



World Sikh Council – America Region (WSC-AR)

A representative body of Sikh institutions of America founded under the patronage of Siri Akal Takhat Sahib

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Member Gurdwaras:

1. Gurdwara Sahib Fremont, Fremont, CA
2. Guru Nanak Sikh Mission, Livingston, CA
3. Sikh Gurdwara of LA, North Hollywood, CA
4. Sikh Gurdwara Riverside, Riverside, CA
5. Colorado Singh Sabha, Denver, CO
6. Guru Singh Sabha of Augusta, Augusta, GA
7. Sikh Study Circle of Atlanta, Atlanta, GA
8. Sikh Religious Society of Chicago, Palatine, IL
9. Sikh Society of South, New Orleans, LA
10. Sikh Gurdwara of Michigan, Rochester Hills, MI
11. Sikh Society of Michigan, Madison Heights, MI
12. Guru Nanak Foundation of Jackson, MS
13. Sikh Gurdwara of North Carolina, Durham, NC
14. Garden State Sikh Association, Bridgewater, NJ
15. Guru Nanak Sikh Society of Delaware Valley, Sewell, NJ
16. Siri Guru Singh Sabha, Glenrock, NJ
17. Sikh Sabha of New Jersey, Lawrenceville, NJ
18. Sikh Cultural Society Inc., Richmond Hills, NY
19. Sikh Cultural & Edu. Society of Western NY, Buffalo, NY
20. Sikh Religious Society of Dayton, Dayton, OH
21. Guru Nanak Found. of Greater Cleveland, Richfield, OH
22. Guru Gobind Singh Sikh Society, Bedford, OH
23. Guru Nanak Religious Soc. of Central Ohio, Columbus, OH
24. Tristate Sikh Cultural Society, Monroeville, PA
25. Mid South Sikh Sabha, Memphis, TN
26. Sikh Center of Gulf Coast, Houston, TX
27. Siri Guru Singh Sabha, Richardson, TX
28. Sikh Gurdwara of North Texas, Garland, TX
29. Singh Sabha Gurdwara, Fairfax, VA
30. Sikh Association of Central Virginia, VA
31. Sikh Religious Society of Wisconsin, Brookfield, WI

Other Sikh Institution Members:

1. Siri Guru Granth Sahib Found., Anaheim, CA
2. Sikhs Serving America, Topeka, KS
3. Sikh Youth Federation of North America, White Plains, NY
4. Sikh Educational & Religious Foundation, Dublin, OH
5. Sikh Youth Federation of USA, Toledo, OH
6. Academy of Guru Granth Studies, Arlington, TX

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World Sikh Council – America Region Speaks Truth to Power: Calls Upon Prime Minister of India to Act to Prevent India’s Persecution of Sikh Community

On the eve of the Prime Minister of India Dr. Manmohan Singh’s historic visit to the United States of America from July 18 - 20, 2005, the World Sikh Council – America Region (WSC-AR), on behalf of the Sikh community of the United States, takes this opportunity to remind the Prime Minister of the Sikh nation’s long-outstanding concerns, and calls upon him not to let the Indian polity continue the genocidal era of India’s state terrorism of the 1980s and 1990s against the Sikh community.

Sikhs are still waiting for justice from the State of India for its genocidal policy against the Sikh community. Justice delayed is indeed justice denied for the Sikhs of India.

We also call upon the Indian Prime Minister, himself a Sikh, to clearly outline the steps his government will take to provide transparency and accountability in the treatment of religious minorities, and what measures he will take to safeguard their constitutionally provided freedoms.

Dr. Manmohan Singh is visiting the United States of America from July 18 – 20 on the invitation of the United States President George W. Bush.

The WSC-AR further appeals to the Prime Minister of India to:

- Investigate and make public an inquiry into the killings of Sikhs by police and security forces since the 1970s
- Release all Sikh political prisoners
- Provide full disclosure and remedial measures pertaining to enforced disappearances, custodial deaths, extra-judicial killings, and illegal cremations
- Release the full-text of the Nanavati Commission report on the Nov 1984 massacre of Sikhs.

Mr. Amolak Singh, Chairperson of World Sikh Council – America Region (WSC-AR) remarked, “We condemn in the strongest terms the continued efforts of the Government of India to demonize the Sikh community. We call upon the Indian Government to end its genocidal attempts against religious minorities.”

Dr. Anahat Kaur, Vice-Chairperson of WSC-AR said, "The Sikh experience in India demonstrates a relentless pattern of religious persecution under the guise of democracy while flouting the ideals of peace, justice, and human rights". She added, "These actions hardly seem worthy of a democratic nation.”

Once again, in the last several months, very disturbing news reports have been received from the Sikh Homeland of Punjab in South Asia. A new wave of mass arrests and detentions of several hundred young Sikhs has been unleashed by India. This is in gross violation of civil liberties and political freedoms guaranteed by the Indian Constitution and by the International Covenants and Conventions on Human Rights.

The Sikh nation continues to seek transparency and accountability. Thousands of Sikhs continue to languish in jail for decades without charge or trial. Thousands more have become the victims of enforced disappearances, custodial deaths, extra-judicial killings, and illegal cremations. This history makes the new wave of mass arrests all the more ominous.

Since its independence from British Colonial rule in 1947, India has persecuted its religious minorities, including Christians, Muslims, and Sikhs, in the name of national integration.

In the May 2003 report “Reduced to Ashes: The Insurgency and Human Rights in Punjab” (www.punjabjustice.org), Mr. Ram Narayan Kumar, one of India’s leading human rights activist, presents overwhelming evidence (along with over 600 case histories) of massive human rights abuses of Sikhs by police, and the contributions at all levels of the state and national government as well the Indian judiciary towards police impunity.

The New York Times Bureau Chief in Delhi from 1988 to 1991, Barbara Crossette, writes in article “India’s Sikhs: Waiting for Justice” published in the World Policy Journal, Summer 2004: “Almost as many Sikhs died in a few days in India in 1984 than all the deaths and disappearances in Chile during the 17-year military rule of Gen. Augusto Pinochet between 1973 and 1990.... Not only Chile, but also Argentina, Peru, Mexico, South Africa, and Ethiopia, among other nations, have been addressing atrocities from decades past. India, in refusing to confront its bloody recent history, stands in glaring contrast to these nations.”

The WSC-AR is a representative and elected body of Sikh Gurdwaras and institutions in the United States. Its members include 37 Gurdwaras (Sikh places of worship) and other Sikh institutions across the nation.