



1<sup>st</sup> January 2015

## Further disclosures in declassified British Cabinet Papers

Cabinet papers from 1985 which have been declassified this week under the 30 year rule show Sikhs and India were discussed on a number of occasions and provide further insight into the British Government's position on Sikhs during that period.

The disclosures include a decision taken by the Cabinet to ban a Sikh march proposed to take place in London in April 1985 despite receipt of advice from the Metropolitan Police that the gathering posed no law and order risk.

Other revelations include a decision to pressure Sikhs to re-name a local sports tournament following complaints from the Indian High Commission. There are a number of references to trade with India and further description of Sikhs as extremists but no mention of the killings and human rights abuses in India which Sikhs in the United Kingdom were reacting to.

The latest revelations follow recent disclosures from the Irish Government National Archives of comments made by Margaret Thatcher about Sikhs in Southall during Anglo-Irish peace talks.

Recent press reports also indicate that four files from the Prime Minister's Office and the Cabinet Office relating to Sikhs and India from 1985 have been withheld from released to the public.

Secretary General of the Sikh Council Gurmel Singh said "The latest revelations show that trade with India was a clear factor in determining the paradigm in which Sikhs were viewed by the British Government of that time and further strengthens the call for an independent enquiry into these matters".

**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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