



Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi MP

The Rt Hon Boris Johnson Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

5th January 2021

Dear Boris Johnson,

Peacefully protesting Indian farmers and linked global protests

Many constituents, especially those emanating from the Punjab and other parts of India, were horrified to see footage of water cannon, tear gas and brute force being used against hundreds of thousands of peacefully protesting farmers. The issue has so galvanised the Indian diaspora community, especially those of a Punjabi or Sikh background, and others who have land or links to farming in India, that tens of thousands engaged in global protests, including in towns and cities across the UK.

A cross-party letter was sent to Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab to raise this matter with his Indian counterpart and he has assured that it was raised with the Indian Foreign Minister, but he did not do so with the Indian Prime Minister during his December Delhi meeting.

You were asked about this issue during Prime Minister's Questions on Wednesday 9th December. It seems you misunderstood the question, since you made a reference to Pakistan and the need for "those two Governments to settle" these matters. The issue of course has nothing to do with Pakistan, but is regarding farmers from across India protesting and expressing their concerns of major corporates moving into the sector, as a result of new agriculture laws. Could you please respond to clarify your understanding of this important issue? Do you indeed agree that everyone has a fundamental right to engage in peaceful protest?

We believe your January India visit has now been cancelled, but you intend to meet your Indian counterpart soon. Given the urgency of this matter, could you please confirm that you will definitely convey to the Indian Prime Minister the heart-felt anxieties of our constituents, our hopes for a speedy resolution to the current deadlock and also for the democratic human right of citizens to peacefully protest?

We look forward to your timely response, so that we can inform our constituents accordingly.

Yours sincerely,

Tan Dhesi MP
Member of Parliament for Slough

Labour Member of Parliament for Slough

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(Peers of course do not represent constituencies)