

SIKH FEDERATION (UK)

Never flinch from performing righteous deeds

ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018

#FREE
IAGGI
NOW

SCOTTISH ACTIVIST
DETAINED IN INDIA
SINCE 4 NOVEMBER,
2017. TORTURED,
DENIED INDEPENDENT
MEDICAL EXAM &
PRIVATE CONSULAR
SERVICES.



SIKHS
ARE A
NATION

2021
Sikh ethnic
tick box
Census

WORKING FOR TRUTH, JUSTICE AND FREEDOM



Overview



A Message from the Chairman.

The Sikh Federation (UK) has now been going for 15 years. The organisation's origins can be traced back to 1984 and the dream of Shaheed Bhai Amrik Singh Ji, the son of Sant Kartar Singh Bhindranwale the 13th Jathedar of the Damdami Taksal, of bringing like minded Sikhs together across the globe.

The Damdami Taksal, a Sikh seminary is unique in that it was entrusted with the responsibility of teaching the reading (santhia), analysis (vichar) and recitation of the Sikh scriptures by Guru Gobind Singh Ji and its 1st Jathedar was Baba Deep Singh Ji. Historically the Damdami Taksal has stood up for Sikh rights and its Jathedar's have led the Sikh Nation and have been prepared to sacrifice their lives in accordance with the teachings of the ten Gurus and Guru Granth Sahib Ji.

At the 35th Annual International Sikh Convention we can hold our heads up high as we have remained true to our founding principles established in September 1984 and the guiding values and roadmap provided by Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale Ji the 14th Jathedar of the Damdami Taksal.

The focus of the organisation has remained on Sikhi and working for truth, justice and freedom. Our achievements in the last 15 years have been momentous. The organisations international profile within the Sikh community and with politicians and governments in representing Sikh interests is second to none.

In the last 12 months working with the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for British Sikhs we have made huge progress in several areas of the Sikh Manifesto i.e. Sikh ethnic tick box in the Census 2021, "Lions of the Great War" monument in Smethwick and site in central London, growing evidence and calls for an independent public inquiry etc.

As we approach 12 months since the abduction and imprisonment of Jagtar Singh Johal, the Sikh Federation (UK) continues to remain fully committed in supporting his family and the #FreeJaggiNow campaign in every capacity.

The high level campaigning of the Sikh Federation (UK) to expose and challenge the Indian regime in the mainstream media and political circles in the UK and abroad have also not gone unnoticed by the Indian authorities who have publicly called for restrictions on the organisation by the UK Government. Thankfully our lobbying efforts, political contacts and public profile built over the last 15 years means the UK Government dare not do what it did in the mid 1980s or in 2001.

The worldwide Sikh community led by Sikhs in the Diaspora is at an important crossroads and poised for remarkable achievements. With this in mind the focus of our efforts in the next 3-5 years will be to prepare and promote the next generation for leadership roles that will be achieved through the expansion of the Sikh Network concept.

We will also be taking political engagement to the next level. We are therefore delighted to announce the APPG working with leading UK Gurdwaras has launched a 3-year outreach programme designed to increase engagement with the leadership of each of the main political parties.

In the next six months the Sikh Network will also be organising a series of regional workshops to assess progress with the Sikh Manifesto and update the manifesto so it ready for the next General Election as the UK is in a period of huge political uncertainty and turmoil prior to Exit from the EU.

The final announcement this year will be on progressing the campaign for a Sikh homeland. We hope the blue print will prove to be the most significant development since the Sarbat Khalsa of 29 April 1986. A follow up event providing details will be at the United Nations within the next three months.

Bhai Amrik Singh
Chair Sikh Federation (UK)

NB: The updates and articles in this report are a reflection of the work and activities undertaken by the Sikh Federation (UK) over the past year. The mainstream newspaper coverage published has been as a direct result of our press releases and media outreach.

SIKH FEDERATION (UK)

BUILDING A STRONGER POLITICAL VOICE IN THE UK AND ABROAD

Thousands at Sikh convention in Wolverhampton

Express & Star

Express and Star – 18 September 2017 (extract)



More than 10,000 are estimated to have attended the **Sikh Federation UK's** convention at the Guru Nanak Gurdwara in Wolverhampton over the weekend.

And in a keynote speech at the event a Sikh leader called for Prime Minister Theresa May to make a full apology in Parliament for a historic massacre before its 100th anniversary.

Unarmed civilians were killed at Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar on April 13, 1919 by soldiers from the British Indian Army.

During a visit to the site in 2013, David Cameron described the massacre as 'a deeply shameful event in British history' – but fell short of an official apology.

At the convention Bhai Amrik Singh said: "While the words of David Cameron in 2013 when he visited Jallianwala Bagh were comforting they fell short of an apology for the shameful massacre of unarmed civilians in Amritsar on April 13, 1919.

"We will focus our efforts in the UK by gaining cross-party support to demand a full apology

SIKH FEDERATION (UK) PUSH TO REINSTATE GOVERNMENT SIKH ROUNDTABLE MEETINGS



Previously only one Sikh roundtable meeting took place in September 2016 with Lord Bourne, the faith Minister. The meetings were to be quarterly and the Sikh Federation (UK) wrote numerous times on the lack of Sikh roundtable meetings in 2017 due mainly to ill health, staff capacity and resignations at the Communities Department.

Preet Kaur Gill having become an MP and Chair of the APPG for British Sikhs wrote to Lord Bourne and a Sikh Roundtable meeting on 30 November 2017 appeared in the dairy, just before he met Preet and the Sikh

before the 100th anniversary from the Prime Minister.

"We are confident of support from MPs as many know the massacre came within months of the end of the First World War where Sikhs made sacrifices in huge numbers for the freedom of Europe."

The Federation is leading an ongoing campaign for an independent public inquiry into UK involvement in the 1984 Sikh Genocide.

The convention, which ran at the Gurdwara in Sedgley Street from Friday to yesterday (Sunday), also heard from both new Sikh MPs elected to Westminster in June – Sandwell councillor and new Edgbaston MP Preet Kaur Gill, the first Sikh woman MP, and Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi, the first turban wearing Sikh MP.

Wolverhampton MPs Pat McFadden and Eleanor Smith also attended and spoke, as did former city MP Rob Marris.



Federation (UK) on 1 December 2017. At the meeting with Lord Bourne he agreed to put dates in the diary for 2018. Three Sikh roundtable meeting dates were agreed within two weeks for 2018. The first two meetings took place on 29 March where the Sikh Federation (UK) proposed a Sikh Heritage Month starting in 2019 and 16 July after which the Sikh Network is facilitating a meeting in Birmingham with Sikh organisations dealing with grooming. The third meeting will be in November 2018.



To make meetings with government more effective the Sikh Federation (UK) organised a pre-meeting of Sikh representatives prior to the last meeting in July as the government were reluctant to discuss the Afghan Sikh issue and over the summer the Sikh Federation (UK) has made a number of suggestions in meetings and written exchanges with the Department. These include:

- the five main Sikh representative organisations liaising prior to each Sikh roundtable meeting and agreeing priority agenda items from a Sikh community perspective. Government will also want to add items to the agenda from its own perspective.
- two or three separate Sikh roundtable meetings with the Home Office and a similar number with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office each year

As the Sikh Federation (UK) and the Sikh Network are engaged and working on a very broad range of matters cutting across government they have increasingly been playing a dominant role in government-wide meetings and pushing for this expansion of roundtable meetings with other departments. Some organisations with much narrower remits and lack of capacity and capability may struggle to handle around ten roundtable meetings a year. Meeting dates for 2019 are currently being arranged.

London Mayor Sadiq Khan in Amritsar says UK Government should apologise for Jallianwala Bagh massacre

THE NEW
INDIAN EXPRESS

Indian Express – 7 December 2017

London Mayor Sadiq Khan has said the British government should apologise for the Jallianwala Bagh incident, Khan, who is on a six-day mission to India and Pakistan to strengthen cultural and economic ties with London, was at Amritsar on Wednesday and visited the Golden Temple and Jallianwala Bagh.

Talking to media after paying respects at Jallianwala Bagh memorial and garden, he made it clear that almost 100 years after the dreadful event, the British government should formally apologise for it. "It was important to me to come to Jallianwala Bagh. Indian Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims were peacefully protesting against the British government. In response to the peaceful act, General Dyer and his soldiers closed the gate and opened fire on men, women and children."

He said: "I have seen the well myself where people fell and died. The British government should apologise for the errors done in the past. Some people use the world massacre for the incident and the British government should apologise for it." On Vaisakhi, April 13, 1919, soldiers of the British Indian army fired at more

than 10,000 unarmed men, women and children who had gathered. In two years, it will be 100 years since the massacre.

In 2013, then British Prime Minister David Cameron visited Jallianwala Bagh and described the Amritsar massacre as "a deeply shameful event in British history". The UK-based Sikh Federation also asked political parties to make it an election agenda to seek apology for Jallianwala Bagh in the recent general election held in Britain.

Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh was also in Amritsar on Wednesday to meet Khan. About Khan's statement, he said: "I am very happy to hear it... He is the Mayor of London. If he is saying that the British government should apologise, then it is a good thing." During his tour of the Golden Temple, Khan met volunteers who were preparing food for the local community. He also went to the Baba Deep Singh shrine and the pool of nectar before going to Jallianwala Bagh.

The Mayor took the opportunity to reaffirm his commitment to working with London's Sikh community to find a space in London to mark the contribution made by Sikhs who served during



both World Wars. "More than 83,000 Sikhs died during World War I and World War II, and more than 100,000 were injured," Khan said. "I want to make it clear that a memorial should take pride of place in London to honour those who served and died in the wars. Over the coming months, my office will establish a community board to drive



plans forward and to find the best site for the memorial," he added.

"Britain and the world owe a huge debt to the Sikh servicemen and women who fought alongside British troops during the First and Second World Wars. These brave individuals sacrificed an enormous amount to defend the freedoms that we enjoy today and it is only right that there is a memorial in our capital city to honour the Sikhs who fought to preserve our freedoms," Khan said. "When I think of the Sikh community in London and the contribution they have made to the capital socially, culturally and economically I feel proud. Seva, or selfless service, is integral to Sikhism and this principle of charity and equality is something I deeply respect. It was an honour to visit the Golden Temple this morning and to see volunteers helping their local community," Khan said.

Sikh body plans to ban Indian officials from UK Gurdwaras

hindustantimes

The Sikh Federation UK said the ban could extend to more than 100 Gurdwaras in Britain as part of an eventual worldwide ban on visits by Indian officials to Gurdwaras.

Hindustan Times – 5 January 2018 (extract)



Days after some Gurdwaras in Canada imposed a ban on visits by Indian officials, a Sikh organisation in the United Kingdom has proposed a similar measure from later this month in response to what it said was their "interference and

anti-Sikh activities".

The Sikh Federation UK, a leading campaign group of the Sikh community, said on Friday the ban could extend to more than 100 Gurdwaras in Britain as part of an eventual worldwide ban on visits by Indian officials to Gurdwaras in their official capacity.

Responding to the proposal, India's deputy high commissioner Dinesh Patnaik told Hindustan Times that the mission would continue to engage with the Sikh community, which he described as a "pillar of society".

"Such threats are not acceptable. In 2017 we held a major Baisakhi event and several others related to the 350th anniversary of Guru Gobind Singh in various parts of the UK. We will continue to engage with the Sikh Federation UK too," he said.

A group of office-bearers claiming to represent more than a dozen Gurdwaras in the Canadian province of Ontario resolved on December 30 to "bar" officials representing India, its diplomats and others from entering the premises of these places of worship.

The campaign group said the Federation of Sikh Organisations - the umbrella group of several organisations - will discuss the proposal over the weekend to issue a declaration, and added its contacts in 15 European countries had suggested similar bans there.

The proposed ban is on visits by Indian officials in their official capacity, but according to the Sikh Federation UK, their presence in an individual capacity would also make members of the community uncomfortable and they can be expected to be challenged on alleged "anti-Sikh activities".

Bhai Amrik Singh, chair of the campaign group, said: "Sikhs in the diaspora are fed up with Indian government officials and their agents increasingly interfering in our institutions and Sikh affairs, undermining Sikh campaigns for greater rights and internal matters for the Sikh community.



"The latest tactic by the Indian authorities of targeting Sikhs from the diaspora when they visit the Sikh homeland as demonstrated by the case of British citizen Jagtar Singh Johal has broken the camel's back."

Johal is reported to be under arrest in Punjab his alleged role in the assassination of some individuals. A campaign has been initiated in the UK to seek his release.

OVER 225 UK GURDWARAS CONFIRM BACKING FOR RESTRICTIONS ON INDIAN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

Desperate and under hand tactics of the Indian authorities exposed

13 February 2018 - On 7 January 2018 the Federation of Sikh Organisations (FSO), made up of ten Sikh organisations including the Sikh Federation (UK), announced the imposition of restrictions on Indian government officials in UK Gurdwaras.



The FSO set a target of 150 UK Gurdwaras and stated that the implementation would be formalised later in the month, but it made clear that since the 1984 Sikh Genocide restrictions already existed in many Gurdwaras.

Over 225 UK Gurdwaras had confirmed by the end of January 2018 with the FSO that since 1984 they have never let Indian government officials speak from their Gurdwara stages or given them any form of recognition and they had no plans to change their stance.

In a further development on the 31 January the Sikh Council UK following an Executive Committee meeting also put out an official statement supporting the restrictions in UK Gurdwaras. This followed backing for the restrictions from the Akal Takht, the supreme authority in Amritsar.

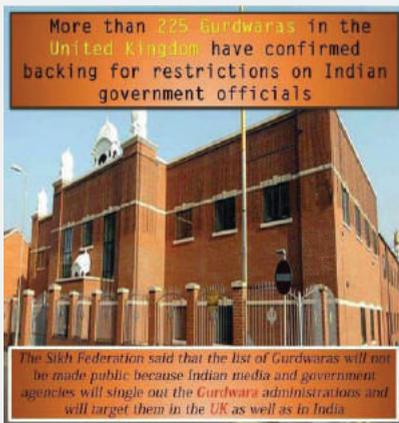
The original plan was to publish a list of UK Gurdwaras where restrictions were in place. However, this has been altered due to the overwhelming level of support from UK Gurdwaras and some Gurdwaras specifically asking not to be named given the outrageous threats reported in the Indian media.

It has been widely reported in the Indian media that the Indian authorities had compiled a "blacklist" of Gurdwara representatives in Canada where a list of relevant Gurdwaras had been published and they could not find members of management committees prepared to back Indian officials visiting Gurdwaras.

The Indian authorities have been shocked with the united and co-ordinated action by Sikhs across the globe and in desperation resorted to a number of underhand tactics that can now be exposed.

First came the repeated misinformation by the Indian authorities, their supporters and agents of a total 'ban' on Indian government officials from entering Gurdwaras to try and cause confusion.

Some, who originally condemned the 'ban', were forced into a U-turn after they realised they had been hoodwinked by the false propoganda by the Indian authorities.



More than 225 Gurdwaras in the United Kingdom have confirmed backing for restrictions on Indian government officials

The Sikh Federation said that the list of Gurdwaras will not be made public because Indian media and government agencies will single out the Gurdwara administrators and will target them in the UK as well as in India



Then came efforts to show that Indian High Commission officials in London and some of its consulates were defying the restrictions.

On 6 January, a day before the restrictions were discussed by the FSO, an Indian High Commission official spoke at Guru Nanak Sikh Academy in Hayes. However, the Indian authorities claimed in a news item in the Tribune they visited a Gurdwara in Southall and showed a picture of Sri Guru Singh Sabha Southall and also stated they were set to visit another Gurdwara in the Midlands.



This fake news instigated by the Indian High Commission in London was designed to cause friction within the Sikh community. However, it backfired on the Indian authorities as it forced the Southall Gurdwara to initially confirm to the media no official had visited the Gurdwara and then telephone into a live TV programme to confirm that Southall Gurdwara stood united alongside other Gurdwaras and the Sikh Council UK in imposing restrictions.

On 7 January, the Deputy High Commissioner attended an event at Sri Guru Ravidass Community Hall in Bedford. A week later, on 13 January, Indian officials from the consulate in Cardiff visited a Gurdwara where objections were raised by the Sangat and claims were made of the consulate making a large donation.

The Indian authorities have developed personal links with certain individuals in specific Gurdwaras and know the restrictions will never apply to all UK Gurdwaras or other venues the Gurdwara may be responsible for. UK Gurdwaras number around 270 in total.

However, the Indian authorities have been going to extreme lengths to show their defiance. For example, one very small Gurdwara was approached by one of the Indian consulates to allow them to do an Akhand Paath. They said they would also provide their own Kirtani Jatha and were willing to pay £2,000 a month for the next 12 months.

In a further embarrassing set back to the Indian authorities and following an article in the Times of India regarding a claim Gurdwaras in Bedford were not imposing restrictions, Parmjit Singh Sohal, the General Secretary of Guru Gobind Singh Gurdwara Kempston (Bedfordshire) has written to the Sikh Federation (UK) and the Sikh Council (UK) and said: *"Please note that a meeting of the executive committee of Guru Gobind Singh Gurdwara Kempston (Bedfordshire) was held on Thursday 8/2/2018. The whole executive committee unanimously supported the Sikh Council UK statement dated 31/1/2018."*

"Following the above meeting on Sunday 11/2/2018 at 10:45 in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib, the whole Gurdwara Sangat was made aware of the Sikh Council UK statement and its background."

