



Sikh Federation (UK)

Never flinch from performing righteous deeds

Prime Minister, Keir Starmer must show the courage, humility and leadership to honour Labour's promise and issue a formal apology to the worldwide Sikh community for the Amritsar massacre

London – 13 April 2026

On the 100th anniversary of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre in Amritsar on 13 April 1919 there was huge pressure on the UK Prime Minister, Theresa May to issue a formal apology to the worldwide Sikh community.

She stated in Parliament the massacre was a "tragedy" that was a "shameful scar" on British history. She referred to Queen Elizabeth II in 1997 describing the event as a "distressing example" of our history and we "deeply regret" what happened and the suffering caused.

This was widely acknowledged as falling short of a formal apology. The Labour Leader at that time, Jeremy Corbyn pushed for an apology and stated a Labour Prime Minister would put this right. This was also included in the Labour manifesto.

Last year for Keir Starmer it was the first opportunity as Prime Minister to make a formal apology, but Parliament was not sitting and an apology was avoided.

Today is 13 April and Parliament is sitting. It is ironic he has invited Sikhs and Labour MPs with large numbers of Sikh constituents to attend a Vaisakhi reception at 10 Downing Street this evening.

Opinion polls suggest the biggest reason why those who voted Labour in July 2024 are defecting is not delivering or breaking promises.

Today is an opportunity for Keir Starmer to show before 7 May elections he does not have the same mindset as Nigel Farage and has the courage, humility and leadership by honouring a Labour promise and issue a formal apology for the Amritsar massacre.

The 13 April 1919 Jallianwala Bagh massacre in Amritsar by the British colonial power, when British troops fired on a peaceful gathering was a major turning point that galvanised moment in the independence movement.

13 April marked Vaisakhi and up to 20,000 civilians, many who had been worshipping earlier at Sri Harmandir Sahib had gathered at the Jallianwala Bagh public gardens to protest against the Rowlatt Act that had been introduced to limit civil liberties.

The Jallianwala Bagh massacre took place 5 months after the end of the First World War where tens of thousands of turban-wearing Sikh soldiers had sacrificed their lives fighting for Britain.

The Jallianwala Bagh massacre turned what had been a peaceful protest against the British to a more assertive nationalism against colonial rule.

On 27 March 2025 in the UK Parliament it was stated "At the end of the massacre 1,500 people were dead and 1,200 injured."

Many were shot dead, but some died by being crushed in the stampede or jumping into a large well to avoid being shot. Around 120 bodies were recovered from the well.

ENDS

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Lead Executive

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