



Sangh Mail

Holocaust Memorial Day Commemoration

January 2025

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HINDU SWAYAMSEVAK SANGH (UK)
COMMEMORATING

HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY

SPEAKER DIANA COOK FROM
GENERATION 2 GENERATION

Sun 19th Jan 2025 - 3PM
ZOOM EVENT



QUEENSBURY NAGAR'S JIABAI,
SATYA, AND ARJUN SHAKHA
INVITE YOU TO JOIN...



22/11/24
7:00 - 9:00

IT'S YOUR
UK PARLIAMENT

#UKPW

LET'S
MAKE A
DIFFERENCE
TOGETHER

GAMES
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QUESTION TIME
QUIZES

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Holocaust Memorial

Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (UK) Holocaust Memorial Day Commemoration

The Holocaust was one of the darkest chapters in human history.

With the emphasis on the 'Light the Darkness' theme, we heard from Diana Cook a speaker from Generation 2 Generation. She explored echoes from the past and narrated 'The story of Margot' - Diana's mother, Margot Hodge née Pogorzelski who escaped the horrors of Nazi Germany a few weeks before war broke out. It was after Margot died in 2014 that Diana realised that her mother's memories were now her responsibility.

Diana used family photos and voiced extracts from a brief memoir Margot wrote describing her childhood and early adult life. She described how Margot's idyllic childhood changed dramatically after Hitler came to power in 1933.

The online event also looked into the persecution and genocide Hindus have suffered in the past and continue to suffer today in Bangladesh, Pakistan, Myanmar, and Afghanistan.

Joining the online event on behalf of HSS(UK), were members from the HSS(UK) National Executive team, including Dr. Harsha Jani, Public Relations HSS(UK).



'Breslau Jews were deported to extermination camps from this place 1941-1944'



Freystadt (now Koźuchów) in 2019 and in the 1930s

Anti-Jewish Measures in Nazi Germany



- 1933 - Public burning of books by Jews and anti-Nazis and boycott of Jewish shops.
- 1934 - Jewish students excluded from medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, law.
- 1935 - Jews denied citizenship under Nuremberg Laws
- 1938 - All Jewish children barred from German schools.



Mum, dad and my brother Stephen, 1946



Stephen and me, 1952



Margot and her brothers in Israel, 1966

UK Parliament week

UK Parliament Week 2024 HSS(UK) Engagement



We have come a long way since our first UK PARLIAMENT WEEK (UKPW) activity in 2017. Looking at activities up and down the country it is clear we have huge potential and there is an appetite to learn about democracy and the importance of democratic engagement. In our 8th Year of UK PARLIAMENT WEEK, we saw our Shakha branches which had never participated in UKPW take on the challenge of hosting activities.

At our UKPW activities in 2024, over **2206 participants** aged 7 to 85 learned why engaging with our lawmakers matters. We had conversations with **57 politicians** including MPs, Councillors, Mayors, and Members of The London Assembly. We showcased our activities in the presence of invited community leaders and demonstrated our keen aptitude for learning about our political system through debates, discussions, raising petitions, organising campaigns, and visits to the UK Parliament.



There are several avenues we can explore to harness the enthusiasm for political engagement we have cultivated through UKPW. It is important to look to the future and encourage potential young Swayamsevaks and sevikas to actively participate in debates, Youth Councils, Youth Parliament, Youth Boards, and other formal structures. Our efforts to politically engage our youth can help to develop the next generation of young leaders who see themselves as agents of change.



To end, a quote from a young Swayamsevak, **'I now realise, I can speak to my MP about things that matter to me'**.

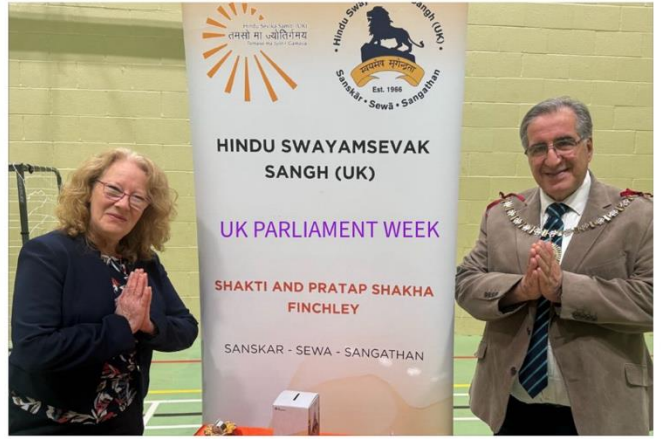
Commenting on the activity at Ektaa Parivar Shakha, Emily Darlington MP for Milton Keynes South commented, **'It's great to attend this activity and see people of all ages wanting to be active in bringing about understanding of our democracy'**.

