



# Sikh Federation (UK)

*Never flinch from performing righteous deeds*

## Call for an inquest into the suspicious death of Sikh activist, Avtar Singh Khanda

- Renowned pathologist, Dr Ashley Fegan-Earl indicates the possibility Avtar was poisoned
- West Midlands Police exposed for being a part of a sinister UK cover up of transnational repression by the Indian government targeting Sikh activists in the UK

London – 3 July 2025

We can now formally reveal that before the second anniversary of the mysterious and suspicious death of Avtar Singh Khanda in a Birmingham hospital, the barrister representing Avtar's family wrote to challenge the senior coroner, Louise Hunt and request she open an inquest based on the new evidence gathered.

This press release was waiting for the exclusive story that appeared in the Guardian yesterday: [Sikh activist who died in UK could have been poisoned, says pathologist](#)<sup>1</sup>

In October 2023 the senior coroner refused to open an inquest arguing West Midlands Police had conducted a "thorough" investigation and had concluded that there were "no suspicious circumstances". In other words the senior coroner relied on the police.

An investigative team at the Guardian challenged and exposed the West Midlands Police to prove they had not conducted a "thorough" investigation as they originally stated. In a new statement in December 2023, nearly 6 months after Avtar's death the police backtracked and changed their position to simply state they were satisfied there were "no suspicious circumstances".<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jul/02/sikh-activist-avtar-singh-khanda-pathologist-family-inquest>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/dec/04/indian-police-accused-of-harassing-sikh-activist-in-uk-before-his-sudden-death?ref=birminghamdispatch.co.uk>

The senior coroner has now been told she was misled by the police and a report from renowned pathologist Dr Ashley Fegan-Earl has been presented to show the medical evidence does not rule out death from an unnatural cause and the "real possibility that poisoning caused his death". He has pointed out the limitations of the testing carried out and the absence of specialist testing.

Evidence has now been submitted by Michael Polak, a barrister at Church Court Chambers to show the police for some strange reason carried out no investigation as they relied solely on the medical evidence.

Sikh community representatives met the Chief Constable, Craig Guilford and his team on three separate occasions in 2024 - February, June and August at Guru Nanak Gurdwara, Smethwick where Avtar's funeral was conducted.

Dabinderjit Singh OBE, a Lead Executive of the Sikh Federation (UK) said:

*"It was clear to me after the first two meetings that the West Midlands Police were negligent at best."*

*"I attended those meetings where we presented a detailed timeline before and after Avtar Singh Khanda's death on the 'suspicions' the West Midlands Police should have had in the critical period before he was cremated on 12 August 2023."*

*"Taking account of everything we have learnt over the last two years, including the information available to the Five Eyes nations at that time and the police responses in those meetings I am in no doubt there has been a cover up by the authorities in the UK of the Indian government's transnational repression of Sikh activists."*

*"We have made the UK authorities aware of the threats faced by Sikh activists in the UK and if they travel to India, but they lack the courage to publicly call out India."*

*"In a briefing to MPs in Parliament in October 2024 I said I suspect MPs and the UK Government will only speak up if a Sikh activist is shot dead like Hardeep Singh Nijjar in Canada."*

Jas Singh, of the Sikh Federation (UK) who has submitted a witness statement said:

*"It is a scandal that the authorities – coroner and police colluded and were negligent in refusing to carry out an autopsy despite the suspicious circumstance surrounding Avtar's death."*

*"Central government officials also inappropriately pressured Avtar's family and between them created obstacles to prevent a private autopsy before Avtar was eventually cremated on 12 August 2023."*

The coroner has been requested to take account of the context and timing of Avtar Singh Khanda's death, including the assassination of Hardeep Singh Nijjar three days later in Canada and the plot to kill United States based attorney Gurpatwant Singh Pannun around the same time.

**ENDS**

Jaspal Singh  
Lead Executive  
Sikh Federation (UK)