME are helpful.”

“However, the recommendations do not go far enough to address the concerns we raised on the absolute need for the collection of good quality data on Sikhs to assess inequalities in healthcare, education and hate crimes.”



## Calls for Tory peer to quit after revelations he 'victimised' female worker



Left Foot Forward - 15 April 2021

An employment tribunal has found that a Conservative peer 'victimised' a woman who complained of alleged sexual harassment at his multi-million pound firm Sun Mark.



Lord Rami Ranger used his maiden speech in the House of Lords last year to advocate for women, telling peers that "empowerment and equality for women everywhere is a necessity," the Telegraph reports.

Yet a tribunal has ruled that he discriminated against a female employee who complained of alleged 'unwanted sexual attention' by a male colleague at the food export company.

According to evidence at the tribunal, Lord Ranger reportedly told the woman – who had just complained to him that she was being sexually harassed by one of the senior colleagues – that he would not "spare her" and criticised her for "arguing with men like a proper quarrelsome woman".

The judge at the employment tribunal ruled that Rami Ranger had "victimised", "harassed" and "discriminated against" the woman, in breach of employment laws, in his handling of her sexual harassment complaint. Rami Ranger strongly denied the allegations against him, and he has been granted permission to appeal.

The judge ruled Lord Ranger's conduct amounted to gender-based discrimination, saying that the peer "would not have treated a man in a hypothetically similar situation by the use of those words."

Judge Alastair Smail said Rami Ranger's behaviour "had an effect of violating the claimant's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating and offensive environment for her", and that he had insulted her in a way which "related to her gender and the fact that she was raising an allegation of sexual harassment".

Rami Ranger has been found to have directly discriminated under the Equality Act.

In a statement, the Sikh Federation called for Lord Ranger to resign as the chairman of the Conservative Friends of India and be expelled from the House of Lords.

Sikh Socialists said the tribunal showed "Rami Ranger uses honour, caste, and migration precarity to dismiss [the] employee's experiences of sexual harassment in the workplace."

The Sikh Federation is critical of Rami Ranger's alleged support for the right-wing Hindu nationalist BJP government. Lord Ranger is chair of the British Sikh Association.

On Twitter, Lord Ranger said: "Those who have seen selective accounts of the story in the media should read my full statement. I remain proud of my record as both an employer & a champion of gender equality & look forward to re-stating my case at the appeal."

Sun Mark had issued a statement claiming that the victim's recorded phone call to Lord Ranger "amounted to entrapment" and that 'Ms A' had "deliberately goaded" him before secretly recording the conversation.

Sun Mark strongly denied the allegations against Lord Ranger, according to the Telegraph. The statement said: "The tribunal acknowledged there is no history of discrimination or harassment in any of our companies."



## Tributes pour for 'caring and humble' pillar of Sikh community and former Gurdwara President

Leicestershire.Live

**'He shared our happiness and our sadness - that's just what he was like'**

LeicestershireLive – 7 June 2021

A former President of a Gurdwara in Leicester and devoted dad has been described as a 'caring and humble' man after he passed away last week.

Sardar Mangal Singh was the President of Guru Tegh Bahadur Gurdwara in East Park Road, in Spinney Hills, for more than 20 years where he was a well-known and loved member of the local Sikh community.



The 62-year-old who lived in Oadby, passed away in hospital on Thursday, June 3 due to health complications.

His daughter Amandeep Kaur, the youngest of four siblings described her father as "loving and caring" but said the extent of his care for the wider community has become more apparent after an outpouring of tributes to him on social media and through personal messages.

Since her dad passed away, Amandeep said she has received numerous calls and messages about how much he did for others.

"He's gone way too soon but it's hard to be sad because of everything I'm hearing about him from people - I feel so proud."

Mangal was a devoted Sikh who visited the Gurdwara every day. During the lockdown, when

the Gurdwara was closed, he was known to park outside and pray from a distance.

His loyalty to his friends and community were also of great priority to Mangal, who moved to England from India in 1976 and worked in a factory in South Wigston.

"He made so many friends there - that was his first proper job and he still kept in touch with that group.

"Everywhere he went he made a big impact," Amandeep said.

She said her dad's empathy and resilience made him the family's "rock".

After his role as President of the Gurdwara committee came to end, Mangal continued to volunteer at the temple.

A statement from the Guru Tegh Bahadur Gurdwara committee said: "Mangal Singh was a pillar of the community and will be sadly missed by all those who had come to know him through his voluntary work at the Gurdwara."

Leicester's Indian Workers Association spokesperson, Sital Singh Gill said: "His long-life contributions to the community will always be remembered. Our deepest condolence to the family and friends at this difficult time."

In a tribute to him on Twitter, MP Claudia Webbe said described Mangal as a "humble champion within our Leicester East community."

"His love & care throughout Leicester will be missed by all. He served the Guru Tegh Bahadur Gurdwara well. My thoughts are with the Sikh community, his family & loved ones."

**Sikh Federation in the UK**, an organisation promoting Sikh issues, also paid tribute to the former Gurdwara committee President on social media hours after his death, saying: "We are saddened & shocked by the news of the sudden passing of one of our most loyal sevadars (volunteers) S. Mangal Singh from Leicester, who earlier today took his last breaths."

Mangal Singh is survived by his wife, Jaswinder Kaur, four children and four grandchildren.





## DEFENDING AND PROMOTING THE SIKH IDENTITY

### ONS REFUSES TO DECIDE ON POSTPONEMENT OF CENSUS 2021 IN ENGLAND AND WALES DESPITE LATEST SCIENTIFIC ADVICE AND PROJECTED STATISTICS ON COVID-19

22 September 2020-The National Statistician this morning giving evidence to the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee (PACAC) in Parliament refused to confirm to MPs if the Census 2021 in England and Wales would be postponed despite the latest scientific advice.

The chief medical officers for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland said yesterday cases were now "rising rapidly and probably exponentially in significant parts of all four nations" and that the UK's coronavirus alert level was being upgraded from 3 to 4, meaning transmission is "high or rising exponentially".

The Scottish Government announced on 17th July 2020 it was delaying the Census 2021 by one year due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic as it would reduce data quality from the Census as there would be an impact on the response rate. This put to an end the UK-wide census on the same day across the UK.

Last Thursday Chloe Smith, the Cabinet Office Minister responsible for the Census in response to a Parliamentary Question from Preet Kaur Gill MP on plans to postpone the Census 2021 expressed regret at the position in Scotland but insisted the government had no plans to postpone the census in England and Wales.

Last week the Irish Government also announced a one-year postponement due to the need to ensure the safety of the general public and staff working for the Central Statistical Office coupled with the need to deliver a Census that achieves the highest possible response rate.

The Census is a major logistical operation and there are now less than 6 months left before the next 10-year census in England and Wales on 21st March 2021.

Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) said: "The position of the Office for National Statistics (ONS) as regards the timing of the Census 2021 in England and Wales with less than 6 months to go is unsustainable."

"Based on their own latest statistics, the trend of Covid-19 cases and the most recent advice of the chief medical and scientific officers there is huge uncertainty around the pandemic that strongly suggests it will not be possible to conduct the Census on 21st March 2021 in England and Wales."

"ONS are unable to explain why Covid-19 is less of an issue in England and Wales compared to Scotland (and Ireland) as the National Statistician admitted this morning giving evidence to MPs there was a greater challenge with Covid-19 in major cities across the UK."



“He also admitted giving evidence to MPs that face to face surveys were probably a thing from the past, but he fell short of commenting on the Census 2021 where face to face contact will be necessary.”

“The Covid-19 situation is deteriorating but as far as the Census is concerned the ONS appears to be oblivious to the safety of the general public, especially the millions of vulnerable people that will need assistance to complete the Census.”

“The ONS has set a target of 75% of the public to complete the next census online in England and Wales but field operations require significant face to face contact between enumerators, householders, and managers of communal establishments to ensure a high level of response is achieved.”

The Cabinet Office on advice from the ONS will in the coming weeks need to decide whether to delay the Census in England and Wales by a year due to Covid-19.

The Sikh Federation (UK) with the support of over 150 Gurdwaras and Sikh organisations is challenging the Cabinet Office on the absence of a Sikh ethnic tick box in the Census 2021. A high court hearing is due to take place next month to declare the process used to arrive at a decision by ONS as unlawful and quash the Census Order and Census Regulations in England and Wales.

### **ONS FABRICATES FINANCIAL IMPACT OF DELAY IN CENSUS BY ONE YEAR TO TRY AND INFLUENCE FINAL OUTCOME IN HIGH COURT CASE**

22 October 2020-During the second day of a judicial review hearing in the High Court on behalf of the Sikh Federation (UK) against the Cabinet Office the barrister representing the government revealed that the financial impact of a delay of the Census 2021 by one year would be £250 million.

Contempt of court prevented the Sikh Federation (UK) from exposing the underhand tactics of the ONS to try and deny the Sikh community a Sikh ethnic tick box in the forthcoming 2021 Census.



The 2019-20 audited accounts for the UK Statistics Authority published in July 2020 indicate the total spend of the organisation last year on all activities was £308 million. Closer examination shows over 60% of the costs are employing 4,225 staff. However only 52 or 1% of these staff relate specifically to census field staff.

The 2020-21 published estimates for the UK Statistics Authority indicate the spend on staff costs up to 31st March 2021 will only be £36 million higher. After taking account of pay rises and non-census related costs, for example, additional work associated with COVID-19, it is reasonable to assume the total cost of employing additional staff for the Census that is currently

underway would be no more than £30 million up to 31st March 2021.

In May 2020 the Sikh Federation’s solicitors asked the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to confirm that no irreversible steps were being taken to progress the 2021 Census prior to the conclusion of the judicial review proceedings. The ONS ignored this and has pushed ahead with preparations for the Census in March 2021. Justice Choudhury, the High Court judge hearing the case noted the May 2020 request not to take irreversible steps.

The only major sunk costs the Office for National Statistics (ONS) has incurred is that it decided to print three million paper questionnaires over the summer some nine months before the census date at a cost of a few hundred thousand pounds. They did this despite the uncertainty created by COVID-19 and knowing the Scottish government decided in July 2020 to delay the Census in Scotland by one year due to the inevitable impact of COVID-19.



The UK Statistics Authority annual report published in July 2020 also states with respect to delivery of the Census 2021 that it is “assessing the risks and re-planning is taking place in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and how this might impact”. This suggests ONS when entering into contracts would have been mindful of the possibility that COVID-19 could delay the census.

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

“We do not have access to contracts ONS has signed and clauses inserted, but any reasonable person would conclude the £250 million figure put before the High Court is entirely false and a massive exaggeration. The total spend specifically on the census in 2020-21 will probably by no more than £150 million.”

“We are quietly confident the judgement will find the Cabinet Office acted unlawfully, but the assertion that £250 million would be wasted is a deliberate fabrication aimed to influence the court.”

“We suspect much of the spend for census preparations is not waste. Much of the effort to date has been on design and build of a digital-first census that will not be wasted even if there is a delay of one year.”

“Printing three million forms and employing some staff early is a risk ONS has taken that could amount to waste, but we are probably talking a few million and not £250 million.”

“It is for the court to determine if the Deputy National Statistician has made a reckless witness statement that could amount to committal proceedings for contempt of court.”

## British Sikh group loses High Court challenge for Census ethnicity tick-box



The Hindu – 7 November 2020

The High Court in London has dismissed a challenge brought by a **British Sikh group** against the UK Cabinet Office for its failure to incorporate a separate Sikh ethnicity tick-box in the next census in 2021.



Justice Akhlaq Choudhury handed down his judgment on Friday to conclude that the Census, as currently designed, will not prevent people from identifying as ethnically as Sikh as a write-in option.

“In coming to that view, I do not underestimate the importance to the Claimant of having a specific Sikh tick-box under the ethnic group question.

“However, the Census, as currently designed, will not prevent any respondent who wishes to do so from identifying as ethnically Sikh. The write-in option, with the auto-fill function in the online version, will enable the respondent to do so,” the ruling notes.

“It cannot be right that any challenge to executive decision-making should require the decision maker to cease ongoing work, particularly in respect of a project of the scale of a national census,” it reads.

**Sikh Federation (UK)**, represented by the law firm Leigh Day at the Royal Courts of Justice, had earlier claimed that it would be unlawful for the Cabinet Office to lay before Parliament a Census Order based on the proposals set out by the UK’s Office for National Statistics (ONS) in its December 2018 White Paper, which had rejected the need for a separate tick-box.

Justice Beverley Lang had earlier dismissed a previous High Court challenge to that on the ground that it is “premature”, leading to an appeal against the Cabinet Office’s Census Order as being unlawful.



The judge points out that his ruling this week is not concerned with whether or not there should be a Sikh tick-box in the census form or with the respective merits of the arguments for and against such a tick-box.

“Such matters are not for the court to determine. This judgment is concerned solely with the question whether, as alleged by the Claimant [Sikh Federation (UK)], the Cabinet Office, which has responsibility for laying the necessary legislation for the 2021 Census, has acted unlawfully in the process leading to the making of the Census Order,” the judge said.

The Sikh Federation (UK) said that although the High Court has rejected its claim, refusing to quash the census legislation, its battle for a separate tick-box continues.

“While we are disappointed with the court’s decision, we look forward to working closely with

### BATTLE TO CONTINUE FOR SEPARATE RECOGNITION OF SIKHS BY PUBLIC BODIES

6 November 2020-Although the High Court has rejected our third judicial review claim and the judge has refused to quash the census legislation our battle continues for separate recognition.

Justice Choudhury made clear in his judgment handed down today he was not concerned with whether there should be a Sikh ethnic tick-box in the census form.

The judgment was concerned solely with the question whether the Cabinet Office acted unlawfully in the process leading to the making of the Census Order.

This scenario of the ONS and the Cabinet Office finding a way to avoid the inclusion of a Sikh ethnic tick box in the Census 2021 was envisaged in the Sikh Manifesto 2020-25 published in November 2019. It stated Sikhs would continue to campaign against this injustice and discrimination with the support of MPs. The Manifesto stated there may need to be “a large-scale campaign leading up to the Census 2021 encouraging Sikhs to tick “Other” and write “Sikh” if the option of a Sikh ethnic tick box is not made available”.

Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) said: “Justice Choudhury’s ruling is a massive disappointment to the Sikh community, but our political and legal battle will continue. One chapter has ended, but another has opened.”

“10 years ago, over 83,000 Sikhs protested by rejecting the existing ethnic tick boxes in the Census 2011, ticked “Other” and wrote “Sikh”. If the Census in England and Wales takes place on 21st March 2021 as planned, we will campaign with others to double the number of Sikhs rejecting the existing ethnic tick boxes.”

MPs and government bodies to find another solution to ensure the specific needs of the Sikh community are not overlooked in the allocation of public resources and policymaking,” it said in a statement.

Sikhs are recognised as a separate religion in the optional religious question introduced in the 2001 Census.

The UK’s Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 placed an obligatory duty on the country’s public authorities to monitor and positively promote race equality in the provision of public services.

According to Sikh Federation (UK), which claims the backing of hundreds of UK Gurdwaras, public bodies tend to only reference the ethnic groups used in the Census and demand a separate Sikh ethnic tick-box to ensure Sikhs have fair access to all public services.



“The Cabinet Office know the main reason why we campaigned for having a Sikh ethnic tick box in the Census is because over 40,000 public bodies use the census ethnic group categories to ensure equal opportunities and to formulate anti-discrimination policies.”

“The Office for National Statistics (ONS) and Cabinet Office have side-stepped the issue of equal opportunities and anti-discrimination policies by suggesting it is public bodies themselves that are at fault in terms of compliance with Equalities legislation as they accept Sikhs legally constitute an ethnic group.”



**The general equality duty**

This came into force on 5 April 2011.

In the exercise of their functions, **public authorities** in England, Scotland and Wales must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other unlawful conduct in the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

Equality and Human Rights Commission

“We will consider the full range of actions available to us to prevent discrimination against Sikhs by directing our efforts to each of the four main types of public bodies – schools, hospitals, local authorities and central government bodies.”

In the coming months and years, the Sikh community working with MPs will engage with the four central government departments responsible for each of the sectors to find a solution. We cannot rule out legal action against strategically placed public bodies to bring about sector wide change.

In contrast, the Scottish government want to work with the Sikh community to get public bodies in Scotland to monitor Sikhs as a distinct ethnic group. We hope the Cabinet Office, Department for Education, Department of Health and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government will also see sense.

## UK Sikh bodies encourage British Sikhs not to classify ethnically as Indian in UK Census

Times of India - 23 February 2021

Sikh organisations and Gurdwaras in Britain are encouraging Sikhs not to classify ethnically as “Indian” in the online census being carried out in March 2021.

The Census takes place every 10 years in Britain to capture up-to-date accurate details about households so that public services can be planned.

The Network of Sikh Organisations (NSO) has, in a tweet, explained how Sikhs should answer the “What is your ethnic group?” question: “We recommend individuals unhappy with the ‘Indian’ option should tick ‘Any other Asian background’ (under ‘Asian or Asian British’) and write in ‘Punjabi’.”

