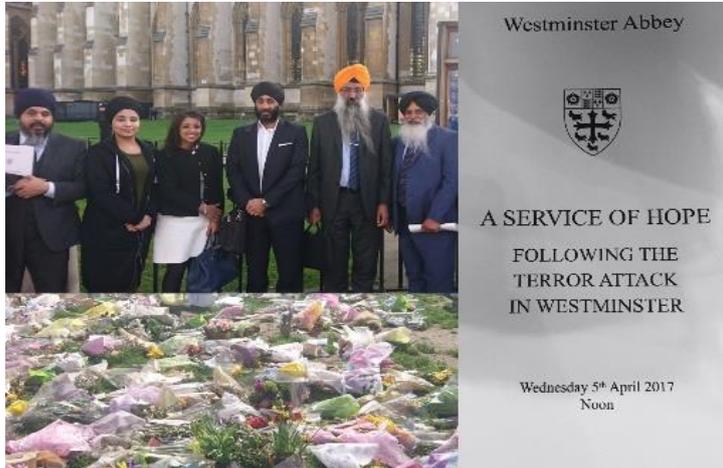


**The Sikh Network newsletter provides a quarterly update on activities and events associated with the highly acclaimed 10-point Sikh Manifesto published in January 2015 and the associated UK Sikh Survey, the largest survey of its kind**

**Service of Hope at Westminster Abbey**



The terror attack outside Parliament and the Palace of Westminster on 22 March 2017, saw an attacker drive a car into pedestrians on the pavement of Westminster Bridge then continue on to fatally stab a police officer before being shot dead. The attacker injured over 50 people with four tragically losing their lives.

The Sikh Network were invited to attend a special Service of Hope at Westminster Abbey. Joining the families, leading politicians, Royal family, police officers and interfaith communities. The service also saw PC Jaskaran Kaur Garcha, who was featured earlier this year in our #350sikhwomen campaign give the following reading from Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji:

*“First, God created the Light, then, by his Creative Power, he made all mortal beings. From the One Light, the entire universe welled up. So who is good, and who is bad? O people, O Siblings of Destiny, do not wander deluded by doubt. The Creation is in the Creator, and the Creator is in the Creation, totally pervading and permeating all places.” (Bhagat Kabir)*

**Vaisakhi celebrations at No 10 & Parliament**



On 18th April 2017, the Sikh Network joined Vaisakhi celebrations at No. 10 Downing Street and at the Houses of Parliament. Home Secretary, Amber Rudd hosted guests at No. 10, and later that day the Speaker of the House, John Bercow, kindly opened his residence to celebrations. Whilst looking to the identifiable Khalsa created by Guru Gobind Singh Ji, its

dedication to the service of others, and its pursuit of justice for all people of all faiths, the Sikh Network took the opportunity to highlight the challenges Sikhs continue to face in the UK. The call for more effective representation of Sikhs in Parliament, as referenced in the Sikh Manifesto and supported by UK Sikh Survey findings, was unanimously encouraged by the audience and fellow speakers, and today manifests itself in the Sikh candidates standing for election.

**International Women’s Day marked with #350sikhwomen initiative at EY London**

The Sikh Network in collaboration with EY Sikh Network marked the 2017 International Women’s Day with an evening of discussions and presentations to share and celebrate the achievements of Sikh women in the UK. The event was very well attended and filmed and broadcasted by KTV.

The guests heard from and interacted with a special guest panel of women who were featured as part of the #350sikhwomen initiative. They included Manika Kaur - Kirtan Artist and Philanthropist, Preet Kaur Gill - Sandwell Cllr & Cabinet member, Harpz Kaur - BBC Radio, Devinder Kaur - Sikh Educationalist, Paramjit Kaur Matharu - MD JPMorgan Chase and Ashpal Kaur Bhogal - England Hockey, who all shared some of their personal experiences and inspirational journeys.

The Sikh Network launched the #350sikhwomen initiative to mark the 350th Birth anniversary of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji. It recognises and celebrates the sacrifices, contributions and achievements of Sikh women to act as an inspiration for future generations.

Other exhibitions of the #350sikhwomen initiatives included the International Women’s Day events at the Home Office & DCLG London.



**#350sikhwomen Initiative goes International**

Hot on the success of the #350sikhwomen campaign and in keeping with our promise to continue supporting and encouraging our Sikh sisters in the future, the Sikh Network launched #350sikhwomen Global this quarter. The campaign features one Sikh woman per day and is set to highlight and celebrate the achievements of 350 Sikh women across the globe, concluding on 8th March, International Women’s Day, 2018. The campaign began in Canada to coincide with Sikh Heritage month and continued into the USA, receiving encouraging support from followers on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. The abundance and variety of talent is immense, in its first 7 weeks #350sikhwomen Global has featured politicians, artists, media personalities, healthcare professionals, poets, entrepreneurs and human rights activists, to name just a few.

The words of support from our followers and the women featured shows that this initiative is not only inspiring audiences, but also giving further encouragement to the Sikh women highlighted:

*Gursharan Kaur Kandra, President and CEO of CIAS, Canada said “It was an honour to be featured in the #350sikhwomen initiative...I am grateful to be selected in this appreciation, and I am looking forward to your future campaigns and initiatives.”*

*Lakhpreet Kaur, Founder of Kaur Life, USA “You do great work! I’m so humbled and honoured by your highlight”*

**New Sikh Network & Politics Matters shows on KTV**

The Sikh Network team have been broadcasting their very own weekly show on the newly launched KTV channel on Sky 858. The show airs on each Monday 7-8pm, and is repeated during the week.

