Sikh Disinformation Lab

MISLEADING

Republic World's 'I Acted Alone' report on Nikhil Gupta omits the wider conspiracy evidence

A 15 November 2026 Republic World article presents Nikhil Gupta's reported claim that he acted alone in the plot to kill Gurpatwant Singh Pannun. The Lab assesses the framing as Misleading: it omits Gupta's own plea-hearing admission and the US charges against an alleged Indian government employee.

PUBLISHED
17 November 2026

SOURCE POSTED
15 November 2026

NARRATIVES
Labelling Sikh Individuals as Terrorists Without Evidence

OUR ASSESSMENT

What was published

On 15 November 2026, Republic World published an article titled "'I Acted Alone': Nikhil Gupta Takes Full Blame In Plot To Kill Sikh Terrorist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun."

The report discusses a personal letter submitted by Nikhil Gupta ahead of his November 20 sentencing for his role in the attempted assassination of Sikh political activist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun.

The article prominently presents Gupta's reported claim that he acted alone, emphasizing his remorse, personal difficulties, alcohol consumption and experiences in detention. It repeatedly describes Pannun as a "Sikh terrorist" while offering little explanation of the evidence concerning the wider assassination conspiracy.

The Lab's assessment

Verdict: Misleading framing.

The central concern is the presentation of Gupta's reported assertion that he acted alone without acknowledging the substantial criminal evidence and judicial proceedings concerning the involvement of others.

During his February 2026 guilty-plea hearing, Gupta explicitly acknowledged reaching an agreement with another individual to arrange a murder in the United States. The US Department of Justice has separately charged Vikash Yadav, identified by prosecutors as an Indian government employee, with directing the operation. The prosecution's account includes communications, surveillance information and financial arrangements allegedly involving both men.

Gupta's reported statement in a personal sentencing letter does not overturn his earlier admission or constitute a judicial finding that nobody else participated. His individual responsibility is established through his guilty plea, while the allegations against Yadav remain subject to separate legal proceedings.

The framing is particularly significant because Gupta's own defence submissions reportedly argue that he was recruited by Yadav and acted under pressure from him. This important contradiction is absent from Republic World's account.

The article also places considerable emphasis on Gupta's personal suffering while repeatedly identifying Pannun, the intended assassination victim, through India's terrorist designation. Pannun's experience as the target of a murder-for-hire conspiracy and the wider implications for Sikh political activists receive comparatively little attention.

The US Department of Justice has described the case as an attempted act of transnational repression against an American citizen exercising his freedom of political expression.

Context

The assassination conspiracy is not merely an allegation awaiting verification. Gupta pleaded guilty in February 2026 to murder-for-hire and related conspiracy charges.

The question of who directed the operation remains an important part of the American prosecution. Presenting Gupta's personal account as though it resolves that question risks shifting attention away from the alleged involvement of an Indian government employee and the evidence documenting a wider conspiracy.

The central information-integrity concern is the apparent reduction of a documented assassination conspiracy involving alleged multiple participants to the actions of a single remorseful individual, while the Sikh activist targeted in the operation is repeatedly characterized as a terrorist.

This framing risks minimizing the wider questions of responsibility and transnational repression that remain central to the case.

THE CLAIM

‘I Acted Alone’: Nikhil Gupta Takes Full Blame In Plot To Kill Sikh Terrorist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun

THE ANALYSIS

What was published

On 15 November 2026, the Indian outlet Republic World published an article headlined "'I Acted Alone': Nikhil Gupta Takes Full Blame In Plot To Kill Sikh Terrorist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun."

The report discusses a personal letter submitted by Nikhil Gupta ahead of his 20 November sentencing for his role in the attempted assassination of Sikh political activist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun. It foregrounds Gupta's reported claim that he acted alone, and emphasises his remorse, personal difficulties, alcohol consumption and experiences in detention. It repeatedly describes Pannun as a "Sikh terrorist" while offering little explanation of the evidence concerning the wider assassination conspiracy.

The Lab's assessment

Verdict: Misleading.

The central concern is the presentation of Gupta's reported assertion that he acted alone, without acknowledging the substantial criminal evidence and judicial proceedings concerning the involvement of others.

During his February 2026 guilty-plea hearing, Gupta explicitly acknowledged reaching an agreement with another individual to arrange a murder in the United States. The US Department of Justice has separately charged Vikash Yadav, identified by prosecutors as an Indian government employee, with directing the operation. The prosecution's account includes communications, surveillance information and financial arrangements allegedly involving both men.