Lord Singh of Wimbledon, Director, NSO, told TOI: “On ethnicity, our advice to those unwilling to describe themselves as ‘Indian’, because of the absence of closure for the 1984 anti-Sikh genocide is to write ‘Punjabi’ — a more accurate description of ethnicity.”



But the **Sikh Federation (UK)**, backed by dozens of Gurdwaras and Sikh organisations, is promoting a different classification — that British Sikhs avoid the “Asian or Asian British” category and instead

pick the category “Other ethnic group”, then select “any other ethnic group” within that and write in “Sikh”.

The Federation, which recently lost a battle in the High Court here to get a tick box for Sikhs in the ethnicity section of the Census, said this was a battle for the Sikh “quami” identity. Its spokesman said: “In the Census 2011 over 83,000 Sikhs protested and refused to use the existing ethnic tick boxes and ticked ‘other’ and wrote ‘Sikh’. Now we plan to double that number and possibly get up to 200,000 Sikhs to tick ‘other’ and write ‘Sikh’ this time to send a strong signal to the UK government.”



The problem is that whilst some British Sikhs may now write “Punjabi”, others may write in “Sikh”, and others may tick “Indian”, sparking fears the census will not provide an accurate reflection of the Indian community, nor of the population.

This is particularly important since the aim of the Census is to shed light on the needs of different groups and communities, and the inequalities people are experiencing.

## Census 2021: Sikhs could be soul-searching about their identity over form’s ethnic group question



**The question of which ethnic group Sikhs should tick in the Census has divided the community.**

iNews – 17 March 2021

For most people, the 2021 Census is a mere box-ticking exercise that is unlikely to be too taxing, but for members of the Sikh community the decennial survey might cause some soul-searching about their identity.

Many Sikhs may have historically listed their ethnic group as Indian and their religion as Sikh. But some UK community leaders, who believe Sikhs are both an ethnic and religious group, are urging them to label themselves as such for the corresponding questions on the online census, which takes place on 21st March.



Preet Kaur Gill, the first female Sikh MP, said the Office for National Statistics’ decision against including a separate ethnic group tick-box for the community on what could be the last census was “disappointing”.

The campaign for the tick-box, backed by more than 100 Gurdwaras (Sikh temples), was born out of concerns that the needs of the Sikh community, such as equal opportunities and protection against discrimination, were not being met.

Ms Gill, Head of the All Party Parliamentary Group on British Sikhs and the Labour MP for Edgbaston in Birmingham, said public bodies used the ethnicity data to fund and plan local services. “The data is still not reflective of the population because Sikhs are invisible,” she told i.

“This campaign is to address the inequalities they face that have gone unaddressed for decades,” said Ms Gill, adding that the community risked being “voiceless in the eyes of the Government”.

Amrik Singh, Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK), said the lobby group was advising Sikhs to reject

the existing ethnic group options and write or type in Sikh under “other”.



“In the Census 2011, over 83,000 [Sikhs] rejected the existing ethnic tick-box options and chose to select other and write Sikh. We hope to at least double this in the Census 2021.”

Mr Singh said the Covid-19 pandemic had highlighted the need for good-quality data, adding that he was concerned thousands of public bodies were failing to address the needs of Sikhs.

Lord Singh said some people wanted Sikhism to be classed as an ethnicity for “political gain” and to argue for an independent Sikh state.

Explaining the purpose of the ethnic group question on the Census, he said: “If a lot of people from one country came and lived in a particular part of the UK, extra resources could be provided. That’s all it was. And that’s become more and more meaningless because there’s very little immigration – people are born here and they are British.”

“The idea that if we tick Sikh in the ethnic tick-box, we’ll get the Government giving us everything, is just an absurd fallacy.”



“So Indian is not popular. Nor is it very accurate,” he said, explaining that India is home to a number of different identities.

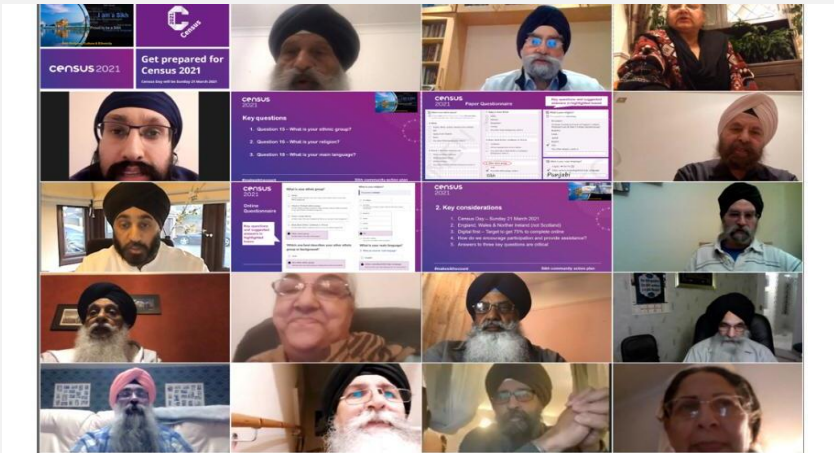


## SIKHS CAMPAIGN TO REJECT EXISTING ETHNIC GROUP CATEGORIES IN CENSUS 2021 AND PROTEST BY USING THE WRITE IN OPTION AND TYPE "SIKH"

21 March 2021- The Census 2021 took place in England and Wales on 21 March 2021. The Sikh Federation (UK) and other organisations encouraged Sikhs to answer the optional religious question and indicate their religion as Sikh by ticking the relevant tick box. In response to the language question Sikhs were encouraged to tick other and write Punjabi.

The critical question is regarding ethnicity that is extensively used by public bodies to develop policies and allocate resources based on ethnic groups specified in the census. 10 years earlier in the Census 2011 83,362 Sikhs protested and ticked other and wrote "Sikh".

The campaign and legal challenge leading up to the Census 2021 was high profile and there is an expectation the number of Sikhs protesting may double and reach between 150,000 to 200,000. The initial results will be published by the Office for National Statistics in March 2022. However, the full results covering all Census data will be revealed a year later in March 2023.



### ਮਰਦਮਸ਼ੁਮਾਰੀ ਲਈ ਯੂ.ਕੇ. 'ਚ 'ਸਿੱਖ ਕੌਮੀ ਪਹਿਚਾਣ' ਮੁਹਿੰਮ ਦਾ ਆਗਾਜ਼

ਲੰਡਨ, 22 ਫਰਵਰੀ (ਮਨਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਬੱਧਨੀ ਕਲਾਂ)-ਯੂ.ਕੇ. 'ਚ ਮਾਰਚ 2021 'ਚ ਹੋ ਰਹੀ ਮਰਦਮਸ਼ੁਮਾਰੀ ਮੌਕੇ ਐਥਨਿਕ ਗਰੁੱਪ 'ਚ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ 'ਸਿੱਖ' ਵਜੋਂ ਖੁਦ ਦੀ ਪਹਿਚਾਣ ਦਰਸਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਵੱਡੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ 'ਚ ਯੂ.ਕੇ. ਦੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਘਰਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਕਮੇਟੀਆਂ, ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਸਥਾਵਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਆਗੂ ਅੱਗੇ ਆਏ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਯੂ.ਕੇ. ਭਰ 'ਚ 'ਸਿੱਖ ਕੌਮੀ ਪਹਿਚਾਣ' ਮੁਹਿੰਮ ਦਾ ਕੱਲੂ ਆਨਲਾਈਨ ਹੋਈ ਮੀਟਿੰਗ 'ਚ ਆਗਾਜ਼ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ, ਜੋ ਅਗਲੇ 4 ਹਫ਼ਤਿਆਂ ਤੱਕ ਦੇਸ਼ ਭਰ 'ਚ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਐਥਨਿਕ ਖ਼ਾਨੇ 'ਚ ਸਿੱਖ (ਕੌਮ) ਵਜੋਂ ਦਰਸਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਜਾਗਰੂਕ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਵੇਗਾ। ਕੱਲੂ ਹੋਈ ਜ਼ੂਮ ਮੀਟਿੰਗ 'ਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਘਰਾਂ, ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਸਥਾਵਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਜਥੇਬੰਦੀਆਂ ਦੇ 40 ਤੋਂ ਵੱਧ ਨੁਮਾਇੰਦਿਆਂ ਨੇ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਲਿਆ। ਇਸ ਮੌਕੇ ਉਕਤ ਆਗੂਆਂ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਮਸਾਲਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਹੱਲ ਲਈ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਵੱਧ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਧ ਸਿੱਖ ਵਜੋਂ ਪਹਿਚਾਣ ਕਰਵਾਉਣੀ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ। ਜਿਸ ਲਈ ਐਥਨਿਕ ਗਰੁੱਪ ਲਈ ਖਾਨਾ ਨੰਬਰ 15 ਦੇ ਭਾਗ ਈ ਵਿਚ ਹੇਠ ਹੋਰ ਅੱਗੇ ਟਿੱਕ ਕਰਕੇ 'ਸਿੱਖ' ਲਿਖਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਮੌਕੇ ਬੁਲਾਰਿਆਂ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਅੰਦਰ ਵੰਡੀਆਂ ਪਾਉਣ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ ਅਜਿਹੇ ਭੁਲੇਖਿਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਬਚਣ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਮੌਕੇ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਕਿ 2011 'ਚ 83000 ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੇ ਇਸ ਖ਼ਾਨੇ 'ਚ ਖੁਦ ਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਸੀ, ਜਦਕਿ ਯੂ.ਕੇ. ਵਿਚ ਲੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ 'ਚ ਸਿੱਖ ਵੱਸਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਵਾਰ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਫਾਰਮ ਭਰਨ ਮੌਕੇ ਸਾਵਧਾਨੀ ਵਰਤਣ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ।

ਮੀਟਿੰਗ 'ਚ ਕਿਹਾ ਗਿਆ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਪੰਜ ਕਕਾਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਮਸਲੇ, ਸਿੱਖ ਪਹਿਚਾਣ ਨੂੰ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਧੋਦਾ ਹੋਣ ਵਾਲੀਆਂ ਗਲਤ ਫਹਿਮੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਹੱਲ ਲਈ ਇਹ ਹੰਡਲਾ ਮਾਰਨਾ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਮੌਕੇ ਖਾਨਾ ਨੰਬਰ 16 'ਚ ਵੀ ਧਰਮ ਵਜੋਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਭਰਨ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ-ਨਾਲ ਖਾਨਾ ਨੰਬਰ 18 'ਚ ਮੁੱਖ ਬੋਲੀ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਭਰਨ ਦੀ ਅਪੀਲ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ। ਉਕਤ ਆਗੂਆਂ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਅਗਲੇ 4 ਹਫ਼ਤਿਆਂ ਦੌਰਾਨ ਯੂ.ਕੇ. ਭਰ ਵਿਚ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਅੰਦਰ ਸਿੱਖ ਕੌਮੀ ਪਹਿਚਾਣ ਮੁਹਿੰਮ ਵਜੋਂ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਵੇਗਾ। ਇਸ ਮੀਟਿੰਗ 'ਚ ਭਾਈ ਅਮਰੀਕ ਸਿੰਘ ਗਿੱਲ, ਪ੍ਰਸਿੱਪਲ ਗੁਰਮੁੱਖ ਸਿੰਘ, ਦਬਿੰਦਰਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਿੱਧੂ, ਅਮਰਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਾਸਨ, ਕਸ਼ਮੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ਹਰਮੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਗਿੱਲ, ਨਰਿੰਦਰਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਾਈ, ਬਲਵਿੰਦਰ ਕੌਰ ਸੌਧ, ਜਰਨੈਲ ਸਿੰਘ, ਤਰਸੇਮ ਸਿੰਘ, ਹਰਮੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਤੋਂ ਇਲਾਵਾ ਯੂ.ਕੇ. ਦੇ ਵੱਖ-ਵੱਖ ਸ਼ਹਿਰਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਆਗੂ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹੋਏ।



## UK SIKHS HIGHLIGHT GOVERNMENT'S FAILURE TO TACKLE HATE CRIMES

6 October 2020-Tomorrow around 40 MPs, including Ministers and Shadow Ministers will listen to concerns of the Sikh community regarding the government's failure to address anti-Sikh hate.

The virtual Zoom lobby will be chaired by Preet Kaur Gill MP, the Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for British Sikhs and is supported by the Sikh Federation (UK) and the Sikh Network.



Speakers will include:

- Rose Simkins, the Chief Executive of Stop Hate UK with the National Hate Crime Awareness Week from 10-17 October 2020.
- Rana Singh Sodhi, from Arizona and the brother of Balbir Singh Sodhi who was the first person killed 19 years ago after 9/11
- Dabinderjit Singh OBE, a leading Sikh who will for the first time talk about his personal experience of being threatened to be burnt alive in London, reporting the hate crime, police response and final outcome
- Jas Singh, Sikh Network representative presenting the hate crime data from the latest UK Sikh Survey
- Jas Athwal, Redbridge Council Leader who was recently reinstated by the Labour Party and will talk about xenophobia in the political establishment
- Gurpreet Singh Anand, the President at Central Gurdwara (Khalsa Jatha) London, the first UK Gurdwara and newly appointed Secretary General of the Sikh Council UK



The virtual Zoom lobby will be about one of the ten sections of the Sikh Manifesto 2020-25 that was published by the Sikh Network in November 2019 before the General Election in December. Section 4 is titled: Hate crimes targeting Sikhs and our religious institutions

**The headlines from the Sikh Manifesto were:**

- "Ant-Sikh hate" has not been adequately acknowledged by the UK Government
- Sikh hate crimes being reported have increased by 60% in the last 12 months without government support to increase reporting
- Government has unacceptably been sitting on resources for almost 2 years aimed at targeting increased reporting of Sikh hate crimes
- Data emerging from the UK Sikh Survey 2019 suggests the government need to have a major rethink on reporting of Sikh hate crimes

The Sikh Network first conducted a survey in 2016 around the time of the Brexit referendum. At that time 21% or 1 in 5 of the 4,500 Sikhs who responded to the UK Sikh Survey stated they had





experienced hate crimes in the last 12 months. This equated to over 100,000 Sikhs being the subject of hate crimes a year.

It will be revealed for the first time by the latest UK Sikh Survey that was concluded towards the end of 2019 that the level of hate crime targeting Sikhs has risen to 32% of the 4,000 respondents.

This is more than a 50% increase between 2016 and 2019 and implies over 150,000 Sikhs are being subjected to hate crimes each year.

94% of those experiencing hate crime said this was because of their race or religion. Race was stated twice as often as religion.

85% of respondents claimed not to have reported hate crimes to the police in the last 12 months. With 8 out of 10 stating it was because it was a waste of time or they expected no positive outcome.

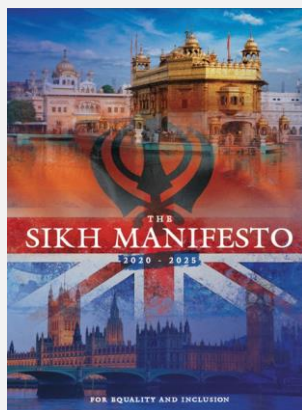
Much more worrying is more than 95% of Sikh hate crimes being reported to the police appear not to be showing up in police records. Some of these no doubt may have been incorrectly recorded as Islamophobic and others lost somewhere in the system.

### **The Sikh Manifesto set out three key priorities:**

- 1) Recognition of “Anti-Sikh hate” in a similar fashion to Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia
- 2) Addressing actions of politicians, parts of government and civil servants towards Sikhs that is increasingly viewed as offensive, xenophobic and unacceptable
- 3) Addressing the massive under-reporting of Sikh hate crimes and how “Anti-Sikh hate” can be confronted

Those at the virtual lobby will be told there has been no progress for the last 12 months and government officials and Ministers have failed to respond since early September knowing the lobby was to take place.

The APPG will announce that it will be publishing a short report following the virtual Zoom lobby and sending it to relevant Ministers and asking for a response.



### **HATE CRIME - SIKHS ARE INVISIBLE AND IGNORED BY THE GOVERNMENT**

12 October 2020-The Home Office will tomorrow release hate crime data relating to the last 12 months.

A year earlier hate crimes reported increased by 10%.

However, reported hate crimes on Sikhs increased by a massive 61% without targeted government support for the Sikh community aimed at increased reporting.

The increased reporting of hate crimes by Sikhs has been achieved by Sikh community organisations like the Sikh Network and Sikh Federation (UK) raising awareness and encouraging reporting to the police.

With Covid-19 resulting in less people venturing outside for the last 6 months but an increase in hate crimes after the easing of the lockdown it is unclear what the data will show.

There has been no real input or resources dedicated by government or the police directed towards Sikhs to increase reporting of hate crimes.



