

18 June 2024

Launch of Sikh Vote Campaign: Empowering the Sikh Community Ahead of the 2024 General Election

Today, we launch the Sikh Vote campaign, a call to action for Sikhs in Britain to unite and fight for our rights in the upcoming General Election on July 4th, 2024. This is our moment to ensure that our voices are not just heard but acted upon, that our community's struggles are acknowledged, and that those representing us in Parliament are held accountable.

For too long, the Sikh vote has been taken for granted, and the community has faced relentless injustices under the Conservative Government. We have been unfairly targeted, our voices silenced, and our rights ignored. The prolonged suffering of Jagtar Singh Johal, a British citizen detained in India for seven years without charge, is a stark reminder of the Conservative Government's failure to protect its own. Sikh activists have been unfairly targeted under the Government's Prevent Strategy, with Schedule 7 legislation misused to silence those speaking against injustices in India.

The Sikh Vote campaign arises from these injustices, urging every Sikh in the UK to ask three crucial questions of their Parliamentary Candidates:

1. **Misuse of Schedule 7:** Sikhs are being unfairly targeted by British Law Enforcement under Schedule 7. What steps will you take to address this if elected?
2. **Indian Pressure on UK Policies:** India is using trade to push its agenda of silencing Sikhs in the UK. Will you stand against this pressure and protect our rights?
3. **Commemoration of Historical Events:** 2024 marks 40 years since the attack on Harmandir Sahib and the Sikh Genocide. Will you campaign for these events to be officially remembered at Parliamentary level?

We must hold these candidates accountable. We must demand answers and actions, not empty promises. Our questions are not just about policies; they are about the lives and rights of our community members.

Why We Must Act Now:

- **Jagtar Singh Johal's Detention:** For seven years, Jagtar has languished in an Indian prison without charge. The UK government has failed him. We cannot allow this to continue.

- **Murders and Assassination Plots of Activists:** Hardeep Singh Nijjar in Canada was brutally murdered, a foiled plot of the assassination of Gurpatwant Singh Pannu in the US, with evidence in both cases pointing to Indian state involvement, and UK allies openly stating this. Both incidents happened just after the suspicious death of Avtar Singh Khanda in the UK. All three have advocated for the Sikh right to self-determination. These are not isolated incidents but part of a broader pattern of transnational repression.
- **Prevent Strategy and Schedule 7:** These laws have been weaponised against Sikhs, labelling our activists as extremists without justification.
- **Biased Reports and Presentations:** The Bloom Report and Oasis Community Learning's presentation have unfairly smeared our community, adding to our marginalisation.
- **Misplaced Government Priorities:** In 2023, the government allocated £95,000 to combat alleged 'pro-Khalistani extremism,' further vilifying our right to self-determination.

This is not just a political campaign but a fight for justice, dignity, and our future. We must engage with candidates, mobilise our communities, and spread the word. Our votes can shape our future and protect our rights.

Your Vote, Your Power

This election, let us vote with our hearts and our minds. Let us stand together as one strong, united community. Let us ensure that our voices are heard and our rights protected. Join the Sikh Vote campaign and make your vote count on 4th July.

For more information, visit sikhvote.co.uk or contact us at info@sikhvote.co.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Manpreet Singh

Lead Coordinator, The Sikh Vote

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