Sikh Federation (UK)

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Sikh Federation (UK) launches nationwide campaign to challenge Home Office targeting of the sacred Kirpan

London – 8 November 2026

The Sikh Federation (UK) has launched a major national campaign in response to the Home Office's deeply concerning and discriminatory approach to the sacred Sikh Kirpan, following the tragic murder of Henry Nowak.

The campaign brings together three coordinated strands of action:

1. A formal letter from the Sikh Federation (UK) to Prime Minister Andy Burnham on 6 November demanding an urgent meeting and calling out the Home Office's failure to engage properly with Sikh religious institutions;

2. A wave of letters from UK Gurdwaras to the Prime Minister, copied to local MPs, coordinated by the UK Gurdwara Alliance; and

3. Thousands of constituent letters being sent from tomorrow to MPs across the country challenging the Home Office's misleading and discriminatory narrative.

The Sikh Federation (UK) said the Home Office is attempting to deflect attention away from the real failings by the police and other government agencies in the Henry Nowak case by inappropriately targeting the Kirpan — a sacred article of Sikh faith — despite the clear fact that the murder weapon was not a Kirpan.

Dabinderjit Singh Sidhu OBE, Chief Executive for Political Engagement for the Sikh Federation (UK), said:

"The Home Office appears to be using this case as a deflection tactic. The facts are clear: the murder weapon was not a Kirpan. Yet instead of addressing the failures that allowed this tragedy to happen, the Government is now allowing inaccurate and harmful narratives about the Sikh faith to take hold. That is unacceptable."

The Sikh Federation (UK) confirmed that over 250 UK Gurdwaras are being encouraged to write individually to the Prime Minister, with around 80 Gurdwaras having already done so within the first 24 hours of the campaign.

In addition, thousands of Sikh constituents are expected to write to more than 300 different MPs over the coming days, demanding that the Home Office stop its discriminatory approach and engage properly with Sikh organisations and Gurdwaras that understand the religious significance of the Kirpan.

The Federation said there is growing anger across the Sikh community because:

- the Home Office has failed to engage transparently with leading Sikh organisations;
- meaningful consultation has not taken place with the UK Gurdwara Alliance and major Gurdwaras;
- the Government is responding to media pressure rather than the facts; and
- proposals relating to the Kirpan risk undermining religious freedom for the entire Sikh community.

The Sikh Federation (UK) has warned that the Government must not allow the criminal actions of one individual to be used as a pretext to restrict the religious freedoms of over a million law-abiding Sikhs.

Dabinderjit Singh Sidhu OBE added:

"Sikhs support public safety and the fight against knife crime. But we will not accept the sacred Kirpan being falsely associated with a murder weapon that was not a Kirpan. The Home Office must stop this divisive and irresponsible agenda and meet Sikh institutions immediately."

The campaign calls on the Prime Minister and Home Office to:

- urgently meet the Sikh Federation (UK) and representatives of the UK Gurdwara Alliance;
- disclose who has been consulted on the religious reasons defence and on what basis as allegations have been made of ethical conflicts of interest;

- halt any move to alter legislation impacting on the sacred Kirpan and begin full, transparent and credible consultation with leading Sikh organisations to establish the best way forward; and

- accept the distinction between the sacred Kirpan and the weapon used in the crime.

The Sikh Federation (UK) says the coming days will see a powerful show of unity from Gurdwaras, Sikh organisations and individual Sikhs across the UK, sending a clear message that the Sikh faith will not be scapegoated.

ENDS

Kuldeep Singh
Chief Executive (Administration)
Sikh Federation (UK)

Notes to editors:

- The Sikh Federation (UK) wrote to Prime Minister Andy Burnham on 6 November 2026 requesting an urgent meeting (see letter attached).

- Around 80 Gurdwaras are understood to have already written to the Prime Minister in the first 24 hours of the campaign.

- Over 250 UK Gurdwaras are being encouraged to write individually to the Prime Minister (see template being used by Gurdwaras).

- Thousands of Sikh constituents are expected to write to more than 200 MPs from tomorrow (see template to be used by Sikh constituents).