"A resolution supporting the restrictions on Indian Government Officials from Gurdwara stages was unanimously passed by the whole Sangat."

Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) said: *"UK Gurdwaras have shown massive support for restrictions on Indian government officials if they visit Gurdwaras. Sikhs across the globe have shown their unity in standing up to the Indian authorities."*

"The misinformation, fake news, bribes and threats by the Indian authorities stand exposed and demonstrate their desperation."

"In the UK we have a duty of care towards members of Gurdwara Management Committees and have deliberately not published a list of Gurdwaras backing the restrictions. This has allowed us to outmanoeuvre and embarrass the Indian authorities, their supporters and agents who now look foolish."



INDIAN GOVERNMENT DEMAND FOR A BAN ON THE SIKH FEDERATION (UK) IS A SIGN OF DESPERATION AND WILL NEVER BE ACCEPTED BY THE UK GOVERNMENT

15 January 2018 - There is no doubt the Indian government has over many years been demanding the UK Government impose a ban or at least restrictions on the pro-Khalistan Sikh Federation (UK).



The UK Government has previously rejected all demands in the last 15 years by the Indian government for the organisation to be banned.

For example, the demand first became public in January 2006 when worldwide candlelit vigils were organised by the Sikh Federation (UK) in opposition to the imposition of the death penalty in India, support for Professor Davinderpal Singh Bhullar and the release of Sikh political prisoners.

Previous rejections by the UK Government have however not stopped the Indian authorities from lobbying at every possible opportunity for a ban to try and obstruct the activities of the organisation.

The Sikh Federation (UK) comes into India's firing line as it is constantly leading the challenge to expose the actions of the Indian authorities, such as in the Jagtar Singh Johal case, in building a stronger political voice for the Sikhs in the diaspora and campaigning for a Sikh homeland.

The reality for the Indian government, apart from the fact that it is impossible to ban an organisation that has been operating legitimately for the last 15 years, is that the Sikh Federation (UK) is now far too well established, powerful and prominent in the eyes of British politicians, the mainstream media and the Sikh community itself.

However, to keep the Indian authorities and the Indian High Commission in London happy, the UK government have and will continue when it needs to engage with the Sikh community to deliberately give preference to Sikh organisations that are deemed pro-Indian and try and shut out organisations that are pro-Khalistan.

Hence, there are undisclosed rules for engagement and the Indian High Commission in London currently has an influence in dictating invites to certain meetings and events when it comes to the Sikh Federation (UK).

However, in recent years the UK Government has had no choice but to engage with the Sikh Federation (UK) since it has grown in political importance, works on a wide range of issues and has a public profile recognised by the mainstream media as well as significant support in the Sikh community.

The Sikh Federation (UK) led the legal challenge to have the ban lifted on the International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF) that was removed nearly two years ago. Many politicians on all sides admitted the ISYF ban introduced in 2001 was illogical other than to appease the Indian authorities.

While the ban existed on the ISYF pro-Indian Sikh organisations and the Indian High Commission in London repeatedly suggested that the Sikh Federation (UK) was the successor body to the ISYF and should be shut out of engagement by the UK Government.



For the last two years, they have been unable to use this argument and now the only reason they give to the UK Government for not fully engaging with the Sikh Federation (UK) is that the organisation is pro-Khalistan and represents a threat to the break-up of India.



Last week the Indian Minister of State for Home Affairs, Kiren Rijju accompanied by other representatives of the Indian government visited the UK and held meetings with several Ministers at the Home Office, Foreign Office and also met the new Conservative Party Chairman, Brandon Lewis.

When the meeting took place with Mark Field at the Foreign Office you can imagine the 'restrictions' imposed on Indian government officials visiting Gurdwaras across the globe in which the Sikh

Federation (UK) role has been so prominent would have featured. The successful political and media campaign run by the Sikh Federation (UK) in support of Jagtar Singh Johal would also have figured in the discussions.

The Indian authorities in particular are probably still wondering why the British Prime Minister, Theresa May went out of her way to specifically talk to the BBC about Jagtar Singh Johal on 20 November that was widely publicised by the Sikh Federation (UK).

The next day the Foreign Minister, Rory Stewart stood up in Parliament and in response to a Parliamentary Question from Martin Docherty-Hughes about Jagtar Singh Johal said "It is completely unconstitutional - it is offensive to the British government - and we will work very closely to investigate and of course will take extreme action (against India) if a British citizen is being tortured." India has probably not recovered from the robust language used in Parliament by the UK Government against India.

As the visit of the Indian Minister of State for Home Affairs came to an end last week a news item titled: "Consider banning Sikh Federation, India tells UK" appeared in The Tribune on 13 January 2018.

This article uses an unnamed source, almost certainly the Deputy Indian High Commissioner, Dinesh K. Patnaik who attended the meeting with Ben Wallace, Minister of State for Security at the Home Office. The Deputy Indian High Commissioner was recently humiliated in a live BBC radio debate by the Sikh Federation (UK) and subsequently recalled to Delhi.

The call for a ban on the Sikh Federation (UK) by the Indian authorities according to the Tribune article is a tit-for-tat response by the Indian authorities for 'restrictions' imposed on Indian government officials visiting Gurdwaras across the globe in which the Sikh Federation (UK) has played a leading role.

The Tribune article states that the Indian delegation was assured by the Home Office that it was keeping the Sikh Federation (UK) "under check" as they have made clear to the Indian authorities a ban is completely out of the question. However, the Home Office refused to comment on whether even the "under check" comment was accurate.

The article also suggests that the Foreign Office is concerned that the Sikh Federation (UK) will disrupt the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in April in London which Narendra Modi will attend. This recognises the organisation's ability to mobilise the Sikh and non-Sikh community and make media impact.



Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) said: *“The Indian authorities are living in cloud-cuckoo land if they think the UK Government will ban the Sikh Federation (UK), especially after we had the ban lifted two years ago on the ISYF via a legal challenge.”*

“We know for a fact the Indian authorities have tried in the last 15 years to get a ban on the Sikh Federation (UK) and have failed. Irrespective of the party in power the demand has always been rejected by the UK Government. They should accept there is no chance for a ban of a legitimate organisation campaigning for Sikh rights.”

“We will continue to expose the RSS/Hindutva ideology that Narendra Modi and the present Indian government represents that threatens minorities and stability in the Indian sub-continent.”

“We have operated for 15 years and the UK Government accept that we are strengthening the political voice of Sikhs in the diaspora and respect us for the work we do to protect and promote the distinct Sikh identity.”

“All sorts of tactics have and continue to be used by the Indian authorities to put obstacles in our way, but we continue to out manoeuvre them.”

“The Indian authorities can do what ever they want, but they will never stop us highlighting human rights violations in India, pursuing truth and justice for the 1984 Sikh Genocide and continuing our campaign for the right to self-determination and re-establishment of a Sikh homeland.”

We take pride in our work, says Sikh Federation UK

Asia Samachar– 13 June 2018

asia
samachar



Earlier today Indian Home Minister, Kiren Rijju met Home Office Minister Baroness Williams in Delhi and demanded restrictions on the Sikh Federation (UK).

It has been widely reported by the Indian media that Kiren Rijju raised the issue of anti-Indian government activities by the **Sikh Federation (UK)**. He stated “certain elements . . . are misusing UK’s territory to propagate or . . . conduct activities” to oppose the Indian government and damage its image on the world stage.

He said he told “the minister that using the UK’s territory for an anti-India agenda must be curtailed”.

He suggested freedom of speech was being “misused to abuse the country’s (India’s) image” and continued “we are very clear that the UK should not be a country where anti-Indian activities can be conducted without any kind of restriction or check”.

It has been hinted by the Indian media that Baroness Williams raised concerns about prison conditions in India. Although not stated this may relate to the detention and torture of 31-year old Scot, Jagtar Singh Johal from Dumbarton who has been held without charge for 220 days.

Bhai Amrik Singh, Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) said:“Since the 1984 Sikh Genocide we have been exposing the Indian authorities for gross human rights violations, including torture, false imprisonment, fake encounters and genocide.”

“In the absence of any justice for these crimes against humanity we have been highlighting our right to self determination and the re-establishment of a Sikh homeland.”

“Successive Indian governments of different political persuasions have in the last 15 years called for restrictions against us for opposing the Indian regime and calling for Sikh independence.”

“In the past much of this lobbying was done behind the scenes and at times the British authorities have capitulated. For example, when the International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF) was falsely banned following political pressure in 2001.”



"However, in the last few years we have taken legal action and had the political ban on the ISYF lifted and won the respect of many British politicians on all sides with nearly 20 years of lobbying."

"We have exposed the UK Government on its involvement in the 1984 Sikh Genocide by the Indian State and anti-Sikh measures in the UK, gained unofficial backing from some in the UK government and from governments abroad and are now making inroads at the United Nations."

"The rise in the profile of the Sikh Federation (UK) has coincided with the pro-right wing BJP Indian government coming to power in 2014 and promoting extreme anti-minority and anti-women policies."

"Governments across the globe know the BJP government has been encouraging or turning a blind eye to the regular killing of minorities and rape of women and children."

"The BJP government has tried all sorts of tactics to reduce our influence and support but has failed. It is now getting desperate and in effect blackmailing the British authorities to impose restrictions."

"When we learn Indian Ministers specifically name the Sikh Federation (UK) in bilateral discussions for exposing and damaging the Indian regime we take pride in our work and strive to do more to highlight continued abuses by the Indian State and the case for Sikh independence."

The Sikh Federation (UK) is by far the largest, most prominent and influential campaigning Sikh organisation in the UK that leads on political engagement for the British Sikh community. The organisation is often referred to as the first and only Sikh political party in the UK. The Sikh community in the UK and throughout the diaspora look to the organisation for leadership and direction.



Religious leaders attack Home Office for Britain being only European country to detain immigrants with no time limit



INDEPENDENT

'There's no fairness, compassion or common sense in locking vulnerable people up and giving them no idea of when they might see their friends and family again'

Independent - 16 February 2018 (extract)

Religious leaders join forces today to demand an end to the indefinite detention of immigrants who have been charged with no crime.

The heads of five faiths have issued a blistering statement aimed at Amber Rudd, the Home Secretary, pointing out that Britain is the only European country to hold people without oversight by a judge – and with no release date.

They are calling for the introduction of a strict 28-day limit when a new immigration bill is put before Parliament, to ease the mental harm suffered by people who can be detained for years.

The Independent revealed, last month, that Theresa May is already facing a Conservative revolt over the controversy, with two former cabinet ministers ready to vote to scrap the practice.

Bhai Amrik Singh, chair of the Sikh Federation (UK), said: "There is evidence this cruel and inhumane practice is causing harm and tearing families apart."

Campaigners believe a looming immigration bill, to introduce post-Brexit rules, will provide an opportunity for MPs to pass an amendment to impose a 28-day limit.

Almost 30,000 people are detained each year in the centres, with several hundred held for longer than one year. One was held for more than four years.

Survivors of torture, trafficking and rape are among those held in overcrowded conditions, where a recent investigation uncovered "widespread self-harm and attempted suicides".

The Home Office has paid £21.2m to migrants it unlawfully detained over the past five years, laying bare its "chaotic decisions" it was alleged.

Half of immigrants leaving detention centres end up being released into the community – rather than deported – where monitoring them costs 80 per cent less, critics say.

A previous attempt to end indefinite detention failed two years ago – but, since then, the



Conservatives have lost their Commons majority, making the Government vulnerable to revolts.

Two MPs from the Democratic Unionist Party, which is propping up Ms May in power, have also backed a 28-day limit.

The statement, signed by a total of 11 religious leaders, says the practice “causes huge harm not

only to those detained, but to their family, children, friends and community”.

It reads: “The time to act is now. We urge the Government to put some fairness, decency and due process into our immigration system and urgently put a 28-day time limit on detention.”

UK Sikhs keenly watching Trudeau’s India visit

Hindustan Times - 16 February 2018 (extract)

Bound by personal, religious and political links in Canada, many Sikhs in the United Kingdom and the rest of Europe will be keenly following the week-long visit to India of Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who is scheduled to visit Punjab, among other engagements, from Saturday.

Of interest will be his position on ‘Khalistan’: whether he reiterates Canada’s official stand that freedom of expression in Canada allowed extending it support, or he adopts a pro-New Delhi posture and commits to India’s unity and integrity.

Campaign group **Sikh Federation UK** said on Friday that every word Trudeau will speak about the experience of Sikhs in India will be closely watched and dissected by Sikhs, not only in Canada but in other parts of the globe too.

“Privately and publicly there is no doubt the Indian authorities and the media will challenge Trudeau on his perceived backing or otherwise for those campaigning for a separate Sikh homeland,

‘Khalistan’...How Trudeau responds to questions about Sikhs in Canada could determine his political future”, it said in a statement.

The Sikh Federation UK statement added: “There is no doubt Trudeau will need to walk a fine line during his India visit given the media hype of him being a close ally of the Sikhs. The fact that economic trade between Canada and India is relatively small will help Trudeau stand up to pressure from New Delhi during his visit given the line taken by his Conservative predecessor (Stephen Harper)”.

The Federation also brought up that next year he will be up against Punjabi-origin Sikh Jagmeet Singh, the leader of the New Democratic Party, “who will have most to gain if Trudeau fails to at least go as far as Stephen Harper in defending the rights of Sikhs in Canada to be able to highlight the atrocities by the Indian authorities; i.e. the failure to release Sikh political prisoners who have served their terms and have the freedom to advocate for ‘Khalistan’.”

hindustantimes

Trudeau’s visit: How Modi government, Captain and media tried to create a Khalistan bogey

Catch News - 23 February 2018 (extract)



The week-long India trip of Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has been marred by controversy especially because a lobby which is

adamant to create a Khalistan bogey appears to have been successful in its attempts.

But this has left the Indian government facing questions which it will find difficult to answer in the days to come.

Just a day after the Trudeau family's visit to Harmandir Sahib and the meeting of the Canadian delegation with Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh, a controversy erupted over an invite to “terrorist” Jaspal Atwal at an official dinner reception of the Canadian High Commissioner Nadir Patel.

catchnews



What is being debated at length in Punjab is why so much importance is being given to the issue of Khalistan in context of Trudeau's visit. Khalistan sympathisers are present in other countries like United States, United Kingdom, Norway, Germany, Australia and New Zealand as well.

Coming back to Atwal, apparently this is not his first visit to India in recent years. Secondly, he no longer figures in the black list of the Union Home Ministry. So the basic question that the Indian government needs to answer is that how did he get a visa to enter India if he is so much despised for his support to the cause of Khalistan which according to reports in Canadian media he gave up several years ago. Another thing that has upset a large number of Punjabis is the manner in which Khalistan sympathisers continue to be projected as villains. There are posts doing rounds on social media that talk about the fundamental right of freedom of expression and raise the question that if Hindutva organisations can openly talk about the concept of a Hindu Rashtra what is wrong if a section of the Sikhs sympathise with the concept of Khalistan.

It is also being pointed out that raising the Khalistan slogan even in India is no crime according to the 1995 verdict of the Supreme Court.



Even Amarinder in his past visits to Canada has addressed the Punjabi diaspora in Gurudwaras with posters supporting the cause of Khalistan in the background. Such pictures were in circulation ahead of the Punjab assembly polls last year when political affiliations to hardline elements dominated the political narrative during the campaign.

But the most intriguing question remains why the bogey of Khalistan is being raised more vociferously in the context of Canada and not any other country where too Khalistani supporters are known to be residing. "There have been attempts to paint Canada in such a manner in the last four to five years," points out Dal Khalsa leader Kanwar Pal Singh.

Amritsar, home of the Golden Temple in India, has always been shrouded in controversy and Britain is not without its share of the blame



In 1919 a British general gave orders to fire into a huge crowd of peaceful demonstrators. This may seem like an anachronism, but beneath the surface not that much has really changed

Independent - 25 February 2018

Earlier this week Justin Trudeau, the Prime Minister of Canada, and his wife, Sophie, were photographed at the Sikh Golden Temple in



Amritsar. It is an exceptionally beautiful building with water on three sides.

Despite its visual delights, however, it is hard for Amritsar to escape controversy. For example, the Indian government wasn't pleased with Trudeau's visit. He is credited with advocating a separate Sikh homeland, called Khalistan, in the Punjab region of which Amritsar is part. That would mightily displease the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, who is a Hindu nationalist.

But for people who know Britain's record as a colonial power, Amritsar, even with its marvellous temple, has negative connotations. What happened there in 1919 may be the greatest blot on the reputation of the British Empire – and that's saying something. For that is where a British general gave orders to fire into a huge crowd of peaceful demonstrators.



Labour government would hold Amritsar raid inquiry, Corbyn vows

Labour leader promises independent inquiry into Britain's alleged role in Indian army's 1984 raid on Golden Temple

the guardian

Guardian - 24 April 2018



An independent inquiry into Britain's military role in the Indian army's 1984 raid on the Golden Temple in Amritsar will be launched under a Labour government, Jeremy Corbyn has said.

The Labour leader promised that an investigation into the attack, which is said to have left thousands of people dead, would be in the party's next manifesto.

Sikh groups have repeatedly called for a fresh inquiry into an apparent decision by Margaret Thatcher's government to send an SAS officer to Delhi to advise the Indians on the operation.

David Cameron ordered his most senior civil servant to investigate alleged British involvement in 2014. He found that the advice was ignored by the Indian army, which launched a full-scale ground assault, causing a heavy loss of life.

