

## **Statement on Zee News article published 30th January 2021**

*Thursday, 4 February 2021*

Khalsa Aid International issued a statement on 23rd December 2020 to raise concern regarding malicious and unfounded claims made in a news report published by Zee News.

Despite that statement, Zee News has continued to pursue an agenda of defaming Khalsa Aid International, the charitable work that it undertakes and also key members of the charity.

For the avoidance of doubt, the Khalsa Aid International team have never had any connection with any of the organisations alluded to in the Zee News report.

Khalsa Aid International understands that an investigation was undertaken by the National Investigation Agency ('NIA') in India in 2012, looking at various overseas Sikh Faith based organisations. Khalsa Aid International was listed as one of the organisations under investigation at the time to determine whether any links did exist between Khalsa Aid International and other organisations being investigated. Khalsa Aid International understands this was an ongoing investigation and to date have had no requests or communication from the NIA for information in relation to this matter.

Khalsa Aid International is a registered charity and regulated by the UK Government through the UK Charity Commission. Independent audits are carried out annually on the charity's financial accounts. Full financial statements of income and expenditure are reported at the end of each fiscal year via our trustee's report. These reports provide an explanation of charity's expenditure and states clearly where funds are ringfenced and in place for specific projects.

The allegations made by Zee News claiming financial wrongdoing are baseless and malicious. All income is reported and accounted for in the trustees annual statement submitted and published to the UK Charity Commission. All expenses incurred by the charity are listed in this report, including the salaries of all the charity staff members.

The statement referring to Ravi Singh and his wife leading a 'lavish and royal lifestyle' is completely untrue. Contrary to the Zee News articles' insinuations Ravi Singh's wife is a health professional in full time employment with the National Health Service of the UK.

The accusations made in relation to Mr Harnek Singh of New Zealand, are also completely baseless, malicious and designed to cause serious harm to the reputation of Khalsa Aid International. We have no connection to this individual or had any involvement with his social media work. Again, the allegations made against Ravi Singh's wife are spiteful, malicious and have been reported purely to cause distress and to cause serious harm to her professional integrity, credibility and reputation.

The article also refers to issues raised by a Mr Ajmer Singh Randhawa. Contrary to the report this individual has never been involved in Khalsa Aid International in any capacity and was merely an acquaintance via social media circa 2012. Khalsa Aid International has no knowledge of any of the alleged allegations he has reportedly made – again Khalsa Aid International categorically refutes those allegations.

Khalsa Aid International has never been a ‘for-profit’ organisation. The Constitution of Incorporation for Khalsa Aid International was reviewed a number of times over the 21 years it has been in existence and there was a gradual evolution of the charity over the two decades. This was to continue to allow resilient and proportionate governance structures to be in place. There is a clear audit trail to all funds and transactions made throughout the history of the organisation. All these reviews have been managed by independent legal bodies and under sound legal advice.

Claims within the article of a Nobel Peace Prize nomination being as a result of lobbying are again malicious and baseless and not worthy of commenting further upon. The allegation undermines the Nobel Peace Prize process and is offensive in its entirety.

In summary Khalsa Aid International believes the Zee News article was constructed and published with a politically driven motivation to defame Khalsa Aid International and its work supporting various charitable endeavours.