# ਯੂ.ਕੇ. ਸਰਕਾਰ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਵਿਰੁੱਧ ਨਫ਼ਰਤੀ ਅਪਰਾਧ ਰੋਕਣ 'ਚ ਰਹੀ ਅਸਮਰੱਥ-ਆਗੂ

ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਵਿਰੁੱਧ ਹੋ ਰਹੇ ਨਫ਼ਰਤੀ ਹਮਲਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਬਰਤਾਨਵੀ ਸੰਸਦ ਵਲੋਂ ਮੀਟਿੰਗ

ਲੰਡਨ, 7 ਅਕਤੂਬਰ (ਮਨਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਬੱਠਨੀ ਕਲਾ)- ਯੂ.ਕੇ. 'ਚ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਵਿਰੁੱਧ ਹੋ ਰਹੇ ਨਫ਼ਰਤੀ ਹਮਲਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਬਰਤਾਨਵੀ ਸੰਸਦ 'ਚ ਵਰਚੁਅਲ ਮੀਟਿੰਗ ਹੋਈ। ਆਲ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਪਾਰਲੀਮੈਂਟਰੀ ਗਰੁੱਪ ਫ਼ਾਰ ਸਿਖਸ ਦੀ ਚੇਅਰ ਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਕੌਰ ਗਿੱਲ ਦੀ ਅਗਵਾਈ 'ਚ ਸਿੱਖ ਵੈਡਰੇਸ਼ਨ ਯੂ.ਕੇ. ਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਨੈੱਟਵਰਕ ਦੇ ਸਹਿਯੋਗ ਨਾਲ ਹੋਈ ਇਸ ਮੀਟਿੰਗ 'ਚ ਵੱਖ-ਵੱਖ ਸਿਆਸੀ ਪਾਰਟੀਆਂ ਦੇ 40 ਤੋਂ ਵੱਧ ਸੰਸਦ ਮੈਂਬਰਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਇਲਾਵਾ ਸਿੱਖ ਆਗੂਆਂ ਨੇ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਲਿਆ। ਮੀਟਿੰਗ ਨੂੰ ਸੰਬੰਧਿਤ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਸੰਸਦ ਮੈਂਬਰ ਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਕੌਰ ਗਿੱਲ ਨੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਚੋਣ ਮਨੋਰਥ ਪੱਤਰ ਦੇ ਭਾਗ-4 'ਚ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਵਿਰੁੱਧ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਨਫ਼ਰਤੀ ਅਪਰਾਧਾਂ ਦਾ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਕੀਤਾ। ਰਾਣਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੋਢੀ ਨੇ 9/11 ਤੋਂ ਹਮਲਿਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ 2001 'ਚ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਭਰਾ ਬਲਬੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੋਢੀ ਤੇ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਦੂਜੇ ਭਰਾ ਦੀ ਅਮਰੀਕਾ 'ਚ ਹੋਈ ਹੱਤਿਆ ਬਾਰੇ ਵਿਸਥਾਰ ਸਹਿਤ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦਿੱਤੀ। ਜਸਵਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਰਿਪੋਰਟ ਦੇ ਸਰਵੇਖਣ ਬਾਰੇ

ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦਿੰਦਿਆਂ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਕਿ 2016 'ਚ 21 ਫ਼ੀਸਦੀ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੇ ਤੇ 2019 'ਚ ਜਨਸੰਖਿਆ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਹੁਣ 1.50 ਲੱਖ ਦੇ ਕਰੀਬ ਸਿੱਖ ਕਿਸੇ ਨਾ ਕਿਸੇ ਰੂਪ 'ਚ



● ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਵਿਰੁੱਧ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਨਫ਼ਰਤੀ ਅਪਰਾਧਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਹੋਈ ਮੀਟਿੰਗ 'ਚ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਲੈਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਬਰਤਾਨਵੀ ਸੰਸਦ ਮੈਂਬਰ ਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਆਗੂ। ਤਸਵੀਰਾਂ : ਮਨਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਬੱਠਨੀ ਕਲਾ

32 ਫ਼ੀਸਦੀ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੇ ਖੁਦ ਨਾਲ ਹੋਏ ਨਫ਼ਰਤੀ ਹਮਲੇ ਦਾ ਸ਼ਿਕਾਰ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ। 194 ਨਫ਼ਰਤੀ ਅਪਰਾਧਾਂ ਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਸਵੀਕਾਰ ਫ਼ੀਸਦੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਉਕਤ ਸਰਵੇਖਣ 'ਚ ਹਮਲੇ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਪਹਿਚਾਣ ਮੰਨਦੇ

ਹਨ, ਜਦਕਿ 85 ਫ਼ੀਸਦੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਹਮਲਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਕੋਈ ਪੁਲਿਸ ਸ਼ਿਕਾਇਤ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦੇ। ਪੁਲਿਸ ਸ਼ਿਕਾਇਤ ਨਾ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਮੱੇ ਦੀ ਬਰਬਾਦੀ ਤੇ ਕੋਈ ਨਤੀਜਾ ਨਾ ਨਿਕਲਣਾ ਮੰਨ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ। ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਨਫ਼ਰਤੀ ਅਪਰਾਧਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਸਲਾਮੀ ਫ਼ੋਫ਼ੀਆ ਨਾਲ ਜੋੜ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਦਬਿਚਰਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਿੰਘੂ ਨੇ ਇਸ ਮੌਕੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਨਾਲ ਜ਼ਿੰਦੀ ਦਾ ਸਾਜ਼ਨ ਦੀ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਧਮਕੀ ਦੀ ਘਟਨਾ ਦਾ ਵੀ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਕੀਤਾ, ਧਮਕੀ ਦੇ ਵਾਲੇ ਨੂੰ ਬਾਅਦ 'ਚ ਮਾਨਸਿਕ ਰੋਗੀ ਐਲਾਨ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ। ਕੌਲ ਲੀਡਰ ਜਸ ਅਠਵਾਲ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਛੋਟੀ ਉਮਰ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਨਸਲੀ ਭੇਦਭਾਵ ਦਾ ਸ਼ਿਕਾਰ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਆ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਮੀਟਿੰਗ 'ਚ ਸੰਸਦ ਮੈਂਬਰ ਤਨਮਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਢੇਸੀ, ਗੁਰਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਨੰਦ, ਭਾਈ ਅਮਰੀਕ ਸਿੰਘ ਗਿੱਲ ਤੋਂ ਇਲਾਵਾ ਸਕਾਟਿਸ਼ ਨੈਸ਼ਨਲ ਪਾਰਟੀ, ਕੰਜਰਵੇਟਿਵ ਪਾਰਟੀ, ਲਿਬਰਲ ਡੈਮੋਕ੍ਰੇਟਿਕ ਪਾਰਟੀ, ਲੇਬਰ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਦੇ ਮੈਂਬਰਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਸ਼ੋਡ ਮੰਤਰੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਵੀ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਲਿਆ।

Instead, government resources have approached Tell Mamma to increase hate crime reporting linked to Islamophobia and the Community Security Trust (CST) to increase hate crime reporting linked to Anti-Semitism.

Tell Mama has received over £1 million since 2012 and the CST receives annual funding of £13.4 million from government as part of the Jewish Community Protective Security Grant that in part addresses the reporting of Anti-Semitic hate crimes.

In January 2017 the government appeared to be making its first effort at correcting the lack of attention to Sikh hate crime reporting. Sajid Javid as the Communities Secretary announced that the government would be funding a programme aimed at improving the reporting of hate crimes by Sikhs and Hindus with a proportion of the £375,000 grant allocated to True Vision, the police's online portal for reporting hate crimes.

However, our understanding is True Vision has not used any of the funds allocated for the Sikh community almost 4 years later.

Even after racism and race-related hate crime was unleashed during the 2016 UK EU membership referendum Sikhs were barely mentioned in the government's plan for tackling hate crime, Action Against Hate, that was published in July 2016.

Subsequently, it emerged 10 Downing Street had removed from the plan a case study of the attempted beheading of a Sikh dentist in a racially-motivated machete revenge attack by far-right extremist, Zack Davies for the murder of Lee Rigby by Islamic extremists.

The case study was deemed inconsistent with government priorities on hate experienced by Muslims, Jews and Christians.



The government was criticised by several Sikh organisations and the Faith Minister repeatedly promised to Sikh representatives that the refreshed hate crime action plan to be issued two years later would not make the same mistake.

However, the Faith Minister was left embarrassed when more senior Ministers advised by officials decided to repeat the mistake by focusing simply on Islamophobia and Anti-Semitism.

Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) said: "Sikhs are invisible and ignored by the government when it comes to hate crime."

"We are lost in the system and no efforts are being made by government to address our concerns."

## Community rallies behind Sikh boy taunted for turban, assaulted in UK



Indian Express – 28 November 2020 (extract)

The Sikh community in the UK has since Wednesday been rallying together on social media to express outrage against the hate crime faced by a young school boy from the community in Telford, Shropshire. In a video circulated widely on social media, a young Sikh boy is seen being assaulted by two others in school uniform as he was walking back home from class. The boy's turban was also pulled off, he was pushed to the ground and pinned down.



The incident is believed to have taken place on November 13. The incident, which was initially being labelled as a 'bullying incident', was then recorded as the 'hate crime' by the local police. West Mercia Police confirmed that the incident was being treated "as a hate crime and with utmost seriousness." The boys involved in the incident had been identified and their enquiries continued, including joint working between their youth offending team and the school to ensure suitable action was taken, said Superintendent Jim Baker in a statement.

"Although the incident did not take place during the normal school hours of the school day, we have taken full responsibility for working with all

students involved and the wider school community to prevent any further such incident from occurring. The school is also working closely with the local Sikh community and its leaders at this time," reads a statement from the Charlton School.

First turbaned Sikh MP Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi tweeted, "Saddened to see such vile behaviour towards a young boy. Brings back memories of when someone tried to pull off my turban at school. bullying and anti-Sikh hate can't be tolerated. Looking to Charlton School and authorities to take swift action."

Telford MP Lucy Allan has said that "attack on Sikhs and attacks on Sikh turban are deeply shocking events. Very sadly many Sikhs experience racially motivated abuse and attacks focusing on turban. The turban is a distinct part of the Sikh identity and has spiritual significance which makes such attacks all the more abhorrent."

Meanwhile, **Sikh Federation UK (SFUK)** has written to Secretary of State for Education Gavin Williamson, asking about actions being taken by his department on hate crimes and bullying of Sikh school children due to their visible identity. "We fear thousands of Sikh children regularly face such acts of physical violence and emotional trauma in the educational system that need to be fully investigated and addressed," states the letter, a copy of which is available with the Indian Express.

"The release of video on social media has highlighted the ever-increasing number of visible Sikh school children who face physical attacks. This should not be happening in 2020 but we fear thousands of Sikh children face such attacks and intimidation and hide this from parents and teachers," said Bhai Amrik Singh, chair, SFUK.



## EDUCATION SECRETARY PRESSED TO URGENTLY ACT ON HATE CRIMES AND BULLYING THAT TARGET VISIBLE SIKH SCHOOL CHILDREN

27 November 2020-The Sikh Federation (UK) has written to Gavin Williamson, the Secretary of State for Education asking about actions being taken by his department on hate crimes and bullying of Sikh school children due to their visible identity.



This follows an incident on 13 November involving a physical attack on a Sikh schoolboy in Telford that West Mercia Police is investigating as a hate crime.

The extensive media coverage of this incident in the last 48 hours following the circulation of a video of the incident on social media has brought the issue of attacks on visible Sikh school children into focus.

The letter to Gavin Williamson states: “We fear thousands of Sikh children regularly face such acts of physical violence and emotional trauma in the educational system that need to be fully investigated and addressed.”

Last month the Sikh Federation (UK) and the Sikh Network organised a virtual lobby on Anti-Sikh hate involving over 40 MPs. The All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for British Sikhs produced a report on Anti-Sikh hate and is waiting for a response from the Home Secretary and Communities Secretary.



The Sikh Federation (UK) has asked the Education Secretary to provide reassurances to Sikh community representatives and discuss what actions can be taken including raising awareness and understanding of the Sikh identity.

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

“Bullying and hate against any child is unacceptable and should not be tolerated. Good schools develop an ethos to prevent bullying in the first place. However, when incidents like this come to light those in positions of responsibility at the national and local level must investigate to establish the scale of the problem and respond.”

“The police have reported there has been a dangerous rise of right-wing extremism and the threat of hateful ideology linked to nationalism that must also be urgently addressed by the education system.”

“The release of the video on social media has highlighted the ever-increasing number of visible Sikh school children who face physical attacks. This should not be happening in 2020, but we fear thousands of Sikh children face such attacks and intimidation, and hide it from parents and teachers.”



The letter to the Education Secretary has been copied to Preet Kaur Gill MP, the Chair of the APPG for British Sikhs and Lucy Allan MP the Conservative MP for Telford and a member of the APPG who has issued a statement on the Telford incident.



## Anti-Sikh hate crimes reported across Britain rise by 70% in two years



**Government figures show 117 hate crimes were recorded against Sikhs in 2017-18 compared to 202 in 2019-20.**

Sky News - 5 December 2020

The number of anti-Sikh hate crimes reported across Britain has increased by 70% in the last two years, according to Home Office figures, prompting calls for "urgent action" to tackle the problem.



Britain's first female Sikh MP Preet Kaur Gill has told Sky News that the figures do not tell the whole story, as there is not a system in place monitoring hate crimes against Sikhs.

"There are lots of concerns from the Sikh community that there is not enough being done to protect us. The community feels forgotten. There needs to be a definition, just like there is for antisemitism and Islamophobia, for anti-Sikh hate crimes," said Ms Gill.

The shadow International secretary said she herself was the victim of a hate crime.

"Some of my experiences have been people referring to me with the P word, you know the abbreviated version for Pakistani, that's despite me being a Sikh.

"This has become so normal for so many, especially my generation who grew up in schools. It was actually the norm to be referred to in that manner."

Government figures show 117 hate crimes were recorded against Sikhs in 2017-18 compared to 202 in 2019-20.

In February 2019, **Dabinderjit Singh** was targeted by a man because of his long beard and turban.

"A man came up to me as I was about to cross the road, took a lighter, flicked the lighter and said

various expletives and said I burn people like you," he said.

"He then pointed to my beard and came about a metre closer, flicked the lighter again. I couldn't believe it."

Turbans are an essential part of Sikh identity and are mandatory for men.

Although Sikhs are a minority in Britain, they form the largest religious group of Indians.

Mr Singh, a prominent campaigner, said Sikhs have long been subject to racial discrimination and threats of violence seems to have become mainstreamed.

"This phenomena of attacking Sikhs is not new. 9/11 created a worldwide phenomenon. That image of a turban, a beard associated with 9/11 - I remember in London we had 50 attacks on Sikhs two or three days after the attack," he said.

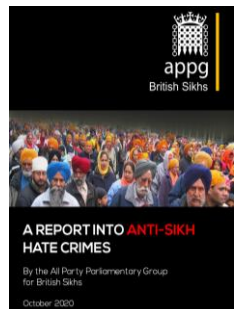
The Sikh Council UK has condemned the recent attack on a Sikh boy at a secondary school in Telford.

Its secretary general Gurpreet Singh Anand said it is vital for people to report hate crime.

"We are hearing a lot of concerns from the community - school children being bullied right up to elderly people getting attacked. We're getting a lot of our organisations reporting worrying incidents, but I am urging people who have been victims to come forward," he said.

A recent report, by the All Party Parliamentary Group for British Sikhs, found the lack of an official term or definition was a contributing factor to why this type of crime goes largely "unnoticed, unreported and unrecorded".

It called for funding to help the reporting of hate crimes against Sikhs.



## Sikh boy, five, has 'sacred hair cut by bullies' in shocking attack at his school



**Alexandra McLeod Primary School in Abbey Wood, South East London, has launched an investigation into the alleged incident which is said to have left the youngster 'deeply hurt'**

The Mirror – 25 May 2021

A five-year-old Sikh boy has been left traumatised after 'bullies' cut his hair with scissors while at school, his parents say.

Alexandra McLeod Primary School in Abbey Wood, South East London, has launched an investigation into the alleged incident which is claimed to have left the youngster 'deeply hurt'.



The reception pupil has never had his hair cut due to his religion and his parents now say they are too scared to send their son to school, My London reports.

Speaking on social media, a parent of the boy said: "I am just posting this because we as parents are deeply hurt by this incident which happened today with my son in Alexandra McLeod School Abbey Wood.

"My son is only 5 years old, a Sikh boy. I have never cut his hair but someone in school today cut his hair with scissors and my boy is really upset and saying 'I am not going to school now'.

"I don't understand from where a reception student can get scissors and it's shameful."

"It's bullying which should not be accepted. We are really scared to send him to school. Don't know what to do to secure him in future."

The school said it was aware of the incident last Friday, which is claimed to have happened when "most of the staff had left", and that the matter will be investigated.

**The Sikh Federation (UK)** has said it was "totally unacceptable & devastating" for the child's "sacred unshorn hair" to be cut by "another pupil."

It tweeted: "Totally unacceptable and devastating to hear about the bullying & assault on a 5-year-old boy at South London school Alexandra McLeod.

"For a Sikh boy to have his sacred unshorn hair cut by another pupil while in school is one of the worst possible #Anitsikh hate crimes."

The Federation has called for an urgent meeting with the Gavin Williamson, Secretary of State for Education, to discuss the "shocking case" and other recent claims of "anti-Sikh hate" bullying in schools in the UK.