The finding was met with "disappointment" by British Sikh groups, and the **Sikh Federation** said Sir Jeremy Heywood's review had been "limited in scope".

Corbyn, speaking at a Sikh Federation event in Watford, said: "You can be very sure that, whenever the election comes, it will be in the next

manifesto ... it's a commitment that's going to be there and we will honour that commitment."

It came as Sir Simon McDonald, the Foreign Office's most senior civil servant, apologised after describing the Golden Temple, one of the most revered in the Sikh religion, as a mosque on Twitter.

After realising the error, the permanent secretary said: "I was wrong: I am sorry. I should of course have said the Golden Temple or, better, Sri Harmandir Sahib."

However, **Bhai Amrik Singh, the chairman of the Sikh Federation**, said: "This was a major gaffe by a top civil servant and totally unacceptable. It demonstrates a remarkable level of ignorance from someone in his position."

He added: "In our view, a public apology and admitting the mistake is not enough. What we need is a commitment from the UK government and senior civil servants to root out such ignorance and discrimination or we will continue to face hate, abuse and threats of violence."

The error is particularly sensitive given the suspicions that exist around the extent of UK involvement in the 1984 raid.

Inside the temple with his armed followers was a spiritual leader, Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, who was understood to want an independent homeland for Sikhs in predominantly Hindu India. Some Sikhs dispute that he had made this demand.

Many hundreds, possibly thousands, were killed in the assault in June 1984. They included Bhindranwale. Many pilgrims were caught up in the violence. The temple was badly damaged in what many Sikhs saw as an attack on their religion.

The botched operation, in which 136 Indian soldiers also died, led to the assassination of the prime minister, Indira Gandhi, by her Sikh bodyguards, which in turn provoked massacres of Sikhs. About 3,000 were stabbed, burned or beaten to death by mobs in Delhi, the capital, alone.



DEFENDING AND PROMOTING THE SIKH IDENTITY

Sikhs demand census change

The Times – 12 September 2017

THE  TIMES



More than 100 MPs have signed a letter calling for the inclusion of Sikh as an ethnic group, not only a religion, on the 2021 census form.

In the 2011 census more than 83,000 Sikhs refused to choose one of the listed options in the question on ethnicity, rejecting options such as Indian and writing "Sikh" in the space for "any other ethnic group".

Campaigners say that Sikhs are a distinct ethnic group under the Race Relations Act 1976. By yesterday afternoon 113 MPs had signed a letter to John Pullinger, chief executive of the UK

Statistics Authority, who is also responsible for the Office for National Statistics (ONS). In preparation for the 2021 census, the ONS ran a test version of the census this year with "Sikh" included as an option under ethnicity, issued in areas with large Sikh populations. It found that almost a quarter of those who specified Sikhism as their religion also chose Sikh as their ethnicity.

Preet Gill, the first female Sikh MP, said: "Local authorities with huge Sikh populations are not recording data that will assist public health professionals to ensure services are being delivered that are being targeted correctly for communities."

She added that the official figure of 420,000 Sikhs in Britain could underestimate their number by half.

A Sikh ethnic tick box is needed in the UK's 2021 census

the **guardian**

Sikhs should be recognised as an ethnic group and not simply a religion, writes Preet Kaur Gill MP, chair of the All-Party Group for British Sikhs

Guardian Letters - 23 October 2017

It is a legal fact that the House of Lords ruled in the Mandla v Dowell-Lee case of 1983 that Sikhs are an ethnic group and not simply a religion (Census questions on ethnicity and gender, Letters, 12 October).

As there is not a separate Sikh ethnic tick box in the census, the majority of schools, hospitals, local authorities and other public bodies ignore Sikhs when considering jobs and service provision. It also explains why earlier this month the PM's race disparity audit totally ignored Sikhs. Hundreds of MPs from five different political parties representing hundreds of thousands of Sikhs and millions of non-Sikhs therefore are supporting the campaign for inclusion of a Sikh ethnic tick box in the 2021 census.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) cannot ignore the 83,362 Sikhs who in the last census rejected the existing ethnic group categories and ticked "other" and wrote Sikh, or the stakeholders

working in the education, health, local government and business sectors that recognise the need for information on Sikhs to plan and make decisions on service provision.

Damian Green, the minister responsible for presenting the census white paper, told me he had an open mind on the inclusion of a Sikh ethnic tick box in the 2021 census. Nonetheless, an adjournment debate in parliament is planned to leave the ONS and the Cabinet Office in no doubt of the strength of feeling of MPs.



Preet Kaur Gill MP
Labour, Birmingham Edgbaston



SIKHS MOVE A STEP CLOSER TO SECURING A SEPARATE SIKH ETHNIC TICK BOX IN THE 2021 CENSUS

On 23 October the Sikh community moved a step closer to securing a separate Sikh ethnic tick box in the 2021 Census after the Office for National Statistics (ONS) called an open meeting of stakeholders to update them on progress.

Around 80 or so Sikh representatives from a wide-range of Sikh organisations participated. By the end of the evening the ONS was left in no doubt concerning the level of support for a separate Sikh ethnic tick box with many accusing the ONS of discrimination for ignoring the fact that Sikhs are a legally recognised ethnic group.



In a show of hands virtually all present called for a Sikh tick box in the ethnicity question and to also retain the optional religious question. Only two Sikhs present, both from the Network of Sikh Organisations (NSO), dissented with one calling for a Sikh tick box under religion only and the other calling for a Sikh tick box under ethnicity only.

Lord Singh, the head of the NSO, became a laughing stock by ignoring the legal reality and arguing Sikhs were simply a religion and not an ethnic group. The 85-year old sounded like a broken record that has seen better days. At the end he showed he had totally lost the plot by being the one person calling for a Sikh tick box under ethnicity only.

The overall conclusion was consistent with what the Sikh Federation (UK) and The Sikh Network have been telling the ONS over the last three years. 93.5% of the 4,500+ respondents to the UK Sikh Survey last year stated they wanted a Sikh ethnic tick box and 19 out of 20 preferred to be identified as Sikh rather than Indian or Asian given the choice.

Many in the Sikh community have been saying for over a decade the claims by the NSO that it 'represents' 130 organisations is false. In the Census consultation process this has become crystal clear. None of the so-called 130 organisations the NSO claims to represent responded to the ONS consultation. This has much wider implications across government where the NSO and Lord Singh's standing has declined.

The ONS had completely downplayed the results of the test they carried out earlier this year at 40,000 households in Hounslow and Wolverhampton at previous meetings. The main reason for this was because the Sikh Federation (UK) and The Sikh Network had pointed out a number of shortcomings. Surprisingly the ONS presented the results from the test yesterday

A presentation slide titled "2021 Census: Ethnic group and religion questions" with a subtitle "The options for a Sikh tick box". The slide contains the following text: "We will make a recommendation on a religion and ethnicity question and the tick boxes for inclusion in the 2021 Census. There are three options relevant to this event:" followed by a bulleted list of three options. Option 1, "Option 1 – include a Sikh tick box in the ethnicity question AND religion question", is circled in red. Option 2 is "Option 2 - - Do not include a Sikh tick box in the ethnicity question BUT include a tick box in the religion question (the 2011 scenario)". Option 3 is "Option 3 - Include a Sikh tick box in the ethnicity question BUT NOT in the religion question". The slide also features the Office for National Statistics logo and a "2021 Census" logo.

without reflecting some of the caveats. Sikhs from the Sikh Federation (UK) and The Sikh Network were then forced to expose some of the serious limitations of the test. These included:



- An overall response rate lower than expected at 13.4%. The Census is compulsory with the Census 2011 having a response rate of 94%.
- Only 4.3% of the respondents were from Sikh households (the target population) and significantly lower than the 10% expected based on the estimated Sikh population in Hounslow and Wolverhampton.
- Trying to arrive at a meaningful conclusion on such an important matter based on only 228 responses from Sikh households was totally inadequate.
- The test proved too confusing.
- The online test of the ethnic group question with a Sikh tick box was also flawed as it failed to recognise many respondents given the previous census options since 1991 have become accustomed to stating their ethnicity under the 'Asian/Asian British' category rather than 'Other ethnic group' category that came after and contained a sub-option of Sikh.
- The only meaningful conclusion from the test is the number identifying as Sikh when adding a Sikh tick box more than doubled from 11.6% to 24.3% highlighting that there is a need for the tick box. This would increase with appropriate publicity and information in Punjabi that would naturally accompany the actual census.

Sikh representatives rejected the test carried out by the ONS and suggested it had wasted hundreds of thousands of pounds of taxpayers money with nothing worthwhile emerging. The ONS confirmed it was analysing census data from 2011 using Sikh surnames to determine the undercount of Sikhs and to estimate the possible number of people with a Sikh ethnic origin.

Should the UK's 2021 census have an ethnic tick box for Sikhs?

the guardian

Guardian Letters - 25 October 2017

Preet Kaur Gill MP has demonstrated she has her finger on the pulse. On 23 October the Sikh community moved a step closer to securing a separate Sikh ethnic tick box in the UK's 2021 census after the Office for National Statistics called an open meeting of stakeholders to update them on progress.

About 80 or so Sikh representatives from a wide range of Sikh organisations participated. By the end of the evening the ONS was left in no doubt about the level of support for a separate Sikh ethnic tick box, with many accusing the ONS of discrimination for ignoring the fact that Sikhs are

a legally recognised ethnic group. In a show of hands, virtually all present called for a Sikh tick box in the ethnicity question and to also retain the optional religious question.

Only two Sikhs present dissented, with one calling for a Sikh tick box under religion only and another calling for a Sikh tick box under ethnicity only.



Dabinderjit Singh, OBE
Principal adviser, Sikh Federation (UK)

British Sikhs to be given ethnicity status in census

The Sunday Times - 22 July 2018

THE SUNDAY TIMES

The 2021 census is set to list Sikhism as a distinct ethnicity rather than only as a religion.

In the most recent census in 2011, more than 83,000 Sikhs refused to tick any of the choices in the question on ethnicity, -rejecting options such

as Indian in order to write "Sikh" in the space for "any other ethnic group".

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is considering the inclusion of Sikhism as an ethnicity on the 2021 form, but had raised concerns over the issue of "public acceptability"





and whether the move would have backing across Britain's 430,000-strong Sikh community.

The all-party parliamentary group for British Sikhs offered to write to gurdwaras to assist the ONS with its public consultation and sent out letters about five months ago.

The Times has learned that MPs received 112 responses from temples representing more than 100,000 members.

Preet Gill, the first female Sikh MP and chairwoman of the all-party group, said: "Overwhelmingly they have said yes. Not a single gurdwara has opposed it." It is understood that the

ONS is likely to back the move if it received backing from more than 60 per cent of the gurdwaras that responded.

Public health bodies use the ONS list of ethnicities when compiling health data and determining provision of services for different ethnic groups.

Ms Gill said that issues such as alcoholism within Sikh communities had gone unaddressed as information had not been gathered. Bhai Amrik Singh, chairman of the Sikh Federation, said: "The final ONS test was one of public acceptability and our main religious institutions have spoken with one voice with 100 per cent backing a separate Sikh ethnic tick box. The ONS will now have to recommend a Sikh ethnic tick box in the census white paper later this year."

Last year, 113 MPs signed a letter to the ONS supporting calls for Sikhism to be included as an ethnicity on the census. The ONS is also considering the need for separate ethnic designations for Jewish, Roma and Somali Britons.

Sikhs have technically been legally recognised as an ethnic group since the House of Lords ruled in 1983 that a Sikh schoolboy suffered discrimination based on his ethnicity. The option was not available as an ethnicity in the 1991, 2001 or 2011 censuses however.

CASTE CONSULTATION - SIKH ORGANISATIONS INSIST EXPLANATORY NOTE TO EQUALITY ACT 2010 DROPS ERRONEOUS AND OFFENSIVE REFERENCE TO SIKHS

18 September 2017 - On 28 March 2017 the Government Equalities Office launched a 16 week consultation on "Caste in Great Britain and equality law" to ensure there is appropriate and proportionate legal protection against unlawful discrimination because of a person's origins. As a result of the General Election the consultation was extended for a further 8 weeks.

The Sikh Federation (UK) responded to the consultation some 10 weeks ago and is now making public its response as the consultation closed at 11.45pm today. Sikhs are opposed to all forms of discrimination, including because of a person's origins. However, the consultation has provided us an opportunity to raise a number of fundamental concerns:

Definition of caste should not make any reference to Sikhs

In our response we have stated there is an absolute necessity to amend the explanatory notes to the Equality Act 2010 to remove the erroneous and offensive reference to Sikhs in the definition. Although explanatory notes are not legislation and do not give authoritative rulings on interpretation of legislation they are sometimes referred to in litigation.

Paragraph 3.25 of the consultation admits that "caste could not be defined in the Act" and paragraph 2.2 of the consultation accepts "establishing a workable definition of caste is highly challenging" and continues the definition of caste in the Explanatory Notes has "led to controversy and resentment because it associates caste with particular religions, which may be socially divisive."



The Sikh Federation (UK) response states: "From a Sikh perspective the definition is not only offensive but is a misrepresentation of Sikhi and what Sikhs believe in and practice. Sikh teachings reject any notion of ranking according to ritual purity and Sikh practices, such as Guru Ka Langar (free food kitchen) practically challenge such concepts.

Preference for a case law approach assuming the caste definition drops reference to Sikhs



The consultation questions focused on two options to tackle caste discrimination - a case law approach or inserting caste into the Equality Act 2010 as a specific aspect of race. The Sikh Federation (UK) has responded strongly opposing the latter option as it is totally unnecessary, would entrench caste consciousness in legislation, have unintended consequences and pose significant additional burdens for employers, those who provide goods and services and individuals.

A case law approach is preferred as caste and caste discrimination is complex and best left to the courts to examine and respond to specific facts and situations. However, the Sikh Federation (UK) in its response has put down one significant caveat that the definition of caste in the explanatory note to the Equality Act 2010 removes the incorrect reference to Sikhs.

Need for proportionate response as caste discrimination is not pervasive in the UK

The Sikh Federation (UK) in its response has stated: "We are of the strong opinion specific caste discrimination is not pervasive in the UK and is a minor issue in comparison to other forms of discrimination." It has also been pointed out that caste discrimination is pervasive in the Indian sub-continent despite the anti-caste discrimination laws and poor practices and thinking from there should not be transferred to the UK. It must also be an ever diminishing issue in the UK with an increasing number born in the UK. The UK Sikh Survey showed around 69% of all Sikhs are born in the UK and significantly higher than Hindus and Muslims from the Indian sub-continent.

Total opposition to collection of data on caste as it would entrench caste-identity

In practical terms anything that forces public bodies to ask socially divisive questions and publish results must be avoided at all cost. This would be hugely counter-productive and from a Sikh perspective extremely offensive as it challenges the teachings and practices of the Sikh faith and the courts may therefore deem it illegal as for Sikhs it would amount to racial discrimination.

Root cause analysis will show the problem is 'exported'

The Sikh Federation (UK) in its response to the consultation has suggested the need for root cause analysis and is convinced it will show the problem has largely been 'exported' from the Indian sub-continent and other similar parts of the world. It has been suggested the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for International Development have a role to address caste discrimination abroad in their direct dealings with foreign governments, international agencies and NGOs. Immigration policy should also be designed and targeted to ensure poor practices and thinking on caste discrimination is not 'exported' to the UK.

Bhai Amrik Singh, Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) said: "*Our Gurus and Sikh teachings are opposed to all forms of discrimination and totally reject any notion of ranking according to ritual purity therefore it is offensive and inappropriate for there to be any reference to Sikhs in paragraph 49 of the Explanatory Notes and we want this removed.*"



"We are confident Rt. Hon. Justine Greening, the Minister for Women and Equalities, who we are planning to meet now consultation has ended and has previously written to the Sikh Federation (UK) wanting to work with us as she respects our work will agree to remove the reference to Sikhs."

"Sikh organisations responding to the consultation are united in our request for the definition to drop reference to Sikhs, but the Hindu community have a much more difficult challenge as many believe in the four classes (varnas) of Hindu tradition ."

UK Sikhs hail government backing off on anti-caste discrimination legislation

TOI

Times of India – 25 July 2018

AMRITSAR: Sikhs in Britain have hailed the Theresa May government's move to retract the proposed anti-caste discrimination legislation.

"The UK government concluded that caste discrimination does not require separate legislation, and said it can be covered as part of emerging case law in the country," said Gurjeet Singh, press secretary of **Sikh Federation UK**, on Tuesday, while claiming they had lobbied for this outcome.

The 'Caste in Great Britain and Equality Law - A Public Consultation' had been launched in March last year to gather the public's views on how best to ensure that there is "appropriate legal protection" against caste discrimination in Britain.

"Having given careful and detailed consideration to the findings of the consultation, the government believes that the best way to provide the necessary protection against unlawful discrimination because of caste is by relying on emerging case law as developed by courts and

tribunals," the UK government's Equalities Office said in its conclusion release. "We were not persuaded by the argument that introducing explicit legislation into domestic law was the most appropriate and proportionate way to provide the necessary legal protection against discrimination because of caste," it said.

Sikh Federation UK chair Amrik Singh said they had responded to the consultation over a year ago on July 5, 2017. "The government should repeal the duty introduced in 2013 to avoid entrenching caste consciousness in legislation. At the same time, the opportunity should be used to amend the explanatory note to the Equality Act 2010 to remove the erroneous and offensive reference to Sikhs in the definition," said Amrik.

