

Sikh Society



*[London School of Economics
& Political Science]*

LSE SIKH-PUNJAB SOCIETY

"LSE's most dynamic, vibrant happening society...constantly pushing the boundaries of possibility to reach unimaginable heights." [LSE SU]

Making the Minority
Matter & Giving YOU the
Experience of a Lifetime!

E-mail: su.soc.punjab@lse.ac.uk
Facebook: LSE Sikh-Punjab

"We do not remember days; We remember Moments" [C Pavese]

Annual Report

2010-2011

The LSE Sikh Society promotes activities that appreciate the culture, history and ideology of the Sikh way of life.

OUR VISION & AIMS

- Make the Minority Matter
- Create more awareness on campus; have a stronger presence at LSE and encourage more students to attend all our events
- Make the Society better and bigger
- Allow students to learn more about the history of Sikhism, and to feel confident when voicing their concerns. To also allow them to experience the culture of Punjab
- To get sponsorship
- Network more with other societies and universities
- Create more unique events that encourage people to attend
- To raise money for charity
- To ensure the members of the society know each other, so that they feel comfortable sharing experiences and knowledge

OUR VALUES

Our values involve being open and preserving the important message of equality so that all who wanted to learn and experience Sikh Society could do so as they wish. Many students found the Sikh Society an approachable one this year, and this was one of our four key values: to be approachable, to inform others about Sikhism, to share experiences and knowledge, and to work together as a team to create a stronger society.

INTRODUCTION

[Report from University Sikh society President 2010-2011]

This report will include the positive things that took place due to Sikh Society 2010-2011. All suggested improvements are written throughout the document and can be identified by being in italics. There were many things that took place during the past academic year and below shows just a few of the main highlights.

We created a new logo and produced new red hoodies. This infused us with a new path of creativity for our society.

Weekly Simran: At our first simran (meditation) the professionals KDP performed. We invited guests who had lived in Punjab to come and talk about the history of Punjab one week. Our discussions have consistent attendees from all backgrounds and religious groups. Another week, the host from Punjab Radio came to prompt discussion on Sikh Taboos. This continued for 3 hours! Our meditation became so well-known that we were asked by the SU to host meditation for Week 1 of LT "Beat the blues" which took place in the Underground.

Our Annual Bhangra Run involved dancing along Houghton Streets with traditional Punjabi drums, dressed in traditional clothing to promote awareness of the Punjabi culture.

Bhangra Workshop: For the first time ever for any University, the LSE Sikh-Punjab provided a Bhangra Workshop, headed by a professional from the US who has appeared in many UK Bhangra videos. Both workshops were incredibly successful!

Interfaith events: Firstly, there was the "Faith Fayre", where we provided information on Houghton street, and secondly the Holocaust Memorial, where Jim Walters organized for each religion to speak something about our general religious values. I felt privileged that we contributed to this event.

Inter Sikh-Society Football Tournament: We attended two tournaments this year. We came First in Tournament 1.

Raising Money for Charity WHAM: We sold Christmas cards&crackers; although we raised a small amount, £40.55, every little counts.

Collaborations 2: This was a new event where we initiated organization. There were over five universities involved to organize the RELIGIOUS CAMP EVENT. We slept over at the temple, doing evening prayers, cleaning the temple, making food, doing a homeless run, trips to visit areas relating to Sikh-history, meditation sessions, and a professional Gatka performance.

Hum Tum Ball: We collaborated with KINGS, and the LSE Hindu-Society to put on this event for 400 people.

Other important points are mentioned throughout this document. I would like to say that it has been an honour being part of Sikh Society this year, and no success that occurred this year could have taken place without the support of the committee, and the society members and friends, so I would like to personally thank all these people, that made this year one to remember and build upon. We hope that the committee next year continue to strive forward and be recognised in its progress. This year we were nominated for 'Best Improved Society', and we hope next year's committee go on to achieve it. Many thanks & God bless.

MEMBERSHIP & OFFICERS

SELECTION PROCESS

The Committee of 2010-2011 was selected via an Election. Those that were running for a position had to do a speech and then votes were cast. Those who voted had to be current members of the Society.