They added: "We offer our full support to the family and will push the school and authorities to investigate fully. #NoCoverUps".

Jas Atwal, the Sikh leader of Redbridge Council in East London, said he was sickened to hear about the incident. "Appalling to see this happen to anyone, let alone a five-year-old," he said. "Sickened to hear of this, why is it still happening?"

Members of the public also replied and said: "This is assault however young the child was who did it to him and now the poor boy doesn't want to go to school! It's awful..."

While another said: "I don't understand why so much religious intolerance among us. Unacceptable."

The primary school put out a response to the incident and said it would be meeting with the pupil's parents.

A statement read: "In response to messages received: An incident was reported late Friday afternoon after the children and most staff had left.

"A meeting had already been arranged with the parents of the child.

"Please trust that the matter will be investigated thoroughly and fairly."



## HEADTEACHER 'REGRETS' 5-YEAR-OLD SIKH BOY'S HAIR BEING CUT BY SCISSORS IN CLASS, BUT INVESTIGATION FINDS NO EVIDENCE OF HATE CRIME

2 July 2021-A South East London headteacher has said he 'regrets' the hair of a 5-year-old Sikh boy being cut by scissors in class, but an investigation by the school has found no evidence it was a hate crime.

On May 21, the boy's hair was cut by a fellow pupil in a reception class at Alexander McLeod Primary School in Abbey Wood.



In Sikhism, the practice of letting one's hair grow is known as Kesh and it is a pillar of the religion as it shows respect for God's creation, hence why the boy's parents were said to be 'deeply hurt'.

But an internal investigation by the school has found no evidence what happened was a hate crime.

In a statement, headteacher Muhammad Mustafa said that having 'worked closely' on the probe with multiple organisations, it was concluded the act was not 'racially motivated'.

He said: "After conducting a thorough investigation and liaising closely with the Metropolitan Police, all the families involved, Gurdwara Sahib Woolwich, South

London Sikh Youth organisation and a legal representative from the local authority, we have all concluded that there is no evidence the incident was racially motivated or that a hate crime was committed."

"We regret that this incident occurred and recognise that five-year-old children will make mistakes as part of their learning and we will work together to avoid such incidents in the future."

"The investigation report and action plan has been shared with the local authority who agree with the key headlines and are hopeful that the matter is now resolved."

Mr Mustafa added that it's not uncommon for kids to use scissors in class, and lashed out at the way he claimed "false information" had been shared on the matter.

He said: "There have been many false and highly damaging stories published which have had a huge impact on the mental wellbeing of staff at our school and our parent community."

"I am deeply disappointed by pockets of the media and other organisations who have shared false information before allowing the school the opportunity to even investigate the matter." "We all have much to learn from this."

One of the child's parents previously took to social media to highlight how upset they were.

"I am just posting this because we as parents are deeply hurt by this incident which happened today with my son," they wrote.



Greenwich Councillor Matt Morrow, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, said: "The council has been in constant communication with Alexander McLeod School and is fully supportive of the findings of the internal investigation.

"The situation has been treated with the sensitivity that it deserved and we now consider the matter to be closed."



## After 'Tough Turban' UK Sikhs to seek helmet exemption

TOI

Times of India - 18 June 2021

AMRITSAR: After the introduction of 'Tough Turban' made of impact-resistant material to protect the head, British Sikhs are ready to ask their government to exempt them from wearing helmets at various workplaces.

**UK Sikh Federation** principal advisor Dabinderjit Singh on Thursday talked about the Canadian invention that looks like the normal cloth turban but is tough enough to protect the wearer's head. In 2015, the UK made it mandatory for turban-wearing Sikhs in the police, fire brigade, and armed forces to don helmets, when they don't like to put anything over their religious headgear.

Dabinderjit said that before 2015, the UK safety law had nothing against the 'dastar' and the uniformed squads had to tread carefully not to discriminate against Sikh members of staff, "while

the new law will allow this discrimination". He said the Sikhs negotiating with the government in 2014 and 2015 on the exemption were "short-sighted" people who didn't appreciate that 'gurmat' and 'dastar' were "non-negotiable for Sikhs".

About the technical features of the 'Tough Turban', he said: "These are not seen in typical helmets. Its non-Newtonian foam hardens on impact and disperses energy outward from the impact zone to protect the head. It has a chainmail-like matrix made of 3D-printed plastic, besides Dyneema, a lightweight, composite fabric used in bulletproof clothing and motorcycle gear. The ultimate goal was not to create a turban that qualifies as a helmet but to offer legitimate protection in a turban that feels like the normal cloth variety."

## Aussie Sikh group draws flak for suggesting changes in kirpan specifications

TOI

Times of India – 28 June 2021

The 10-member New South Wales (NSW) Gurdwara Working Group has kicked off a furore over alteration of specifications of the kirpan, one of the five symbols of Sikh faith, and how it should be worn.

Reacting to the working group's recommendations, principal advisor to **Sikh Federation (UK)**, Dabinderjit Singh told TOI on Saturday that it was the working group that negotiated proposed guidelines with the NSW department of education on the issue of the kirpan.

He claimed that the working group said on record that the proposed guidelines were arrived at after wider consultations with the Sikh community and religious organisations in Australia and other countries, including Akal Takht Jathedar.

"This is hugely misleading as what has been negotiated is unacceptable and it is impossible for any Amritdhari (baptised) Sikh or respectable Sikh organisation, let alone the Jathedar, to agree to such restrictions on the kirpan," said Dabinderjit.

NSW Education Minister Sarah Mitchell issued orders of imposing a ban on the wearing of the kirpan in all schools after a 14-year-old baptised

Sikh student of Glenwood High School, Sydney, NSW, stabbed a 16-year-old male student with their kirpan twice in his stomach on 6th May.



The Australian Sikh community objected to this and asked the NSW government to rescind the orders. To find an amicable solution, a 10-member NSW gurdwara working group was constituted to offer suggestions to the NSW





government on the kirpan. A draft proposal was formed, which was uploaded online.

According to this, the kirpan worn by Sikh students should have a blunt blade and be secured so that it cannot be used. It was also suggested that it be secured by a chain soldered closed at the links to restrict the blade from being removed. The new policy read that the kirpan should also be concealed from view and must be removed and safely stored, or secured against the body when undertaking physical activity such as sport.

As the new policy was uploaded, Sikhs around the world questioned whether the ASA or the working group had any authority to alter specifications of the kirpan and how it should be worn.

When contacted, chairperson of the Australian Sikh Association (ASA) Ravinderjit Singh said that

the 10-member working group comprised members from across Australia and had five baptised Sikhs.

He said the group had sent the draft proposal to the Akal Takht Secretariat but they didn't receive any reply so far.

"We understand the Jathedar has not responded to these proposals and the NSW Gurdwara working group is misusing his name to justify their naïve approach," alleged Narinderjit Singh, General Secretary of the Sikh Federation (UK), adding that the Jathedar has had plenty of time to study the matter and should come out to clarify that such restrictions on the kirpan were totally unacceptable. He said the worldwide Sangat was furious with those who were trying to compromise the kirpan. Despite repeated attempts, neither the Jathedar nor his personal assistant Jaspal Singh answered the phone to comment on the issue.

## RAISING AWARENESS & CAMPAIGNING FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

### BJP INDIAN GOVERNMENT PLAYING WITH FIRE IN PASSING LAWS TARGETING FARMERS

24 September 2020-The BJP Indian government has passed three laws that are awaiting the President's approval. The laws fail to protect farmers from exploitation or ensure fair prices for their produce. These laws, if implemented, could lead to large corporate entities taking advantage of farmers.



Protests have taken place against the government's agricultural reforms in Punjab and Haryana. Effigies of Narendra Modi have been burnt, tractor marches have taken place and trains have been stopped. The farmers union in Punjab have announced a boycott of BJP leaders.

Those living abroad with links to farmers in Punjab, Haryana and other states where farming is vital stand shoulder to shoulder with farmers who are deeply concerned with the impact of these new laws on their livelihoods. Many with links to Punjab, Haryana and other states have families that will be devastated if these laws are enacted and enforced.

Punjab is known as "India's bread-basket" with many of the people of Punjab relying on farming for their existence.



About three-quarters of the state's 30 million-strong population is involved in agriculture. Therefore, these new laws present the people of Punjab with a massive problem with some describing it as a "death warrant". Protests will continue.

The BJP Indian government is under pressure to rethink this damaging legislation that introduces huge uncertainty. It must delay its implementation and urgently listen to those who represent farmers so they can be given adequate assurances.

## PARLIAMENTARY GROUP TO WRITE TO UK FOREIGN SECRETARY ABOUT PUNJAB FARMER RIGHTS AND WIDER POLITICAL RAMIFICATIONS

30 October 2020 -The All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for British Sikhs will be sending a joint letter signed by dozens of MPs with large numbers of Sikh constituents to the Foreign Secretary following a virtual lobby on 28th October 2020.

**THE SIKH LOBBY NETWORK  
PUNJAB FARMERS RIGHTS**

A virtual political lobby event to raise the concerns of Punjab Farmers after the Indian govt passed three highly controversial laws, which fail to protect farmers from exploitation and to ensure fair prices for their produce and being further exploited by large corporations. Please contact your MP via letter or Parliament switch board on 0307 215 3000 to encourage them to join the lobby and raise their voice for you!

**WED 28<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2020 3-5PM ZOOM LOBBY EVENT**  
Zoom meeting ID: 821 5584 0920 - Passcode: APPGSikhs

Sikh Federation (UK) | appg British Sikhs | THE SIKH NETWORK | sikhcouncils

The MPs will be asking for an urgent meeting on behalf of Sikh constituents to discuss Punjab Farmer Rights. Dozens of MPs representing Sikhs, including Ministers have already written individually to take up the issue with the Foreign Secretary.

Tanmanjeet Singh Dhese the MP for Slough and Vice Chair of the APPG for British Sikhs who excellently chaired the virtual lobby will take the lead in getting MPs signed up and arranging the meeting.

Tanmanjeet Singh Dhese opened the meeting and spoke about the impact of the controversial laws introduced by the Indian government.

Speakers from the Punjab, UK, Europe and North America focused on the widespread concerns of Sikhs across the globe against 'anti-farmer' laws passed in India. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic there have been mass protests by farmers, especially in Haryana and the predominantly Sikh state of Punjab.

The two main guest speakers were from Punjab and provided an excellent insight into the issue and its wider context.

**Ajaypal Singh Brar:** A political activist and blogger with an avid interest in geopolitics and history of South Asia & one of the 5-member Committee leading the protest at Shambu.

**Bhai Mandhir Singh:** Joint Convenor for the Panth Sewak Jatha Doaba, former national President of the Sikh Students Federation.

Several speakers clarified the core issue for Punjab and the Sikhs was a historic and political one. The protests highlight the deteriorating relationship between States like Punjab and the central government.

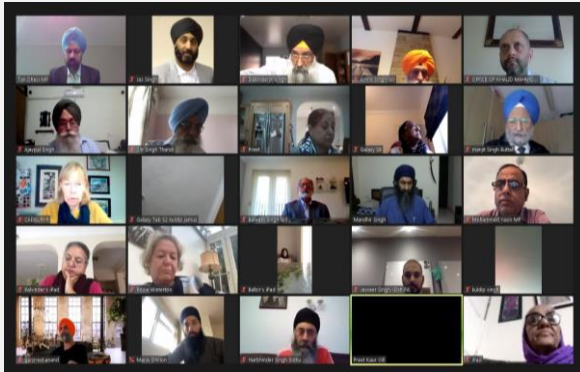
Many concluded the solution to this crisis lies in Punjab's autonomy. However, the situation in Punjab is a ticking time-bomb with the authorities expected to use violence to suppress those raising their voices in protest based on past experiences.

In addition to Tanmanjeet Singh half a dozen other MPs spoke and another half a dozen had staff/researchers present. Other MPs that spoke at the meeting included:



- Shadow International Development Secretary, Preet Kaur Gill, Birmingham Edgbaston who had excellent knowledge and personal experience of the issue
- Deputy Speaker Dame Rosie Winterton, Doncaster Central
- Shadow Leader of the House, Valerie Vaz, Walsall South
- Martin Docherty-Hughes, West Dunbartonshire
- Ruth Cadbury, Brentford & Isleworth
- Mohammad Yasin, Bedford

**Sikh community speakers included:**



Ranjit Singh, the Deputy Mayor of Bobigny in France who highlighted how the issue impacts Sikhs across the globe as they have family members involved in farming in Punjab.

Dabinderjit Singh, the principal adviser to the Sikh Federation (UK) who spoke about the human tragedy of farmer suicides due to farmer debt and the new laws. He also spoke of the clash between States like Punjab and the central government.

Manivjoyt Singh Dhillon, a member of the Executive Committee of the Sikh Council UK presented the results to date from their survey relating to farmers. They show that 92% of Sikhs in the UK have ties to agricultural land in India and 84% are personally concerned about the impact of the new laws. For Sikhs, land-ownership holds cultural significance interlinked with our faith and history. Another stark statistic is that 93% of respondents felt that human rights violations will increase following the mass protests by Punjabi farmers.

Others who spoke included Jas Singh, from the Sikh Network who co-hosted the lobby, Gurpreet Singh Anand the Secretary General of the Sikh Council UK, Balvinder Kaur Saund, the Chair of the Sikh Women’s Alliance, Jasvir Singh from Sikh PA and Bhai Narinderjit Singh, the General Secretary of the Sikh Federation (UK).

**Sikh Diaspora call for UN intervention to prevent use of violence against farmers peacefully protesting controversial farm laws in India**

Sikh Siyasat - 30 November 2020

Sikh diaspora sections have written to Clément Nyaletsossi Voule, the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association.

In a written release sent to Sikh Siyasat News (SSN), the **Sikh Federation (UK)** national press secretary Harnek Singh said that their organization has called upon the UN to intervene to prevent use of violence by the Indian government against the farmers who are

peacefully protesting against controversial new farm laws in India.

Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) said “We have appealed to the United Nations to make an urgent public statement recognizing the importance of the rights of farmers in India to peacefully assemble and protest.”

“The United Nations must immediately exert pressure on the Indian authorities not to use excessive force or falsely imprison protesters that



have civil and political rights that must be protected.”

“Tomorrow is the Gurburb of Guru Nanak Dev Ji and it is ironic that millions of Sikhs will be peacefully protesting in and around Delhi and have vowed to only return home victorious.”

Notably, hundreds of thousands of farmers are peacefully protesting in India against new laws exploiting small and medium sized farmers.

Farmers from several different states, led by those from Punjab were temporarily prevented from traveling to Delhi to protest the new laws.

Protesters, young and old, men and women are very determined and have faced intimidation,

## Support for Indian Punjab farmers: Thousands of Sikhs besiege India House in London

The News International – 7 December 2020

Thousands of Sikhs from across the United Kingdom laid siege to the Indian High Commission here for nearly three hours in support of farmers peacefully protesting in Delhi against the Farm Laws.



The Kissan Support Protest call was given by the Federation of Sikh Organisations (FSO) to show solidarity with the farmers from Punjab and across India fighting for their rights and future. This was one of the biggest-ever protests by British Indian Sikhs outside the Indian High Commission – veteran Sikh leaders said this was the second largest protest at the venue after the historic protest held here in the wake of the Indian government’s raid on the Golden Temple, killing thousands of Sikhs.

A spokesman for the **Sikh Federation (UK)** told The News and Geo that the organisers had told the police and the local Westminster Council that only about 300 protesters will assemble but

roadblocks, tear gas, water cannon, violence and police beatings. There have already been several fatalities and many injuries.

The situation is extremely tense with the Indian government underestimating the resolve of protesters. International pressure from the UN and individual governments is necessary to avoid a serious loss of life.

A Sikh delegation from across the globe are expecting to discuss the developing situation with Clément Nyaletsossi Voule and Irene Khan, the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression in the next 48 hours.



thousands of people – men, women, youth, elderly and children – started gathering outside the High Commission from 11:00am and stayed there until 3:00pm. The protest was so huge that protesters were arriving at the venue even until 3:00pm. They came in cars, coaches, tractors, heavy bikes and cycles – bringing areas around Trafalgar Square, Holborn, Oxford Circus to a complete halt. It’s estimated that around 700 cars were concentrated around the protest venue, many unable to leave their cars until the end of the protest..

The Sikh Federation’s Dabinderjit Singh said, “The turnout has surpassed our imagination. These are thousands of people who have come from all over the UK on their own, they are outraged, and they want justice for the protesting Punjabi farmers in India. They have come out to denounce Narendra Modi. You can see that are all chanting slogans against Modi’s government.”



More than a hundred policemen were present to police the demonstrators and warned the protesters not to break COVID-19 laws. The demonstration was against farming reform in India and banners saying “justice for farmers” were held aloft outside India House in Holborn.



The protesters said that the Modi government was targeting Punjabi farmers because they were mainly Sikhs and the Indian government of Baharitya Janta Party (BJP) didn't like Punjabis and Sikhs.



Throughout, the protesters let off orange smoke bombs as dozens of heavy bikers revved their engines. There was a minor clash between the police and a group of youth raising Khalistan slogans trying to get closer to the Indian High Commission's central entry door.