He said they were hopeful a repeal of the legislation that had been announced by the government would allow the alleged erroneous and offensive reference to Sikhs in the definition included in the explanatory note to the Equality Act 2010 to be removed.

PMs RACE AUDIT SILENT ON DISCRIMINATION AGAINST SIKHS BY PUBLIC BODIES

10 October 2017 - Sikh organisations consulted by the Cabinet Office are incensed at the failure to address data gaps and have declared the Prime Minister may have given the green light to public bodies to continue to discriminate against the minority Sikh community despite protection under race laws.



The Prime Minister soon after stepping into 10 Downing Street announced she was setting up an audit of race inequality in government. A key explanation for racial inequalities is racial discrimination. A year on the audit is eagerly anticipated by the public and those who research the field of race inequality.

One of the key concerns raised by the Sikh Federation (UK) and the Sikh Network at the outset of the audit in meetings with the Cabinet Office was that public bodies were failing to collect data regarding Sikhs, although Sikhs have been legally recognised as an ethnic group since 1983 and



protected under race laws. It is important to engage with minority ethnic communities to understand their perspective on these issues and to ensure any interventions are appropriate.

However, in a damning indictment one of the civil servants leading the work at the Cabinet Office has confirmed public bodies covered by the race disparity audit “do not currently collect ethnicity data” on Sikhs “therefore there is no Sikh data.” It is understood the ethnic categories covered in the data audit are based on the Census 2011 categories.

A Sikh Federation (UK) spokesman said: *“On the eve of the publication of the Race Disparity Audit we are extremely disappointed the Cabinet Office has failed to confirm if there will be any specific reference in the findings to the data gap with regards to Sikhs.”*

“Having been consulted we will be deeply dissatisfied if it turns out there are no specific recommendations to address this serious data gap and fear it will be seen as endorsing that public bodies are free to continue to discriminate against the minority Sikh community despite legal protection under race laws for over 30 years.”

It was established in the 5:0 ruling in the House of Lords in the Mandla v Dowell-Lee case in 1983 that Sikhs were a legally recognised racial group with respect to ethnic origins. More than 15 years ago following the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 the Commission for Race Equality (CRE) in July 2002 amended its guidance ‘CRE Ethnic Monitoring, A guide for public authorities’ to make specific reference to Sikhs due to the legal position.

Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) said: *“It is indefensible for all public bodies covered by the Race Disparity Audit to claim more than 34 years after the House of Lords ruling and the CRE guidance 15 years ago that none of them collect data on Sikhs as a distinct ethnic group. Public bodies should not be allowed to claim ignorance of the law and hide behind the Census 2011 ethnic categories.”*

Rt. Hon. Maria Miller, the Chair of the Women’s and Equalities Select Committee wrote to John Manzoni and the Home Secretary last year following the publication of the findings of the UK Sikh Survey 2016.



A Sikh Federation (UK) spokesman added: *“The missed opportunity with the race audit will not be the first time Sikhs have been disappointed since Theresa May came to power. When the Hate Crime Action Plan was published in July 2016 after the Brexit vote we understand Number 10 airbrushed out reference to Sikhs when the case study specifically referring to a high profile attack on a Sikh dentist in North Wales was taken out.”*

“The government will be judged on how they react to the findings of the race audit and the Prime Minister on actions she puts in place to make Britain a more racially-fair society. A data gap for Sikhs should and can be put right by immediately compelling public bodies to recognise their legal responsibility and collect relevant information relating to Sikhs. The Cabinet Office must insist the Census 2021 ethnic group categories to be finalised in the next six months include a separate Sikh ethnic group category.”

SIKHS ARE EXPERIENCING INSTITUTIONAL RACISM

18 October 2017 - Preet Kaur Gill the Labour MP for Birmingham Edgbaston and Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for UK Sikhs yesterday challenged Amber Rudd, the Home Secretary at the Home Affairs Select Committee.

The response from Amber Rudd was totally inadequate as she clearly was unaware of how and why Sikhs were excluded from the Hate Crime Action Plan.



consultations have been delayed until the latter part of 2018. The plan is for a launch event for the Code of Practice to take place in the Sikh Heritage Month due to commence in mid-March 2019.

244 British MPs sign motion to support memorial for Sikh soldiers in London

hindustantimes

Hindustan Times - 27 December 2017

The demand for the memorial was first made in a publication called the 'Sikh Manifesto' before the 2015 general election.

Over 240 MPs have signed an early day motion in the House of Commons, expressing support to a memorial for the thousands of Sikh soldiers who died or were injured during the two World Wars while fighting for the British armed forces.

Initiated by Labour MP Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi, the motion has been signed by 244 MPs from across the political spectrum – the largest for any such motion in the current parliament. It is also supported by the All Party Parliamentary Group for British Sikhs.

The demand for the memorial was first made in a publication called the 'Sikh Manifesto' before the 2015 general election. It was furthered by Sadiq Khan during his election for London mayor and his recent visit to Amritsar.

He reportedly said during his visit to the Golden temple: "Britain and the world owe a huge debt to the Sikh servicemen and women who fought alongside British troops during the First and Second World Wars."

"These brave individuals sacrificed an enormous amount to defend the freedoms that we enjoy today and it is only right that there is a memorial in our capital city to honour the Sikhs who fought to preserve our freedoms."

Narinderjit Singh, general secretary of campaign group Sikh Federation (UK) said in a statement: "In 2015 virtually all candidates standing in the election from all political parties backed the need for a permanent monument to highlight Sikh sacrifices in the First World War."



"Ideally the exact site needs to be determined before the

100th anniversary of the end of the First World War," he said.



100th anniversary of the end of the First World War," he said.

The early day motion says: "That this House appreciates the extraordinary bravery and sacrifices of Sikh soldiers in service of Great Britain, including during both World Wars, and supports the erection of a permanent national monument in a prime central London location to commemorate and highlight these contributions."

It also notes that for over a decade there has been a demand from various quarters for the installation of such a national monument and welcomes the recent statement by the Mayor of London, who said it is only right that these brave individuals should have a memorial in our capital city.

The motion also says, "Though Sikhs made up only two per cent of the population of British India, they formed 20 per cent of the British Indian Army during the First World War, and that hundreds of thousands of Sikh soldiers saw active service during the two major wars and many other conflicts."

It further notes that more than 83,000 turbaned Sikh soldiers laid down their lives and more than 100,000 were injured during the World Wars; and calls on the government to actively support a memorial dedicated to those who made or were willing to make the ultimate sacrifice for the freedom of our country.



Racist shouts 'Muslim go back' as he tears turban from head of Indian Sikh man waiting to meet MP outside Parliament

Daily Mail - 22 February 2018

A Sikh man waiting near the Houses of Parliament had his turban ripped from his head in a sickening racist attack.



Ravneet Singh was waiting outside Portcullis House to meet Labour MP Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi when he was targeted by a racist screaming: 'Muslim go back.'

The 37-year-old, a prominent Sikh environmentalist from Punjab, India, who is a Sikh and not a Muslim - said his attacker then attempted to pull his turban from his head.

An image of the assault was posted on Twitter by Dr Rajwant Singh, the founder and President of EcoSikh, an organisation which helps to promote better awareness of environmental issues around the world.

Mr Singh told The Independent the man ran up to him before launching the unprovoked attack.

He said: 'He was pulling at my turban strongly. It half moved and I grabbed it. Before he could do anything else I shouted at him and he ran.'

'He made a racist comment in another language that I didn't recognise.'

'He was a white man, but he didn't sound English.'

'He said something like 'Muslim go back'.'

Mr Singh added: 'He held my turban with both hands and kept shaking it. My turban was almost down to my face. Then he also tried to injure my neck.'

'I kept shouting what's this, stop it. He did not budge. Soon security guards were there and he ran away.'

The abhorrent assault prompted outrage among social media users, including Mr Dhesi, who was due to meet Mr Singh and his colleague to discuss plans for the upcoming World Sikh Environment Day.

Mr Dhesi, the Labour MP for Slough, told MailOnline: 'I am disgusted that someone filled with hatred tried to pull off the turban of one of my guests.'

'While consoling Ravneet, I felt embarrassed that he would be left with a personal scar from his visit, while also giving him a negative perception of our country.'

'It has been pointed out previously on several occasions to the Government that their hate crime action plan totally ignores Sikhs. Given such incidents, the Government needs to address this genuine community demand to properly monitor and record hate crime against Sikhs.'

'I had experienced a similar attack when at school, but thought at the time that maybe that was due to the perpetrator 'being a kid' and not realising the importance of a turban for the Sikh identity.'

'Sikhs regard the turban as a crown on their head. I was distressed when I had to deal with such racist behaviour, but coped thanks to family and friends. Unfortunately, many children and adults have to experience this all too often.'

'These types of incidents harm the victim's confidence and self-respect, and not only cause distress to the individual but also show our country in a bad light. We need to work together to remove this evil and discrimination from our society.'

Mr Singh is a prominent Sikh environmentalist from Punjab, India.

Mr Singh is the South Asia project manager for EcoSikh and is in the UK on a three week trip to discuss the group's work.

A Metropolitan Police spokesman said officers were called at 5.20pm last night to reports of a man being assaulted outside Portcullis House.



They said no arrests have been made and their enquiries are ongoing. The Met confirmed it was being treated as a hate crime.

Portcullis House is opposite the Houses of Parliament, and home to the offices for MPs and their staff.

Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) told MailOnline: 'Sikhs are the most visible ethnic minority, especially those who wear turbans and been subject to unacceptable levels of hate since 9/11.

'However, the hate crime action plan published by the government in July 2016 after the Brexit vote

woefully failed the Sikh community by neglecting to acknowledge hate crimes against Sikhs.

'The Sikh community were 'invisible' and not consulted in drawing up the plan that focused primarily on the more vocal Muslim and Jewish communities.

'We have been waiting for nearly two years for answers and a response from government.

'The Home Secretary and Communities Secretary will be aware of this incident outside Parliament, but we fear they will continue to turn a blind eye on attacks on Sikhs.'

10ft bronze statue of Sikh soldier set to stand in Smethwick High Street

BirminghamLive

The total cost of the project is estimated at £170,000

Birmingham Live – 23 July 2018

A 10-foot high bronze statue of a First World War Sikh soldier planned for Smethwick High Street will be created if councillors approve a £145,000 grant.

Members of Sandwell's Cabinet are being recommended to support the monument which honours the soldiers of all faiths from the Indian subcontinent who fought for Britain in two world wars and other conflicts.

The money will be used to create a paved public area for the statue which has been commissioned by the Guru Nanak Gurdwara in Smethwick.

The statue, named the '**The Lions of the Great War**' and costing £30,000, will be sited between High Street and Tollhouse Way. The total cost of the project is estimated at £170,000.

Guru Nanak Gurdwara Smethwick is paying for the cost of designing and casting the statue.

Black Country sculptor Luke Perry is creating the memorial which will be unveiled in time to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War.

He said: "I first became aware of the story of Indian soldiers' contribution to Britain when my wife was researching a book on the First World War.

"Without their help in 1914 we might well have lost the war and I wondered why we had never heard



of this sacrifice and I wanted it to be marked and remembered."

He added that after approaching a number of organisations, Smethwick's Guru Nanak Gurdwara agreed to commission the memorial.

MP Preet Kaur, a former councillor, said: "As a Sandwell councillor, I was honoured to work on



this project and want to congratulate the Gurdwara and the council for all their hard work and community engagement in making this project a success."It will be an integral part of Sandwell's rich history."

Sandwell Council leader Councillor Steve Eling added: "We have been looking to improve this section of Smethwick High Street for some time

and we're really pleased we can link in with the Gurdwara's exciting plans for the Lions of the Great War statue, creating a fantastic public space for everyone for years to come and something we can all be proud of."

Members of Sandwell's cabinet will now discuss the grant at their meeting on July 25.

Minister condemns petrol bomb attack on Edinburgh Gurdwara; suspect held

Arson at Guru Nanak Gurdwara Sahib, established in 1964, was a hate crime, says Sikh Federation.

hindustantimes

Hindustan Times 30 August 2018



Scotland first minister Nicola Sturgeon on Wednesday condemned a petrol bomb attack on the Guru Nanak Gurdwara Sahib in Edinburgh, while the police arrested one man for what it called "suspicious fire" in the gurdwara established in 1964.

The building located in Leith was extensively damaged but there were no injuries. The Guru Granth Sahib was also not damaged, reports from Edinburgh said, as MPs and others urged the Theresa May government to include hate crime against Sikhs in its Hate Crime Action Plan.

Police Scotland did not name the man arrested but said he was 49, adding that investigations were continuing. Sturgeon, who heads the Scottish National Party government in Scotland, called the attack "appalling".

Bhai Narinderjit Singh of the Sikh Federation (UK) said: "This is not the first arson attack on a gurdwara. They often come in the aftermath of a terror attack and in what has popularly become known as 'mistaken identity' as Sikhs have never been involved in terror attacks."

"The Hate Crime Action Plan published in July 2016 was issued jointly by the then Home Secretary, Amber Rudd, and the then

Communities Secretary, Sajid Javid, who completely overlooked the existence of the Sikh community and hate crimes we have faced. It focused largely on Islamophobia and Antisemitism."

He added: "We have had excuse after excuse by the Conservative government for the oversight and been promised an updated plan. We are still waiting two years later. In the meantime Sikhs and our religious institutions continue to be attacked."

Galab Singh, member of the gurdwara committee, told BBC: "I'm quite surprised at this attack, the Gurdwara Sahib enjoys a good relationship with the local community here," while Ravjeet Singh of Sikh Council UK noted that it was the second attack on the gurdwara in 2018.

Brown, moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, said: "How sad that a place of worship should be the target of such a hateful act. I am glad no one was injured and extend sympathy to the Sikh community in Edinburgh.

"We recognise the actions of a small minority do not reflect the good relations that exist with your local community. There is no room in Scotland for intolerance."



RAISING AWARENESS & CAMPAIGNING FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

British government 'covered up' its role in Amritsar massacre in India

TheObserver

A Sikh group is demanding an inquiry into the SAS's involvement in the storming of the Golden Temple in 1984

Observer - 29 October 2017



The government has been accused of covering up the full extent of the UK's support for India's bloody crackdown on Sikhs in 1984.

A new report calls for a full inquiry into the role played by Margaret Thatcher's government in the events leading up to a massacre in which hundreds, possibly thousands, of Sikhs and Indian soldiers died.

In 2014 David Cameron ordered a review after the accidental release of secret documents revealed that a British SAS officer had been drafted in to advise the Indian authorities on removing armed Sikh militants from the Golden Temple at Amritsar, Sikhism's holiest shrine.

The documents said the plan, known as Operation Blue Star, was carried out with the full knowledge of the Thatcher government.

A report, *Sacrificing Sikhs*, published by the Sikh Federation UK, described Cameron's review, conducted by Sir Jeremy Heywood, as a "whitewash".

It claims that attempts to expose the full facts have been thwarted by government secrecy rules and conflicts of interest. More than half of the Foreign Office's files on India from 1984 have been censored in whole or in part.

Some documents suggest the Foreign Office was aware of what was at stake when the Indian authorities approached the UK for help.

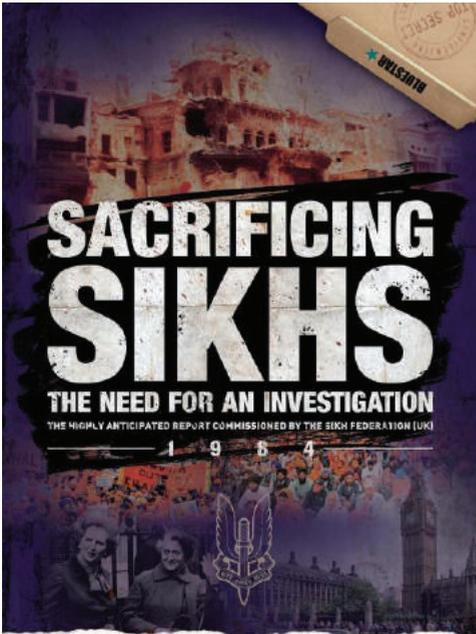
A week before the Golden Temple assault, Bruce Cleghorn, a diplomat, wrote that "it would be dangerous" for the UK government "to be identified" with "any attempt to storm the Golden Temple in Amritsar". He was also named in correspondence discussing possible SAS assistance to India immediately after the massacre.

In 2015, Cleghorn became a Foreign Office "sensitivity reviewer" whose job involved censoring documents about the Amritsar massacre before they were released to the National Archives.

Sir John Ramsden, a member of the Advisory Council on National Records and Archives, which adjudicates on government censorship applications, was a member of the Foreign Office's south Asia department in 1984. Ramsden wrote a letter advocating further SAS assistance for India immediately after Operation Blue Star and also argued in favour of equipping India's paramilitary forces.

The role of the SAS officer in the days before Operation Blue Star are shrouded in secrecy as





are the full extent of the fatalities. The Indian government puts the figure at about 400. Sikh groups say it was in the thousands.

According to the **Sikh Federation's** report, immediately after the SAS officer carried out his reconnaissance with an Indian special forces unit, the Sikhs pulled out of peace talks believing they

had seen a commando unit move into the city. The negotiations never recovered and eventually the Indian army stormed the temple in June 1984. Four months later, India's prime minister Indira Gandhi was assassinated by one of her Sikh bodyguards, prompting reprisals that led to the deaths of more than 3,000 Sikhs.