Dr. Harsha Jani
HSS(UK) UPPW2024 Lead





Amersham - Kerrie Carpenter, Senior Outreach and Engagement Officer for Parliament explains how Parliament works



Finchley - Mayor Tony Vourou and Allison Moore



Birmingham Sutton



Birmingham Sutton



Edinburgh - Should Social Media be Banned for Under 16's
MP Christine Jardine & Councillor Simita Kumar





Halifax and Huddersfield - MP for Halifax Kate Deardan



Hounslow and West Drayton - HSS(UK) Kalyani Peshave thanking Emergency Services

UK PARLIAMENT WEEK

#UKPW



Hounslow and West Drayton - PW with Emergency services



Leamington - Big Ben Restoration



Nottingham- Junk food advertising should have stricter controls



Milton Keynes - Q and A with a Member of Parliament



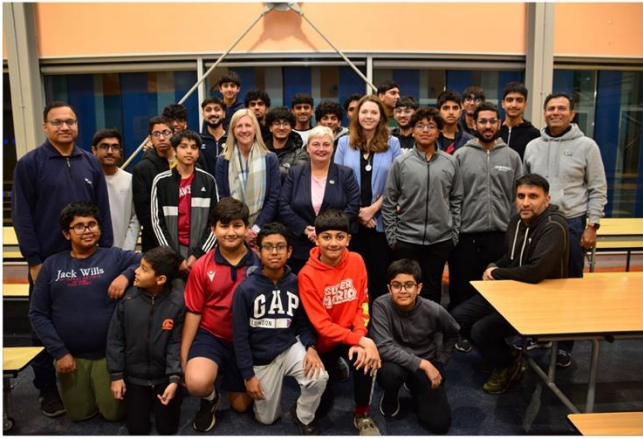
Milton Keynes - Q and A with a Member of Parliament



Queensbury - Cllr Jayanti Patel & Cllr Kanta Mistry, the Vice Chairman (Political) of Harrow East Conservative Association Shri Vijay ji Singh



Queensbury - Debate on Littering, Bullying in the schools and Supporting mental health care



Reading - Cllrs Laura Blumenthal, Pauline Jorgensen and Rebecca Margetts



Reading - Debating.. Is Home Schooling better than going to school



South Harrow - 4 day working week - Clls Krishna Suresh and Thaya Idaikkadar



Slough - Is Technology Making Us More Isolated_ and Should the UK Lower the Voting Age to 16 to Better Represent Young People in Decisions That Affect Their Future



Slough - Mr. Jack Rankin (MP for Windsor), Mr. Balwinder S. Dhillon (Mayor of Slough), Cllr Subhash Mohindra, Cllr Neel Rana



Halifax and Huddersfield - MP for Halifax Kate Dearden



Swindon - Cllr Vijay Manro, Cllr Ravi Venkatesh, Parish Cllr Raj Patel and Swindon Hindu Temple Chairman, Pradeep Bharadwaj



Wakefield - Funding for supporting COP 29



Warrington MP Sarah Hall and Councillor Nathan Sudworth (Warrington North) and MP Charlotte Nichols (Warrington South)



Woolwich - MP Louie French



Bradford - Debating Assisted Dying Bill



Bromley - Cllr Raj Singh ji, Reading



Cheltenham - Cameron Thomas MP Tewkesbury, Cllr Mary Jordan, Manny Masih, BBC Radio Presenter



Cheltenham - Should social media platforms be held responsible for the mental health of young users



Rugby - Mobile phones should be banned in Schools, John Slinger the MP for Rugby



Leamington - Fast food restaurants -
MP Mr. Matt Western and cllr Hema Yellapragada



Liverpool - Paula Barker - Labour MP, Wavertree



KAHO - Should UK lower the voting age to 16



KAHO - Prof Ross Renton of ARU University, Cllr Tim Alban and Master Pranav Agarwal, Youth MP of Peterborough



KAHO and Peterborough Parliament Week Gathering

Kho-kho worldcup

Kho Kho World Cup 2025 HSS(UK) Big Representation



The inaugural Kho Kho World Cup took place at the IGI Stadium in Delhi, India on 13th-19th January 2025 and included 14 members of the HSS(UK) as part of the England team. Fielding both a men's and a women's team, each squad will consist of 15 talented athletes, ready to showcase their skills on the global stage in this thrilling and fast-paced sport.

