

## ON THE ISC FRONT

KANWAL PAL SINGH\*

\*General Secretary, International Sikh Confederation (ISC), [iscchd2006@gmail.com](mailto:iscchd2006@gmail.com)

During the first quarter of 2026 (January–March), the International Sikh Confederation (ISC) advanced a series of meaningful outreach and commemorative initiatives. Alongside these efforts, the Confederation broadened its engagement with stakeholders at both national and international levels.

On 7<sup>th</sup> January, 2026, ISC submitted a representation to the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Punjab, S Bhagwant Singh Mann, arising from the Conclave '*The Way Forward*' held to commemorate the 350th Martyrdom Anniversary of Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib, titled '*Religious Conversions in Punjab.*' Eminent Sikh personalities from academia, administration, judiciary, journalism, Sikh institutions, *et al*, had participated and deliberated on the issue. ISC shared the two resolutions related with the Government of Punjab, and urged the CM Punjab to strengthen communities through education, cultural engagement, and economic empowerment as safeguards against exploitation, while affirming that any anti-conversion law would contradict Sikh philosophy of freedom of conscience, dignity of choice, and respect for all faiths. The Confederation requested due consideration of these resolutions in future policy framing.

On 29<sup>th</sup> January, 2026, ISC addressed a representation to Shri Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu, Hon'ble Minister of Civil Aviation, Government of India, highlighting the urgent need for enhanced international connectivity from Chandigarh. While Chandigarh is designated as an international airport, its only current overseas service is to Dubai/ Sharjah, compelling travelers from Punjab, Haryana, and Himachal Pradesh to rely on indirect routes via Delhi and other airports. ISC emphasized that direct flights to London, Singapore, and Amsterdam from Chandigarh would significantly ease travel for the diaspora world wide, reduce costs and time, and strengthen India's cultural and economic ties globally. The Confederation requested the Ministry's kind consideration to initiate these vital connections, underscoring their potential to promote tourism and regional development.

On 29<sup>th</sup> January, 2026, ISC submitted another representation to Shri Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu, Hon'ble Minister of Civil Aviation, urging the initiation of direct air connectivity between Chandigarh International Airport (IXC) and Sri Guru Ram Dass Jee International Airport (ATQ), Amritsar. The appeal highlighted Amritsar's spiritual, cultural, and historical significance as home to Sri Harmandir Sahib and other major heritage sites, alongside its role as a hub of trade and industry. Chandigarh was emphasized as a modern capital city and gateway to Himachal Pradesh, with its own strong tourism appeal. ISC underscored that direct flights between the two cities would greatly benefit pilgrims, tourists, business travelers, and senior citizens, while fostering regional trade, tourism, and economic growth. The Confederation proposed an initial schedule of twice-weekly or once daily flights to assess demand and optimize service, requesting the Ministry's kind consideration to make this vital connectivity a reality.

On 9<sup>th</sup> February, 2026, ISC issued a reminder to the Hon'ble President of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) regarding the non-inclusion of prominent Sikh

organizations in the 34-Member Committee constituted to frame service rules for the Hon'ble Jathedar of Sri Akal Takht Sahib. While acknowledging the initiative, ISC reiterated its earlier request (letter dated 28<sup>th</sup> August, 2025) for the inclusion of national and international Sikh bodies whose contributions to the Panth are widely recognized. The Confederation emphasized that such inclusion would enhance the credibility and comprehensiveness of the Committee and safeguard the sovereignty and independence of Sri Akal Takht Sahib, both in spirit and practice. ISC urged the SGPC to give due consideration to this request and communicate an early reply.

Despite ISC's earlier representation dated 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 2025, no response or apology has been received from the Editor-in-Chief of *The Tribune*. On 9<sup>th</sup> February, 2026, ISC had issued a reminder to *The Tribune* regarding the misleading headline published on 26th November, 2025, titled, '*Op Sindoor legacy of Guru's valour: Modi*' which not only distorts the Prime Minister's words but is also a gross misrepresentation of the sacred legacy of the Sikh Guru. The Guru's legacy is rooted in his supreme sacrifice for religious freedom, human rights, and interfaith harmony. The Confederation expressed disappointment at the silence of the Editor-in-Chief, and reiterated that journalistic ethics demand a public apology, urging *The Tribune* to act without further delay to uphold accuracy, respect, and public trust.

On 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2026, ISC submitted a representation to the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Punjab, S Bhagwant Singh Mann, emphasizing the urgent need for a high-quality Punjabi–Punjabi monolingual dictionary. ISC highlighted that while bilingual dictionaries (Punjabi–English/English–Punjabi) exist, the absence of a comprehensive monolingual resource hampers mastery of the mother tongue. The letter further underscored the importance of developing an advanced online Punjabi dictionary, modernizing vocabulary to include scientific, technical, legal, and medical terms, as well as expanding the linguistic heritage by incorporating words from Gurbani. ISC proposed that the responsibility for this project be entrusted to the Punjab Language Department and/or Punjabi University, Patiala, ensuring cultural sensitivity, sustainability, and scholarly rigor. The Confederation affirmed that such a dictionary would be a historic achievement and a lasting gift to Punjab, Punjabi, and the global Punjabi community.

On 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2026, S Chamkaur Singh, a progressive farmer from Village Gholian visited the office of the ISC and held a meeting with the Secretary General and General Secretary. He briefed the Confederation on various activities related to organic farming and highlighted the challenges currently being faced by farmers in Punjab. He shared details of his initiatives wherein farmers have come together to showcase a collective organic farming project. ISC encouraged him to prepare a comprehensive project plan for the entire state, so that the proposal could be taken up with the appropriate authorities. The Confederation reiterated its commitment to promoting sustainable agriculture, reducing dependence on chemical inputs, and supporting farmer-led initiatives that safeguard health, environment, and economic resilience.

ISC extends its warm congratulations to Dr Jaspal Kaur Kaang on her distinguished appointment as Professor of Eminence at Sri Guru Granth Sahib World University, Fatehgarh Sahib; S Gurbir Singh for President, Institute Of Sikh Studies, Chandigarh; and Dr Birendra Kaur for Vice President, Sikh Educational Society, Chandigarh. ISC recognized these honors as a befitting acknowledgment to their dedication and commitment to Sikh studies and education. As valued members of ISC's Executive Committee, their elevation to these esteemed positions is a proud moment for the Confederation. ISC conveys heartfelt appreciation and best wishes to all of them.