Sikh Federation (UK)
Never flinch from performing righteous deeds
Tanglewood House, Pine Walk, Chilworth, Southampton SO16 7HQ

Rt. Hon. Andy Burnham MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

6 November 2026

Dear Andy

Request for an urgent meeting on the Home Office's approach to the sacred Kirpan

I am writing on behalf of the Sikh Federation (UK) to request an urgent meeting in light of the ITV documentary broadcast last night concerning the murder of Henry Nowak, and the renewed calls from his family for changes to the law.

Henry's murder was appalling. His family deserve answers, accountability, and action to help ensure that no other family suffers such a devastating loss.

However, the specific request being made is to clarify the definition of a Kirpan in law. We are concerned that the Home Office appears to be responding to media pressure without fully considering the key facts. **The central fact remains that the murder weapon was not a Kirpan, and that the police missed multiple opportunities to prevent Henry's murder.**

It suited the defence, police, and CPS for a false narrative about the Kirpan to emerge during the original trial. Following the verdict, we pressed for the police and CPS to release a photograph of the murder weapon. When this was eventually released after sentencing, it confirmed that the weapon was not a Kirpan.

The origins, design, and purpose of the murder weapon are entirely different from, and inconsistent with, the sacred Sikh Kirpan, which must have a curved blade and a handle that should never be made from an animal product.

The sacred Kirpans used daily in all Gurdwaras across the world to bless food are consistent in design: a curved blade, as reflected in legislation and in previous Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance dating back to 2010, and a single piece of steel extending from the tip through to the handle.

We wrote to the Rt. Hon. Alex Chalk KC on 29 October, setting out our correspondence with the Home Secretary since 29 May 2026 regarding the fact that the murder weapon was not a Kirpan, as part of the independent review. We have also submitted evidence showing how the police and CPS failed to search the Digwa home when the two brothers

were arrested, following a report from a local Gurdwara in Southampton more than two years before Henry was killed.

Earlier this morning, we wrote to the Lady Chief Justice and the Registrar of Criminal Appeals requesting that the phrase “large Kirpan” — used incorrectly and repeatedly in the judgment — be replaced with “large bladed item.” This would provide a more accurate description of the weapon and avoid bringing the sacred Kirpan into disrepute unnecessarily. We were shocked and disappointed by the careless use of the term “Kirpan” in the judgment yesterday, given the heightened tensions this has caused.

We are also concerned that Home Office engagement has not included leading Sikh organisations, such as the Sikh Federation (UK), or many of the larger Gurdwaras that serve as our main religious institutions, including Gurdwara Khalsa Darbar, Southampton, which reported the Digwas to the police. For example, the Home Office contacted the UK Gurdwara Alliance — which represents more than 250 Gurdwaras — in June to arrange a meeting in early July, but that meeting was later cancelled and has still not been rearranged despite repeated requests over the past four months.

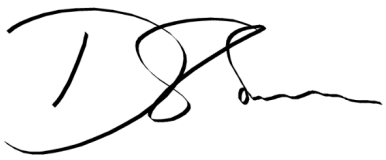
Leading Sikh organisations and Gurdwaras have the knowledge and experience to advise the Government properly. There is also insufficient transparency about who is being consulted and how those discussions are shaping policy.

Meaningful engagement must include those who understand Sikh religious practice and who work directly with the Sangat (congregations). The Sikh Federation (UK) and Gurdwaras stand ready to assist the Government in protecting the public while safeguarding legitimate religious practice.

I would therefore be grateful if you could urgently meet with us and representatives from the UK Gurdwara Alliance to hear our concerns and ensure that Sikh religious institutions are properly involved before any proposals are developed further.

The UK Gurdwara Alliance will also be encouraging Gurdwaras to write to you directly and copy in the MPs representing their Sangat. There is significant anger about what has happened in the last 24 hours so Sikh constituents will also be contacting hundreds of MPs to raise concerns with you and the Home Office.

Yours sincerely,



Dabinderjit Singh Sidhu OBE
Chief Executive for Political Engagement