For 2011-2012, we wanted to implement an "interview" selection, where one would send in their manifestos, and then the current president, treasurer and secretary could interview the candidates to see who the best candidates were for the roles. *Unfortunately, this process was not followed through as many thought an election was more democratic. Hence the selection was done once again by Election, but one could only run if they had sent in their manifestos by a certain deadline. I would advise an interview process as one can then ensure that the future committee members would be committed to their roles and would appreciate being cast into a position in the Committee.*

This year for the first time, we wanted to ensure the new Committee was chosen before the holidays, to ensure they have enough time to plan for the year ahead. There was much support for this from the current students too.

SOCIETY OFFICERS

- ✚ President= Ravandeep Kaur Khela
- ✚ Vice Presidents= Gulzar Singh Hanspal & Ravi Singh Cheema
- ✚ Secretary= Kamaljit Kaur Sagoo
- ✚ Treasurer= Inderaj Singh Alg
- ✚ Publicity Officer= Amandeep Kaur Virk
- ✚ Sports Ambassador= Hardeep Sandhu
- ✚ Events Co-ordinators= Curran Vedi & Avraj Bhachu
- ✚ 1st Year Representative= Gurmeet Kaur
- ✚ Post-Grad Rep= Kevindeep Atwal

SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

- ✚ 99 Paid Members at price of £1.50 each
- ✚ 241 Facebook Members
- ✚ Attendance varied depending on event. Meet & Greet had over 250 people. Meditation once was 40 people, with KDP. Variation from week to week, as sometimes meditation only had 5 people, normally at times of exams.
- ✚ Collected data of telephone numbers and emails to send information about Sikh Soc Events. *Should have utilised mobile messaging to remind people on events a bit more- we thought that those who paid for membership should have this privilege and those that didn't could still receive emails but this was not followed through so much; this may be a good tip for the future.*

STUDENT SERVICES

ACADEMIC STUDIES

- ✚ After each meditation, which would normally last for 20 minutes or so, we would do an “academic” study on the history of Sikhism or questions/queries that people wanted to discuss at the weekly meet-ups.



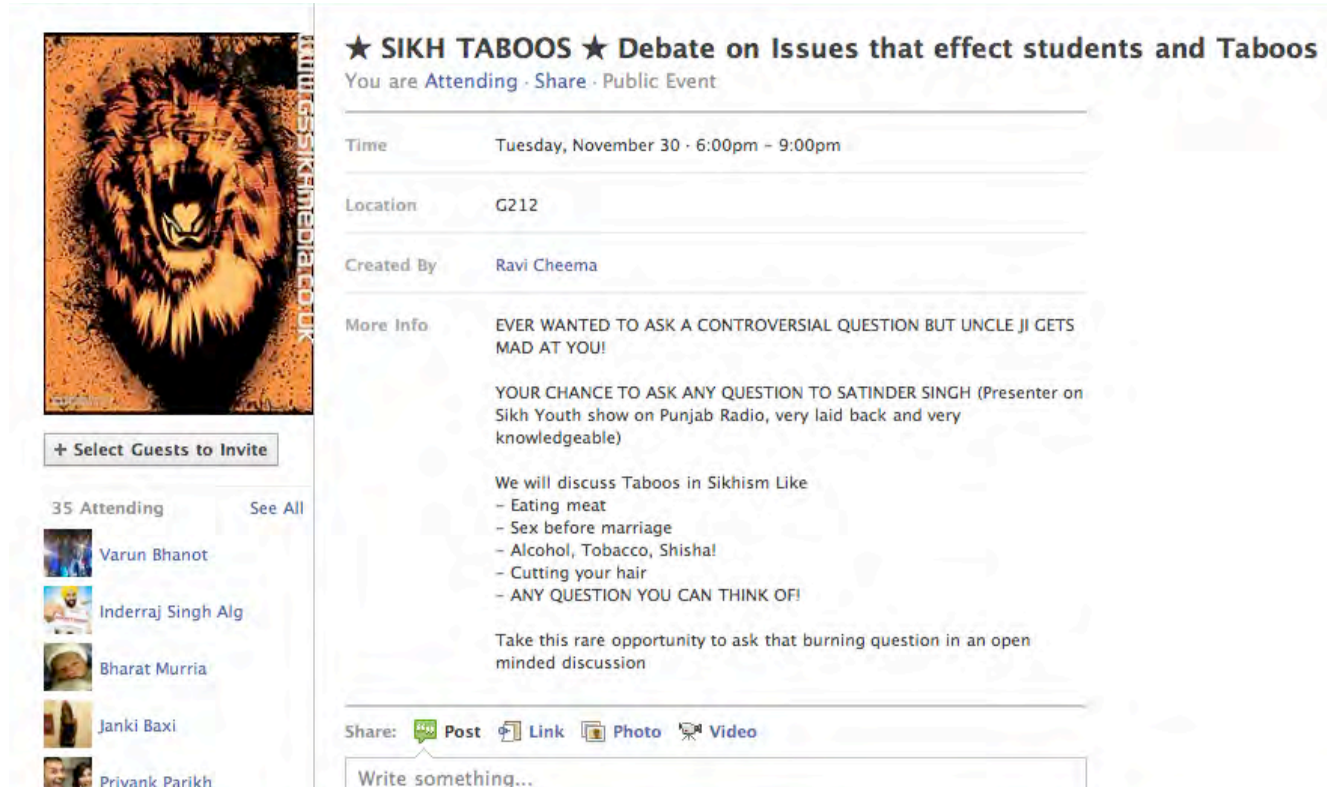
- ✚ The LSE events team put on a lecture by Gurbaskh Chahal where one learnt about some tips for success. We encouraged many society members to attend as one would gain a great awareness into the different methods of staying positive and successful.



