

*Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh*

**Meetings:**

6<sup>th</sup> August 2013 Representatives of Sikh Council attended a meeting with FCO Minister of State, Rt Hugo Swire MP and Lord Singh; representatives from Kesri Lehar and the Simranjit Singh Branch of the Akali Dal (Maan Group) were also present. The meeting focused on the central concern of the protestors which is the case of Professor Bhullar as well as their wider human rights concerns in India. (FCO Press Release attached)

10<sup>th</sup> August 2013 Meeting of the Board of Jathedars took place at Guru Tegh Bahadur Gurdwara Sahib, Leicester

15<sup>th</sup> August during an annual trip organised by Sikh Community and Youth Services, representatives of Sikh Council UK who were in attendance took the opportunity to meet and network with Committee members and Sangat of Gurdwara Nanaksar Southampton. As always everyone visiting the Gurdwara Sahib as part of the trip was humbled by the immense hospitality shown by sevadars.

18<sup>th</sup> August Representative of Sikh Council attended the Global Sikh Alliance Conference held on France by United Sikhs during the event the opportunity was taken to express Sikh Council's support in making the Global alliance a success. Applications have been made for funding to support the democratic engagement work of the Council. Outcome will be known at the end of September/October.

26<sup>th</sup> August the Northern Mela was attended by representatives of Sikh Council in support of the young people and sewadars that put the event together. The event was said to be a huge success. Discussions took place with the Home-office about supporting work relating to options of safe and dignified return of destitute panjabis to North India.

**Casework/Campaigns:**

A health worker within Derby NHS queried a variation between EHRC guidelines and Derby's NHS dress code policy in which it states a Kara can be worn in clinical settings as long as it is pushed above the elbow and secured under a sleeve. As rightly stated by the worker this causes confusion. For the purpose of consistency and clearer guidelines of how practically it is possible to push a 'Kara' above elbow, Sikh Council suggested both guidelines are brought to the attention of and discussed with the NHS Management.

Sikh Council UK advised its members that while the initiative of One Britain, One Nation event is a positive step towards community cohesion and national integration, people must not lose sight that full respect must be paid to the Sikh traditions and respect for the Nishaan Sahib.

Having had a poor experience previously at Italian Airports relating to dastaar searches a businessman made contact with Sikh Council UK as he was anxious about travelling through the same airport in September. Sikh Council shared the new regulation guidelines with him to have with him at time of travel and present these should the need arise.

Having been made aware of the dastaar issue at Italy airport in which the President of Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee was stopped and was demanded to remove his turban, Sikh Council UK wrote to the Aviation Authorities with concerns that the European legislation which came into force in February are clearly not being cascaded down or training given to the Security Officers working at ground level.

Sikh Council supported the petition through wide circulation to stop planning permission going ahead in Bradford Council for a halal meat plant near Guru Govind Singh Gurdwara (Bradford).

### Media:

An article of Sikh Council appeared in the Daily Mail following an interview with the Secretary General. The article highlighted the experiences of those entering UK as illegal immigrants with false hope offered to them by fraudulent agents, Sikh Council along with the authorities and other NGO's recognises this to be a major problem as the immigrants are left stranded and homeless on the streets in a very poor way. Due to the poor state, discussions with the home office have been around how NGO's can work with them in setting up a scheme to enable the illegal immigrants to return home in a humane and dignified way Sikh Council was consulted by an advertising agency providing promotional materials to leading supermarkets in Leeds. Specifically relating to guidance on appropriate contents in their advertising for Diwali and Bandi Chorr Divas

### Change of delegates:

The following Gurdwaras have notified Sikh Council of changes in their delegates:

Guru Har Rai Gurdwara West Bromwich

Guru Nanak Gurdwara Smethwick

Sri Guru Singh Sabha Gurdwara Huddersfield