The protesters told this correspondent that right now, millions of farmers are protesting across India about the implementation of three new farming bills which will change agricultural trade laws. Thousands from states such as Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Bihar, Punjab and further have descended on India's capital Delhi to protest the discriminatory laws against Punjab farmers and farmers from other areas of India.

The protest organisers said that the main issues are the removal of the Minimum Support Price, a safeguarding regulation which ensures farmers get a fair price for their crops and the removal of rules preventing corporations hoarding crops. With these changes, farmers believe they will be left vulnerable to exploitation, which will lead to bankruptcy and land seizures.

The huge protest was held after a group of 36 cross-party parliamentarians wrote to UK Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab asking him to make representations with his Indian counterpart, S Jaishankar, about the impact on British Punjabis affected by the demonstrations by farmers against new agricultural reforms in India.

The letter has been drafted by British Sikh Labour MP Tanmanjeet Singh Dhese and signed by other MPs including former Labour Leader Jeremy Corbyn.

"This is a joint letter calling for representation to be made by yourself to your Indian counterpart about the impact on British Sikhs and Punjabis, with longstanding links to land and farming in India," read the letter.

"This is an issue of particular concern to Sikhs in the UK and those linked to Punjab, although it also heavily impacts on other Indian states. Many British Sikhs and Punjabis have taken this matter up with their MPs, as they are directly affected through family members and ancestral land in Punjab," it read.

### **FORMAL COMPLAINT REGISTERED BY SIKH VICTIM AGAINST METROPOLITAN POLICE OFFICER FOR UNPROVOKED PHYSICAL ASSAULT**

8 December 2020- The Sikh Federation (UK) earlier today wrote to Sadiq Khan, the Mayor of London and Cressida Dick the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service requesting an urgent meeting to discuss the policing of a protest on Sunday in support of farmers demonstrating in Delhi.

Cressida Dick's office quickly responded stating "you raise a number of points in your email so a full response will be sent to you in due course". The points raised include:

- Inadequate police preparations to ensure social distancing and safety of protesters in accordance with the risk assessment provided and approved by Westminster Council
- No contingency arrangements to deal with a much higher number of protesters as indicated in the risk assessment
- Various inappropriate and inaccurate communications by the Metropolitan Police and the National Sikh Police Association UK leading up to the protest
- Total disregard by the police for the need for social distancing to protect protesters and pedestrians



- Excessive use of force and violence by police officers against protesters and journalists covering the event
- Unacceptable herding of protesters preventing any chance of social distancing and increased risk of the spread of coronavirus
- Unnecessary arrests for breach of COVID-19 regulations after the official protest had ended



A 31-year old Leicester man was left stunned and devastated by a violent physical assault by a Metropolitan Police officer on Sunday 6 December. Mr Singh who is a working professional and father of one with another baby due soon, had travelled to London to participate in the Farmers Protest outside the Indian High Commission.

Following the protest, he was standing in Trafalgar Square, when a group of policemen approached a nearby man and proceeded to arrest him for no clear reason. The man became very scared and confused as he did not understand what was going on, so Mr Singh attempted to calm the man down and help explain, as he did not seem to understand the police shouts.

While Mr Singh was assisting, from out of nowhere, a police officer (later identified as PC 2777) threw a straight

hard punch to Mr Singh's face. The attack was completely unprovoked and totally unexpected which threw Mr Singh backwards and left him in severe pain and distress, both physically and mentally.

Mr Singh was not arrested or spoken to by the police, and other officers pulled PC 2777 away from the scene very quickly. The incident was witnessed by many members of the public and caught on camera from various angles. The Metropolitan Police appear to have registered a complaint themselves to damn down the situation.

However, we can confirm that Mr Singh has himself today made a formal complaint on the Metropolitan Police website.

## Indian Farmers car rally draws thousands to Birmingham

BBC – 12 December 2020

Thousands of people have driven to Birmingham's Indian consulate to show support for farmers in India protesting about agricultural reforms.



Despite the city being under tier three rules,



people from across England have been taking part a week after a similar gathering in London.

The National Sikh Police Association UK advised people not to attend.

Arjan Singh, from Manchester, said people wanted to show the Indian government the reforms were unfair.

Protests in India have seen more than 250 million workers go on strike.

"Everyone has come together as these reforms are very detrimental to farmers and only serve corporate interests which will leave the farmers with nothing," Mr Singh, 37, a company director from Bramall, said.



## Why UK protestors are supporting Indian farmers

"I feel very proud to be here... it's happened in London, Canada and America and it's a domino effect from India and we're trying to make the government see what's happening and that something's got to change."



The Kisaan Car Rally started at Guru Har Rai Gurdwara in West Bromwich at about 10:30 GMT on Saturday with participants driving to the consulate for 13:00 GMT.

The National Sikh Police Association UK advised people not to attend because of the tier three restrictions and warned people if they did, to stay

in their cars or potentially face enforcement action.

Some smoke devices were let off in Sandwell as part of the rally, West Midlands Police said as they advised motorists to avoid the the whole of West Bromwich, Birmingham city centre and the Jewellery Quarter because of severe traffic disruption.

**Jas Singh**, 41, a business consultant from Derby said he could see people in the slow-moving convoy en route to the city were adhering to social distancing if they got out of their vehicles.

"It's taken me one-and-a-half hours to get from Soho Road to the city centre because of the convoys," he said. The Govt must take action.'

"There's thousands of people here, from all ages and from around the country and they're wearing masks and very little mixing is going on - everyone is very conscious of that."

When the vehicles reached Birmingham, some people did leave their cars to gather outside the embassy in the Jewellery Quarter prompting police to say they would take "appropriate action".

"Deliberately not following the regulations and measures put in place to limit the spread of the virus is unacceptable and our officers will take the appropriate action where necessary," the force tweeted.

## **Protest in Edinburgh to highlight woes of India's farmers**

**the  
Edinburgh  
Reporter**

Edinburgh Reporter – 13 December 2020

Earlier today a group of protesters from Scotland's Sikh Community joined others across the world to bring India's farmers and their current plight to global attention.

According to reports, the Indian government's new legislation will allow large private corporations to take over Indian agriculture in place of individual farmers.



The farmers produce over two thirds of the spices consumed in the world, as well as basmati rice and cotton.

Charandeep Singh, Executive Director, Sikhs in Scotland told The Edinburgh Reporter: "Scottish

Sikhs stand in solidarity for

Farmers Rights and today we added our voice to one of the world's largest human protests ever to take place. The Scottish Sikh diaspora is calling on the UK Prime Minister to raise the voice of Scottish Sikhs directly with the Indian authorities and call on them to repeal anti-farmer laws. This is a global issue which no political leader can ignore."

Protesters gathered in Glasgow first and drove in convoy to Edinburgh where they protested in Rutland Square outside the Indian Consulate. As you can see from the photos provided by David Gardiner of Laid Back Bikes, the protestors largely complied with instructions from organisers, but it is still the case that any such protest does not comply with government coronavirus guidance. Police Scotland were in attendance. Sikhs in Scotland are calling for the repeal of Anti-Farmers bills put forward by the Prime Minister of India.



## Farmers Issue: 100 British MPs write to Boris urging him to take up protests with PM Modi



The Wire – 9 January 2021

A tweet by British MP Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi has brought to the fore the fact that more than 100 MPs and peers from various parties in Britain had written to Prime Minister Boris Johnson, expressing concern over the Farmers protest in India.

Slough MP Dhesi has been leading a drive to keep the protests by the Indian farmers against the government's controversial farm laws in the news in Britain.



The “current deadlock” that Dhesi has tweeted about refers to rounds of talks between Farmers unions and the Centre. While thousands of farmers have stood their ground on their demand that three farm laws be repealed, in eight rounds of talks, the government has not agreed to their demand.

The writers, who include Labour MP Jeremy Corbyn, also say that they had written to Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab, urging him to take the matter up during his visit to India in December. However, while Raab took it up with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, he did not broach it with Modi, the letter alleges.

The letter mentions the effect of the protests on the diaspora who make up a significant portion of the constituencies of the MPs.

“Many constituents, especially those emanating from Punjab and other parts of India, were horrified to see the use of water cannons, tear gas and brute force being used on hundreds of thousands of peacefully protesting farmers. The issue has so galvanised the Indian diaspora community, especially those of a Punjabi or Sikh background, and others who have land or links to farming in India, that tens of thousands engaged in global protests, including in towns and cities across the UK,” the letter said.

The British MPs have also written of Johnson's gaffe in Parliament, when upon being asked as to how Britain would respond to the Farmers issue by Dhesi, Johnson mistook the situation to mean unrest with Pakistan.

“So, will the Prime Minister (Johnson) convey to the Indian Prime Minister (Narendra Modi) our heartfelt anxieties, our hopes for a speedy resolution to the current deadlock and does he agree that everyone has a fundamental right to peaceful protest,” Dhesi had asked Johnson.

“Our view is that of course we have serious concerns about what is happening between India and Pakistan but these are pre-eminently matters for those two governments to settle and I know that he appreciates that point,” said Johnson.



The letter is dated January 5th and asks Johnson, in no uncertain terms, to take up the matter of the Farmers agitation and the police action on them with Prime Minister Narendra Modi whenever they meet next.

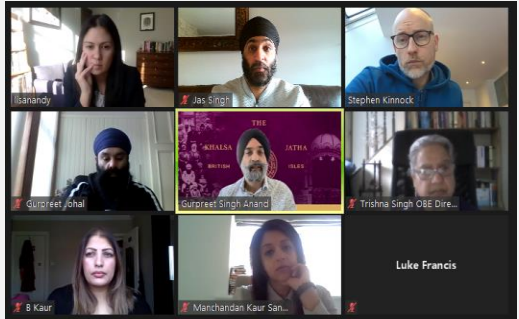
It was presumably sent after the British government announced that Johnson would not be travelling to India as chief guest of the Republic Day functions so as to be able to oversee the response to the coronavirus situation in the UK.





## SIKH GROUPS CONDUCT URGENT MEETING WITH THE SHADOW FOREIGN SECRETARY ON FARMERS ISSUE

10 February 2021 – Representatives from the Sikh Federation (UK), The Sikh Network and Sikh Council UK conducted a meeting with the Labour shadow foreign office team including Lisa Nandy, Shadow foreign secretary and Stephen Kinnock, minister for South Asia. While understand the Labour Party position on commenting on the Indian farm laws directly, a request for action was made regards the ongoing human rights abuses the Indian state is perpetuating on the peaceful farmers. The key issues we outlined today were:



**Right to gather and protest** – farmers have faced police brutality and disproportionate use of force against them, much without any provocation. They have faced beatings, water cannons, tear gas, gun fire and war style barricades around the protest sites cutting off essential life supplies, water and electricity.

**Police Harassment & Unlawful detention** – following the 26 Jan tractor rally, many protestors have been unlawfully abducted, detained and arrested without reason or cause. Whilst lawyers have determined a figure of 200+ detained by the Police. Many have been tortured, mistreated and denied access to both legal representation or had family members notified.

**Freedom of Speech** – the Indian government has repeatedly shut down and cut access to the Internet around the protest sites, particularly when the police and gangs have been deployed to disrupt them. International humanitarians and celebrities have also been targeted.

**Free & Fair Press** – the level of control and influence the Modi govt as over the Indian media is of real concern, it has led to biased and divisive coverage and defamation of the protests by calling them a small minority, extremist, separatist and even terrorists.

Jas Singh called on Labour to challenge and call out the government of India on such actions with strong criticism and condemnation from the Labour Party and its leadership. Following the meeting the Labour party issued a formal statement and tweets. The foreign Secretary and minister also agreed to monitor the situation and meet with the Sikh groups on a regular basis.

## PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE HIGHLIGHTING HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN INDIA THREATENS TO DELAY BORIS JOHNSON'S VISIT TO INDIA AND PROGRESS ON TRADE DEAL NEGOTIATIONS

8 March 2021- A 90-minute debate on the Farmers protest in India – the world's single largest ever protest - is due to take place later today at 4.30pm in Westminster Hall.

We estimate almost a million British nationals and residents in the UK have families in India who are directly impacted by these farmer protests that have been taking place over the last three and half months.



The debate is taking place following a Parliamentary e-petition titled: “Urge the Indian Government to ensure safety of protesters and press freedom” that very quickly attracted over 115,000 signatures from constituents covering all 650 MPs.



The Petitions Committee prioritised this debate and dozens of MPs from across the political spectrum have expressed an interest to speak. Around 25 MPs are expected to contribute in what many expect will be a lively debate.

It is rumoured the Indian High Commission has not been able to persuade a single MP to defend its position in the debate later today.

Boris Johnson is planning a springtime trip to India in April where he is expected to announce new business deals. He is worried the debate will offend the Indian authorities and jeopardise Liz Truss’s weekly talks with her Indian counterpart. Some have suggested India may have threatened to cancel Boris Johnson’s visit in April.

MPs from all political parties are expected to be highly critical of the Indian authorities’ handling of the human rights violations against farmers, journalists, activists and others supporting them.

Although the debate is not about the three controversial Indian farm laws certain leading MPs may put the Foreign Minister on the spot by revealing experts have suggested the new farming laws in India may have violated a specific UN agricultural treaty.

The treaty to which India are signatories specifically protects farmer rights that may require all three Indian farm laws to be repealed – the key demand of the farmers who are protesting. MPs forcing the UK Government to take this up on the international stage may trigger an adverse reaction given the BJP’s track record on dealing with criticism.

MPs will want the Foreign Minister responding on behalf of the UK Government to explain at the end of the debate what specific actions the UK Government has taken in the last 12 weeks since Dominic Raab met the Indian External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar in India.

A month earlier Jacob Rees-Mogg in response to concerns raised in Parliament about human rights violations perpetrated on farmers and journalists in India, stated that the UK champions human rights on the international stage. He indicated the UK Government was able to use the Chair of the UN Security Council in February 2021 to act on the Farmers protest.

MPs will also want to know what actions the UK Government has taken or plans to take at the 46th Regular Session of the UN Human Rights Council that is ongoing in Geneva given concerns raised by



Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the UN Human Rights Commissioner and the UN Secretary General.

The UK Government has rightly raised concerns about the treatment of protesters in Hong Kong and has introduced sanctions having witnessed the human rights violations in Myanmar.

However, given the scale and duration of the Farmers protest in India, the numerous human rights violations, and the direct impact on over a million Brits, the UK Government is expected to come under intense pressure to take tough action despite trade negotiations.

The Sikh Federation (UK) briefing for the debate was sent to all MPs and covered the following 10 matters that MPs expected to speak in the debate have confirmed they will raise.

1. We are witnessing the world's single largest ever protest
2. Protesters initially stopped from taking their protest to Delhi
3. Freedom of expression, right to assemble and peacefully protest
4. Indiscriminate detention, disappearances and torture
5. Protesters face ridiculous charges of terrorism, sedition and anti-national conduct
6. State sponsored goons and badgeless police officers instigate attacks on protester camps
7. Food, electricity and fresh water supplies cut at protest sites
8. Internet restrictions and social media blackout
9. Indian government crackdown on journalists reporting on the Farmers protest
10. Celebrities, climate change activists and female activists and politicians targeted

Stephen Kinnock is expected to speak from the front bench of the Labour Party and Ed Davey and Layla Morgan from the front bench for the Liberal Democrats. Other speakers could include Jeremy Corbyn, the former Leader of the Labour Party who released a powerful video several days ago.

## **BJP ONLY HAVE THEMSELVES TO BLAME FOR INTERNATIONAL FOCUS ON FARMER PROTESTS**

10 March 2021- India-UK relations are on a knife edge following the UK Parliamentary debate on Tuesday about the Farmer Protests in India. What 17 out of 18 MPs and the UK Foreign Minister stated regarding human rights violations against farmers, journalists and activists in India is now on official record.



Unsurprisingly India's Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla yesterday summoned the British High Commissioner Alex Ellis and a diplomatic note or demarche was handed over to him.

Last Friday ahead of the debate on the Farmers protest in UK Parliament, Alex Ellis at his first media briefing since taking over last month did not help the situation as he described it as an "internal issue for India" that has to be resolved by the Indian government.

Focusing on the Indian farm laws being an internal issue for India was a major gaffe by Alex Ellis as he knew the debate in UK Parliament would be focused on human rights violations and press freedoms where most MPs on all sides would be critical of India. He simply had to look at the public briefing that we produced that was also sent to all UK MPs and was used as a reference document by many MPs who spoke.

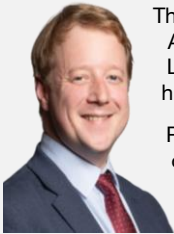


The UK Government and its representatives like Alex Ellis have largely been allergic for the last 74 years to raising human rights violations carried out by successive Indian governments, whether Congress, BJP or other.

There are two main reasons for this. Firstly, the predictable reaction of the Indian authorities to any criticism and secondly past British atrocities in India like the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre in Amritsar for which the UK Government has never apologised. Britain therefore risks being criticised for its own atrocities in India and accused of double standards.