- ✚ We had a Workshop on Punjab History, by a volunteer’s father who had lived in Punjab and knew a lot about the history there. This was a very insightful academic session, where many students were intrigued to learn more and at the same time query things that they had wanted to question many times.

WORKSHOPS

- ✚ Bhangra Workshop
- ✚ Sikh Taboos Workshop



The screenshot shows a Facebook event page for "★ SIKH TABOOS ★ Debate on Issues that effect students and Taboos". The event is on Tuesday, November 30, from 6:00pm to 9:00pm, at location G212, created by Ravi Cheema. The event description includes a list of topics to be discussed: Eating meat, Sex before marriage, Alcohol, Tobacco, Shisha, Cutting your hair, and ANY QUESTION YOU CAN THINK OF!. It also mentions that the presenter is Satinder Singh, a presenter on Sikh Youth show on Punjab Radio. The page shows 35 attendees, including Varun Bhanot, Inderraj Singh Alg, Bharat Murria, Janki Baxi, and Privank Parikh. There is a share button and a text input field for comments.

ASSISTANCE

- ✚ Sponsorship by Capital Dairy Farms
- ✚ Food provided for 200 people free for Meet & Greet; done by the company. A member from the society volunteered to provide the food through her parent's company, Samosa King Catering. They provided quality food and did so from the kindness of their hearts thus we thank them for this assistance.
- ✚ Interfaith Support in raising awareness in Houghton Street, and raising profile of the Society, and helping create a strong network between other faiths
- ✚ LSE SU & Activities Resource Centre

ACTIVITIES

SPORT

- ✚ Football Tournaments: We attended many tournaments, including Kings Football tournament. One of the tournaments in the year, we ended up joint first. With football this year, we made a great progression, and had many people participating. I hope this continues for the upcoming year.
- ✚ *I believe that there is so much more potential for sports in the upcoming year. A netball team should be created and thus tournaments can be arranged.*
- ✚ *It would be good if we had a kabadi team too, and a mixed basketball team.*
- ✚ *Our sports ambassador did try and set up a cricket tournament, but found that this would be very difficult as there is much difficulty in finding a place to play.*



WELL-BEING

- Our weekly meditation sessions became vital in helping many students de-stress from university life. They aided in mentally and physically calming individuals down, and gave them strength and positivity to carry on, as well as strengthening their spiritual connection with God.
- Many interfaith events contributed to keeping the students active on a regular basis.
- Sports and participating in other events such as King's 5K run helped in keeping the members physically fit.