The report suggests the UK was keen to help India because the country was one of its biggest purchasers of military equipment between 1981 and 1990. It also claims that repressive measures against Sikhs were carried out in the UK to appease the Indian government and secure arms deals.

"The government needs to finally come clean about Thatcher's role in the Amritsar massacre and India's crackdown on Sikhs," said the report's author, Phil Miller. "Whitehall censorship of historical files is like an old boys' club that prevents the public from ever knowing how taxpayers' money was spent. This culture of secrecy around Britain's special forces and intelligence agencies is undemocratic and unsustainable."

Bhai Amrik Singh, chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) said: "This report casts serious doubts on the adequacy and integrity of the inhouse Heywood review commissioned by Cameron. There has been a massive cover-up and parliament and the public have been disturbingly misled. An independent public inquiry to get to the truth is the only way forward."

Talk 'Hindutva agenda' with PM Modi: UK Sikhs

Times of India – 12 April 2018 (extract)

JALANDHAR: British Sikh groups led by the **Sikh Federation** have written to Prime Minister Theresa May, urging her to question PM Narendra Modi on issues of 'extreme Hindutva agenda', 'growth of Hindu radicalisation across the globe' and 'treatment meted out to religious minorities and Dalits in India' during their meeting on April 18 in London in the backdrop of CHOGM to be held from April 16-20.

They have also cited a research at Leeds University to argue that it found no evidence of radicalization of Sikhs in the UK. **The Sikh Federation UK**, which has sent a letter to May on Tuesday, urging her to raise the concerns of the UK Sikh community with Modi, said, along with around 200 Sikh Gurdwaras in the UK, the Federation of Sikh Organisations, The Sikh



Network and other Sikh groups had also supported the letter.

It said that when Modi first came to the UK as the Indian PM in November 2015, the Sikh community



raised a number of serious concerns with the UK government, MPs and media. The letter mentioned that to deflect attention from these concerns and growing 'Hindu radicalization', it was widely reported in the Indian media, following briefings by Indian officials, that a 'dossier' on 'radicalization' of British Sikhs was on the agenda when Cameron and Modi met.

The letter has argued, "This so-called dossier inappropriately maligned certain Gurdwaras, individuals, Sikh TV channels and Sikh organisations in the UK."

The UK Sikh groups have now argued that, "Modi should be prepared to respond to some difficult

questions on these issues. The direction in which Modi is taking India needs to be checked as a matter of urgency," said the letter, copies of which have also been sent to the UK leader of the opposition, foreign secretary, home secretary, their counterparts and other leading politicians.

"Following Modi's last visit we were subsequently assured that some of these concerns were taken up through diplomatic channels as the UK government, unlike the Indian regime, does not see the benefit of 'megaphone diplomacy', especially given the British colonial past and continued Indian sensitivities," the Sikh groups have said in the letter.

PIOs start petition over flag controversy; no arrests made



Times of India – 23 April 2018 (extract)

LONDON: Thousands of people of Indian origin in the UK are furious about their national flag being torn down during protests last week and have started a petition which they will hand to UK Prime Minister Theresa May.



Launched by the Friends of India Society International UK, the petition, addressed to May and to leader of the opposition Jeremy Corbyn, calls for "action against the culprits who brought down the Indian flag and tore it under the watchful eyes of British police".

The metropolitan police confirmed to TOI on Monday that no arrests had been made. With 60 murder investigations launched in the capital this year, one can only speculate how much attention they will give it.

A metropolitan police spokesman said: "The damage to a flag would be either a criminal damage or public order offence, depending on the circumstances."

When probed as to their reaction to the petition criticising the police, the spokesman said: "Any

petition related to this would not be a police matter."

"Most countries across the world prohibit the desecration of or insult to a country's national symbols. This includes intentionally destroying, damaging, or mutilating a national flag in public. It's a shame that neither the law of England and Wales nor the law of Scotland contains punishment for desecrating a national flag," said Hindu Council UK director secretary-general Sanjay Jagatia.

"It was the UK government who put the flag up in Parliament Square and, therefore, it remains for the UK government, mayor of London and the metropolitan police to ensure that the person(s) responsible for this are brought to justice for deliberately provoking and inciting hatred and hurting the sentiments of law-abiding Indians in the UK," he added.

"Disrespecting the Indian flag is disrespecting our nation's ideals, principles and, above all, disrespecting those people who died fighting for our country, both soldiers and freedom fighters."

Hundreds of Indian-origin people vented their fury at the incident in a Facebook group for Indians living in London. One wrote: "Where do these people want Khalistan? And will they move out of UK to live there?" Another wrote: "It felt like the cops were scared and are too weak to take strong action against some ethnic minorities."

Indian TV journalist Loveena Tandon, who says she was abused, intimidated and harassed by some of the protesters, confirmed to TOI that police came to her house on Saturday and took



her statement. It is not clear what charges the police will framed.

by PTI on the matter at a televised event last week.

The Sikh Federation UK, Sikhs for Justice and Dal Khalsa UK boasted about the flag being torn down on social media. Dal Khalsa UK tweeted: "Indians are moaning about the flag yet turn a blind eye to genocide and rapes across India" and praised PM May for not answering a question

Bhai Amrik Singh, chair of the Sikh Federation UK, said: "Does removal of the Indian flag in London matter more than the lives of millions of innocent men, women and children belonging to minorities or lower castes in India who are being killed, attacked and raped on a daily basis?"

TENS OF THOUSANDS OF SIKHS GATHER IN CENTRAL LONDON TO MARK 1984 SIKH GENOCIDE



3 June 2018 - On Sunday 3 June tens of thousands of Sikhs gathered in central London to remember victims of the 1984 Sikh Genocide.

Sikhs from across the UK commemorated the 34th anniversary of the June 1984 Indian army attack on the Sri Harmandir Sahib Complex, often referred to as the Golden Temple Complex.

Sikhs gathered in Hyde Park followed by a protest march through central London that went down the Mall for the first time before holding a massive freedom rally in Trafalgar Square.

The theme of the annual event is Truth, Justice and Freedom.

In the past twelve months relations between the Indian regime and Sikhs in the Diaspora have increasingly become strained. The main cause of this is the extreme right wing Hindu policies of the Indian government and the growing political activism of Sikhs in the Diaspora led by British and Canadian Sikhs.

In the UK the Indian government see a number of campaigns, activities, incidents and events spearheaded by the likes of the Sikh Federation (UK) as a major threat to its image abroad and its territorial integrity.

These include:

- i) public opposition to Narendra Modi's participation in the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in debates in the UK Parliament as well as protests to coincide with his visit by highlighting issues relating to gross human rights violations and denial of religious freedoms
- ii) the high profile #FreeJaggiNow campaign relating to the torture and continued detention without charge of Jagtar Singh Johal, a 31-year old Scot from Dumbarton who went to India to get married



- iii) the widespread restrictions on Indian government officials/politicians from speaking or being given recognition in over 230 UK Gurdwaras
- iv) the legal and political pursuit of the truth of UK involvement in the 1984 Sikh Genocide and anti-Sikh measures by the UK Government at the behest of the Indian authorities and continued calls for a UN-led investigation into the 1984 Sikh Genocide
- v) growing emphasis on the distinct Sikh identity, whether this be a separate Sikh ethnic tick box in the Census 2021, a monument in central London to recognise Sikh sacrifices and the Lions of the Great War or a Code of Practice regarding the 5 Kakaars and Sikh turban



1984 June Remembrance march walks past the iconic Buckingham Palace

The situation between India and Britain has deteriorated by the over reaction of the Indian authorities. It has been reported in the Indian media that India Ministers have called for a ban of organisations such as the Sikh Federation (UK), ludicrous legal threats have been made against the UK Government for failing to take action against anti-Modi protesters who tore down the Indian flag in Parliament Square and ridicule of the Labour Party leadership for supporting Sikhs on many of these issues.

Speakers in Trafalgar Square included Gurpreet Singh Johal the elder brother of Jagtar Singh Johal. Bobby Singh the co-founder of Love Your Postcode who gave unprecedented support for the event with hundreds of massive digital images that have highlighted the most prominent in June 1984 who were martyred.

MET POLICE APOLOGISES TO SIKHS OVER 'FAILINGS'

18 August 2018 - The Metropolitan Police has admitted its failings during 1984 Sikh Genocide remembrance march in London that put lives of Sikh elders and families with children at risk, admitting that it failed to communicate with the organisers and as a result elderly and families with children were put at risk.



MET Police Commissioner & Mayor of London

The Sikh Federation (SF) wrote to the police on 4 June, the day after the 1984 Sikh Genocide Remembrance March and Freedom Rally in central London, to Sadiq Khan, the Mayor of London and Cressida Dick, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, protesting against the police behaviour.

The Sikh Federation demanded an apology to the Sikh community for police negligence and incompetence by putting the lives of thousands of peaceful Sikh protesters at risk in central London because the Metropolitan Police failed to turn up to stop traffic to allow the protest march between Hyde Park and Trafalgar Square. There were

massive traffic jams as a result and chaos was witnessed.

Cressida Dick wrote to Preet Kaur Gill MP, Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for British Sikhs on 13 June categorically stating Commander Jane Connors was "in contact with the Indian High





SC022 Public Order & Resources

3rd Floor
New Scotland Yard
1-3 Richmond Terrace
Westminster
SW1A 2JL

7th August 2018

Dear Bhai Amrik Singh,

Apology to the Sikh community for lack of Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) support for the 1984 Sikh Genocide event on 3rd June 2018

May I start by thanking your colleagues from the Sikh Federation (UK) for attending New Scotland Yard on Friday, 20th July 2018 to meet with me (and my team) to allow me to apologise in person. I am extremely grateful for the time that you took to enable us to go through the problems that you encountered in the planning and on the day of the 1984 Sikh Genocide event.

I understand the frustrations experienced by yourselves in receiving updates from the MPS on the planning of your event. You had engaged with the MPS and partners well before the event, in fact in December 2017 you had been seeking clarity on the planning of this event.

The MPS communication with yourselves was not timely and indeed it appeared to be giving yourselves conflicting information on what support from the MPS you would receive. This particularly related to the traffic management plans that were needed to support the event route. Having discussed the matter at our meeting, it is clear that you tried a number of times to contact the MPS in order to ensure your event passed safely and you did not receive the service from the MPS that you should have.

seriously injured due to the gross negligence of the police."

"We were promised a personal video apology by the Commander who we met nearly a month ago that we could share with the thousands of Sikhs from across the UK that took part in the 35th 1984 Sikh Genocide Remembrance march on 3 June. However, our request has fallen on deaf ears so we are now going public with the Commander's letter of apology."

Commission to discuss the policing of this event." This admission caused outrage in the Sikh community as it provided proof of Indian government interference in policing a peaceful protest march to remember the 1984 Sikh Genocide.

The Mayor of London wrote to the chair of the Sikh Federation apologising for delay and emphasising the need for a prompt and transparent answer to our concerns.

After negotiations over months, Commander Jane Connors has accepted all responsibility and apologised for the systematic failings by the Met Police from start to finish over a six month period.

A spokesperson for the Sikh Federation (UK) said: *"This was a catalogue of errors by the Metropolitan Police Service at every level that should have been avoided. It was a miracle no one was killed or*

UK defends secrecy of Operation Blue Star files



Times of India – 6 March 2018

LONDON: Senior civil servants from the UK's Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) today gave evidence in a closed tribunal session to explain the reasons over some Cabinet Office files related to 1984's Operation Blue Star not being made public over 30 years later.

undertaken the Freedom of Information (FOI) appeal on behalf of UK-based freelance journalist Phil Miller on a pro bono basis.

"Our understanding is that the BJP government of India has no objection to these files being made public. Yet, the British government continues to argue in favour of them remaining classified despite an overwhelming public interest in them," the spokesperson said.

Miller's initial FOI request was turned down by the UK Cabinet Office, a decision upheld by the UK Information Commissioner in 2015.

The appeal this week is aimed at declassifying the secret files, which Miller believes could lead to further evidence of British involvement in advising the Indian government and its forces in the military operation at the Golden Temple in Amritsar, in order to secure trade and arms deals worth billions of pounds.



A three-day hearing of the First Tier Tribunal (Information Rights) opened here, with a bulk of the session being held in secret as FCO officials explained their stand that the declassification of the files posed a threat to national security and international relations with India.

"It is quite unusual that we are not allowed to be part of our own appeal," said a spokesperson for KRW Law, the human rights law firm that has

"Disclosing documents from three decades ago will not harm diplomatic relations," said Miller, the author of the report titled **'Sacrificing Sikhs: The Need for an Investigation'** released last year.



In 2014, some UK government documents declassified under the 30-year rule to make such material public had revealed that British military advice was given to Indian forces prior to Operation Blue Star to flush out militants holed up in the Sikh holy shrine.

The then British prime minister David Cameron had ordered a review into this discovery, which led to a statement in Parliament declaring that Britain's role had been purely "advisory" and the Special Air Service (SAS) advice had "limited impact".

British government ordered to open Amritsar massacre files

Campaigners say papers could reveal details of UK role in 1984 assault at Golden Temple

Guardian – 16 June 2018



A tribunal has ordered that secret Downing Street files relating to Anglo-Indian relations at the time of the 1984 massacre at the Golden Temple of Amritsar must be made public.

Campaigners say the Margaret Thatcher-era documents could reveal further information about the UK's military role in the deaths of hundreds and possibly thousands at Sikhism's holiest site following a violent assault by the Indian army in June 1984.

The information tribunal said this week there was "a high public interest" in disclosure – partly in response to the "strength of feeling of the Sikh community in the UK and beyond" – and set aside objections from the Foreign Office, which said declassification could adversely affect the UK's relations with India.

The decision, which followed an appeal brought by journalist Phil Miller, is the latest step in a lengthy disclosure battle that began in 2014 after it emerged that an SAS officer had been dispatched in February 1984 with the approval of

The Opposition Labour party has backed some **British Sikh groups, including Sikh Federation (UK)**, in their call for an independent public inquiry into the exact nature of Britain's links with then prime minister Indira Gandhi's government in the lead up to the Indian paramilitary operation on the shrine in June, 1984.

Last year, Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn wrote to Prime Minister Theresa May, calling for an independent inquiry and his party has since included the issue as an election pledge in its manifesto for the June 2017 general election.

the **guardian**

Thatcher to advise on Indian army plans to remove dissident Sikhs occupying the temple.

David Cameron, then prime minister, immediately ordered an inquiry by the cabinet secretary, Sir Jeremy Heywood, who examined government files and concluded that UK involvement was limited to the visit by the SAS officer. However, the official files were not made public as part of the Heywood review and there have since been legal attempts to force their disclosure.

Bhai Amrik Singh, the chair of the Sikh Federation in the UK, said the judgment "confirms the Heywood review was limited and will add to the evidence we have already presented to prove it was a whitewash". Singh called on Theresa May to consider holding a public inquiry. He said the prime minister "should not listen to those paranoid about our relations with India".

The Downing Street files that the government has been ordered to declassify include one that covers UK-Indian relations between March 1984 and May 1985, and another that relates to the assassination of Indira Gandhi in October 1984 by some of her Sikh bodyguards, and Thatcher's visit to India to attend her funeral.

Labour is supporting the legal challenge and called on the government to release the files promptly. The Cabinet Office has a month to decide whether it will appeal against the ruling, and said that it was currently considering its position.

Labour's deputy leader, Tom Watson, said: "It has been a source of deep hurt to the British Sikh



community for the past four years that Britain could have played a role in the terrible massacre of 1984. If the government appeals against this decision it will be a cowardly attempt to hide the truth."

The unanimous judgment by the tribunal led by Judge Shanks records that two Foreign Office officials gave evidence in the hearing, often in secret session. Owen Jenkins, a former director of the FCO's south Asia and Afghanistan desk, unsuccessfully warned that "the release of some of the withheld documents would have damaged relations with India by showing that the UK

government did not regard the activities of the Sikh extremists with sufficient concern and was 'soft' on them".

But in the judgment, the tribunal disagreed and the documents "tend to show how seriously the issues were taken at senior levels in the UK government".

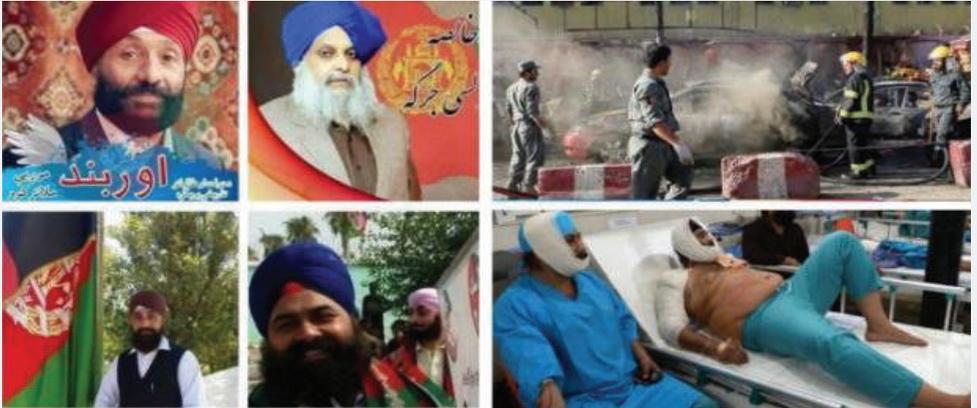
The tribunal also ruled that one other set of files, relating to intelligence assessments prepared for the joint intelligence committee had to remain secret because they were covered by the blanket freedom of information exemptions that apply to the UK's spy agencies.