Having learned the subtle differences in the rules for International Kho Kho, the players were successfully selected for the England team after trials in November 2024. Making up almost 50 percent of the squad, the selected players from HSS background learned to play in shakhas over the years and all have participated at the yearly Khel Pratiyogitas and/or NHSF (UK) tournaments. Players from across England have been training for the past 2 months including a 3-day boot camp between Christmas and New Year in preparation for the competition.

Team India won the title in both categories. **The next Kho Kho World Cup is scheduled for Birmingham in 2027.**

Kho-kho worldcup



HSS(UK) Players in England Squad

Players selected are:

Aishwarya Apte, Anushree Kaluskar,

Navya Shandil (Amersham)

Jaanki Mistry, Bharat Prasanna Kumar (Slough)

Maya Mepa (Reading)

Keshvi Shah (Queensbury)

Varun Harpale, Om Harpale, Shiv Hirani (Wembley)

Akash Sanghavi (Leicester NHSF UK)

Akash Sood, Rutik Joshi, Dillon Kevat

(Ashton Under Lyne).

Kho-kho worldcup



HSS(UK)
Supporters



Shri Chandrakant Sharma meeting Team
England



Other news

Other news

Celebrating Kite Festival – Coventry Makar Sankranti

On 17th January 2025, Coventry Nagar came together to celebrate Makar Sankranti. Makar Sankranti, also known as Pongal or UttarayaNa, is a Hindu harvest festival celebrating the Sun God's transition from the southern to the northern hemisphere, signifying new beginnings. Celebrated across India with regional names and customs, it includes colourful decorations, rituals like "Mangha Snana" and offerings of gratitude through pooja and feasts.

Traditional activities include kite flying, cattle worship, and preparing sweets like sesame seed and jaggery treats. The festival is a time of joy, symbolising hope, prosperity, and the significance of agriculture in Indian culture. It reminds many of the warmth of family gatherings, the aroma of fresh harvest, and the spirit of renewal and goodwill.



Other news

Cheltenham Kesari Shakha Supports Srinivasan ThiruKalyanam Event



On 8th December, Cheltenham Kesari Shakha Karyakartas supported an event Srinivasan ThiruKalyanam organised by the International Hindu Community Association of Gloucester. The Karyakartas engaged with the children, aged from 5 to 13 years, with Physical and Bauddhik activities. The children enjoyed making deities with play dough, coloring Rangoli, and doing crossword puzzles on Ramayana and Mahabharata in a Karyashala. All Karyakartas enjoyed and loved supporting the event.

Siva Rama Reddy ji posted a heartfelt thank you note to all the volunteers for supporting the event.

'A special note of gratitude to the Kesari Shakha team from Cheltenham for beautifully managing the kids' zone and organizing engaging activities. Thank you, Kesari Shakha, and your wonderful team.'



Other news

North East & Scotland Vibhag Geet Pratiyogita

The karyakram began with Deep Prajwalan and the reciting of Saraswati Vandana. Halifax/Huddersfield, Bradford, Morley, Sheffield, Wakefield, and Leeds nagars participated in person, while video entries were forwarded from Newcastle, Edinburgh, and Aberdeen nagars

All participated with great enthusiasm and energy. The eventual winner was Sheffield ShivShakti Shakha with an amazing performance, and all the runners-up felt a sense of achievement also. As part of our Samaj Sampark efforts, we invited 4 judges who have a background in music. The Karyakram concluded with delicious bhojan prepared by our Madhav Kendra.





New Initiative

“Attithi Devo Bhava” – The guest is a form of the divine

North West and Northern Ireland Vibhag

Our youngest members of Shakhas across our Vibhag have been taking care of our new guests! Plush toys representing Krishna ji, Ganesh ji, and Hanuman ji were shared around Shakhas, and primary school children were given the opportunity to take one home for a week, along with a journal, to write about their experiences and learnings.

Everyone enjoyed spending time with them so much that we were later joined by Lakshmi ji, Saraswati ji, and Durga ji at Navratri time, allowing more visits! The children were encouraged to write about their activities, what they knew about their guest, and anything new they had learned about them during their visit. Over this year, 7 different Shakhas participated, with over 50 homes visited and 91 diary entries in total.