However, the current dilemma for Britain is 99% of the 115,000 who signed the Parliamentary petition or those who spoke on Tuesday were probably born after 1947. They want Britain to apologise for atrocities in the colonial past that will allow Britain to take a much tougher public stand on widespread human rights violations in India.

External affairs ministry spokesperson Anurag Srivastava has admitted they had lobbied UK MPs and sent relevant briefings to the UK Government, MPs and others. They have complained and told the media the debate was one sided, but they must accept their failure in that they were only able to get one UK MP to support their indefensible position in the debate. The one MP who defended India unashamedly read from a briefing she was given by the Friends of India Society International and some have suggested she may be getting a large financial donation.



The Indian media have also airbrushed out other Conservative MPs like Paul Bristow, Adam Holloway and the UK Foreign Minister himself who joined Labour, SNP, Liberal Democrat and Independent MPs to criticise the Indian authorities in terms of human rights violations against farmers, journalists and activists.

Paul Bristow the Conservative MP for Peterborough accused the Indian authorities of breaking accepted norms, crossing a line and sliding into authoritarian oppression. Others were even more critical of the BJP, Modi and Hindutva.

Although the debate was not specifically about the controversial farm laws, we provided Layla Moran MP, the Liberal Democrat Spokesperson on Foreign Affairs a specific briefing on the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources on Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA). It is an important binding treaty and Article 9 of the treaty is about farmer rights.

We suggested the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) based in Rome and in turn Michael Fakhri, the UN Special Rapporteur on Right to Food should be consulted. We are strongly of the view that it can be reasonably argued that the three Indian farm laws are in breach of Article 9 that protects the rights that farmers have to save, use, exchange and sell farm-saved seed/propagating material as all three laws refer to "seeds".



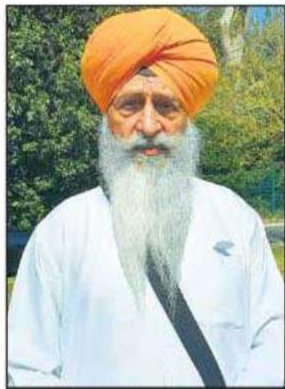
If it can be established the three laws violate this binding treaty there are grounds to lobby internationally that the Indian farm laws need to be repealed. This directly assists farmers protesting in India who are demanding the farm laws are repealed.

Layla Moran raised Article 9 of the treaty and Nigel Adams, the UK Foreign Minister had to admit that the UK Government had "not made an assessment of India's agricultural bills in relation to Article 9" and would consult officials on this.

Although the above points were made in the debate the Indian government or media have avoided addressing the possible violation of Article 9 of a binding treaty. Officials and Ministers on both sides will be frantically looking at damage limitation in the context of Boris Johnson's visit to India next month and the G7 summit in Cornwall on 11-13 June 2021.



## ਸਿੱਖ ਫੈਡਰੇਸ਼ਨ ਯੂ.ਕੇ. ਵਲੋਂ ਸੰਯੁਕਤ ਕਿਸਾਨ ਮੋਰਚਾ ਆਗੂਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਾਵਧਾਨ ਹੋਣ ਦੀ ਅਪੀਲ



ਭਾਈ ਅਮਰੀਕ ਸਿੰਘ ਗਿੱਲ

ਲੰਡਨ, 28 ਜਨਵਰੀ (ਮਨਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਬੱਧਨੀ ਕਲਾਂ)- ਦਿੱਲੀ ਵਿੱਖੇ ਹੋਏ ਘਟਨਾਕ੍ਰਮ ਨੇ ਦੇਸ਼ ਵਿਦੇਸ਼ ਵਿਚ ਬੈਠੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਨਿਰਾਸ਼ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ, ਇਸ ਸਬੰਧੀ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਕ੍ਰਮ ਦਿੰਦਿਆਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਫੈਡਰੇਸ਼ਨ ਯੂ.ਕੇ. ਨੇ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਵਿਖੇ ਕਿਸਾਨੀ ਅੰਦੋਲਨ ਚਲਾ ਰਹੇ ਸੰਯੁਕਤ ਕਿਸਾਨ ਮੋਰਚੇ ਦੇ ਆਗੂ ਨੇਤਾਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਲਾਘਾ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਆਪਣੀ ਸਿਆਣਪ ਤੇ ਤਜਰਬੇ ਨਾਲ ਪਿਛਲੇ ਲੰਬੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਤੋਂ ਇਸ ਅੰਦੋਲਨ ਦੀ ਵਧੀਆ ਤਰੀਕੇ ਨਾਲ ਅਗਵਾਈ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ | ਚੇਅਰਮੈਨ ਭਾਈ ਅਮਰੀਕ ਸਿੰਘ ਗਿੱਲ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਸੰਯੁਕਤ ਕਿਸਾਨ ਮੋਰਚੇ ਦੇ ਆਗੂਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਵੀ ਜਾਣ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਵੀ ਲੰਬੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਇਸ ਅੰਦੋਲਨ ਨੂੰ ਤਾਰਪੀਡੋ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਯਤਨ ਕਰ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ | ਕਿਸਾਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਟਰੈਕਟਰ ਪਰੇਡ ਵਾਲੇ ਦਿਨ ਜੋ ਵੀ ਕੁਝ ਘਟਨਾਵਾਂ ਹੋਈਆਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਾਰੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਜ਼ਿੰਮੇਵਾਰ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਹੈ | ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨੇ ਨੌਜਵਾਨਾਂ 'ਤੇ ਲਾਠੀ-ਚਾਰਜ ਕੀਤਾ ਤੇ ਗੋਲੀ ਵੀ ਚਲਾਈ, ਜਿਸ ਦੇ ਕਾਰਨ ਜਾਨੀ ਨੁਕਸਾਨ ਵੀ ਹੋਇਆ | ਭਾਈ ਗਿੱਲ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਲੰਬੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਤੋਂ ਸ਼ਾਂਤਮਈ ਬੈਠੇ ਨੌਜਵਾਨ ਜੋ ਜਜ਼ਬਾਤੀ ਹੋ ਵੀ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ ਤਾਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪਿਆਰ ਨਾਲ ਸਮਝਾਇਆ ਜਾਵੇ | ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਕਿਸਾਨੀ ਅੰਦੋਲਨ ਦੀ ਏਕਤਾ ਨੂੰ ਬਰਕਰਾਰ ਰੱਖਣ ਦੀ ਅਪੀਲ ਕੀਤੀ |

### SIKH FEDARASTION (UK) RAISES CONCERN AND ALARM ON INDIAN GOVT PLANS FOR FARMERS PROTESTS IN DELHI

26 January 2021 - Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) said:

“Sikhs across the globe have been raising for months with their respective governments the rights of farmers surrounding Delhi to peacefully protest against laws that exploit them in favour of corporates.”

“Our fear was the massive tractor rally today in Delhi would me met with violence from the Indian authorities.”

“The police put up barricades to disrupt the protest, fired tear gas, used batons to beat protesters, used water cannon and even live ammunition. However, the protesters could not be stopped and even took over the Red Fort and hoisted the Sikh National flag on India’s Republic Day.”

“Yesterday we had a meeting with the UN Human Rights Council and suggested they should have pre-empted the use of violence by the Indian authorities today and issued a public statement warning them to respect the rights to peacefully protest.”

“Sikhs across the globe will be pushing with their governments and NGOs for the plight of farmers to be on the agenda of the 46th session of the UN Human Rights Council starting on 22 February.”

“India has embarrassed and exposed its self, in the eyes of the world to its longstanding anti sikh demonisation policy by labelling all protestors as ‘terrorists’ including humanitarian charities like Khalsa Aid and its CEO Ravi Singh, who a days later was suggested for a noble peace prize.”



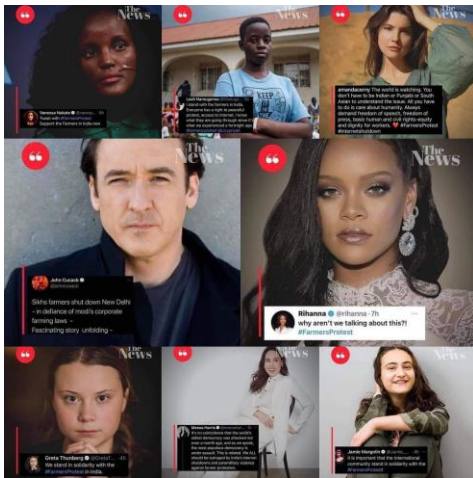
## Rihanna, Greta Thunberg anger India by supporting farmer protests

Following tweets by international celebrities, foreign ministry says 'vested interest groups' trying to mobilise support against the government.

Al Jazeera - 3 Feb 2021

Pop superstar Rihanna and climate activist Greta Thunberg have drawn the ire of the Indian government after they tweeted in support of the huge protests against the new farm laws.

Tens of thousands of farmers have been camped on the outskirts of India's capital New Delhi since November, calling for a repeal of laws they fear will allow large corporations to crush them.



Rihanna, who has more than 100 million followers on Twitter, wrote **“why aren't we talking about this?! #FarmersProtest”**, with a link to a news story about a government crackdown that included an internet blackout.

Her comment was retweeted more than 230,000 times and liked by more than half a million users.

She was joined by several international celebrities, including legislators from the United States and Britain, who expressed their solidarity with the protesting farmers.

Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg, one of the world's most prominent environmental campaigners, also tweeted a story about the internet blackout, saying: **“We stand in solidarity with the #FarmersProtest in India.”**

There was also support from the niece of US Vice President Kamala Harris, whose mother was born in India.

**“We ALL should be outraged by India's internet shutdowns and paramilitary violence against farmer protesters,”** tweeted Meena Harris.

The international celebrity tweets triggered an online storm in India, where the Farmers protests have become one of the biggest challenges to Hindu nationalist Prime Minister Narendra Modi since he took power in 2014.

India's government has bristled at international remarks on the protests, calling them an **“internal matter”**, adding that **“vested interest groups”** were trying to mobilise support against the government.

India's foreign ministry said on Wednesday the celebrities needed **“a proper understanding of the issues”**.

**“The temptation of sensationalist social media hashtags and comments, especially when resorted to by celebrities and others, is neither accurate nor responsible,”** it said in a statement, with the hashtags **#IndiaTogether** and **#IndiaAgainstPropaganda**.

Members of India's governing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its supporters regularly brand their critics traitors, propagandists and **“anti-nationals”**.

Some Indians tweeted in support of Rihanna, but others were not pleased, with her remarks getting abusive replies.

Bollywood actress Kangana Ranaut, a vocal Modi supporter, responded by calling the protesting farmers **“terrorists”** and Rihanna a **“fool”**.

Modi has said the laws are necessary to modernise India's agriculture sector, but farmers fear they would put them at the mercy of big corporations.



A forum of Farmers unions said the government



had disconnected electricity and water, suspended the internet and social media accounts and removed mobile toilets at the protest sites.

The police have been fortifying barricades and digging trenches on the highways to stop protesters from entering the capital after a group resorted to violence on January 26.

Twitter temporarily blocked tens of accounts tweeting about the protests on Monday at the demand of the Indian government, while police have detained dozens of farmers and filed sedition charges against prominent journalists.

India – the world's biggest democracy – regularly uses internet shutdowns to limit information sharing during disturbances.

## Jagtar Singh Johal: Plea to free Briton held in India who was 'tortured into signing confession'



**The Scot claims he was electrocuted, beaten and had his legs pulled apart before being made to sign blank confessions.**

Sky News - 28 January 2021

A charity is calling on the government to get involved in the case of a Scottish man being held in India, who says he was tortured into confessing to be part of an assassination plot.

Jagtar Singh Johal, from Dumbarton, could face the death penalty in India, after he was detained in 2017 on conspiracy to murder charges over the assassination of Hindu leaders.

The charity Reprieve, which is assisting Mr Johal's family, has written to Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab to ask him to call for the release of the Scot, who had travelled to the Punjab for his wedding.

In the letter seen by Sky News, Reprieve said: "In recent days we have learnt that Jagtar may be facing new, and completely spurious, capital murder charges.

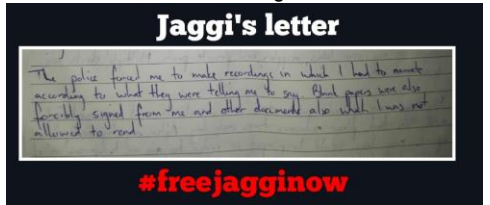


"These charges only increase the risk that Jagtar will be sentenced to death. In the coming days they also present the very real threat of yet more torture aimed at securing a 'confession' to these charges.

"Given the absence of evidence, numerous and grave fair trial violations, credible torture allegations and the threat of continued torture and of the death penalty, Reprieve believes that the

only way to secure Jagtar's rights would be for the FCDO to make representations for Jagtar's release and return to the UK."

The charity says Mr Johal was arrested unlawfully and forced to sign a confession "extracted under brutal torture", adding that he was "electrocuted on his head, torso and genitals and officials



threatened to burn him alive".

A handwritten note from Mr Johal, given to Sky News, says his legs were repeatedly pulled apart, and he was beaten and forced to confess on camera, and sign blank pieces of paper.

Deputy Director of Reprieve Dan Dolan said: "We are talking about a young British man facing a death sentence on trumped up political charges.

"It's just not good enough for the (Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office) to make generic requests for due process. Action from the British Government could save Jagtar's life and bring him home to his family.

"Why won't they call for his release?"

Mr Johal's lawyer told Sky News that the next hearing of the case is in Delhi on 2nd February, adding police only have a "disclosure statement", and "no material evidence" linking him to the charges of conspiracy to kill.



The High Commission of India in London has been contacted for comment. allegations of torture and mistreatment and his right to a fair trial.

A spokesman for the FCDO said: "Our staff continue to support Jagtar Singh Johal following his detention in India and are in regular contact with his family and prison officials about his health and wellbeing. "There has been extensive ministerial engagement on Jagtar Singh Johal's case. Most recently, the foreign secretary raised his case with Indian External Affairs Minister (Subrahmanyam) Jaishankar during his visit to India."

"We have consistently raised concerns about his case with the government of India, including

## UK GOVERNMENT BEING URGED TO TAKE UP INDIAN RESPONSE TO THE FARMERS PROTEST AT UN SECURITY COUNCIL

**Sanctions possible as there is a serious threat to peace under Article 39 of the United Nations Charter**

**UK Government under pressure to demand India immediately release Jagtar Singh Johal from prison and allowed to return to his family in the UK**

15 February 2021- Following the Sikh Parliamentary lobby on human rights last week all UK MPs have today been sent a detailed action note. Preet Kaur Gill MP, the Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for British Sikhs following the issues raised at the lobby is expected to write to ask the Foreign Secretary for an urgent meeting.



At the meeting with the Foreign Secretary the two key issues to be discussed will be the serious human rights violations against farmers protesting in Delhi and the need to take urgent action demanding India immediately release Jagtar Singh Johal from prison and returning him to his family in the UK.

Pressure on the UK Government to take tougher action on the farmers protest is increasing

with growing demands for a UK Parliamentary debate and action at the UN Security Council.

The UK is a permanent member of the UN Security Council and is currently the Chair and will be followed by the US. Under Article 39 of the United Nations Charter the Security Council can in country-specific situations determine the existence of a threat to peace.

The farmers protest is seen as the world's largest ever protest, has been continuing for months with no sign of a resolution and matters have escalated in the last couple of weeks with serious violations of human rights. It could be argued under Article 41 of the Charter of the United Nations the Security Council could impose sanctions against India. The UN Security Council can resort to sanctions as an enforcement tool when peace has been threatened and diplomatic efforts have failed.

A UK Parliamentary e-petition on the farmers protest has already had 115,000 signatures that should result in a Parliamentary debate. An associated UK Parliamentary e-petition focused on the UK



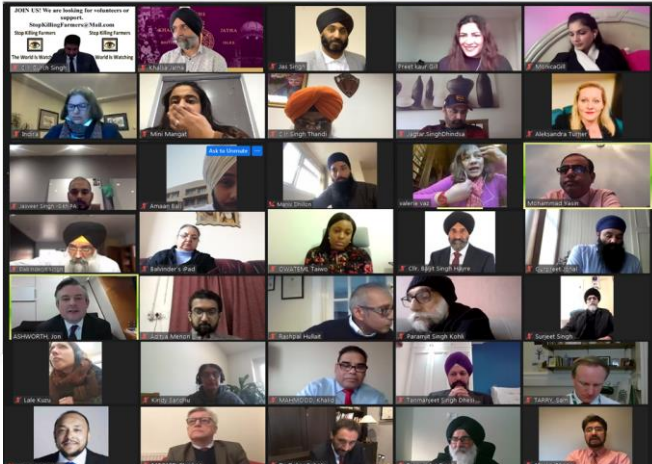


Government making strong representations directly with India, at the UN Human Rights Council and UN Security Council condemning the widespread human rights violations against farmers, journalists and activists has been submitted and is in the process of being approved. Both petitions would be debated together by MPs in the House of Commons.

The UK Government is being pressed to raise concerns with regards to the treatment, abuse, attacks, arrests and disappearance of farmers protesting; restrictions on the internet and harassment, arrest, sexual abuse and imprisonment of journalists and activists like Nodeep Kaur a 23-year-old Dalit labour activist and Disha Ravi a 22-year old climate activist.

