

February 7, 2005

To,  
The Principal,  
Michael D. Chambless,  
Greenburgh Central School District No. 7  
Hartsdale, New York 10530

**Issue: The Right to Wear Amandeep Singh's Kirpan**

It has been brought to the attention of UNITED SIKHS that one of the practicing members of the Sikh faith, Mr. Amandeep Singh, has been barred from participating in his right as an American citizen to a proper education on the basis of his wearing his Kirpan, a **required** article of faith for a practicing Sikh. Therefore, UNITED SIKHS Director Hardayal Singh will today be meeting with the Administrators of Mr. Amandeep Singh's school to discuss the issue of the Kirpan and resolve the issue at hand.

The Kirpan is a required article of faith that is enjoined to every Sikh upon being formally inducted into the Sikh faith. Along with the other five articles of faith called the 5 K's, namely the Keshas (unshorn hair), Kanga (a comb kept in the hair), *Kachhehra* (long undershorts), Karha (a steel bracelet) and of course, the Kirpan. Let us again insist that a Sikh is **not** to part with these articles of faith and to do so is a violation of the Sikh Code of Conduct...a violation that is punishable by Sikh law. The Sikh Code of Conduct explicitly states in Chapter XII, Article XXIV, Section P:

*"Have, on your person, all the time, the five K's: **The Keshas** (unshorn hair), **the Kirpan** (sheathed sword) [The length of the sword to be worn is not prescribed.], **the Kachhehra** [The Kachhehra (drawers like garment) may be made from any cloth, but its legs should not reach down to below the shins.], **the Kanga** (comb), **the Karha** (steel bracelet) [The karha should be of pure steel]."*

Not only does Sikh law require that the articles of faith be maintained at all times, but the United States Constitution also provides strict instructions in its very First Amendment that:

*"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."*

...thereby guaranteeing that every person have the God-given right to practice their faith without any blockade or hinderance. Even the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights under Article 18 upholds the right to the free practice of one's religion:

*"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance."*

However, despite these laws affirming the right of every person, including Sikhs, to practice their faith without hindrance, Sikhs have litigation after litigation against their right to wear a Kirpan. And time after time, the Sikhs have had this right defended. The right to wear the Kirpan has been unanimously defended by the court systems of the U.S. Sikh schoolchildren have no had a single incident of Kirpan related violence in school.

We urge that the school administrators fulfill their duty to provide Mr. Amandeep Singh his American right to an education while being able to freely practice his faith unhindered. It is our hope that this situation is resolved expeditiously and Mr. Amandeep Singh is allowed to resume his studies without further delay.

Sincerely,  
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