The diary entries have been both informative and creative! Multiple drawings, photographs, sholkas and stories about the respective Bhagwaan were shared in the journals. The children also used these to learn mantras, such as Hanuman Chalisa, and several have taken them to school/ classes to talk about Hindu dharma and even to friend's houses, also sharing what they learn in Shakha. The toys have engaged in many more activities, such as cricket matches, holidays to the lake district and multiple trips to the Trafford Centre, as well as participating in family poojas and festive celebrations. It was lovely to see each one returned with a rakhi (thread of protection) tied to them!

The aim of this activity was not only to give a fun way to learn more about these deities, but help develop creative writing skills, use them as a tool for story-telling and develop verbal presentation skills, as well as practising a core Hindu value 'attithi devo bhava' – the guest is a form of the divine, when these toys are welcomed into the home and looked after by the children. By sharing these across the vibhag, it encouraged networking and allowed children to read entries from children from other Shakhas too, allowing both experiences and resources to be shared. Our guests certainly enjoyed spending time with everyone!

Other news

Sewa Event at Bracknell

The last Sewa Event for the year end, Bracknell Gajanan Parivar Shakha collected food items for the Bracknell Council Food Bank and warm coats for the NishkamSWAT organisation. Around 55 kg food and 300 coats were collected! Youths and seniors participated in the experience. Hon. MP Peter Swallow's office joined us while handing over the food items and were amazed to see our unity and strength! Amazing end to the year 2024!



Other news

Tulsidas Shakha First Bhajan Sandhya

Tulsidas Shakha a newly formed shakha in Stratford upon Avon had its first Bhajan Sandhya. It was so nice to hear everyone singing Bhajans together, children and seniors. Many talented musicians. Our Bhajan Sandhya became our first opportunity to get to know each other and make a resolution for the new year to bring together more people in the community.





Essential read



Mentors in the Sangh

Most karyakartas would say that at some stage in their life, they had been tremendously influenced by senior person or another. These influential stalwarts have had so much effect on the swyamsevak that they become a lifelong karyakarta of the Sangh.

How have these great figures managed to influence so many swayamsevaks. Great souls such as Ma. Laxmanrao Bhide had kept close touch with many swayamsevaks and through enquiring on a regular basis and on one-to-one contact. He took great interest in personal, family issues of the swayamsevaks.

Swayamsevaks often recall him as a personal guide, guru or even 'Bheesma Pitamaha'. He had no personal self-interest but only the interest of the swayamsevaks at heart.

Why is this necessary

As swayamsevaks and sevikas grow up, they undergo so much change in their life. From being buffered in young life by family, to stresses of student life, through phase of adolescence, starting out in working life, getting married and settling down.

All this happens in a short period of time. So many questions, contradictions and concerns come to the fore. In this time of change, we have to imbibe the spirit of Sangh also.

Can Sangh be the one constant, a true companion and a selfless guide that provide a rock of stability that is so much needed?

How can I be a Mentor?

There are many tiers of being mentor. Even those who need mentoring can be mentors. This action will develop our swayamsevaks and sevikas. Let me explain.

- A mukhya shikshak of a shakha can mentor his gatnayaks over a couple of years.
- A Karyawaha of the shakha can mentor more mature and intelligent swayamsevaks of his shakha.
- A Nagar karyawaha can mentor some of the junior karyakartas of his nagar.
- One karyakarta can selected to be mentor all university students living away.
- Some senior swayamsevaks can be given specific responsibility to mentor other junior swayamsevaks in their shakha.

Everyone needs to have mentor whom they can freely talk to and exchange ideas and get moral support.



What is Involved in being a Mentor?

1. Meet as often as possible in the home setting as part of meeting with parents also.
2. Try to create a balance between formally and informally in a group setting.
3. Try to enjoy the exchange of views.

What sort of Issues do we concentrate on?

1. Take interest in issues such as personal and peer stresses.
2. Create clarity of thinking and issues such as Sangh, Samaj, and social issues

3. Guide them through difficult times such as education, career, through early married life, etc.
4. Involve them in key decision-making processes, activity.

Summary

Sangh sanskaars are imbibed through mentoring, heart to heart, being there in their times of need and indifferent circumstances. These are often the characteristics that give the lifelong imprint on our Sway/s and Sevikas, which stay with them for a long time.





We want to hear from you!

When submitting your articles, here are a few points to consider:



Provide a summary

Keep articles short, highlighting the best parts



A picture tells a thousand words

Attach your best high resolution pics (maximum of 8 @ 300 dpi).



Who it's from

Don't forget to include your Shakha name and location

Send all articles and pictures to sanghmail@hssuk.org

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