The UK Government is also being asked to work with other member states and NGOs like Amnesty International. Human Rights Watch and the International Commission of Jurists who have in the last few days all condemned the Indian Government's handling of the farmers protest. The objective is to ensure the farmers protest is discussed and actions agreed at the 46th regular session of the UN Human Rights Council from 22 February to 23 March 2021. Over 80 MPs and Peers from all the main political parties have already signed a joint letter produced by Reprieve that will be sent to the Foreign Secretary. The letter makes clear Jagtar Singh Johal has been held in arbitrary detention for nearly three and half years and there is a risk he could be given the death penalty. Urgent action is therefore required from the Foreign Secretary to demand India immediately release Jagtar from prison and return him to his family in the UK.

## ਸਿੱਖ, ਕਿਸਾਨ, ਜੱਗੀ ਜੌਹਲ ਸਮੇਤ ਵੱਖ ਵੱਖ ਮਾਮਲਿਆਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਅਧਿਕਾਰ ਪਾਰਲੀਮੈਂਟਰੀ ਲਾਬੀ



\* 35 ਬਰਤਾਨਵੀ ਸੰਸਦ ਮੈਂਬਰਾਂ ਸਮੇਤ ਵੱਖ ਵੱਖ ਦੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਦੇ ਆਗੂਆਂ ਨੇ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਲਿਆ ਲੰਡਨ, 10 ਫਰਵਰੀ (ਮਨਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਬੱਧਨੀ ਕਲਾਂ)- ਆਲ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਪਾਰਲੀਮੈਂਟਰੀ ਗਰੁੱਪ ਫਾਰ ਸਿੱਖਸ, ਸਿੱਖ ਫੈਡਰੇਸ਼ਨ ਯੂ.ਕੇ., ਦ ਸਿੱਖ ਨੈੱਟਵਰਕ ਅਤੇ ਫ੍ਰੀ ਜੱਗੀ ਨਾਏ ਵਲੋਂ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ 'ਦ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਾਬੀ ਨੈੱਟਵਰਕ ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਅਧਿਕਾਰ ਪਾਰਲੀਮੈਂਟਰੀ ਲਾਬੀ' ਵਿਚ ਬਰਤਾਨੀਆ ਦੀਆਂ ਵੱਖ ਵੱਖ ਰਾਜਸੀ ਪਾਰਟੀਆਂ ਦੇ 35 ਬਰਤਾਨਵੀ ਸੰਸਦ ਮੈਂਬਰਾਂ ਨੇ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਲਿਆ। ਜਦ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਵਿਚ ਅਮਰੀਕਾ, ਕੈਨੇਡਾ, ਯੂਰਪ ਅਤੇ ਭਾਰਤ ਹੋਰ ਦੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਦੇ ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਅਧਿਕਾਰ ਕਾਰਕੁੰਨਾਂ, ਪੱਤਰਕਾਰਾਂ ਨੇ

ਹਿੱਸਾ ਲਿਆ। ਇਸ ਮੌਕੇ ਅਮਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਾਲੀ, ਇੰਦਰਾ ਨਾਤਾਸ਼ਾ ਵੈਨਕੂਵਰ, ਅਦਿਤਿਆ ਮੈਨਨ ਪੱਤਰਕਾਰ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਅਦਾਕਾਰਾ ਮੇਨਿਕਾ ਗਿੱਲ ਯੂ ਐਸ ਏ, ਸਈਅਦ ਮਹਿਮੂਦ ਕਾਜਮੀ ਨਿਊਯਾਰਕ ਨੇ ਕਿਸਾਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਮੌਜੂਦਾ ਮਾਮਲਿਆਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਚਰਚਾ ਕੀਤੀ। ਜਦ ਕਿ ਡਾਨ ਡੋਲਨ ਡਿਪਟੀ ਡਾਇਰੈਕਟਰ ਰੀਪਰੀਵ, ਧਾਰਸ਼ਾ ਜੇਗਾਥੀਸਵਾਰਨ, ਚਾਰਲੀ ਲਾਊਡੇਨ, ਗੁਰਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੌਹਲ ਨੇ ਜੱਗੀ ਜੌਹਲ ਦੇ ਕੇਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਚਰਚਾ ਕੀਤੀ। ਗੈਰਥ ਪੀਰਸ ਨੇ 3 ਬਰਤਾਨਵੀ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਭਾਰਤ ਹਵਾਲਗੀ ਮਾਮਲੇ ਬਾਰੇ ਅਤੇ ਸਟੈਨਫੋਰਡ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ ਦੇ ਡਾ: ਹਰਦਇੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਸਾਕਾ ਨਕੇਦਰ ਬਾਰੇ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਸਾਂਝੀ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਕਿ ਕਿਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਅਜੇ ਤੱਕ ਇਨਸਾਫ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲਿਆ। ਅਖੀਰ ਵਿਚ ਜਸ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਦਬਿੰਦਰਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਬੁਲਾਰਿਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਲੈਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦਾ ਧੰਨਵਾਦ ਕੀਤਾ। ਮੀਟਿੰਗ ਦੌਰਾਨ ਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਕੌਰ ਗਿੱਲ, ਤਨਮਨਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਢੇਸੀ, ਸੀਮਾ ਮਲਹੋਤਰਾ, ਵਲੇਰੀ ਵਾਜ਼, ਜੇਏ ਮੌਰਸੀ, ਐਲੀਸਨ ਬੈਵਲਿਸ, ਕਲਾਊਡੀਆ ਵੈਬੋ (ਸਾਰੇ ਸੰਸਦ ਮੈਂਬਰ) ਨੇ ਵੀ ਸੰਬੋਧਨ ਕੀਤਾ। ਇਸ ਮੌਕੇ ਕਿਸਾਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਚੱਲ ਰਹੇ ਅੰਦੋਲਨ ਬਾਰੇ ਲੋਕਤੰਤਰਕ ਢੰਗ ਨਾਲ ਸਾਂਤਮਈ ਪ੍ਰਦਰਸ਼ਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਹੋਈ ਅਤੇ ਭਾਰਤ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਵਲੋਂ ਕੀਤੇ ਵਰਤੋਂ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਜ਼ੋਰ ਜਬਰ ਦੀ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ। ਜੱਗੀ ਜੌਹਲ ਦੀ ਰਿਹਾਈ ਨੂੰ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਵੀ ਚਿੰਤਾ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਕਿ ਉਸ 'ਤੇ ਗੁਨਾਹ ਕਬੂਲਣ ਲਈ ਦਬਾਅ ਪਾਇਆ ਜਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਲਾਬੀ ਦੌਰਾਨ ਸਾਕਾ ਨਕੇਦਰ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਹੀਦਾਂ ਦੇ ਇਨਸਾਫ ਲਈ ਵੀ ਅਵਾਜ਼ ਬੁਲੰਦ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ।



## PRITI PATEL INITIATES EXTRADITION OF THREE BRITISH SIKH ACTIVISTS TO INDIA

### Arrests follow Dominic Raab's visit to India last week and Boris Johnson's planned visit next month to start negotiations on a free trade agreement with India

23 December 2020- In the early hours of Monday, the homes of three British Sikh activists in the West Midlands were raided. Two are from Coventry and one from Wolverhampton.



At approximately 6am West Midlands police smashed down their front doors and took all three of them away to London to appear at Westminster Magistrates Court in the afternoon.

The wives and young children of the three have been left traumatised by the dawn raids and are extremely worried by the threat of extradition to India of their loved ones.

Leading lawyer and human rights activist Gareth Pearce, who has worked on several high-profile cases, including the Guilford Four arranged for their representation in court.

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) turned up unprepared suggesting they were pushed to appear at short notice and simply argued the three should not be given bail.

The judge disagreed and the three were remanded in custody at HMP Wandsworth overnight to appear again the next day for a bail hearing. The three have been granted bail and are now back with their families.

If the extradition case proceeds there will be a preliminary hearing where the judge will set a date for an extradition hearing.

Many in the Sikh community are deeply concerned these raids are linked to Dominic Raab's visit to India last week where he also met with Ajit Doval, the National Security Adviser who is believed to have pushed for their extradition. It is almost certain the visit has triggered the extradition process to begin.



Extradition to India is under Section 70 of the Extradition Act 2003 and this requires the Home Secretary to certify the extradition request and send it to the court for a judge to issue arrest warrants.

It is understood India is demanding their extradition for an offence that took place in India more than 11 years ago in July 2009 when all three were in their 20s.

The Indian police initially registered a case against unidentified persons in July 2009 and arrested four persons from India, but later let them go.

Later in September 2009, the Indian police arrested five others from India who were eventually acquitted in February 2015.

More than 10 years ago four Britons were arrested and questioned regarding the killing of a man in India linked to the Hindu supremacist paramilitary organisation Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh.

Following questioning, all four men were released on police bail and in January 2011 they were also released from bail without charge.



The UK is looking to establish a Free Trade Agreement with India therefore it is assumed the Indian authorities used the opportunity to push Dominic Raab on the extradition of the three British Sikh activists. They also know they have a Home Secretary in Priti Patel who rarely plays by the rules and is an enthusiastic supporter of the Narendra Modi BJP Government.



Some are also speculating the arrests may have a direct link with Jagtar Singh Johal a 32-year old from Dumbarton who had just got married in India and was abducted by plain clothed Indian police. He was subject to third degree torture and has been held in an Indian jail for more than three years.

Despite the torture, a so-called confessional video released to Indian TV and trial by

media the Indian authorities have been struggling to produce any evidence in court for the last three years to substantiate the false charges against him.

In September 2018 British terror police assisted by Indian police officers raided the homes of five British Sikh activists linked to the #FreeJaggiNow campaign and took away computers, paperwork and other material. The five were never arrested or charged and two years later some of the information taken away has still to be returned.

Incredibly the names, addresses and photographs of some of these activists obtained during the raids immediately appeared in Indian newspapers emphasising the close working between police and intelligence in the two countries.

This collusion between British and Indian police that led to this serious indiscretion instantly put the lives of the individuals named and pictured at serious risk if they ever visited India. It is understood two of those arrested on Monday are those who have repeatedly been named and pictured in Indian newspapers.

If there is an extradition hearing one of the main considerations for the judge will be if extradition to India would breach their human rights. The European Convention of Human Rights and UK law will almost certainly not allow extradition to India as it retains the death penalty for the crime the three are accused.

Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) said: "Given India retains the death penalty and its appalling track record on human rights it is impossible to see how extradition to India will be granted by a British judge."

"If the three are extradited they would almost certainly be tortured and have no chance of a fair trial."

"No one has been able to explain why their homes needed to be raided in the early hours and their doors smashed down for a crime committed 11 years ago in India and for which they were questioned and released 10 years earlier."

"The heavy-handed police approach, arrests and attempted extradition appear to be there to appease the Indian authorities at a time when the UK is interested to begin discussions on a free trade agreement and before Boris Johnson's controversial visit to India."



## INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL PRESSURE TO BE EXERTED SEEKING RELEASE OF JAGTAR SINGH JOHAL

11 November 2020- There was an excellent turnout of MPs for the virtual lobby for Jagtar Singh Johal on 10th November 2020, marking his third year in detention in India. Martin Docherty-Hughes the SNP MP for Jagtar Singh Johal excellently chaired the meeting.

Speakers other than politicians included:

- Gurpreet Singh Johal, an immigration solicitor by profession and Jagtar’s elder brother
- Jaspal Singh Manjhpur, the advocate from Punjab representing Jagtar
- Charlie Loudon, an International Legal Adviser at REDRESS
- Ximena Vengoechea, a member of the panel of counsel for the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) in Scotland
- Dabinderjit Singh OBE, the Principal Adviser of the Sikh Federation (UK)
- Gurpreet Singh Anand, the Secretary General of the Sikh Council UK
- Charandeep Singh from Sikhs in Scotland



24 MPs directly participated or sent staff and 16 MPs spoke during the lobby. More than 50 MPs also sent apologies but wanted to be kept updated with some of them having already written to the Foreign Secretary.

### The 16 MPs that spoke during the lobby were:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Martin Docherty-Hughes (SNP) – West Dunbarton   | 9. Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesei (Lab) – Slough       |
| 2. Abena Opong-Asare (Lab) – Erith & Thamesmead    | 10. John McDonnell (Lab) - Hayes & Harlington   |
| 3. Zarah Sultana (Lab) – Coventry South            | 11. Jon Ashworth (Lab) – Leicester South        |
| 4. Preet Kaur Gill (Lab) – Birmingham, Edgbaston   | 12. Allan Dorans (SNP) – Ayr, Carrick & Cumnock |
| 5. Douglas Chapman (SNP) – Dunfermline & West Fife | 13. Steve McCabe (Lab) – Birmingham, Selly Oak  |
| 6. Afzal Khan (Lab) – Manchester, Gorton           | 14. Hannah Bardell (SNP) - Livingston           |
| 7. Alison Thewliss (SNP) – Glasgow Central E       | 15. Pat McFadden (Lab) – Wolverhampton South    |
| 8. Kirsten Oswald (SNP) – East Renfrewshire        | 16. Matt Western (Lab) – Warwick & Leamington   |



Martin Docherty-Hughes MP will be drafting two letters as the Vice Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for British Sikhs and as Jagtar’s MP. One letter will be to the Home Secretary concerning the Home Office’s appalling decision to appeal against an immigration judge granting Jagtar’s wife to remain in the UK. The other letter will be to the Foreign Secretary requesting he meets with Martin and Jagtar’s family ASAP. The letter may also suggest the Foreign Secretary meets with the APPG as many MPs have concerns raised by constituents on the handling of Jagtar’s case from a political perspective. Jagtar’s case has had considerable political connotations ever since his arrest more than 3 years ago.

Constituency MPs unable to sign the joint letters due to Parliamentary protocol, such as being part of the government or on the shadow front bench are to be encouraged to write separately.



## British Sikh 'tortured' in India after arrest must be freed, say **the guardian** MPs

### Nearly 140 parliamentarians warn trumped-up charges could result in death penalty for Jagtar Singh Johal

Guardian - 28 February 2021

Nearly 140 MPs and peers have written to Dominic Raab urging him to do more to secure the release of a young Sikh man facing the death penalty in India after a confession allegedly extracted under torture.



The letter calls on the foreign secretary to accept that Jagtar Singh Johal is being detained arbitrarily, and says at least three of the charges levelled against him carry the death penalty.

In the letter the parliamentarians wrote: "When a British national is arbitrarily detained, tortured, and faces a potential death sentence, all on the basis of trumped-up political charges, the British government must make clear this is unacceptable. This is a moment for the UK to take a stand and bring this young British man home."

Signatories include the former Brexit Secretary David Davis; the former International Development Secretary Hilary Benn; the Father of the House, Sir Peter Bottomley; the SNP Leader at Westminster, Ian Blackford; Sheffield's Mayor, Dan Jarvis; the former Foreign Office Minister Lord Hain; the former Liberal Democrat Leader Menzies Campbell; and Andrew Rosindell, a Conservative Member of the Foreign Affairs Select Committee.

They claimed in their letter that Johal, who has been detained for three years, is a Sikh human rights activist from Dumbarton who travelled to India in October 2017 to get married and, three weeks after his wedding, was violently arrested by plainclothes police officers in Punjab before being "bound, hooded, and bundled into a car". "We understand that his arrest was unlawful,

amounting in effect to an abduction by the state," they wrote.

They added, after his detention, "Jagtar was brutally tortured with electricity into 'confessing' his involvement in an alleged conspiracy."

Jagtar is being supported by the legal NGO Reprieve, which said the charges – of procuring arms, conspiracy to commit murder and a terrorist act – all carry the death penalty in Indian law. It has been alleged he provided £3,000 to a Sikh planning to kill members of the extremist nationalist group Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a charge he denies. Despite an extraordinary 145 court appearances, his trial has been repeatedly delayed at the request of the prosecution, and basic information to defence counsel denied.

Reprieve Deputy Director Dan Dolan said: "It's baffling that the Foreign Office hasn't sought Jaggi's release. We're talking about a young British man facing a death sentence, based on nothing but a supposed confession he recorded after being tortured with electricity. It is about as clear a case of arbitrary detention as you can imagine, but the government hasn't acted to bring him home. Why?"



The issue is likely to be diplomatically sensitive for the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, as he seeks to cement economic ties with India by travelling to see its Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, on a postponed trip, as well as to host Modi as a guest at the UK's G7 gathering set for Cornwall in June. The wooing of India is part of a wider UK government tilt towards the Indo-Pacific that is likely to be a central feature of the UK's 'global Britain' strategy.



## Wife of 'tortured' Scot Jagtar Singh Johal wins Home Office fight

THE NATIONAL  
THE NEWSPAPER THAT SUPPORTS AN INDEPENDENT SCOTLAND

The National – 25 April 2021

The family of a Scottish man who's been awaiting trial in India for almost three and a half years finally has cause to celebrate after a judge ruled his wife should stay in Scotland.



