



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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House of Commons Oral Answers

Business of the House

col 1102 Thangam Debbonaire (Labour): ... This is Race Equality Week. Hate crime is rising in Britain. Race is now a factor in more than seven out of 10 hate crimes recorded in England. Can the Leader of the House explain what the Government are doing to tackle this? Religious hate crime is also rising, particularly against British Muslims, so can the right hon. Gentleman also demonstrate his personal commitment to tackling that by scheduling in Government time a debate on Islamophobia? ...

Mark Spencer: ... I think everybody in the House will recognise that race crime is a terrible offence, and we should all do our part in condemning anyone who is involved in racial crimes. I wholly accept the point that she makes. I would be delighted to work together, in any way we can—we have a responsibility not only as Members of Parliament, but as citizens, to call out racial hatred whenever we see it in all its forms. ...

col 1110 John Cryer (Labour): ... May I support the plea from my hon. Friend the shadow Leader of the House for a debate in Government time on racism and anti-racism? The figures for attacks on Jewish and Muslim communities in particular are rocketing for all sorts of reasons, and many of us, including me, represent both communities.

Mark Spencer: This is an important issue, and, as I have said, we all have a responsibility to try to ensure that we get our language right in the House. Hate crime of any nature should not be tolerated. I think it is always a good thing to debate it at any point and to highlight and condemn it, as well as working with our law enforcement officers who are out there on the frontline dealing with it on a daily basis. ...

col 1117 Sarah Owen (Labour): ... My constituents are concerned by the rising incidence of Islamophobia, backed up by worrying new findings from the University of Birmingham that Britons are three times more likely to discriminate against Muslims than any other faith group. Their fears are all compounded by reports of Islamophobia at the heart of this Government. ... Will people's legitimate concerns be addressed in Government time, yes or no?

Mark Spencer: The hon. Lady is right to highlight all forms of hate crime and racial discrimination, and I am committed to assisting her in any way I can to try to diminish, reduce or eradicate racial hatred and racial crime. It is an appalling crime and it should be condemned at all levels. If I can assist her in any way in doing that, I would be delighted to do so. ...

col 1118 Anum Qaisar (SNP): ... Will he make time, on the Floor of the House, for a debate on Islamophobia? I have spoken previously on the Floor of the House about my experiences of Islamophobia and racism. Does he agree that an individual's religion, or indeed no religion, should never be a barrier to them in the workplace?

Mark Spencer: I wholly agree with the hon. Lady that someone's religion, sexuality, sex or age should not be a barrier to their career. ...

To read the full transcript see

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2022-02-10/debates/8BCD7CDB-2DB2-43CF-B045-42A39627B98E/BusinessOfTheHouse#contribution-B2586184-4213-4EA8-988D-7183F4A3F7D4>

House of Commons Written Answers

The following two questions both received the same answer

Islam: Discrimination

Angela Rayner (Labour) [116951] To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the terms of reference are of his Department's investigation into allegations of Islamophobia within Government; and who is conducting that investigation.

Angela Rayner (Labour) [117795] To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether the findings of his Department's investigation into allegations of Islamophobia in Government will be published; and what the timeframe is for that investigation to conclude.

Michael Ellis: I refer the Rt Hon. Member to Paragraph 1.4 of the Ministerial Code and the published Terms of Reference for the Independent Adviser on Ministers' Interests.

In line with well established policy in relation to investigations under the Ministerial Code, it would not be appropriate for Ministers to comment further during an ongoing investigation. That is intended to protect the rights of all involved.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-02-02/116951>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-02-03/117795>

The Ministerial Code, referred to above, can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/826920/August-2019-MINISTERIAL-CODE-FINAL-FORMATTED-2.pdf

The Terms of Reference referred to above can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/981552/Independent_Adviser_-_Terms_of_Reference_-_April_2021.pdf

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House of Commons Written Answer

Overseas Trade: Israel

Scott Benton (Conservative) [116074] To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment she has made of trends in the level of trade in services between the UK and Israel in the past ten years.

Ranil Jayawardena: The United Kingdom is strongly committed to our trade and investment relationship with Israel, one of the Middle East's most dynamic and innovative economies. In 2020, our services trade totalled £1.7 billion, which is an increase of 84.5% since 2010. Financial services and professional business services were our largest exports to Israel in 2020.

On 1st February, the Department for International Trade launched a public consultation on a new free trade deal that will play to British and Israeli strengths as fellow tech superpowers, boosting our strong trade relationship in digital, services and life sciences.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-02-01/116074>

The consultation referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/trade-with-israel-call-for-input>

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Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

** **Animal Welfare (Sentience) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2867>

Committee Stage, House of Commons

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2022-02-10/debates/83c65059-a966-4e52-bd9f-ac7de7ed38b3/AnimalWelfare\(Sentience\)Bill\(Lords\)](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2022-02-10/debates/83c65059-a966-4e52-bd9f-ac7de7ed38b3/AnimalWelfare(Sentience)Bill(Lords))

Assisted Dying Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2875>

Charities Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2877>

Education (Assemblies) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2878>

Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2862>

Israel Arms Trade (Prohibition) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3025>

Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3017>

Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2900>

**** Nationality and Borders Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3023>

Committee Stage, House of Lords

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2022-02-10/debates/77D527E6-362A-4F96-9CDD-1BDD25FFA5EA/NationalityAndBordersBill>

and

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2022-02-10/debates/F81A145A-6B3B-4824-894E-B0676740954E/NationalityAndBordersBill>

Online Safety Bill (Draft)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/draft-online-safety-bill>

Palestine Statehood (Recognition) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2942>

Northern Ireland Assembly

Organ and Tissue Donation (Deemed Consent) Bill

<http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/assembly-business/legislation/2017-2022-mandate/primary-legislation---bills-2017---2022-mandate/organ-and-tissue-donation-deemed-consent-bill/>

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Consultations

** new or updated today

**** closes in 7 days**

Marriage Law (Northern Ireland) (closing date 18 February 2022)

<https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/consultations/public-consultation-marriage-law>

Equality Commission for Northern Ireland Draft Corporate Plan 2022-2025

(closing date 25 February 2022)

<https://www.equalityni.org/CorporatePlanConsultation#gsc.tab=0>

Human Rights Act Reform: A Modern Bill of Rights (closing date 8 March 2022)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/human-rights-act-reform-a-modern-bill-of-rights>

Hate Crime Legislation in Northern Ireland (closing date 28 March 2022)

<https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-hate-crime-legislation-northern-ireland>

Trade with Israel (closing date 30 March 2022)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/trade-with-israel-call-for-input>

CPS: Public interest guidance for suicide pact and ‘mercy killing’ type cases

(closing date 9 April 2022)

<https://www.cps.gov.uk/consultation/consultation-public-interest-guidance-suicide-pact-and-mercy-killing-type-cases-0>

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The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC) is Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SC029438