UK GOVERNMENT TURNING A BLIND EYE TO PLIGHT OF AFGHAN SIKHS

16 July 2018 - Two weeks ago a deadly terror blast blamed on an ISIS suicide bomber targeted leaders of the tiny Sikh minority in Afghanistan.

The timing of the cowardly attack on leaders of the Sikh minority came as Awtar Singh Khalsa, MP elect who was running unopposed, was killed leading a delegation with to meet President Ashraf Ghani.

The Sikh community across the globe was devastated having heard the tragic news from Jalalabad. Tens of thousands of Afghan Sikhs that have sought sanctuary in the UK were deeply concerned as some of those killed and injured were family members.



A number of the family of those killed who live in the UK immediately contacted the Sikh Federation (UK) and we wrote to the Home Secretary and Foreign Secretary asking for an urgent meeting with family members to discuss their concerns.

To date there has been no response from Sajid Javid the Home Secretary whereas the lack of response from the new Foreign Secretary is understandable given Boris Johnson's resignation a week ago.

However, within days of the attack the matter was raised at Prime Minister Questions by Seema Malhotra the Labour MP for Feltham and Heston who asked if the Prime Minister would meet the Afghan diaspora to discuss their concerns.



On the same day Preet Kaur Gill MP, the Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for British Sikhs wrote to both the Foreign and Home Secretary raising concerns about the safety of the minority Sikh community in Afghanistan and deportation of Afghan Sikhs from the UK.

Other MPs like Tanmanjeet Singh Dhese, the Labour MP from Slough also posed the Foreign Secretary and Home Secretary Parliamentary Questions on the same issue.

Later this afternoon Sikh representatives will be holding a Sikh roundtable meeting, held every three or four months, with representatives from various government departments, including the Home Office. The meeting is arranged and hosted by Lord Bourne, the Minister responsible for faith communities at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

Despite the high profile of the terrorist attack on the Afghan Sikh minority and considerable Parliamentary interest MHCLG officials have been very reluctant leading up to the meeting to include the plight of Afghan Sikhs on the agenda or allow a prominent representative of the Afghan Sikh community living in the UK to attend the meeting.

Various organisations like the Sikh Federation (UK), Sikh Council UK and Lord Singh, the Director of the Network of Sikh Organisations asked for this issue to be put on the agenda and have expressed concerns that officials should not be dictating who attends from the Sikh community and what is or is not on the agenda.

Sikh representatives have agreed they will raise this matter with Lord Bourne at the meeting today at 2pm and Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) who is close to Caroline Nokes, the Minister for State for Immigration, will reach out to her directly to meet representatives of the Afghan Sikh community.

Bhai Amrik Singh added:-“The Afghan Sikh community has been decimated by decades of conflict, face widespread discrimination and daily threats from the Taliban and ISIS in Afghanistan.”

“The number of Sikhs left have dwindled from 80,000 to less than 1,000. These killings sadly demonstrate there is no secure future for Sikhs in Afghanistan that have been failed by all concerned.”

“The least we expect Sajid Javid to do as the Home Secretary is accept the security threats to the tiny Sikh minority and that Afghan Sikhs living in the UK should not face deportation.”

INDIA NEEDS TO ACCEPT THE LONG STANDING DEMAND FOR A SIKH HOMELAND IS GAINING POLITICAL SUPPORT

5 August 2018 - The Sikh Federation (UK) has written to the Sunday Times responding to an article published earlier today with the sensational headline “Assassination suspect plans Sikh separatist rally in Britain”.

The full letter reads:



We were most disturbed by your sensational headline “Assassination suspect plans Sikh separatist rally in Britain”.

Anyone living in the UK has the right to peacefully protest provided you have obtained the necessary permissions from relevant authorities.

We assume the organisers, USA based Sikhs For Justice, obtained the necessary permissions/licences from the Greater London Authority for the event in Trafalgar Square next week before publicising the event.

The so-called ‘Referendum 2020’ campaign launched more than four years ago in the USA is nothing more than an unofficial opinion poll and another small step to raise awareness on the treatment of Sikhs by the Indian authorities and the continued demand for a Sikh homeland.



As usual the Indian authorities are over reacting to the Sikh Diaspora and resorting to misinformation. Since 1966 the Indian state in accepting the right to self determination at the UN imposed an unacceptable 'reservation' that it could not apply to the people of India. No doubt fearing a break up of the country with a number of legitimate secessionist movements.

The right of self-determination is a basic human right and absolutely fundamental to the protection of individual rights. The vast majority if not all UK politicians support this right based on international law.

The Sikhs right to self determination is helpfully summarised in the Sikh Manifesto. We have engaged with UK MPs from all political parties, Ministers and shadow ministers, foreign governments and those at the UN. They have all responded positively to the arguments presented.

UK Government ministers of different political persuasion in meetings with us have also acknowledged the historical context as Sikhs were the third party with whom the British negotiated the transfer of power in 1947.

There is also a recognition that Clement Attlee's Labour government at that time offered Sikhs a separate homeland. The Indian authorities are therefore extremely sensitive and suspicious, as we are well aware, of anything happening in Britain that vaguely promotes the demand for a Sikh homeland.

However, calls for the reestablishment of a sovereign Sikh state, given the 1849 British annexation of the largest sovereign Sikh state that existed for 50 years and was recognised by all the world powers are not new. In the period leading up to the creation of India and Pakistan in 1947 several resolutions were passed by Sikhs for an independent Sikh State.

On 20 August 1944, the All Parties Sikh Conference passed a resolution for an independent Sikh state. On 10 March 1946 the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC), an elected representative body of Sikhs passed a resolution for the formation of an independent Sikh state. On 22 March 1946, the Shiromani Akali Dal the representative political party of the Sikhs at that time, passed a resolution for an independent Sikh state.



ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਕੈਪਟਨ ਅਮਰਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ਸਾ; ਸੁਰਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਰਨਾਲਾ, ਸਿਮਰਨਸੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਮਾਨ, ਕਰਨਲ ਜਸਮੇਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਾਲਾ ਸ਼ੇਖਰ ਦਲ, ਹਾਈ ਮਹਸੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ, ਜਗਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ ਤਲਵੰਡੀ, ਗੁਰਚਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਟੇਰਤਾ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ ਤਖਤ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਉੱਤੇ ਐਮਿਟਸ਼ਨ ਮੇਲਾਨਾਮੇ (ਯਲਿਸਤਾਨ) ਦੇ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ 'ਤੇ ਸਹੀ ਚੁਕਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਅਤੇ ਬੈਠੇ ਹੋਏ ਸਹੀ ਚੁਕਾਉਂਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਪ੍ਰੋ: ਮਹਸੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ ਤਖਤ ਸਾਹਿਬ।

Politicians and a number of governments across the globe understand the mistreatment and discrimination of the Sikhs since partition in 1947. They are also aware of the peaceful agitation by Sikhs for greater autonomy in the 1970s and 1980s and the Indian regime's brutal response ultimately resulting in the 1984 Sikh Genocide. This was followed by a decade of false encounters, torture and extrajudicial killings by Indian police and paramilitary forces for which the Sikhs have had no justice.

In our view the reestablishment of a Sikh homeland is inevitable with the Sikh

Diaspora leading the way and gaining the direct support of world powers like the USA and China with a vested interest and countries like the UK, Germany, Canada and Australia to name a few, also playing their part.

Both India and Pakistan know they will in due course be forced to break apart and a strong and resourceful Sikh homeland extending well beyond 'Indian occupied Punjab' respecting the rights of all living there will emerge.



UK MPS WHO HOSTED RAHUL GANDHI IN PARLIAMENT URGED TO CONDEMN HIM FOR FLATLY DENYING CONGRESS INVOLVEMENT IN 1984 SIKH GENOCIDE

27 August 2018 - The Sikh Federation (UK) is asking constituents to question any MPs present at an event in the Grand Committee Room in Westminster last Friday and to urge the MPs concerned to condemn Rahul Gandhi for his outrageous and offensive denial of Congress involvement in the 1984 Sikh Genocide.



Photographs clearly show the presence of three Labour MPs Keith Vaz, sitting next to Rahul Gandhi and Virendra Sharma and Seema Malhotra sitting to one side. All three MPs have been contacted and been given an opportunity to publicly condemn Rahul Gandhi for what he said. Previously they have all been supportive on the need for justice for the 1984 Sikh Genocide alongside the Labour leadership therefore they should not now be silent.



Sanjay Suri of CNN News 18 and an eye witness against Kamal Nath from November 1984 when he was working for the Indian Express asked Congress chief Rahul Gandhi about the criminal involvement of the Congress Party in the killing of Sikhs in 1984. There is ample evidence that some Congress leaders led or encouraged mobs to target Sikhs.



In a surprise and deeply offensive response Rahul Gandhi with a poker face controversially said he did not agree that the Congress Party was involved. This denial will haunt him and has already been jumped upon by political opponents,

victims of the genocide and the media.

Rahul, son of Rajiv Gandhi, grandson of Indira Gandhi, great-grandson of Jawaharlal Nehru, heads the Congress. He frequently invokes his party's historical role in winning freedom for India to take credit for past achievements. He must therefore accept responsibility for the Congress party's role in the 1984 Sikh Genocide despite having no personal involvement.

Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) said: *"Like father, like son. Many hold Rahul's father, Rajiv Gandhi as the main culprit as the person who had ultimate responsibility for encouraging rather than preventing the 1984 Sikh Genocide."*

"His insensitive remarks when Indira Gandhi was shot dead by two of her Sikh bodyguards and his rationalisation of the violence with the distasteful aphorism, "When a big tree falls, the earth shakes" will never be forgotten."

"For electoral gain Rajiv Gandhi and the Congress Party disgracefully organised the genocide of Sikhs by fostering the idea that the bullets which killed Indira Gandhi were fired by the entire Sikh community."

"We understand Keith Vaz was the host and Virendra Sharma and Seema Malhotra were in the audience. Their silence at the time and in the last 72 hours is unacceptable with the commitments they have given on the need for justice for the 1984 Sikh Genocide to the tens of thousands of Sikh constituents they each have in Leicester, Southall and Hounslow."

"Public condemnation of the Congress chief is the least their Sikh constituents expect and deserve as the Congress Party is criminally culpable."

"Rahul Gandhi's insensitive denial of Congress Party involvement in the 1984 Sikh Genocide in the two-day visit to London knowing what has factually already been established reinforces why those of us demanding a Sikh homeland are gaining widespread support."



CAMPAIGNING FOR JAGTAR SINGH JOHAL #FREEJAGGINOW

CONCERNS RAISED ABOUT FALSE IMPRISONMENT AND MISTREATMENT OF SCOTTISH SIKH MAN BY INDIAN POLICE

The Sikh Federation (UK) is demanding action from both the British and Scottish governments in ensuring his immediate release to prevent further torture and hardship

9 November 2017 - A young Sikh man born and raised in Glasgow was picked up by plain clothes policemen five days ago on the 4 November in Jalandhar, Punjab, India.



30-year old Jagtar Singh Johal from Dumbarton travelled to Punjab with his family on 2 October for his wedding and had been there for nearly five weeks when he was swooped upon. He had previously travelled to Punjab earlier this year in April for his engagement and stayed there for seven weeks without any difficulties.

Whilst shopping in Jalandhar with his newly wed wife and a female cousin he was accosted, a sack thrown over his head, and he was forced into a van by men dressed in plain clothes. The family later found out the men were police officers. The family were also lied to about his whereabouts and his welfare. On 4 and 5 November they were unable to locate him.

On 5 November he was presented in court and was placed in police remand for five days. However, his whereabouts and condition remain unknown and undisclosed.

His family from the UK have been in constant contact with the British High Commission in India and several UK MPs, including his local MP Martin Docherty-Hughes since the day of his abduction.

Martin Docherty-Hughes has expressed his concern at the present situation regarding his constituent and offered his full support to the family in the hope to achieve a positive outcome. He has also contacted the High Commission of India in London and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and will be speaking to his elder brother when his flight arrives from Delhi later today.

His brothers Gurjit and Gurpreet, aged 29 and 32 from Glasgow concerned for the well being of their brother and other family members flew out to India on the next available flight the day after he was picked up to try and obtain more information and encourage the British authorities to take the matter more seriously. However, they have been forced to return back to the UK following threats and false accusations in what has proved a perilous trip.

The Indian authorities have declined to provide any information to the British High Commission or UK MPs regarding his whereabouts or condition raising the strong possibility he is being mistreated.

His family in India are being harassed by the police with his maternal aunt, her daughter and his wife being arrested when they refused to hand over his British passport. All three have now had to go into hiding to avoid further harassment and abuse.

His family in the UK have complained to the British High Commission about police harassment and intimidation. They have also raised serious concerns about the mistreatment of Jagtar at the hands of the notorious Punjab police and are concerned the British authorities are not doing enough for a law-abiding British citizen.



A further court appearance is arranged for Friday 10 November, which may provide the first opportunity for the British officials in India to visit and talk to Jagtar and provide legal assistance.

Lawyers familiar with police tactics have pointed out it is highly suspicious his arrest came four days after a 'Jimmy' Singh from Jammu handed himself to Indian police when he returned to India having spent several years living in the UK. It is highly probable he has returned to India on the understanding he will become an informant or been interrogated and provided names of others.

Police have suggested in Indian media reports that Jagtar's only crime is he has been 'running a magazine' in the UK of atrocities during the 1984 Sikh Genocide and influencing the youth through social media. Sources in the UK suggest the Indian authorities are fabricating evidence or exaggerating his role. If the Indian authorities believed what he was doing in the UK amounted to breaking the law they should have raised this matter with the UK authorities so they could have taken appropriate action.

This young man should be enjoying married life, but finds himself the subject of some sort of conspiracy hatched by the Punjab police and leading politicians. Two days ago the Chief Minister of Punjab was prompted by the Punjab police chief DGP Suresh Arora in a press conference to specifically mention the young man by name and pass a public judgement.



Gurbet Singh Johal, the elder brother said: *"Jagtar has not been charged, let alone had a trial, but the Chief Minister has made incendiary and prejudicial remarks to the media. Unless the British authorities quickly step in this will guarantee a law-abiding British citizen will be illegally detained for some time and will not receive a fair trial. He should be immediately released and returned to the UK."*

"It is also my understanding that my brother was not even named on the police First Information Request (FIR) equivalent of a warrant or charge sheet. This raises further questions that his detention is opportunist and the absence of any evidence against my brother"

The Chief Minister is getting a reputation for making outlandish and fabricated claims. He first targeted the highly respected Canadian Defence Minister Harjit Singh Sajjan during his official visit to India. More recently he targeted Jagmeet Singh, the newly elected leader of the NDP in Canada. In comparison making false claims about an unknown 30 year old Sikh from Scotland who is not even known in active Sikh circles in Britain is easy.

Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) said: *"We are deeply concerned for the mental and physical well-being of this young man who got married on 18 October and was spending time with his wife before returning to the UK."*

"Punjab police are notorious for their brutality and use of torture during interrogation to extract information or obtain false confessions."

"Given some of the media reports we are disturbed by the lack of urgency and action taken by the British High Commission in both Delhi, the mission in Chandigarh and the Foreign Office in London. They have failed to make contact with senior police officers to ensure the safety and wellbeing of this young British man."

"The British authorities really need to pull their finger out and nip this in the bud as the Indian police and politicians are known to be corrupt to the core. They have no regard for a fair judicial process and obtaining evidence legally to establish if they have a case that will stand up in court. They use the media to spread false information as they need to be seen to be tough, so suspects can be held indefinitely even if the person is eventually proved to be found innocent."



Scottish tourist has sack thrown over his head as he's snatched off street by cops in India

Daily Record – 10 November 2017 (extract)

A Scottish tourist holidaying in India has appeared in court in India after being snatched off the street due to political views he outlined in a UK-based magazine.

The Sikh Federation UK said Jagtar Singh Johal from Dumbarton, West Dunbartonshire, had a sack thrown over his head and was forced into a van by plain-clothes officers on November 4.

The 30-year-old was reportedly out shopping with his wife and cousin when the incident happened in Jalandhar in the state of Punjab.

Mr Johal's 'crimes' reportedly include "running a magazine" in the UK that featured atrocities committed during the 1984 Sikh Genocide and "influencing the youth through social media".

Mr Johal appeared in court for a second time on Friday, with no legal representation, having been

"sneaked in" without his lawyers being made aware, the Federation said.

Mr Johal, who recently married, is said to have been in the country since October 2 for his wedding.

Elder brother Gurpreet Singh Johal said: "Unless the British authorities quickly step in this will guarantee a law-abiding British citizen will be illegally detained for some time and will not receive a fair trial. He should be immediately released and returned to the UK."

The Sikh Federation UK has been acting as Mr Johal's representative since his arrest and is providing support to his relatives.

Martin Docherty-Hughes, SNP MP for West Dunbartonshire, has also been supporting the family.

Hundreds of protesters march down Whitehall after a British-born Sikh man was 'abducted and tortured by Indian police' to demand the UK government takes action - as 175 MPs express concern over the case

Daily Mail - 16 November 2017 (extract)



Hundreds of Sikh protesters marched outside the Foreign Office in Whitehall in support of a British Sikh who they claim has been abducted and 'tortured' by police in India.

The crowd demanded the release of Jagtar Singh, 30, who was detained by police in Punjab over allegedly financing weapons used in the murder of several officials in the Indian state.

