

Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh

## **Meetings**

1st April 2012: Emergency Panth meeting organised in association with the Federation of Sikh Organisations at Guru Nanak Gurdwara Sahib Wolverhampton in relation to the Campaign for Truth, Justice and Equal Treatment. It was attended by over 160 participants and position statements were agreed. Two follow up meetings of the Indian Sub-continent Affairs Committee of SCUK took place on the 7<sup>th</sup> April 2012 at the Singh Sabha Gurdwara Sahib, Derby and 14<sup>th</sup> April 2012 at Guru Arjan Dev Ji Gurdwara Sahib, Derby. These meetings were used to clarify issues and agree a strategy to progress on the agreed actions. The Committee has agreed an outline blueprint for progressing forward.

3rd April 2012 a meeting of the representatives took place to discuss the Polish Airports discrimination case involving Shaminder S Puri. This was followed by a conference call with Shaminder Singh to clarify a few points and to agree next steps. It was agreed that whilst SCUK is not leading on the case which is already supported by the Helsinki Foundation it will provide personal support and as far as possible raise awareness of it.

13<sup>th</sup> April 2012: Meeting held with BBC Senior members to discuss lack of coverage with many issues affecting the Sikh Community in particular recently why the Rajoana campaign was not covered in the main media. Representatives of the Council included Cllr Balvinder Kaur Saund, Jaspal Singh Anand and Gurmel Singh. The meeting was a single contact point relationship which has been set up for the future.

28<sup>th</sup> April 2012 the 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Executive Committee took place at the Guru Nanak Gurdwara Sahib South Birmingham. Key agenda items included:

- Review of the Strategy, Policy and Legal Affairs committee.
- The process of selection for the Executive Committee for the next administration.
- Feedback on work in Europe
- The next steps for the Indian Sub-continent Affairs committee.

## **Events**

16<sup>th</sup> April 2012 Jagtar Singh and Gurmel Singh attended the Second Vaisakhi event at Downing Street. From the networking a meeting has been arranged to progress on a key Sikh Council area of work.

24<sup>th</sup> April 2012 Ranjit S Seehra, Paramjit K Matharu, Surinder Singh Matharu and Jagtar Singh attended the Vaisakhi celebrations at the Houses of Parliament. Ranjit Singh Seehra successfully delivered an inspiring speech under the theme of Education. Once again it proved to be a useful networking event for the Council in developing key contacts.

19<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> April 2012: Secretary General-Gurmel Singh attended a three day convention on Multiculturalism and Religion in Foreign Policy. Very useful links were made with Civil servants and diplomats from several countries and insights gained to inform the Councils work with foreign governments.

19<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> April 2012: Vice Chair of the European and International Affairs committee Paramjit Kaur Matharu along with Surinder S Matharu attended the Fundamental Rights Platform conference in Vienna. A workshop was delivered on the impact of secular policies on minority communities like the Sikhs. Very useful side meetings took place to better inform the Council on its research in Europe to create dossiers on impact of policies on the Sikhs in European countries. Shaminder S Puri Case the French ruling etc.

Paramjit K Matharu also took up the opportunity to network and meet with local Gurdwara Sahibs in Austria. During the meeting it was mutually agreed that 2 representatives from Gurdwara Sahibs in Vienna would be the key liaisons as part of the Committee to serve on the Europe wide working group.

12<sup>th</sup> April 2012: The Secretary General-Gurmel Singh attended the Kesri Lehar demonstrations organised by the young adults where a peace march to start a petition for Human Rights abuse in India, The march started at 10 Downing Street to Houses of Parliament to raise awareness and then returned to Downing Street before dispensing.

10<sup>th</sup> April 2012: The secretary General Gurmel Singh and Vice Chair of European Affairs Committee Paramjit Kaur Matharu attended the Ernst and Young supported Vaisakhi event at this event Paramjit Kaur was a panel member and Vince Cable was the guest. 11<sup>th</sup> April 2012 Paramjit Kaur also attended the second day of the event and took up networking opportunities. The event continued for a 3<sup>rd</sup> day where the theme was Sikh representation in the media. Useful links were made and a follow up joint programme targeted at the young adults is under consideration

24th April 2012- Two members of the Sikh Federation UK, Sukhvinder Singh and Dabinderjit Singh, who are also members of the Executive of the Sikh Council UK, attended the 4th Annual Global Sikh Civil and Human Rights Conference 2012 in New York organised by the United Sikhs. A short briefing paper on the work of the Sikh Council in Europe was also provided for reference for the Conference.

29<sup>th</sup> April 2012: Gurpreet Singh Anand spoke exceptionally well during his attendance to the 'Sikhs Against the EDL' campaign public meeting attended on behalf of Sikh Council UK. The inspiring speech reminded attendees at the meeting of the historical good working relationship between Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims

### **Case Work and Media**

7<sup>th</sup> April 2012: Executive Member Surinder Singh Jandu and on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2012 Manpaal Singh Anand as representatives supported the Wembley arena in their new policy to allow Amritdhari Sikhs to wear their Kirpans to events. Both events went well and the support of the Sikh Council in amicably revolving the matter was acknowledged.

The Council supported the mainstream television media with the research to identify a Sikh who had experienced discrimination.

14<sup>th</sup> April 2012 The BBC documentary on the turban was shown on BBC 1-Sikh Council assisted with the research during the making of the programmes and Secretary General Gurmel Singh appeared in the programmes in highlighting the history and importance of the Turban to Sikhs. BBC confirmed that over a million viewers watched the programme

Sikh Council was contacted by a Nurse who had served within NHS services for over 24 years but recently incurred issues relating to the wearing of her Karra during work. The council provided support and guidance in addressing this with the NHS Trust. A meeting relating to this is due to take place in May 2012

Meetings have taken place with two PR companies with a view to increasing the effectiveness of key issues taken up by the Council getting coverage in the mainstream media.

### **Education Sub-Committee**

The Free School Applications - Interviews have been granted to Smethwick, Wolverhampton, Leeds and Leicester. The schools are assisting each other and the Council wishes all the applicants well in this important endeavour.

The Education Committee is also pleased to inform that the IT based Panjabi e-learning scheme is not fully operational and further details can be accessed on: [www.panjab-e-learning.com](http://www.panjab-e-learning.com),

### **Other**

The Council circulated materials relating to the Bhai Balwant Singh Rajoana and Bhai Jagtar Singh Hawara case

The Parliamentary worker applications have closed and there are four applicants who will be interviewed on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2012. The outcome of this will be shared.