



05 December 2014

Outrage over Attack on Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji

Sikh Council UK joins the Sikh community in expressing outrage over the attack on Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji in a Gurdwara in Village Jodhpur, Tarn Taran, India. The Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, which had been properly instituted in the diwan of the Gurdwara, was set on fire and suffered severe fire damage in what appears to be a deliberate attack.

The incidence, which took place on Monday 1st December has shocked the Sikh community the world over and led to calls for an immediate and substantial investigation by the authorities to determine the facts. A number of people have reportedly been arrested by Police in connection with the attack.

Latest reports suggest those arrested are linked with the Noormehl Dera of 'Divya Jyoti Jagriti Sansthan' founded and previously led by the now deceased Ashutosh. The arrests have fuelled suspicion that the attack may be linked to clashes between Sikh protestors and supporters of Ashutosh in October and the ruling delivered on Monday 1st December by the Punjab & Haryana High Court that the body of Ashutosh should be cremated. Ashutosh died in January 2014 but some followers have claimed he is in a deep meditation and have kept his body in a freezer apparently awaiting his return.

Chair of the Indian Sub-Continent Affairs Sub-Committee of the Sikh Council UK, Gurdial Singh Atwal said, "We totally condemn this desecration and call for the perpetrators to be brought to justice. We are also concerned by apparent links with Ashutosh and his followers who have been the cause of much tension and provocation in Punjab and we would urge the authorities to address this as a matter of priority."

Vice Chair of the Indian Sub-Continent Affairs Sub-Committee of the Sikh Council UK, Jarnail Singh Dhaliwal said, "The attack on Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji is very distressing for Sikhs. Whilst we call for the strongest possible action against the perpetrators, we also urge the community to remain calm."

Sikh Council UK urges all Gurdwara Management Committees and Granthi's to re-visit their responsibilities for the safety of the Guru, Sangat and buildings entrusted to their care. All safety precautions should be examined and implemented in line with local professional guidelines and procedures should be reviewed and modified to minimise risk from fire or any other threat.

END

Notes for Editors

The Sikh Council UK is the largest representative body of Sikhs in the UK. We are recognised as the national advocate for British Sikhs in the United Kingdom and at the European Union.

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