

## **REQUEST**

**Re: Demonstrations on 15/08/19 and 03/09/19 outside Indian Embassy - India House, Aldwych WC2B 4NA**

I write with reference to the demonstrations which were held outside the Indian Embassy in London as mentioned above. I note that the Mayor's Office for Policies and Crime is part of the Greater London Authority and is responsible for oversight of the Metropolitan Police.

In respect of both the demonstrations I seek the following information from you:

- (i) Whether you were aware of both the demonstration, the date, start time of the event and the end time?
- (ii) The event start points and route to the Embassy?
- (iii) The number of people that were expected. If, so what the numbers expected were?
- (iv) The organisation's name or name of individuals and their respective addresses organising the same? If, so please provide details of the same. If, not then why, not?
- (v) Whether there was a planned meeting before or after the event? If, so where?
- (vi) The names of anyone scheduled to speak at both demonstrations. If, so provide the details of the same?
- (vii) What publicity, material or links were provided to you? If, so please provide the same?
- (viii) Whether you met the organisers and if so, when and what was discussed? Please provide any documents in support of the same.
- (ix) Whether you coordinated with Westminster City Council and the Metropolitan Police in respect of the demonstrations and if so, in what way?
- (x) After the first demonstration and the attacks that ensued, what steps, if any, did you take with the Metropolitan Police to ensure the safety of the Indian High Commission, its staff and the general public in the vicinity? If, not then why not?
- (xi) Was (x) above discussed or raised with the Metropolitan Police? If, not why, not?

(xii) Having regard to the fact that there was a second demonstration on the 6 September 2019, what steps, if any, did you take with the Metropolitan Police to ensure the safety of the Indian High Commission, its staff and the general public in the vicinity? If not then why not?

(xiii) Did you, with the Metropolitan Police carry out any risk assessment? If you did not, please provide an explanation as to why you did not deem it appropriate to do so.

(xiv) In the response to the questions to the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan on the 25 September 2019, he states that in relation to the power to ban protests and marches, that power does not lie with the Mayor of London but lies with the Home Secretary. Please provide us with reference, if any, for the said power? Does the Mayor have the power to make recommendations to the Metropolitan Police? Were any recommendations made? If not, why not?

(xv) Please confirm whether you are aware as to whether the Metropolitan Police has the power to place appropriate conditions / restrictions on the demonstration? If so, please confirm whether after the first demonstration you consulted with the Metropolitan Police to see whether appropriate conditions and restrictions can be placed upon the second demonstration on the 3 September 2019 or that you recommended that they should be appropriate conditions and restrictions? If not, why not? If yes, the conclusions, if any reached and what conditions / restrictions were considered too be placed?

(xvi) After the first demonstration did you recommend to the Metropolitan Police to request the Home Office to ban the second demonstration. If not, why not?

(xvii) Are you aware as to whether the Metropolitan Police issues a Partners, Business and Stakeholders update in respect of both demonstrations? If not, why not? If so, do you have copies of the same? Please forward the same to me.

In respect of the above numbers (i) - (xvii) inclusive, please provide documentary evidence that substantiates your position.

## **RESPONSE**

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request of 25 October to the Mayor's Office for Policing And Crime (MOPAC).

On the 18 October, the Mayor of London said:

*"The power to ban marches of this nature lies solely with the Home Secretary, not with me as the Mayor of London. I am copying this letter to both the Home Secretary, Priti Patel, and the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Cressida Dick, so they can clearly see the full extent of my concerns about this march.*

*I absolutely condemn the plans for a protest march to take place on the auspicious day of Diwali, in the vicinity of the Indian High Commission in London.*

*This march will only deepen divisions at a time when Londoners need to come together. That is why I am calling on those organising the march and all those considering taking part in it to think again and cancel their plans. The right to protest is an important and valued part of our democracy, but it must always be done peacefully and within the law.*

*I understand why many British Indians are so deeply concerned. Many have felt deeply threatened and worried since the previous protests outside the Indian High Commission. I can assure all Londoners that anyone who acts unlawfully will be accountable to the police.*

*City Hall are working with the Metropolitan Police to ensure a robust policing plan is in place for this march to prevent a repeat of the totally unacceptable violence, aggression and hostility from some protestors during the Indian Independence Day celebrations and at subsequent protests outside the Indian High Commission in London. This behaviour goes against everything we stand for in London and has no place in the city. The Metropolitan Police are working closely with the Indian High Commission as part of their plan.*

*As Mayor, I will continue to do all I can to extend the hand of friendship to Londoners of Indian origin – who continue to make such an incredible contribution to our city. I want to ensure they always feel respected, valued and made to feel safe in London, and that London remains a welcoming place to people from India and around the world."*

I confirm that your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and that MOPAC does hold some information relating to your request as set out below.

I note that your email mentions the Greater London Authority (GLA). Although the GLA and MOPAC are closely linked, they are separate Public Authorities for the purposes of The Freedom of Information Act 2000, as per schedule 1 of the Act. I have answered your Freedom of Information questions from MOPAC, but you may also wish to direct your questions to the GLA, here: <https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/governance-and-spending/sharing-our-information/freedom-information>

- (i) Whether you were aware of both the demonstration, the date, start time of the event and the end time?

**Answer:** The demonstration, the date, start time of the event and the end time are in the public domain.

- (ii) The event start points and route to the Embassy?

