



VIRENDRA KUMAR SHARMA



“for firmly believing in and championing the values of secularism, equality, tolerance and social justice. For being a crusader of human, child and women’s rights all across the globe and a role model councillor, as Mayor and Member of the British Parliament.”

## A POLITICIAN'S HEART WITH A HUMANIST'S SOUL...

One of the most well known political figures in the British Parliament of today, Virendra Kumar Sharma has been an embodiment of secularism, equality, tolerance and social justice. From being a crusader of human, child and women rights all across the globe to being a role model as Councillor, Mayor and Member of the Parliament – Virendra Sharma has been one of the most vocal and outspoken member-parliamentarians. Virendra Kumar Sharma, distinguished to be the only first generation Indian at the House of Commons of the UK Parliament, was first elected as British MP from the Ealing Southall in 2007. Virendra's arrival in the UK Parliament was the end of one long chapter of public service and the beginning of another. He served as a councillor in Ealing for 25 years including a term as Mayor and was a list candidate for the GLA in 2004, before becoming an MP.

Virendra Sharma was born in Mandhali, a village in Punjab, India and speaks fluent Punjabi, Hindi and Urdu. His late father Dr. Lekh Raj Sharma was a prominent political leader of Punjab State in India and was political and social reformer. He came to Hanwell from India in 1968 and started out as a bus conductor on the bus route 207 before studying at the London School of Economics on a Trade Union Scholarship and eventually working as a day services manager for people with learning disabilities in Hillingdon.

When first elected Virendra served as a member of the International Development Select Committee, again successively re-elected in 2015 and 2017. In 2008 he was the Parliamentary Private Secretary to Phil Woolas, a Minister of State at the Treasury and Home Office, from 2008-2009, a member of the Health Select Committee from 2010-2015 and a member of the Joint Committee on Human Rights from 2007-2015. Virendra Sharma is also a member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

Virendra Sharma currently chairs the Indo-British All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG), leads the APPG for Gurkha Welfare, and is Chair of the APPG on Nepal, Co-Chair of APPG on Tuberculosis, the Hepatitis Group and is Vice Chair of the APPG for British Hindus. As the Indo-British APPG Chair, he led a delegation of MPs to India in January 2017 where they met Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other senior government ministers. The APPG also hosts regular events in Parliament to engage MPs and Peers with the Indian High Commission.

He is also the member of international caucus on Tuberculosis. He has previously chaired the APPG for Tamils and is still actively involved as the Vice Chair. He has led many delegations to India, Nepal and to various countries and has

spoken on various topics including health, poverty and sustainable development goals. He has led campaigns on various social issues including dowry, caste system, women and children issues, trafficking, and sexual exploitation amongst others. Currently Virendra Sharma is leading the UK campaign for commemoration of the Amritsar Massacre.