They say the Government has ignored the plight of Scotsman Mr Singh, known to friends and family as Jaggi, who they claim has been subjected to 'body separation techniques' and electric shocks.

Supporters also fear Mr Singh may die in police custody unless the government acts soon.

A huge crowd brought the road outside the Foreign Office to a standstill, holding placards emblazoned with Mr Singh's face and the slogan 'Free Jaggi Now'.

His brother Gurpreet Singh Johal, 32, who travelled to London from Scotland, told protesters the government has failed to act on the case and accused it of stripping Sikhs of their rights.

Using a megaphone to address the crowd, he added: 'He has lived 30 years of his life in this country, if this is happening to him what rights do we have as British citizens?'

Mr Johal said the British government 'have been useless, incompetent' since his brother was detained on November 4.

He said police had tried to seize his brother's passport but Mr Johal was able to hand it in to British officials in India.



Protesters blocked the road outside the Foreign Office chanting 'Free Jaggi Now' 'What do we want? Justice' and 'FCO, do your job'.

Sikh Federation advisor Jas Singh added: 'For us it's shocking that such an act can happen, such a dereliction of international law in that somebody, a British citizen, can be abducted.

'His family, his wife and relatives, in India have been harassed and intimidated and now we know he was tortured.

'It's third degree torture of a British citizen - we're not living in the dark ages.

'The British government were informed on November 4 and until today they still have not met with him.

'He's been stripped of his rights, dignity and humanity. Not only have they broken him, they have broken the whole family and the community.'

The Federation has urged foreign secretary Boris Johnson to meet with Mr Singh's family and pledge more action to free the Scot.

More than 175 British MPs have expressed concern over the case.

The Foreign Office has confirmed it is making efforts to monitor Mr Singh's welfare but the protest today demanded confirmation a British High Commission representative will be present at his next court appearance on November 17.



Protesters also demanded an independent medical examination of Mr Singh to verify the claims of third degree police torture.

They said they want a High Commission officer assigned to the case who will liaise with the Scot's family and that Boris Johnson should reach out to his Indian counterpart demanding Mr Singh's immediate release.

Scottish Sikh 'faces further torture' after being taken back into police custody in India, campaigners say



INDEPENDENT

Jagtar Singh Johal tells lawyers he has been tortured with electricity

The Independent – 19 November 2017

A British Sikh man arrested in India and allegedly tortured by police has been returned to police custody, campaigners have claimed.

Jagtar Singh Johal was moved to judicial custody after appearing in court in Punjab on Friday, sparking hopes the "physical torture" will come to an end, the **Sikh Federation UK** said .

However, the Federation said he was later returned to police custody for the next two days without charge after he was taken to an area magistrate by police from another district.

His legal team are said to be concerned this period will be used to try and "falsely link him" to unsolved cases in the area.

Mr Johal, from Dumbarton in West Dunbartonshire, was detained in Jalandhar in the state of Punjab on 4 November.



The Federation says no official charges have been brought against him, but local media reported Mr Johal's arrest was linked to the killing of Hindu leaders in Punjab.

Mr Johal, 30, who got married in India last month, has told lawyers he has been tortured with "body separation techniques and electrocution to body parts".



'Extreme action' vowed if Scot held in India has been tortured



BBC News - 21 November 2017 (extract)

Extreme action will be taken if claims that a Scottish Sikh arrested in India has been tortured by police are true, a Foreign Office minister has said.

Rory Stewart was questioned in the Commons about the case of Jagtar Singh Johal from Dumbarton in West Dunbartonshire.



His lawyer said he was now accused of involvement in the death of a priest in Ludhiana in July 2015.

During Foreign Office questions in the Commons, Mr Johal's local MP, the SNP's Martin Docherty-Hughes, raised the case, and asked what discussions Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson had

had with the Indian government about their human rights record in Punjab.

Answering his question, Minister of State at the Department for International Development Mr Stewart said Mr Johal's case was being taken very seriously.

He told MPs: "The Deputy High Commission managed to gain access - we have now had a meeting with the constituent.

"We take any allegation of torture very seriously, as indeed would the Indian government. It is completely unconstitutional - it is offensive to the British government - and we will work very closely to investigate and of course will take extreme action if a British citizen is being tortured."

On Monday, the Prime Minister said the government was "concerned" about Mr Johal's case.

Speaking to the BBC Asian Network, **Theresa May said: "Representatives from the Foreign Office have met with Jagtar Singh Johal and obviously are pursuing the case and watching what is happening with concern and will take action (deemed) necessary."**

Mr Johal is due back in court on Thursday.

Scottish Sikh man 'tortured' by Indian police remains in custody as Jeremy Corbyn briefed on case



The Independent - 25 November 2017 (extract)

A British man allegedly tortured in jail by Indian police remains in custody in India.

Jagtar Singh Johal, from Dumbarton, West Dunbartonshire, has reportedly appeared at a duty magistrate's court in Ludhiana.

Supporters say the 30-year-old has been remanded in custody for an additional four days.

The Sikh Federation briefed Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn about Mr Johal's case earlier this week as he made his way to a rally in Birmingham. Separately Mr Johal's brother and Sikh Federation advisors met with the Shadow Foreign Secretary Rt Hon Emily Thornberry MP in parliament to raise the case with Boris Johnson.



A spokesman for the Sikh Federation said: "He expressed his disquiet with the method of abduction, the lack of access to lawyers, British



consular staff and family for the first 10 days, Jagtar's allegations of third degree torture, the fact he remains in police custody rather than judicial custody and the refusal to grant an independent medical examination."

Mr Corbyn promised to discuss the matter with Preet Kaur Gill, the chairman of the All Party Parliamentary Group for British Sikhs and Labour MP for Birmingham Edgbaston and to try and meet Mr Johal's family and campaigners early next week.

Three members of the British High Commission, including Deputy High Commissioner Andrew Ayre attended Mr Johal's court hearing on Friday.

His lawyer said he "pleaded his innocence" and stated he was unrelated to any of the crimes he is being linked with.

He also said: "The court gave the British High Commission team a copy of the directions issued



Andrew Ayre Deputy British High Commissioner mets Jaggi

to the police to arrange for a meeting between the High Commission delegation and Jagtar Singh in a separate room for privacy.

"The copy of the order was also given to Assistant Commissioner of Police Maninder Singh Bedi."

Mr Johal was taken into custody by Ludhiana police after the hearing.

Jagtar Singh Johal: Scottish man 'tortured in India' over murder probe is detained for two more days **EveningStandard.**

Evening Standard - 2 December 2017



On Saturday, the BBC reported he had his jail sentence extended for a further two days and would reappear at court in Ludhiana on Monday.

A new phase of the "Free Jaggi Now" campaign has been launched, urging people to contact their MP about Mr Johal.

In a letter to the public, organisers, **the Sikh Federation UK** said: "I am deeply concerned and worried that despite the profile of this case the British authorities have been repeatedly prevented by the Indian authorities from obtaining private access to a British citizen alleged to have been tortured.

"The British authorities must take direct action to safeguard Jagtar by demanding an independent and full medical assessment that can detect the torture he has been subject to."

A British man who was allegedly tortured in jail by police in India has been detained for a further two days, it has been reported.

Jagtar Singh Johal, from West Dunbartonshire in Scotland, has been in custody in Punjab for nearly a month after being accused of conspiracy to murder Hindu leaders.

The extension of Mr Johal's sentence comes as John Swinney, Scotland's Deputy First Minister, said he would raise the issue with authorities while he is on a four day visit to India which began on Saturday.



BRITAIN APPEARS POWERLESS TO STOP ABUSE OF 30 YEAR OLD SCOT BY INDIAN AUTHORITIES

8 December 2017 - Despite discussions with his counterpart Boris Johnson's efforts have to date proved ineffective in gaining unfettered access to a British citizen since his abduction some five weeks ago on 4 November 2017.

Jagtar has therefore been deliberately prevented by his abusers from spelling out first hand to British consular staff the torture, abuse and mistreatment he has experienced at the hands of the Indian police and been repeatedly denied an independent medical assessment.

Instead many have today watched a leading Indian TV channel in disbelief that shockingly showed extracts from Indian police interviews of Jagtar that you would assume would be classified and confidential.



Jagtar Singh Johal (Jaggi) hooded and handcuffed by Punjab Police

The interviews have been leaked to the Indian media in an attempt to demonise and put at risk other British Sikhs and their families who have been named by Jagtar.

As Jagtar was giving police interviews as opposed to interviews that would be leaked by the police to the TV channels he specifies what he did in the way of research and translations for the Never Forget 84 website and those he met and communicated with as part of his research.

Bhai Narinderjit Singh, the General Secretary of the Sikh Federation (UK) said: *"Surely the police should be investigating and presenting hard evidence in court rather*

than adding to this shambolic circus of a trial by media that was started by the Chief Minister of Punjab and the Director General of Police."

"These tactics of the police smack of desperation in an attempt to try and discredit Jagtar and cause confusion by implying he is spilling the beans on others."

The news segment by India Today shocked many as it falsely showed alongside Jagtar's interviews images of somebody the Indian government claim to be a Pakistani ISI officer posing for photos with several Sikhs described as "Khalistani terrorists".

However, the Indian media has been exposed for fabrication. The person described by the Indian government as an ISI officer is Ihsan H. Nadiem, a Pakistani archaeologist, museologist, author and poet. This is a major embarrassment for the Indian authorities.

Several of the British Sikhs pictured and falsely described as "Khalistani terrorists" alongside those demonised via the inappropriate release of extracts of Jagtar's confidential police interviews are expected next week to raise official complaints about the Indian authorities to the Foreign Office via their MPs.

UK GOVERNMENT TRYING TO GET OUT OF ASSURANCE GIVEN IN PARLIAMENT OF 'EXTREME ACTION' AGAINST INDIA FOR TORTURING 30 YEAR OLD SCOT

12 December 2017 - Despite 14 court appearances Jagtar has still not been charged and remains in the custody of Punjab police accused of his torture.



In a well known, but absurd tactic, the Punjab police introduce new cases that need investigating each time the court rules Jagtar should be moved from police to judicial custody.

These constant court appearances and moving from one case to the next suggest Jagtar is still under the jurisdiction of the Punjab police and not being investigated by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) as previously reported.

The NIA is regarded as more professional in establishing what evidence is available and bringing charges or releasing those under investigation.

Senior police officers have ignored a court order and apparent requests by senior Indian politicians in Delhi and Punjab to allow Jagtar private access to British consular staff.

Disturbingly Foreign Office officials have also been insisting they need direct 'consent' from Jagtar before they can act on his torture allegations and demand an independent medical assessment.

They have refused to accept the written affidavit of his lawyer of torture allegations made by Jagtar and turned down repeated requests by his family to take action.



In an apparent and astonishing attempt at a U-turn Preet Kaur Gill MP, the Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for British Sikhs has received a letter from Mark Field, the Minister of State for Asia and the Pacific, stating Jagtar has confirmed he is 'fine'.

However, in the letter the Minister has failed to mention the senior and experienced consular official who first met Jagtar 12 days after his abduction concluded after the first supervised meeting with Jagtar that he was 'vulnerable'.

Preet Kaur Gill MP said: *"Jagtar's case demonstrates the rights of British nationals to have unfettered access to the full support of consular staff at a time when they are most vulnerable not be compromised or watered down."*

"We can not afford a repeat of the delay and errors in securing justice as we had in getting the release of the Chennai Six."

Bhai Narinderjit Singh, the General Secretary of the Sikh Federation (UK) said: *"Many MPs will be incensed with the line*

now being taken by the Foreign Office Minister given the promise of 'extreme action' in the Commons three weeks ago."

"We have talked to experienced British lawyers who deal with such cases that have told us the 'consent' argument being used by Foreign Office officials is nothing more than an excuse."

"The line being taken probably suits both governments as it avoids the need for extreme action by Britain against India, but it also sends a signal across the globe that the British government is powerless in ensuring basic rights for its citizens if they are abducted and tortured while abroad."

FOREIGN OFFICE UNDER PRESSURE NOT TO REPEAT THE SAME MISTAKES AS IN THE CHENNAI SIX CASE

13 December 2017 - Two written Parliamentary Questions have been answered this week by Mark Field, the Minister of State for Asia and the Pacific.

Bim Afolami, the Conservative MP for Hitchin and Harpenden asked about the representations made by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) with the Government of India and on the treatment of Jagtar Singh Johal.





Gurpreet Singh Johal with Billy Irvine, Chennai six

Mark Field admitted consular staff in India were made aware of allegations of mistreatment through Jagtar's legal representation.

The Minister in his response continued by stating the priority was to inquire about these specific allegations with Jagtar in private, but admitted consular staff had not secured a private meeting despite the efforts of the Foreign Secretary.

Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi, the Labour MP for Slough had raised a Parliamentary Question about the reasons for denial of private and unfettered access to British consular

services to Jagtar. The Minister failed to give any reasons, but admitted they were continuing to discuss the matter of a private meeting with the Indian authorities.

Bhai Narinderjit Singh, the General Secretary of the Sikh Federation (UK) said: *"This dumbing down of the Minister's written response by FCO officials exactly three weeks after MPs were told in the Commons by Foreign Minister Rory Stewart of "extreme action" against India strongly suggests the Foreign Office are more concerned about trade relations with India than the illegal detention and torture of an innocent British citizen."*

CALL FOR FOREIGN MINISTER TO RESIGN, WITHDRAW IRRESPONSIBLE COMMENT AND APOLOGISE TO FAMILY

15 December 2017 - We understand British consular staff met Jagtar yesterday who continues to be tortured and mistreated by Indian police.

Jagtar confirmed through his lawyer that he is being held in solitary confinement and handcuffed 24 hours a day.

Two English-speaking senior Indian police officers were again present to listen to Jagtar's every word so the meeting was not private. However, we understand Jagtar put himself at risk and indicated he wanted consular staff to act upon his assertion of third degree torture and mistreatment made a month ago to his lawyer.



Bhai Narinderjit Singh, the General Secretary of the Sikh Federation (UK) said: *"Mark Field should be ashamed that his irresponsible and insensitive comment earlier this week that Jagtar is "fine" has forced Jagtar to put himself at risk."*

"Mark Field's comment now looks reckless and if Jagtar faces further hardship as a direct result of Foreign Office incompetence he should resign."

Jagtar's MP, Martin Docherty-Hughes who has led the political challenge for action to safeguard his constituent was furious by the comment by Mark Field earlier this week that his constituent was "fine".

Mark Field MP, FCO Minister for India Preet has sent a strongly worded reply to Mark Field's letter and said Jagtar's family were deeply upset with what the Minister had written and were concerned that private access to Jagtar had to date not been secured by British consular staff and the allegations of third degree torture had still not been pursued.

Bhai Narinderjit Singh, the General Secretary of the Sikh Federation (UK) added: *"The Foreign Minister should immediately withdraw his insensitive comment and apologise to the family."*



“Preet has said the Minister was irresponsible, but we would go further and suggest he has been negligent as Indian politicians have been lining up to quote the Foreign Minister and used it to justify third degree torture by Indian police against a British citizen.”

URGENT APPEAL TO THE UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON TORTURE FOR 30-YEAR OLD SCOT ILLEGALLY DETAINED IN INDIA



18 December 2017 - On 30 November representatives of the Sikh Federation (UK) and Gurpreet Singh Johal met Redress to discuss their involvement in the Jagtar Singh Johal case.

Today Redress and Ensaaf filed an urgent appeal to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture.

For the first time the appeal reveals that at Jagtar's court hearing on 10 November witnesses observed he had severe difficulty in standing or walking, and had to be assisted by police officers as he entered and left the courtroom.

This explains why his lawyers and British consular staff were not allowed to enter the court room.

This appeal by human rights organisations adds pressure on the British Government to take the 'extreme action' promised in Parliament four weeks earlier.

30-YEAR OLD SCOT SECRETLY TAKEN BACK INTO INDIAN POLICE CUSTODY TO FACE TORTURE AND DEATH THREATS

17 January 2018 - Earlier today the NIA took police remand of Jagtar Singh Johal who has spent over ten weeks in prison in India without charge.

Jagtar, his family, those supporting him across the globe and his lawyers were relieved when at the start of the month his police custody came to an end after a two month nightmare.

In police custody he faced third degree torture, threats, intimidation and mental blackmail with the unprecedented release of so-called confessional police investigation videos to the Indian media.

Today in a surprise and secret move highlighting the desperation of the NIA Jagtar was taken out of judicial custody in high security Nabha Jail and presented before an Additional Sessions Judge, with the special NIA judge on leave.

Jagtar was not allowed any legal representation and the court handed over Jagtar to the NIA for the next 6 days.

Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) said: *“We are deeply concerned with this latest move. Based on what we know Jagtar's life is in serious danger and the UK Government appears powerless or unwilling to act against the Indian authorities.”*

“The Foreign Office has been dragging its heels and given what his lawyer has shared in writing with the British Deputy High Commissioner about the NIA modus operandi in this case they will know now is the time for the 'extreme action' they promised.”



We can reveal on 27 November Mark Field, the Foreign Minister responsible for relations with India, gave positive signals on their hopes of Jagtar being released “sooner rather than later” in a meeting with Jagtar’s brother and his MP Martin Docherty-Hughes.

However, it took the British authorities until 14 December when Jagtar put himself at risk by insisting in front of senior police officers that the third degree torture issue needed to be escalated and for British concerns to be formally raised in writing with the Indian authorities. Further frustrated with the lack of progress by the FCO, on such serious allegations, Jagtar himself took even greater personal risk to directly inform the FCO in an supervised meeting on the 11 January about the third degree torture he suffered in intimate detail.



