



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 Cultural Society Inc., Richmond Hills, NY
18. Sikh Cultural & Edu. Society of Western NY, Buffalo, NY
19. Sikh Religious Society of Dayton, Dayton, OH
20. Guru Nanak Found. of Greater Cleveland, Richfield, OH
21. Guru Gobind Singh Sikh Society, Bedford, OH
22. Guru Nanak Religious Soc. of Central Ohio, Columbus, OH
23. Tristate Sikh Cultural Society, Monroeville, PA
24. Mid South Sikh Sabha, Memphis, TN
25. Sikh Center of Gulf Coast, Houston, TX
26. Siri Guru Singh Sabha, Richardson, TX
27. Sikh Gurdwara of North Texas, Garland, TX
28. Singh Sabha Gurdwara, Fairfax, VA
29. Sikh Association of Central Virginia, VA
30. 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 Statement on Verdict in Canada Declaring Two Sikhs Innocent

Nearly twenty years after the June 1985 tragic bombing of an Air India Flight and after more than a four year long judicial probe, Justice Ian Bruce Josephson of the Supreme Court of British Columbia (Canada) declared on March 16, 2005 that Ripudaman Singh Malik and Ajaib Singh Bagri, two Sikhs charged with the crime, are innocent.

The World Sikh Council – America Region (WSC-AR) is pleased with the verdict upholding the innocence of the two Sikhs charged with this crime.

WSC-AR is concerned, however, that those who are really responsible for the murder of 329 innocent victims (many of whom were Sikhs) of this tragedy are still free. Many news sources have repeatedly cited the notorious operations of India's intelligence agencies in Canada for masterminding this state-supported terrorism to defame Sikhs in Canada and all over the world.

We hold the families of the victims of this tragedy in our thoughts and prayers and, once again, we extend our unqualified support in pursuing their quest for justice through the identification, arrest, and conviction of the real perpetrators of this crime.

We call upon the Canadian government to establish a Royal Commission of Inquiry that will investigate all facts pertaining to this tragedy. We also request the International Civil

Aviation Organization (ICAO) in Montreal, to call upon the Governments of India, Canada, USA, Ireland, Britain, and Japan -- who were involved in the initial probe -- for their full cooperation for the sake of transparency and accountability, leading to the arrest and conviction of the real perpetrators.

Our thoughts go to Ripudaman Singh Malik and Ajaib Singh Bagri and their families, who have needlessly suffered this prolonged pain, agony, and confinement. This has caused a tremendous drain on their health, family life, and financial situation. We pray to the Almighty God for bestowing upon them the courage and determination to stand up against injustice and falsehood, and seek restitution.

Eminent investigate journalists, Zuhair Kashmeri and Brian McAndrew, of the Globe and Mail and The Toronto Star, concluded in their book titled “Soft Target” published in 1989 that “For several years, India has been engaged in a devious and ruthless operation to manipulate and destabilize Canada’s Sikh population. The operation has been orchestrated by India’s intelligence service and has left the Sikh community estranged from Canadian Society... To its credit, CSIS [Canadian Security Intelligence Service] eventually woke up just before the tragic Air-India bombing that left 329 people, mostly Canadians, dead in June 1985. It chased the culprits right to the Indian embassy and consulates. But what it then faced was political interference.”

For Sikhs across the world, the verdict in Canada is a sigh of relief, but the struggle for transparency and accountability continues. As it were, the Sikhs all over the world also suffered the agony of defamation and distortion, particularly because many media experts rushed to the conclusion by blaming the Sikhs for this tragedy—which reflects, rather poorly, on their professional integrity and their commitment for objective and informed reporting.

For Sikhs, this verdict is a renewed call for reaffirmation of our faith in divine grace for the ultimate victory of truth and justice. We sincerely thank all those people of good will, who have provided moral support, despite the official campaign of misinformation and falsification.

We take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to Justice Ian Bruce Josephson, who has demonstrated great courage and integrity of character and deep commitment for justice, despite overwhelming financial and diplomatic resources of the Indian intelligence agencies in providing fabricated evidence to confuse the situation in order to implicate the two innocent Sikhs.

We also take this opportunity to urge media experts to search their soul and provide their readers and viewers the truth in partial restitution of the injury of defamation, wittingly or unwittingly, inflicted upon two innocent Sikhs and the entire Sikh community.

The WSC-AR is a representative and elected body of Sikh Gurdwaras and institutions in the United States. Its members include 36 Gurdwaras (Sikh places of worship) and other Sikh institutions across the nation.

Some excerpts from “Soft Target: How the Indian Intelligence Service Penetrated Canada”, Zuhair Kashmeri and Brian McAndrew, James Lorimer & Company Publishers, Toronto, 1989:

“For several years, India has been engaged in a devious and ruthless operation to manipulate and destabilize Canada’s Sikh population. The operation has been orchestrated by India’s intelligence service and has left the Sikh community estranged from Canadian Society...To its credit, CSIS [Canadian Security Intelligence Service] eventually woke up just before the tragic Air-India bombing that left 329

people, mostly Canadians, dead in June 1985. It chased the culprits right to the Indian embassy and consulates. But what it then faced was political interference.” (page iii)

“Asking the Sikhs [in Canada] to forget about what was happening in Punjab was like demanding that Canadian Jews disregard the plight of the Jewish ‘refuseniks’ in the Soviet Union. If only because they all had families still living in Punjab, the Sikhs would not turn their backs on their homeland.” (page 38)

“The CSIS [Canadian Security Intelligence Service] investigators slowly became convinced that the Indian Intelligence service may have played a role in the [Air India] bombings. And the further they probed, the more their suspicions grew.” (page 84)

“CSIS [Canadian Security Intelligence Service] had enough circumstantial material to reach the conclusion that agents of the government of India were linked to the Air-India and Narita bombings.” (page 93)

“The record of the Indian government shows that it will use both legitimate and illegitimate means to strengthen its political hold on a country the Western media calls ‘the world’s largest democracy.’ The disinformation campaign made the public look upon the Sikhs as a menace and the separatist groups as the obvious culprits responsible for the bombings.” (page 94)

“It seemed that the interests of the Indian government superceded the rights of Canadian citizens of Sikh origin to freedom of expression, and these ‘irritants’ were standing in the way of an improved relationship between Canada and India, with its growing demand for foreign technology, skills, and marketable goods.” (page 139)

“The perception of the Sikhs held by Montrealers, and without doubt by other Canadians, are largely a result of the Indian government’s campaign to slur the Sikh community in Canada. And, despite the already-entrenched negative impressions, the Indian government has not relented in its quest to interfere in the lives of the Canadian Sikhs.” (page 150)