**Answer:** The event start points and route to the Embassy are in the public domain.

(iii) The number of people that were expected. If, so what the numbers expected were?

**Answer:** MOPAC does not hold information relating to this question.

(iv) The organisation's name or name of individuals and their respective addresses organising the same? If, so please provide details of the same. If, not then why, not?

**Answer:** MOPAC does not hold information relating to this question.

(v) Whether there was a planned meeting before or after the event? If, so where?

**Answer:** MOPAC does not hold information relating to this question.

(vi) The names of anyone scheduled to speak at both demonstrations. If, so provide the details of the same?

**Answer:** The names of those who spoke at both demonstrations are in the public domain.

(vii) What publicity, material or links were provided to you? If, so please provide the same?

**Answer:** Nothing was provided to MOPAC, therefore MOPAC does not hold information relating to this question.

(viii) Whether you met the organisers and if so, when and what was discussed? Please provide any documents in support of the same.

**Answer:** No meeting took place, therefore MOPAC does not hold information relating to this question.

(ix) Whether you coordinated with Westminster City Council and the Metropolitan Police in respect of the demonstrations and if so, in what way?

**Answer:** Operational matters are for the Metropolitan Police Service. In regard to specific operational policing activity, this is the responsibility of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and you can make a freedom of information request to them, here:

<https://www.met.police.uk/rqo/request/ri/request-information/rip/request-information-police/>

(x) After the first demonstration and the attacks that ensued, what steps, if any, did you take with the Metropolitan Police to ensure the safety of the Indian High Commission, it's staff and the general public in the vicinity? If, not then why not?

**Answer:** Operational matters are for the Metropolitan Police Service. In regard to specific operational policing activity, this is the responsibility of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and you can make a freedom of information request to them, here:

<https://www.met.police.uk/rqo/request/ri/request-information/rip/request-information-police/>

(xi) Was (x) above discussed or raised with the Metropolitan Police? If, not why, not?

**Answer:** As to be expected after an event of this nature, there were discussions between the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and the Mayor.

(xii) Having regard to the fact that there was a second demonstration on the 6 September 2019, what steps, if any, did you take with the Metropolitan Police to ensure the safety of the Indian High Commission, its staff and the general public in the vicinity? If not then why not?

**Answer:** Operational matters are for the Metropolitan Police Service. In regard to specific operational policing activity, this is the responsibility of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and you can make a freedom of information request to them, here:

<https://www.met.police.uk/rqo/request/ri/request-information/rip/request-information-police/>

(xiii) Did you, with the Metropolitan Police carry out any risk assessment? If you did not, please provide an explanation as to why you did not deem it appropriate to do so.

**Answer:** Operational matters are for the Metropolitan Police Service. In regard to specific operational policing activity, this is the responsibility of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and you can make a freedom of information request to them, here:

<https://www.met.police.uk/rqo/request/ri/request-information/rip/request-information-police/>

(xiv) In the response to the questions to the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan on the 25 September 2019, he states that in relation to the power to ban protests and marches, that power does not lie with the Mayor of London but lies with the Home Secretary. Please provide us with reference, if any, for the said power? Does the Mayor have the power to make recommendations to the Metropolitan Police? Were any recommendations made? If not, why not?

**Answer:** The Public Order Act 1986 sets out the power for the Home Secretary to ban a procession or march. The Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) can apply to the Home Secretary for a march to be prohibited, if there is a serious concern about the ability of the MPS to safely police the proposed march. The Home Secretary is the only person who has the power to ban a march.

(xv) Please confirm whether you are aware as to whether the Metropolitan Police has the power to place appropriate conditions / restrictions on the demonstration? If so, please confirm whether after the first demonstration you consulted with the Metropolitan Police to see whether appropriate conditions and restrictions can be placed upon the second demonstration on the 3 September 2019 or that you recommended that they should be appropriate conditions and restrictions? If not, why not? If yes, the conclusions, if any reached and what conditions / restrictions were considered too be placed?

**Answer:** Operational matters are for the Metropolitan Police Service. In regard to specific operational policing activity, this is the responsibility of the

Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and you can make a freedom of information request to them, here:

<https://www.met.police.uk/rqo/request/ri/request-information/rip/request-information-police/>

(xvi) After the first demonstration did you recommend to the Metropolitan Police to request the Home Office to ban the second demonstration. If not, why not?

**Answer:** The Mayor has made his concerns about the safety of such protests clear to the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police and the Home Secretary. You can read more about this here: <https://www.easterneye.biz/london-mayor-condemns-anti-india-march-planned-on-diwali-calls-for-cancellation/>

(xvii) Are you aware as to whether the Metropolitan Police issues a Partners, Business and Stakeholders update in respect of both demonstrations? If not, why not? If so, do you have copies of the same? Please forward the same to me.

**Answer:** MOPAC does not hold information relating to this question.

As stated above, both the GLA and the MPS may be able to answer some of your questions and you can make a freedom of information request to them here:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/governance-and-spending/sharing-our-information/freedom-information>

<https://www.met.police.uk/rqo/request/ri/request-information/rip/request-information-police/>

If you are unhappy with the response to your Freedom of Information requests, please see the MOPAC website on what the next steps are at:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/mayors-office-policing-and-crime-mopac/governance-and-decision-making/freedom-information>