

25th March 2020

Guidance for the Sikh Community Amid Restricted Gurdwara Access

Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh

During the March 23rd 2020 evening broadcast by the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, it was announced that as of midnight 24th March 2020 all places of worship were to be included in the list of publicly accessible facilities to be asked to cease public entry and in effect close.

In light of this request and keeping the Maryada (accepted protocol) of the Gurdwara daily routine in relation to our living Guru, Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Maharaj, Sikh Assembly has been consulting with the National Sikh Police Association UK and others, to fully understand the implications and most desirable way forward at present to comply with the announced request and maintain continuity of our Maryada and advise all Gurdwaras of the following:

Guidance for the continuity of basic functions of the Divan Hall

Sewadaars and Granthis are able to attend the Gurdwara to perform the daily Parkash and Sukhasan [morning and evening preparation of Guru Sahib from and to rest].

The live streaming of Gurbani [Sikh Hymns] and Katha [discourse] throughout the day is permissible and encouraged to keep in Chardikala those who wish spiritual nourishment in these difficult times.

The Sewadaars/ Granthis are encouraged to perform Kirtan on the stage and broadcast via available social media platforms to Sikhs currently unable to attend due to the restriction upon movement.

Guidance for those wishing to carry out Seva at the Gurdwara

Sikh Assembly advise those wishing to attend Gurdwaras that have resident Gianis/Granthis/Kirtani Jathas in sufficient numbers, that any additional sewadaars should refrain from leaving their homes to attend.

It cannot be stressed enough and the Sangat reminded, that **the Gurdwara is currently a restricted site and should only be continuing to perform core functions and duties.**

It is the collective responsibility of all Sikhs to ensure the Maryada of Guru Sahib continues. This means more than attendance. It is equally important and is our duty to act responsibly, follow the government guidelines and refrain from physical attendance where it is not essentially required. **This is something that if ignored could result in further stricter measures.**

We want to reassure the Sikh community that the measures announced by the Prime Minister, are in no way intended to interfere with any of the obligations towards the continuity of Maryada related to Sahib Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Maharaj. **Our Maryada and limited Seva is and will continue, so long as we collectively adhere to the instruction of the Government and carry ourselves as the socially conscientious and responsible members of society our Gurus created us to be.**

We would like to congratulate those Gurdwaras that have organised Langar to be delivered to the most vulnerable and dependent on others at this time, as a glorious example of Sikhi being beneficial to humanity in times of crisis. We commend them and bow in humble recognition of their selfless Seva.

As an important reminder, we advise all Gurdwara management committees and sevadars to remain extra vigilant and take all necessary precautions to maintain the security and sanctity of their Gurdwaras in this time of uncertainty and crisis.

Sikh Assembly shall continue to liaise with the Police Service, our own NSPAUK and others to enable us to work with the Sikh Community, to better understand and accommodate our collective and specific needs as the situation develops and changes.

Paramjit Kaur Matharu

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