

## Fact Sheet on Post-9/11 Discrimination and Violence against Sikh Americans

### Overview

- Since 9/11, the Sikh Coalition has received hundreds of reports from the Sikh community about hate crimes, workplace discrimination, school bullying, and racial and religious profiling.

### Hate Crimes

- In the first month after the 9/11 attacks, the Sikh Coalition documented **over 300 cases** of violence and discrimination against Sikh Americans throughout the United States.
- A 2008 Sikh Coalition community survey revealed that **nine percent of Sikhs in New York City have experienced hate crimes** because of their religion. A 2010 Sikh Coalition community survey revealed that **ten percent of Sikhs in the San Francisco Bay Area have experienced hate crimes** because of their religion.
- In the last three years alone, **two elderly Sikhs were murdered** in Elk Grove, California; **a Sikh cab driver was assaulted** in Sacramento, California; **a Sikh transit worker was assaulted** in New York City; **a Sikh cab driver was assaulted** in Seattle, Washington; **a Sikh business owner was shot** and injured in Port Orange, Florida; **an 81-year-old Sikh grandfather was beaten with a steel rod** in Fresno, California; and **six Wisconsin Sikhs were murdered and several more injured at the Oak Creek Gurdwara** by a gunman with known ties to hate groups in one of the worst attacks on an American place of worship since the 1963 bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church.

### School Bullying

- A 2010 Sikh Coalition survey revealed that **69%** of turban-wearing Sikh students in the Bay Area of San Francisco have suffered bullying and harassment because of their religion and that **30%** of them had been hit or involuntarily touched because of their turbans. These attacks occur because the Sikh articles of faith – in particular, the turban – are associated with terrorism and 9/11.
- Some of the most egregious attacks on Sikh children have included: **Jaskirat Singh's turban being set on fire** by a fellow student in Hightstown, New Jersey in 2008, **Harpal Singh Vacher's hair being forcibly cut** by a fellow student in New York City in 2007, and an **assault on Gurwinder Singh** by fellow students in New York City

### Workplace Discrimination

- **12% of Sikhs** in the San Francisco Bay Area have reported suffering employment discrimination, which makes clear that Sikhs are exponentially more likely to suffer employment discrimination than the general population.
- **Gurpreet Singh was refused a job** because he would not shave his religiously-mandated beard at a Lexus dealership in New Jersey. The **NYPD still refuses to hire turbaned Sikhs**, and the **U.S. Armed Forces severely limit the right of patriotic Sikh Americans to serve their nation**.
- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 has been misinterpreted in ways that allow employers to **segregate Sikhs from customers** and the general public in the name of corporate image.

### Racial and Religious Profiling

- At some airports in the United States, Sikhs are subjected to secondary screening **100 percent** of the time by Transportation Security Administration (TSA) personnel. TSA consistently refuses to audit its screening policies to determine whether Sikh travelers are being profiled.
- The problem of perceived profiling at airports has become so troubling to members of the Sikh community that the Sikh Coalition released a mobile application called FlyRights in April 2012. The application allows Sikhs and people of any community to easily file an official complaint with the TSA in real time, right after an incident occurs.

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