

Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi MP makes maiden speech in Parliament

Sikh Council UK – 18 July 2017

Sikh Council UK welcomed the historic occasion of the first dastar wearing Sikh Member of Parliament in the UK House of Commons giving his maiden speech in Parliament today. Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi MP for Slough rose to deliver a powerful speech that was welcomed and praised by all.

During his speech Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi made reference to his Sikh faith and heritage including his dastar. He mentioned the Sikh contribution during the world wars where over 80,000 Sikhs laid down their lives and he lamented the problems faced by Sikhs and others in countries like France today where Sikhs are not allowed to attend state schools wearing nor have their official identity documents wearing dastars.

Tanmanjeet referred to a 'warped interpretation of secularism' regarding the challenges facing not just Sikhs but those from other faith communities including Muslims, Jews and Christians in relation to their articles of faith. He mentioned his desire to continue espousing his strong belief in the value of integration and to work hard for all people regardless of background, colour or creed in the true Sikh spirit of Sarbat Da Bhalla.

Secretary General Elect of Sikh Council UK, Jagtar Singh Gill said, "The entire Sikh community will be proud to see one of their own deliver a heartfelt and sincere speech that spoke to not just the Sikh community but to all communities. It was particularly fitting to hear Tanmanjeet refer to his Sikh and British identity and I was pleased to hear him say he will be working hard for all people in the true Sikh spirit of Sarbat Da Bhalla".

The maiden speech comes just a day after senior representatives of Sikh Council UK met with Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi. The General Election earlier this year saw two Sikh MPs – Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi and Preet Kaur Gill – elected to the UK Parliament where there were none previously. Of the two Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi has been the first to deliver his maiden speech.

The speech by Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi MP can be viewed at:

<http://parliamentlive.tv/event/index/5384b2c5-d8dd-4556-ae90-caacb95cb4e1?in=14:48:27&out=15:00:00>

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Note for Editors: 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 in the European Union.