



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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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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WSC-AR Unequivocally Condemns All Terrorism, India's Demonization of Sikh Community

Once again, there are very disturbing news reports from the Sikh Homeland of Punjab in South Asia. A new wave of mass arrests and detentions of young Sikhs has been unleashed by India in the last month. 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.

Mr. Amolak Singh, Chairperson of World Sikh Council – America Region (WSC-AR) remarked, “We condemn in the strongest terms the 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.”

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.

WSC-AR unequivocally condemns and opposes all terrorism, including state terrorism, and urges the Government of India to stop this gross violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of the Sikhs and other national minorities.

We are particularly concerned for the health and safety of Mr. Simranjit Singh Mann, who was recently arrested in Punjab. Mr. Mann has been subjected to cruel and inhuman treatment in India's torture chambers in the 1980's. He was only released when he was elected by a landslide to a seat in the Indian Parliament while still in jail. We strongly urge the Indian Government to abide by its own laws and immediately release these prisoners of conscience.

While India's current Prime Minister Mr. Manmohan Singh has been rightly credited for the liberalization of the Indian economy, he should not let the Indian polity continue in the genocidal era of India's state terrorism of the 1980s and 1990s. We call upon the Indian Prime Minister 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 during his July 2005 visit to the United States.

WSC-AR fully supports the efforts of India's National Human Rights Commission and other human rights organizations who are trying to stop this newest wave of religious persecution and political oppression. We further appeal to the United Nations, the United States Government, the European Union and all freedom loving people to hold India, often called the world's largest democracy, responsible for the gross violations of civil liberties and fundamental freedoms of its people.

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 report presents evidence to show that "The four fundamentals of the Indian democracy, embedded in its republican Constitution, are: [1] The guarantees of inalienable rights to all citizens; [2] A democratic legislature; [3] An independent judiciary; and [4] The freedom of discourse. On the strength of these constitutional features, India claims to be the largest functional democracy in the world where widespread human rights abuses, systematic persecution of estranged communities and suppression of political dissent cannot occur. However, the experiences of the Sikhs of Punjab show that as a demonised community targeted for abuse by the authorities, they had no protection from the leaders of the supposedly independent institutions, including the judiciary, either in shielding their fundamental rights against imminent violations or in obtaining acknowledgement and legal restitution of wrongs. Freedom of discourse remained an empty promise when even the higher judiciary joined the chorus to turn the page and obliterate the victims' memory on the ground that a public discussion and scrutiny focusing on past abuses and role of institutions would undermine the interests of peace and social order."

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.