Jagtar Singh Johal, from Dumbarton, says he was tortured into making a false confession after his arrest in November 2017 over alleged involvement in an assassination plot.

Those claims were not assessed by medical experts and he has not spoken with his family since last summer.

Nicknamed Jaggi, he was bundled into an unmarked vehicle days after his wedding to Gurpreet Kaur and remains in jail, pending trial, despite concerns raised by organisations including Reprieve and the UN.

In a handwritten letter alleging torture, Jaggi said authorities also threatened to arrest Kaur, who travelled to the UK for talks with then-Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt in 2019 and applied to stay with her in-laws in West Dunbartonshire, where the couple still hope to live together.

But the UK Government, which called her case "unique", said there was no reason for her to stay, triggering a legal battle.

When an immigration tribunal found in her favour later that year, it refused to accept the ruling and launched an appeal.

Now a higher panel has again said Kaur should get to live with her Scottish family.

She told the Sunday National she was relieved but feels she has been "singled out" by the Home Office: "Twice the judges have found in my favour, however I would not be surprised if the Home Office should try to appeal this decision further.

"I had high hopes for the UK Government to bring my husband home when I was invited to meet Jeremy Hunt but since then there have been no developments and it appears the meeting was just a token gesture.

"I urge the Prime Minister to end our nightmare and bring my husband back where he belongs."



Earlier this week Reprieve urged the PM to seek Jaggi's release in his online talks with Indian premier Narendra Modi.

## Jagtar Singh Johal: Nicola Sturgeon meets jailed Dumbarton man's family

THE NATIONAL  
THE NEWSPAPER THAT SUPPORTS AN INDEPENDENT SCOTLAND

The National - 10 August 2021

THE First Minister has met with the family of a Scottish man facing the death penalty in India and offered the Scottish Government's support.

Jagtar Singh Johal, from Dumbarton, was "kidnapped" by Indian authorities and bundled

into an unmarked vehicle just days after his wedding in 2017.

Johal, known as Jaggi, is still in jail pending trial and facing a potential death sentence under India's anti-terror laws.

He says he was forced to sign a confession under electrocution and other torture in relation to



accusations of conspiring to murder a number of right-wing Hindu leaders.

Johal's representatives have accused the judicial system of deliberately drawing out his detention through repeated court delays.

Sikh human rights blogger Johal, who also said he was forced to record a video which was broadcast on Indian TV, has previously said through his lawyer that he has been "falsely implicated".

And now, Nicola Sturgeon has met with Johal's brother Gurpreet Singh Johal, a solicitor, and offered the support of the Scottish Government.

First Minister @ScotGovFM · Aug 10  
We remain concerned for Jagtar Singh Johal's continued detention without charge and allegations of torture.

The First Minister met his family today to discuss the situation and offer @ScotGov support.



Nicola Sturgeon

The First Minister's official Twitter account revealed the meeting and shared a picture of Nicola Sturgeon with Johal's brother.

The tweet said: "We remain concerned for Jagtar Singh Johal's continued detention without charge and allegations of torture."

"The First Minister met his family today to discuss the situation and offer @ScotGov support."

Johal is currently being held in Tihar Prison Complex, in Delhi, the largest of its kind in South Asia.

UN agencies and two international charities - Redress and Reprieve - have taken on the case.

We previously told how in June this year the UK Government were criticised for a "unforgivable dereliction of duty" in relation to Johal's case.

In a Westminster Hall debate MPs from across the political spectrum voiced their anger, frustration and "despair" over Johal's treatment and the government's "failure" to help him.

Asia Minister Nigel Adams failed to answer when he was asked multiple times why Johal's imprisonment was not declared "arbitrary detention".

Arbitrary detention is where one government used the incarceration of a person to leverage another government, and has been declared in the case of Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe due to her treatment by the Iranian government.

And, we told how earlier this week Johal's advocate Jaspal Singh Manjhpur is on a phone hacking list, according to reports in India.

Manjhpur appears on a leaked list of thousands of numbers analysed by the Pegasus Project, an investigative journalism team backed by Amnesty International's Security Lab.

The lawyer was allegedly chosen as a possible candidate for surveillance in 2018 using military-grade spyware by Israel's NSO Group.

## THOUSANDS TO MARK ANNIVERSARY OF 1984 SIKH GENOCIDE IN LONDON

Sunday 6 June 2021- A protest march and freedom rally has been taking place in London every year without fail since June 1984 to remember the victims of the attack on Sri Harmandir Sahib (popularly known as the Golden Temple) in Amritsar by the Indian authorities.

Normally tens of thousands of members of the Sikh community gather in London to mark the anniversary of the 1984 Sikh Genocide.

However, last year COVID-19 and the restrictions in place prevented a mass gathering. The Federation of Sikh Organisations (FSO) therefore closely liaised with the authorities and agreed a much smaller event with social distancing and safety in mind.



The event later today will be larger than last year as many taking part have been vaccinated and much larger gatherings outside have been sanctioned by the authorities with certain safeguards in place.

Exactly six months earlier on 6 December 2020 and before any vaccinations commenced for COVID-19 there was a massive show of support by the Sikh community for farmers protesting in India with a static protest organised outside the Indian High Commission in London.



The march and rally in London have taken on an added significance from a UK perspective since 2014 when the British Government's involvement in the 1984 Sikh Genocide was first "inadvertently" disclosed when Cabinet Office papers were released under the 30-year rule.

The Sikh Federation (UK) published the highly acclaimed Sacrificing Sikhs report setting out the need for an investigation. A public inquiry would need to look at anti-Sikh measures pre and post the 1984 Sikh Genocide taken against UK Sikhs by the UK Government at the request of the Indian authorities. The Labour Party is committed to hold an independent public inquiry when they come into power.

The events of 1984 took place 37 years after India gained independence in 1947 and Sikhs declined the British offer of a separate Sikh homeland and a 10-year agreement of military assistance and support for the Sikh administration.

Today marks the 37th anniversary of the 1984 Sikh Genocide and many speakers at the freedom rally will reflect on the treatment of Sikhs over the last 74 years, including during the last 12 months in terms of the prominent Sikh role in the farmer protests, continued detention of Jagtar Singh Johal and the attempted extradition of Sikhs from Britain to India.

Sikhs who have visibly led the massive farmer protests in Delhi have challenged Narendra Modi and the Indian Government and in recent months led the way in the fight against COVID-19 in India while the government has been widely condemned.

A year ago the Jathedar of the Akal Takht, the supreme authority of the Sikhs and the President of the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) speaking to media after the commemoration in Amritsar declared every Sikh wants Khalistan.

Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) said: "Despite India's propaganda in the last 12 months Sikhs through their actions and their way of life – seva, working for the betterment of all and ability to stand up for their rights have won the hearts and minds of the public across the globe."

"There is also growing recognition by governments of the Hindutva threat unashamedly promoted by Narendra Modi and the Indian Government's discriminatory laws and practices that are causing major instability."





“The challenge to the Sikh Diaspora and those politically active is to translate the positive global reputation and respect of Sikhs to support from governments for Sikh independence that will be seen by all as a desired and positive outcome.”



ਲੰਡਨ ਵਿਖੇ '84 ਘੱਲੂਘਾਰੇ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਹੀਦਾਂ ਦੀ ਯਾਦ 'ਚ ਕੱਢੀ ਰੋਸ ਰੈਲੀ ਦੌਰਾਨ ਪੰਜ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਤੇ ਸੰਬੰਧਨ ਕਰਦਾ ਇਕ ਆਗੂ। ਤਸਵੀਰ : ਮਨਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਬੱਧਨੀ ਕਲਾਂ

# ਜੂਨ '84 ਘੱਲੂਘਾਰੇ ਦੀ 37ਵੀਂ ਵਰ੍ਹੇਗੰਢ ਮੌਕੇ ਲੰਡਨ 'ਚ ਰੋਸ ਪ੍ਰਦਰਸ਼ਨ

ਲੰਡਨ, 6 ਜੂਨ (ਮਨਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਬੱਧਨੀ ਕਲਾਂ)-ਭਾਰਤ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਵਲੋਂ ਜੂਨ 1984 ਨੂੰ ਤੋਪਾਂ ਟੈਂਕਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ 'ਤੇ ਹਮਲਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ ਤਖ਼ਤ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੂੰ ਢਹਿ-ਢੇਰੀ ਕੀਤਾ ਤੇ ਹਜ਼ਾਰਾਂ ਬੇਕਸੂਰ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਕੀਤਾ। ਬੀਤੇ 37 ਵਰ੍ਹਿਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਲੰਡਨ 'ਚ ਸਿੱਖ ਇਸ ਭਾਰਤ ਸਰਕਾਰ

ਗਲੀਆਂ 'ਚ ਕੇਸਰੀ ਝੰਡੇ ਲਹਿਰਾਏ, ਸਿੱਖ ਦੇ ਭਾਰਤ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਵਿਰੁੱਧ ਅਤੇ 'ਖਾਲਿਸਤਾਨ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਾਬਾਦ', ਸੰਤ ਜਰਨੈਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ ਫਿੰਡਰਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਅਰਿਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਲੰਡਨ ਗੂੰਜ ਰਿਹਾ ਸੀ। ਸਿੱਖ ਜਥੇਬੰਦੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਸਾਂਝੇ ਸੰਗਠਨ ਵੈਡਰਸਨ ਆਫ਼ ਸਿੱਖ ਆਰਗਨਾਈਜ਼ੇਸ਼ਨ ਵਲੋਂ ਕੀਤੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਇਸ ਰੋਸ ਮੁਜ਼ਾਹਰੇ ਦੀ ਰੂਪ ਰੇਖਾ 'ਚ ਕੋਰੋਨਾ ਪਾਬੰਦੀਆਂ ਕਾਰਨ ਤਬਦੀਲੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ। ਇਸ ਮੌਕੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਆਗੂਆਂ ਨੇ ਸੰਬੰਧਨ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ 1947 ਤੋਂ 37 ਸਾਲਾਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਉਸ ਸਮੇਂ ਦੀ ਦਿੰਦਰਾ ਗਾਂਧੀ ਦੀ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਵਲੋਂ ਦੇਸ਼ ਦੀ ਆਜ਼ਾਦੀ ਲਈ ਕੀਤੀਆਂ ਕੁਰਬਾਨੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਮੁੱਲ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ 'ਤੇ ਹਮਲਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਯੂ.ਕੇ. ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨੇ ਵੀ ਉਸ ਦਾ ਸਾਥ ਦਿੱਤਾ, ਜਿਸ ਲਈ ਚਿਰਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਜਾਂਚ ਦੀ ਮੰਗ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ, ਪਰ ਯੂ.ਕੇ. ਸਰਕਾਰ ਟਾਲ-ਮਟੋਲ ਕਰ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ। ਬੁਲਾਰਿਆਂ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਇਨਸਾਫ਼ ਮਿਲਣ ਤੱਕ ਸਾਡਾ ਸੰਘਰਸ਼ ਜਾਰੀ ਰਹੇਗਾ। ਇਸ ਮੌਕੇ ਐੱਫ਼.ਐੱਸ.ਓ. ਦੇ ਕੋਆਰਡੀਨੇਟਰ ਭਾਈ ਲਵਜਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਡੱਲਵਾਲ, ਭਾਈ ਕੁਲਦੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਚਰੇਤੂ, ਭਾਈ ਅਮਰੀਕ ਸਿੰਘ ਗਿੱਲ, ਗੁਰਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੋਹਲ, ਜਤਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਾਸੀ, ਹਰਮੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਗਿੱਲ, ਜਸਵਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ਮਨਵਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੰਗ, ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਮੌਲ 'ਬੇਦੀਆਂ ਆਦਿ ਸਮੇਤ ਵੱਡੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ 'ਚ ਸਿੱਖ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਸਨ।

## ਕੋਰੋਨਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਵਾਰ ਕੱਢੀ ਰੋਸ ਕਾਰ ਰੈਲੀ

ਦੀ ਇਸ ਹਰਕਤ ਖ਼ਿਲਾਫ਼ ਰੋਸ ਪ੍ਰਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਕਰਦੇ ਆ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਸਾਊਥਾਲ, ਗ੍ਰੇਵਜ਼ੈਂਡ, ਬੁਮਿੰਘਮ, ਸਲੋਹ, ਕਵੈਂਟਰੀ, ਵਾਲਸਾਲ, ਫੁਲਵਰਹੈਂਪਟਨ ਆਦਿ ਸ਼ਹਿਰਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਆਏ ਸਿੱਖ ਲੰਡਨ ਦੇ ਵੈਲਿੰਗਟਨ ਆਰਟ ਵਿਖੇ ਸਵੇਰ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਇਕੱਠੇ ਹੋਣਾ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਹੋ ਗਏ ਸਨ, ਜਿੱਥੋਂ ਪੰਜਾ ਪਿਆਰਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਅਗਵਾਈ 'ਚ 'ਸਤਿਨਾਮ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ' ਦਾ ਜਾਪ ਕਰਦੀਆਂ ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਦਾ ਰੋਸ ਮਾਰਚ ਠਾਢਗਲਰ ਸੁਕੇਅਰ ਲੰਡਨ ਤੱਕ ਪਹੁੰਚਿਆ। ਇਸ ਵਾਰ ਕੋਰੋਨਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਬਹੁਤ ਸਾਰੇ ਨੌਜਵਾਨ ਕਾਰਾਂ 'ਚ ਪਹੁੰਚੇ ਤੇ ਕਾਰ ਰੈਲੀ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਕਲ 'ਚ ਲੰਡਨ ਦੀਆਂ

### THOUSANDS OF SIKHS EXPECTED TO PROTEST OUTSIDE THE INDIAN HIGH COMMISSION IN LONDON TODAY ON INDIA'S INDEPENDENCE DAY

15 August 2021- Thousands of Sikhs from across the UK are expected to join a protest outside the Indian High Commission, in London from 1-3pm later today.

Today is India's Independence Day, but for Sikhs and other minorities it is not a time to rejoice but reflect on the disastrous partition in 1947 and the continued injustices against Sikhs and other minorities as well as the ongoing farmers protest.

The #FarmersProtest has been ongoing since November 2020, despite harsh conditions and nearly 600 deaths, the Indian Government continue to ignore the rights of millions of farmers and workers.



Many of those attending the protest today in London will be showing solidarity with farmers protesting on the streets of Delhi.

Following the Anglo-Sikh Wars the British annexed the Sikh Kingdom of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1849 and entered various Anglo-Sikh Treaties. Sikh soldiers fought for the British for nearly a century, but also made huge sacrifices for independence and in 1947 offered the Sikhs a separate homeland and support to run the administration for the next 10 years.

Those handling the partition managed it extremely poorly and all commentators agree it was a disaster especially for the Sikhs that had their homeland split between India and Pakistan.

74 years later Sikhs in the Diaspora are well established and increasingly politically active in lobbying foreign governments for the re-establishment of a Sikh homeland and the benefits it can bring.

Sikhs and the Indian and Pakistan states as we know them now are at a crossroads and the next decade will be critical if Sikhs increasingly win support of world powers for the re-establishment of a Sikh homeland.

The Sikh Federation and Young Sikhs UK will be distributing a leaflet titled: “Why Sikhs shouldn’t celebrate Indian Independence” at the protest in London today. The plight of Jagtar Singh Johal and the 3 young Sikhs from the West Midlands facing extradition to India will also be raised.



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# SIKH LEGAL ASSISTANCE BOARD



PO Box 5216, Dumbarton, G82 9AZ

Scottish Charitable Incorporate Organisation Number: SC048790

[info@sikhlegalboard.org](mailto:info@sikhlegalboard.org) | [www.sikhlegalboard.org](http://www.sikhlegalboard.org)



The Sikh Legal Assistance Board (SLAB) is a Scottish registered charity that was set up in April 2019 by Gurpreet Singh Johal, a solicitor by profession and the elder brother of Jagtar Singh Johal (Jaggi). SLAB works closely with Jaspal Singh Manjpur and Panjaab Lawyers.

**SLAB's fantastic work has led to the direct release of 38 Sikh political prisoners and SLAB is supporting on approximately 50 other cases.**



To get the charity off the ground the Sikh Federation (UK), its members and supporters have been providing regular monthly donations for the last two and half years. The Sikh Federation (UK) its members and supporters have directly or indirectly provided over 75% of the financial support to date to secure the release of Sikh political prisoners held in Indian jails.



SLABs excellent reputation and results now means it is inundated by those still in prison who have been let down and require support so they can be released. To enable SLAB to meet this increased demand individuals, organisations and Gurdwaras are requested to set up monthly donations to help secure the release of Sikh political prisoners.

£10

£20

£50

£100

£250

£500

**Bank A/C: Sikh Legal Assistance Board (SLAB)  
Bank of Scotland: Acc: 18537362 Sort: 80-22-60**



# WORKING FOR TRUTH, JUSTICE & FREEDOM

## Donate Now

For monetary donations to support any of the initiatives, please note the following bank details:

HSBC: Sikh Federation (UK)  
Account No: 51692992  
Sort Code: 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.

 [www.sikhfeduk.com](http://www.sikhfeduk.com)

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