A statement in a personal sentencing letter does not overturn Gupta's earlier admission in court, nor does it constitute a judicial finding that nobody else participated. Gupta's individual responsibility is established through his guilty plea. The allegations against Yadav remain subject to separate legal proceedings.

The framing is particularly significant because Gupta's own defence submissions reportedly argue that he was recruited by Yadav and acted under pressure from him. That contradiction is absent from Republic World's account.

The claims, one by one

Claim 1: that Gupta acted alone in the assassination conspiracy. Verdict: Misleading. The assertion is contradicted by Gupta's own plea account, in which he acknowledged an agreement with another individual to arrange a murder, and is disputed by the prosecution's allegations against Yadav.

Claim 2: that nobody else was acting with Gupta. Verdict: Unsupported. This is not established. The Justice Department alleges coordination with Yadav and others.

Claim 3: that the assassination plot remains alleged. Verdict: Unsupported. The characterisation is misleading as applied to Gupta's participation, which is established by his guilty plea in February 2026 to murder-for-hire and related conspiracy charges.

Claim 4: that Pannun is a "Sikh terrorist." Verdict: Unsupported. The label reflects India's domestic terrorist designation and is presented without jurisdictional attribution.

Framing and omission

The article places considerable emphasis on Gupta's personal suffering while repeatedly identifying Pannun, the intended victim of the plot, through India's terrorist designation. Pannun's experience as the target of a murder-for-hire conspiracy, and the wider implications for Sikh political activists, receive comparatively little attention.

The US Department of Justice has described the case as an attempted act of transnational repression against an American citizen exercising his freedom of political expression.

Context

The assassination conspiracy is not merely an allegation awaiting verification. Gupta pleaded guilty in February 2026 to murder-for-hire and related conspiracy charges.

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The central information-integrity concern is the apparent reduction of a documented assassination conspiracy involving alleged multiple participants to the actions of a single remorseful individual, while the Sikh activist targeted in the operation is repeatedly characterised as a terrorist. That framing risks minimising the wider questions of responsibility and transnational repression that remain central to the case.

CLAIMS ASSESSED

01	Gupta acted alone in the assassination conspiracy.	MISLEADING
02	Nobody else was acting with Gupta.	UNSUPPORTED

03	The assassination plot remains alleged.	UNSUPPORTED
04	Pannun is a “Sikh terrorist.”	UNSUPPORTED

SOURCES

01 https://www.republicworld.com/global-news/i-acted-alone-nikhil-gupta-takes-full-blame-in-plot-to-kill-sikh-terrorist-gurpatwant-singh

02 Earlier reporting of Gupta's personal letter, covering his reported sole-responsibility claim and his accounts of alcohol consumption, detention and remorse. Useful for source-attribution comparison, but not a substitute for the original signed court letter. *Other · Retrieved 2026-11-17.*

03 Official confirmation of Gupta's guilty plea, including the prosecution's account of his participation in a murder-for-hire conspiracy involving Vikash Yadav. *External fact-check · Retrieved 2026-11-17.*

04 Federal criminal indictment setting out the alleged conspiracy involving Gupta, Yadav and others. The document is a formal record of charges, not a finding of guilt against Yadav. *Other · Retrieved 2026-11-17.*

05 Official indictment announcement identifying Yadav and describing the alleged coordination, surveillance and payment arrangements. The allegations against Yadav remain unproven in court. *External fact-check · Retrieved 2026-11-17.*

Sikh Disinformation Lab

About Sikh Disinformation Lab

Sikh Disinformation Lab is an independent, evidence-based programme founded and hosted by the World Sikh Organization of Canada. It monitors, analyses and publicly documents disinformation affecting Sikhs.

The Lab examines claims against evidence, publishes assessments with that evidence attached, and tracks coordinated campaigns over time. Every published assessment names what was claimed, where it appeared, what the review found, and what that assessment rests on. Where an item makes several distinct claims, each is assessed separately.

Assessments are made against the methodology framework in force at the time of publication. That framework is public, versioned, and reviewed at each phase gate; a material change produces a new version rather than a silent edit. The full method is published at sikhdisinfolab.ca/method.

Corrections are dated entries, never silent edits. Where a published assessment is found to be wrong or incomplete, the correction is recorded against it and listed at sikhdisinfolab.ca/corrections. If you believe something published here is inaccurate, write to the programme and it will be reviewed.

Assessments are the responsibility of Sikh Disinformation Lab.

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