*Everything you ever wanted to know about religion,
But were too afraid to ask.*

Celebrating National Interfaith Week 2010.

Tues 23rd Nov 11:30am – 3.00pm
HOUGHTON STREET

For more details contact Ben: su.anti-racism@lse.ac.uk



SOCIAL LIFE

FRESHERS WEEK

- ✚ Unfortunately, our Freshers Week took place when the new committee was not even elected yet but those that wanted to be involved attended and helped with this week
- ✚ We helped the 2009-2010 president, Mohan Singh Sidhu, by bringing in Indian sweets, helping with the SikhSoc Packs that were provided by BOSS and creating a vibrant atmosphere to attract students to our stall.
- ✚ We informed them of what SikhSoc was like in the past year and how we wanted to make the next year even bigger and better.
- ✚ There was a friendly atmosphere and we strived to assist students that had any queries.
- ✚ We played lots of music and collaborated with other Religious Societies to create a lively atmosphere in the room.



CELEBRATIONS

- ✚ End of Term Dinner & Trocadero
- ✚ Hum Tum Ball, a celebration of collaboration
- ✚ Meet & Greet- Magic Singh & special Guest Madhu Singh from Signature
- ✚ Bhangra Run
- ✚ Important dates in the Sikh Calender were discussed after our weekly mediations; they would be informative about why the dates were important.



EXCURSIONS

- ✚ At the beginning of the year we attended Collaborations by Imperial University.
- ✚ Collaborations Part II, with many other London Universities: A successful event that happened for the first time. *The foundation has now been laid for future committees to expand on the idea of 'Sikhi camp' and improve it by ensuring the daily schedules are fun, helpful and informative at the same time.*
- ✚ We collectively attended the Turban Exhibition at the British Museum towards the end of the year – 15 attended.



The poster features three photographs at the top: a group of students in traditional attire, a musical performance with a tabla and harmonium, and a group of students posing together. Below these are the words 'LEARN', 'RELAX', and 'NETWORK' in large, colorful letters. A banner below reads '2 DAYS HOSTED BY CITY, HERTS, IMPERIAL, KCL, LSE, QM, RH, UCL'. The main title 'Collaborations II - Seva & Simran' is in a large, stylized font, with 'FOR STUDENTS, BY STUDENTS' underneath. The bottom section is divided into three boxes: Friday 18th March (3PM-11PM) with activities like Homeless Run and Sleep Over; Saturday 19th March (5AM-10PM) with activities like Gatka and Kirtan Darbar; and a Location box for Shepherd's Bush Gurdwara. Contact information for various universities is listed at the very bottom.

LEARN **RELAX** **NETWORK**

2 DAYS HOSTED BY CITY, HERTS, IMPERIAL, KCL, LSE, QM, RH, UCL

Collaborations II - Seva & Simran

FOR STUDENTS, BY STUDENTS

FRIDAY 18TH MARCH 3PM - 11PM - HOMELESS RUN - SUKHMANI SAHIB - SLEEP OVER	SATURDAY 19TH MARCH 5AM - 10PM GATKA, RANI JINDAN'S HOUSE YOGA, DISCUSSIONS, LANGAR KIRTAN DARBAR - 6PM	LOCATION SHEPHERD'S BUSH GURDWARA 58-62 Queensdale Road LONDON W11 4SG Find us on facebook! http://tiny.cc/splw6
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CITY - 07976692579 HERTS - 07956662368 IMPERIAL - 07850139717 KCL - 07979021958
 LSE - 07707261628 QM - 07706735752 RH - singhaq26@gmail.com UCL - 07941499963