The update from the Head of Prisoner Policy and Human Rights Team at the FCO read:

“Staff were able to discuss torture and mistreatment allegations... Jagtar said that he was physically mistreated during the period 4-7 November, when he was first detained.”

This confirmation has led to strong calls from the family and supporters of the campaign to demand that the British government immediately act upon a promise of ‘extreme action’ following this personal statement from Jagtar.

It is understood the British Deputy High Commissioner raised concerns about the police investigation videos being released to the Indian media that would prevent Jagtar getting a fair trial if he is charged, the third degree torture allegations, the lack of agreement to independent medical examinations and the lack of private access to British consular staff.

Under police custody the courts eventually granted his lawyer one hour access on a daily basis.



Jaspal Singh Manjpur

However, according to correspondence between Jagtar’s lawyer and the British Deputy High Commissioner that we have seen on 21 December he was “given less than five minutes” to meet Jagtar with “eight to ten NIA officials” present. He was given no access to Jagtar from 23 December until he was presented in court on 26 December.

When Jagtar met his lawyers (Advocate Jaspal Singh Manjpur and senior Defence Counsel, Advocate Brijinder Singh Sodhi) in court on 26 December he revealed to them “he has been pressurised and threatened by the NIA officials in New Delhi that either he confesses to the crimes alleged” or he becomes a prosecution witness.

His lawyer states in writing to the British Deputy High Commissioner (on 26 December) “He also disclosed that the officials threatened him that if he turns down these offers then he will face severe consequences and spend the rest of his life in jail.”

UK GOVERNMENT FAILING 30-YEAR OLD SCOT TORTURE VICTIM HELD IN INDIAN JAIL FOR 3 MONTHS WITHOUT CHARGE

1 February 2018 - Today Jagtar appeared in court for the 24th time, but still no evidence has been presented and no charges have been forthcoming.

The NIA that took over the case six weeks ago from Punjab police was reprimanded by the judge today for delays and failing to produce the correct paper work.



Bhai Amrik Singh, the Chair of the Sikh Federation (UK) said: “The Foreign Secretary has failed to issue a statement or meet Jagtar’s family and Sir Dominic Asquith, the British High Commissioner to India has also been silent.”

“Mark Field has been photographed wining and dining with Indian government representatives and more concerned with trade and protests against the Indian PM, Narendra Modi when he visits Britain in April.”



Yesterday a report titled: ‘Beyond discretion – The protection of British Nationals abroad from torture and ill-treatment’ was released in Parliament by Redress, a human rights organisation dedicated to securing justice for torture victims.

More than 100 British citizens a year are subjected to ill-treatment in foreign jails, but many struggle to get the Foreign Office assistance they need.

All speakers in relation to Jagtar Singh Johal and the Chennai 6 agreed that the British Government was failing to provide strong enough protection to its citizens when they are unjustly jailed and tortured in India.

The 75-page Redress report highlights the specific cases of Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe in Iran, Andargachew ‘Andy’ Tsege in Ethiopia and Jagtar Singh Johal in India and accuses the UK Government of “a failure to speak out in the face of serious human rights violations” that “seriously weakens the protection of its own nationals and risks legitimising abuses.”

A very broad coalition is being put together involving the Chennai 6 and Scots in general to protest against the treatment of British citizens tortured and jailed in India.

Family mark 100 days since arrest of Dumbarton man in India

Daily Record – 12 February 2018



The desperate family of a Dumbarton man detained in India have marked 100 days since his arrest.

Jagtar Singh Johal at a press conference in Glasgow.



Father Jasbir Singh Johal and brother Gurpreet Singh Johal, who are campaigning for his release, spoke of their heartache that Jagtar was forced to spend his birthday imprisoned in isolation away from his loved ones.

Former Our Lady and St Patrick’s High School pupil Jagtar, 31, has been held in Punjab since November 4 last year — two weeks after he had travelled to India from Scotland for his wedding.

Martin Docherty-Hughes, MP for West Dunbartonshire, yesterday joined the family of

Concerns have been raised about reports of Jagtar being subject to abuse, mistreatment and physical torture during his time in custody.



"It was Jagtar's birthday on Friday and we are heartbroken that he was forced to spend it imprisoned and away from his loved ones. We are determined to bring Jaggi home so his next birthday is enjoyed here alongside his friends and family."

SNP MP Martin Docherty-Hughes said he was stepping up his campaign to secure "justice for Jagtar".

Martin Docherty-Hughes MP said: "It's now 100 days that my constituent has been held by the Indian authorities and he has yet to be charged with any crime."

"Jagtar's family in Dumbarton are deeply concerned for his welfare. He is their son, their brother and their friend – and they remain determined to secure justice for Jagtar and bring him home to Scotland."

"It's critical that the family receives the full backing of the UK government. I will continue doing all I

can to support the family and ensure Jagtar is treated fairly and afforded an open and transparent judicial process."

International human rights organisation REDRESS has cited Jagtar's case as evidence that the UK government must do more to protect British nationals detained abroad.

REDRESS brought Jagtar's case to the attention of the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture in December 2017.

Rupert Skilbeck, director of REDRESS, said: "The UK government has said that extreme action would be taken if a British citizen is being tortured."

"We remain seriously concerned about Jagtar's treatment in detention, and it is crucial the UK does everything in its power to ensure his rights are protected and any torture is immediately stopped, he is provided with any medical care needed, and receives proper due process."

WESTMINSTER DEBATE HELD ABOUT BRITISH NATIONALS IMPROSONED ABROUD AS JAGTAR SINGH REACHES 131 DAYS IN DETENTION WITHOUT CHARGE



13 March 2018 – In a Westminster Hall debate called by Preet Kaur Gill MP she raised the following; In October 2017, Jagtar travelled to India to marry his fiancée. On 4 November, while out shopping, he was seized by plain-clothes officers, hooded and abducted. Following a brief court hearing, he was held incommunicado by Indian police for nine days at an undisclosed location, and he was denied all access to lawyers, British consular staff and family members.

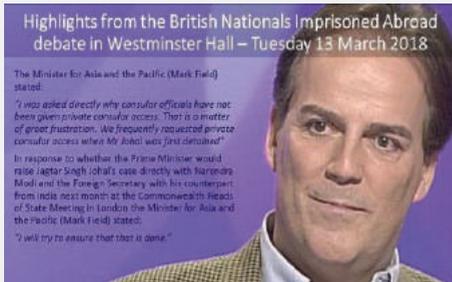
On 10 November, Jagtar was secretly presented in court while his lawyer and British consular staff were, outrageously, left outside the courtroom waiting to be called. They were informed along with the media only after he had been presented before the court and had left the courtroom. Subsequently, witnesses reported that Jagtar had great difficulty standing or walking and had to be assisted by the police officers escorting him in and out of the courtroom, supporting Jagtar's claim of severe torture.

On 14 November, in the courtroom when Jagtar first met his lawyer, briefly, he made allegations of severe torture between 5 and 9 November. That included leg separation and electric shocks to his ears, nipples and genitals. He has told lawyers that police also forced him to sign blank pieces of paper, believed to be for the purpose of forging confessions.

On 16 November, after much lobbying, British consular staff were eventually able to meet Jagtar, some 12 days after his abduction, torture and interrogation, but two senior police officers remained in the interrogation room to prevent a private conversation. The experienced consular officer present assessed Jagtar and concluded that he was prevented from fully opening up about his mistreatment or to show signs of torture, and he was declared 'vulnerable'.

To date, unacceptably, the Indian authorities have prevented Jagtar from having private access to British consular staff. Will the Minister please offer some explanation as to why the Indian authorities





have done that? What actions has the FCO taken in the past 130 days to address such an unacceptable state of affairs?

On 21 November, in response to a parliamentary question by the hon. Member for West Dunbartonshire (Martin Docherty-Hughes), the then FCO Minister, the hon. Member for Penrith and The Border (Rory Stewart), described Jagtar's treatment as "unconstitutional" and warned of "extreme action" against the Indian authorities.

For a large part of his detention, Jagtar has been subjected to severe torture, sleep deprived, had constant verbal abuse, solitary confinement, use of handcuffs 24 hours a day, and misinformation about his family and the British authorities have been used to exploit and demoralise Jagtar mentally.

In December 2017, Redress called on the UN special rapporteur on torture to intervene in Jagtar's case, and on the Indian Government to ensure that he is protected from further torture. Redress also called for Jagtar to be provided with an immediate independent medical examination—which he has been denied, despite repeated requests by his lawyer—and for the allegations of torture to be investigated according to international law. The next hearing for such a medical will be held sometime in March, almost four months after the alleged torture took place. Again, will the Minister please update us on the steps taken to secure an independent medical examination and any necessary medical treatment following the allegations of torture?

Jagtar's case is extremely serious, but it has become farcical and a trial by media. He has been brought to court more than 30 times over the past four months, and he has been taken in and out of judicial and police custody. I understand that the FCO has expressed concerns in writing that confidential police investigation videos of Jagtar, taken when he was under duress, have inappropriately been released to Indian TV station. Has the FCO complained to the Indian authorities about Jagtar facing trial by media, which means that, if charged, he would never get a fair trial?

The British High Commission has never been able to meet Jagtar in private. Requests for private access to him have been denied repeatedly. I will go into more detail about the importance of private visits by consular officials in cases such as Jagtar's. The VCCR states that nationals should be "free to communicate" and have access to consular officers. In cases of torture, often the authorities will be present in the room or will find other ways of monitoring and controlling interactions between consular officers and the individual. The International Committee of the Red Cross, which conducts prison visits throughout the world to ensure humane treatment, recognises that private interviews are the only way to make it possible to hear an individual's point of view. In addition, the United Nations Committee Against Torture has called on states to

"insist on unrestricted consular access to its nationals who are in detention abroad, with facility for unmonitored meetings and, if required...appropriate medical expertise".

Consular assistance is an important humanitarian safeguard and provides a crucial link with the outside world. Sometimes it is the only link. The UK has said that it is a priority to meet Jagtar in private, but it is unacceptable that after 130 days it has not been able to do so. As I conclude my remarks about Jagtar, I ask the Minister whether the Foreign Secretary will meet Jagtar's family, who are concerned with the priority being given to this case.



I therefore ask the Minister whether the Prime Minister will raise Jagtar's case with Narendra Modi when she meets him next month in London, given that she spoke to the BBC and showed interest in Jagtar's case within days of his abduction and torture.

We cannot sit idly by while British citizens are deprived of some of the most basic rights that we hold dear. An integral part of being a responsible member of the global community is to conduct oneself in accordance with international rules and norms, none more so than the 1948 universal declaration of human rights, which states that human rights should be protected by the rule of law. The Government are obliged to ensure that all British citizens are subject to this protection, and I call on them to use every legitimate means to ensure that no British citizen should have to suffer such unlawful and inhumane treatment.

SIKH PROTEST RALLY IN GENEVA URGING UN ACTION FOLLOWING KILLING OF SIKH ACTIVIST AND FREEDOM FIGHTER IN INDIAN JUDICIAL CUSTODY



3 May 2018 - Sikh Federation (UK) representatives will join Sikhs from across the globe at the Sikh protest rally outside the UN office in Geneva on Friday 4 May 2018 between 12 noon and 4pm.

The main focus of the rally is to call for UN action against India for the killing of Harminder Singh, a well know Sikh activist and freedom fighter, while in judicial custody in Patiala jail on 18 April 2018.

Harminder Singh was deported from Thailand to India in November 2014 where he had been tortured and abused while in custody.

Although it has been reported he suffered cardiac arrest many have raised concerns and expressed doubts about the circumstances in which he died and the denial of basic medical facilities that he raised with his family prior to his death.

A judicial inquiry has been announced surrounding his suspicious death following pressure from Sikh organisations in Punjab and a hunger strike initiated by fellow Sikh prisoners in a number of other jails across Punjab.

Advocate Jaspal Singh Manjhpur, representing Harminder Singh met the leadership of the Sikh Federation (UK) on 1 May 2018 in a short stopover in London on his return to India from Canada and repeated the Indian state had conspired to kill Harminder Singh.

He said the jail warden ignored the advice and recommendations of the jail doctor to get Harminder Singh examined from PGI, Chandigarh suggesting a state conspiracy to kill him that has been repeated by his family members.

The Sikh Federation (UK) has also arranged for Sikh representatives to meet staff in Geneva at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

This will include staff supporting Agnès S. Callamard, the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions where they will raise concerns about the collusion between Thailand and India and explore actions that can be taken against both countries following Harminder Singh's death.



Three others, Gurpreet Singh Gurdaspur, Jagtar Singh Tara and Gurdev Singh Jajja were also deported from Thailand and remain in prison in Indian jails.

Following the suspicious death of Harminder Singh there are concerns for the well-being of the other Sikh political prisoners that currently total around 150.

The suspicious death of Harminder Singh following police beatings, mistreatment and medical neglect has direct implications for Jagtar Singh Johal as Indian police have tried to connect them through inadmissible police interrogation videos released to the media.

The Sikh delegation meeting OHCHR staff will include the brother of Jagtar Singh Johal who will be seeking clarification and assurances about actions being taken by the Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment since REDRESS filed an urgent appeal in December 2017.

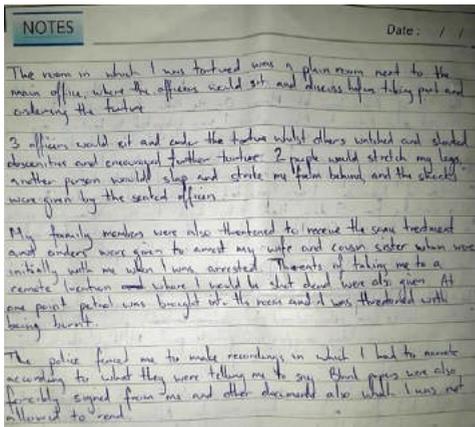
Jagtar Singh Johal: British man alleges Indian police threatened to shoot and set him on fire



INDEPENDENT

The Independent - 9 June 2018

In a handwritten letter seen by The Independent, the Scotsman, from Dumbarton, claimed he was tortured “numerous times each day” by police who attached electrodes to his ear lobes, nipples and genitals.



private parts. Multiple shocks were given each day.

“My legs were pulled apart four to five times each time I was questioned and this took place numerous times each day. Each time the act of pulling my legs would take place, the pain would increase. At some stages I was left unable to walk and had to be carried out of the interrogation room.”

“Threats of taking me to a remote location where I would be shot dead were also given,” he added.

“At one point petrol was brought into the room and I was threatened with being burnt.”

Mr Johal also alleged that he was forced to make recordings of statements police officers told him to say, and that he was forced to sign blank pieces of paper and other documents he was not allowed to read.

The 31-year-old also alleged that his captors threatened to shoot him and suggested he would be covered in petrol and set alight if he did not confess.

In the handwritten account of his alleged torture made public by his family for the first time, Mr Johal claimed: “The torture took place intermittently, numerous times each day. Electric shocks were administered by placing the crocodile clips on my ear lobes, nipples and

In a joint appeal to the Government of India following a request by human rights organisations Redress and Ensaaf, the UN’s special rapporteur on torture, the UN’s special rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, and the vice-chair of the UN working group on arbitrary detention called on India to respond to the serious allegations of torture.

They also asked the government to provide information about the measures taken to prevent any further torture or ill-treatment, the legal basis for Mr Johal’s arrest and detention, and the results of any medical examinations carried out.





ABOUT US

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

The organisation was established in September 2003 with the aim of giving Sikhs a stronger political voice by taking an increasing interest in mainstream politics in the UK.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

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

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

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

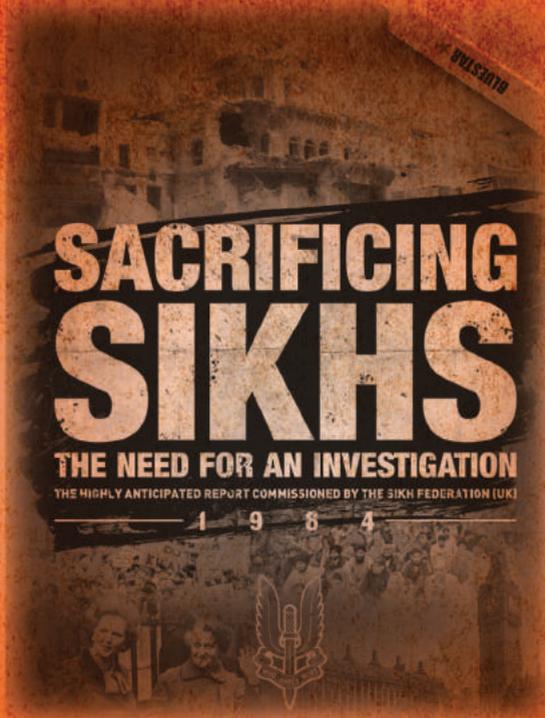
THE SIKH NETWORK

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

The Sikh Network plan to report progress via a quarterly newsletter and hosting relevant professional events throughout the year. Individuals in the Sikh Network have an opportunity to fully participate and contribute to the Sikh Manifesto, even those who wish to remain in the background and do not belong to any Gurdwara or organisation.

SIKH FEDERATION (UK)

WORKING FOR TRUTH, JUSTICE AND FREEDOM



DONATE NOW

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

CONTACT US

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



www.sikhfeduk.com



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