The Sikh Network and the team have recorded over eight shows on a range of topics including the Sikh Manifesto, UK Sikh Survey, #350sikhwomen, Professional networks, Sikh faith schools, Public Health and Substance misuse as well as Political representation. If you would like to be part of any of these show or sponsor them, please get in touch.



A brand new Politics Matters Show has been launched on KTV that looks to interview different politicians each week. The objective is to build links with politicians and political parties and encourage Sikhs to take an active part in politics. In the first few

weeks those interviewed have been Andy Street, the newly elected Conservative Mayor for the West Midlands, Siôn Simon MEP, Fabian Hamilton MP, a shadow Labour Foreign Minister, Baroness Smith, the Labour Leader in the House of Lords and Baroness Sheehan, a Liberal Democrat peer who leads on International Development.

You can catch these and future shows on the KTV YouTube channel on the following link:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC66aldgz89pyBm2BYF\\_6QZQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC66aldgz89pyBm2BYF_6QZQ)

### Testing of the Sikh ethnic tick box for the Census 2021

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) commissioned BMG Research, an independent research agency to conduct research to inform the Census 2021 questionnaire. Letters were sent out the week commencing 20 February 2017 to approximately 20,000 households in each of two areas - Hounslow and Wolverhampton, both with large Sikh populations. Respondents were asked to complete the survey online with a closing date of 14 April 2017. In meetings with ONS it was confirmed part of the research was to test responses by Sikhs to a separate Sikh ethnic tick box alongside the existing optional religious question. Results from the research are expected in July 2017.

### Meetings with Shadow Home Secretary and Foreign Secretary

On 1 February meetings were held in close succession with the Shadow Home Secretary and Shadow Foreign Secretary bringing out findings from the UK Sikh Survey. They were briefed on three specific issues:

- 1) A fresh, independent investigation in relation to the UK role (under Margaret Thatcher) in assisting the Indian authorities in the June 1984 attack and subsequent anti-Sikh measures
- 2) The need to challenge Number 10, the Home Office and Department for Communities and Local Government in deliberately ignoring Sikhs with respect to the Hate Crime Action Plan
- 3) Annual Race Audit announced by the Prime Minister on 27 August 2016 that is expected to also ignore Sikhs as government departments do not separately monitor Sikhs as an 'ethnic' group and for government to urgently address this data gap

### Parliament Project to encourage more Women into Politics



The Sikh Network collaborated with the Parliament Project to hold a workshop in Birmingham titled 'A woman's place is in Parliament'. The message was to encourage and support women to have considered getting involved in politics but not quite been able to take the plunge and to provide them with information.

The workshop discussed the importance of getting involved in politics, the different routes and pathways to get there, next steps and an opportunity to talk to other women who are motivated and excited too

Our board member Cllr Preet Kaur Gill shared her experience and political journey at the event held at Council House, central Birmingham.

### Snap General Election has provided opportunity for Sikh MPs in UK Parliament

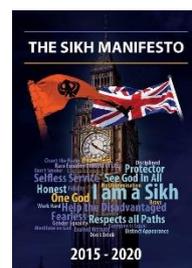
The General Election on 8 June has provided political parties and the Sikh community an opportunity to address the complete lack of Sikh representation in the House of Commons. When this newsletter went to print four Sikhs had been selected in winnable seats.



Labour has led the way and first selected Preet Kaur Gill for Birmingham Edgbaston defending a majority of 2,706 (6.5%) who could become the first Sikh woman MP. Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesei was then selected for Slough who could become the first turban wearing Sikh MP and is defending a majority of 7,336 (15.2%).

Kuldip Singh Sahota, the former Telford and Wrekin Council leader, is looking to overturn a small Conservative majority of 730 (1.8%) and became the third Sikh to be selected by Labour for a winnable seat in Telford. He became the second turban wearing Sikh to be selected for a winnable seat and signaled the Labour leadership better recognise the significance of the visible Sikh identity emphasised in the Sikh Manifesto.

The Conservatives have selected Paul Uppal from Wolverhampton South West who is looking to overturn a majority of just 801 and is the clear favourite to return to Westminster after a 2-year gap. However, the Conservatives are under pressure as they have yet to find a winnable seat for any Sikh woman or turban wearing Sikh on their Approved List.



Rocky Gill, who has been a Barking and Dagenham councilor since 2010 has been selected for Hornchurch and Upminster where the Conservatives have a majority of 13,074 (23.7%). Solicitor Manjinder Singh Kang has been selected for Tewksbury where the Conservatives have a majority of 21,972 (39.7%) and councilor Bally Singh for Kenilworth and Southam where the Conservatives have a majority of 21,002 (43%). The Conservatives have selected Samir Jassal from Feltham and Heston where Labour have a majority of 11,463 (23.2%).

### Progress on the Code of Practice for the 5Ks and turban

Several meetings and conversations have been held with government departments, as well the Equality and Human Rights Commission, on developing updated guidance or a code of practice for the wearing of the 5 Kakkars and turban.

A document is being drafted, which will be shared with all stakeholders, including internally with Sikh organisations. It is envisaged that the final document will be supported by Government Departments, the Equality and Human Rights Commission and ownership will be with the Sikh Community.

Deadline to register to vote for #GE2017 is Mon 22 May.

If you are not registered apply now at

[www.gov.uk/registertovote](http://www.gov.uk/registertovote) - Have your Say!



ELECTION 2017