

Indian Workers Association (G.B.)

Hindustani Mazdoor Sabha Estd 1938

President:
Harbhajan Singh Nahil
23 Asthill Grove,
Coventry CV3 6HN
Tel: 024 7650 5148

Coventry Branch

Secretary:
Dilbagh Singh Gill
89 Clay Lane,
Coventry CV2 4NQ
Tel: 024 7663 5313

27th October 2005

Mr Surinder Sharma
Director for Equality and Human Rights
The Department of Health
79 Whitehall
London SW1A 2NL

Dear Mr Sharma,

Where have our supposed leaders and those in high office been living? This multicultural, multi-faith and tolerant Britain about which New Labour and those with a vested interest love to announce is a fiction in their minds. Those on the ground at the heart of the community know of the widespread underlying discrimination, intolerance, prejudice and the racial, cultural and religious tensions that exist. It comes as no surprise to us that drug related gangs were able to agitate and precipitate open hostility on the streets of Birmingham that has ended in the tragic and shameful loss of life.

It is time that those in authority engaged us in the community and bothered to listen to our concerns and needs. This white male club that still dominates Britain with its bigotry, discrimination, and elitism has been very clever at manipulating a handful of champions for their cause to give the appearance that significant progress towards social integration has been made. No-one denies that it has occurred but it is minimal.

Nowhere is the continuation of racial discrimination more obvious and openly reflected than at our local hospital NHS Trust. On a weekly basis we hear shocking stories of racial discrimination from staff at the Trust and the case of the suspension of Dr Raj Mattu highlights those real concerns. It is no coincidence that in the last 10 years the only 2 consultants to be suspended by the Trust management for bullying have been Indian, yet white consultants and senior managers charged with bullying and sexual harassment have not been dealt with in the same way. We know that in the Cardiology department alone at Walsgrave Hospital 3 senior doctors have raised concerns recently about racial discrimination, yet none of the perpetrators have been dealt with in the same manner as the allegations against Indian consultants.

It should not be unexpected that when one of Coventry's successes from the Indian community, local boy Dr Mattu, is so blatantly discriminated against and shabbily treated that the community feels vulnerable, disadvantaged, and persecuted in the face of this. We need those in authority to act now and engage community leaders to avert any escalation or further outbreaks of hostility between the various factions in our own community. We have consistently pointed out the underlying racism behind the suspension of Dr Mattu and we have been ignored. Surely we should not be ignored any longer. We enclose our previous letter about this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Dilbagh Singh Gill
Secretary, Indian Workers Association

CC: Equal Opportunities Commission, Mr T. Phillips, Ms. S. Chakrabarti