CAMPAIGNS & EVENTS

MAJOR EVENT

- National Interfaith Week – Stalls on Houghton Street for different faiths to promote awareness for societies and to work together to integrate as one.
- Meditation in “Beat the Blues week”, as the society was asked by the SU to host a Meditation session, where the venue was provided and snacks were paid for.
- Collaborations II, put on by London Universities, including Gatka workshops, tours to point out historic sites in London, Sewa in making food for the homeless run, and Kirtan too
- Hum Tum: Collaborating with the Hindu Society and KINGS to truly celebrate an occasion of working together. This took place in March, however it was originally meant to be earlier in the academic year to mark the joint occasion of Diwali. We would advise future committees to arrange this event to celebrate Diwali time.
- Sikh Taboo Workshop (as described above- these were very popular and I would advise as many of these to take place as possible, with different speakers/guests to host the workshop/meeting) The taboo workshop was with Punjab Radio Presenter, Satinder Singh.

ACTIVISM

- + Sending Gifts to Special People: Raising money for the Charity The W.H.A.M Project, during the Christmas Period.



COMMUNICATING WITH STUDENTS

MODES

- + Facebook Advertisements via wall posts and status changes= Effective but too much can prove to be annoying
- + Flyers and Posters were very good
- + Emails were our main form of contact
- + We should have created a twitter account; this could be a new improvement for the future
- + A Newsletter may be a good idea for the future
- + As stated above, text messaging should have been utilised more
- + Word of mouth
- + Help from other societies
- + LSE Radio
- + LSE Interfatih
- + Website! This would be a brilliant progression for the future year.

PARTNERSHIPS

WITHIN LSE

- Close relationship with the Hindu Society
- Working with the Interfaith Committee e.g. For Holocaust Memorial Day
- Working with the LSE SU and Activities Resource Centre

NATIONAL BODY

- Working with other universities, especially Royal Holloway, Imperial, Queen Mary's, Kings, & UCL

EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

- + Capital Dairy Farms: Our main source of sponsorship money.
- + The WHAM Project: the charity we raised money for in Christmas. *It would be nice if a Charity was nominated for the year so that any revenue made can go towards the Charity; more of a focus on Charity work can also be done via Sewa e.g. feeding the homeless*
- + Samosa King Catering: For Meet & Greet

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

SUMMARY

This year, we managed to secure a lot more funding than ever had been done before. This was mainly because of the assistance from Capital Dairy Farms. I recommend looking for sponsorship as soon as possible, so that one can then organise how to spend the money and which events to spend on. Having a good-sized budget will give the society freedom to progress in the way it wishes.

ACCOUNTS

INCOME:

- Activities Resource Centre Budget
- Membership Fees
- Capital Dairy Farms Sponsorship

EXPENDITURE:

- Weekly food and drink (Our high priority)
- Speakers/Guests parking etc
- Meet & Greet Performers & Henna Lady
- Bhangra Run DJ
- Collaborations II
- Hum Tum

THE FUTURE

- ✚ Organise a Kirtan Darbar
 - ✚ Collaborate more with other Universities
 - ✚ Be more involved with LSE Interfaith as this helps for awareness and they are very supportive
 - ✚ As stated above, it may be good to utilise text messaging for updates and use it as an incentive for paying for membership. Furthermore, interviews may be a good way to select the new committee.
 - ✚ Excursions to Gudwaras, could be done via interfaith
 - ✚ Cha & Samosa Party
 - ✚ Have a Seva Day- Although we attended with many Seva events e.g. Hindu Soc events and helped out with homeless runs, it would be a progression in organising your own Sewa work, like with the Collaboration II.
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- ✚ ENSURE THE SOCIETY IS ONE THAT A MEMBER FEELS COMFORTABLE EXPRESSING ONESELF, FEELS AS IF THEY ARE LEARNING MORE, AND TO GAIN CLARITY IN THEIR CHOICE OF THINKING.
 - ✚ ENSURE THE SOCIETY IS ONE THAT CONTINUES TO GROW, AND ORGANISES USEFUL AND FUN EVENTS.
 - ✚ ENSURE THE SOCIETY CONTINUES TO EXPAND TO THE POTENTIAL IT HAS.