



For Immediate Release
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Cultivating Self-Development & the Sikh Spirit

London, England--From 9-17 February, SikhRI was in England for a Winter 2013 tour of events. The series kicked off on 9 February with the event "Sikhi 2020: Vision for the Future" at the Sikh Missionary Society in Southall. Harinder Singh, Chief Programming Officer for SikhRI, outlined the key challenges for Sikhs in the next decade at a local and global level and then offered suggestions for ways Sikhs could develop themselves as individuals and communities to face them. *"This was a thought-provoking discussion that focused on the 'how' not on the 'why',"* said Ajmeet Singh. *"It empowers the individual to think of workable, scalable solutions to a very known and visible problem and inspired me to research and learn more."*

Later that day in Southall at the Sri Gugu Singh Sabha, Harinder Singh led a second session "Saka Nankana Sahib & Jaito Morcha: Sikh Style Activism" which explored the two seminal events of the Gurdwara Reform Movement in the early 20th century. Attendees were introduced to the history surrounding the government-backed repression and the restrictions on religious freedoms that were part of the time period, and the ways that Sikh activists organized themselves in the face of these extreme actions.



On 10 February, this same talk was reprised at the Sri Guru Nanak Darbar Gurdwara in Gravesend following a talk at Sri Guru Singh Sabha in Derby on "[Rekindling the Sikh Spirit: Ideas for Today and Tomorrow](#)." The theme of self-development and community organizing continued the following day with the presentation "A Sikh-ing Process for Self Development" at the Accenture Offices. Ideas for self-development based on the 5-Khands described in the Japji Sahib were introduced; attendees commented afterwards that they found the presentation thought provoking and positive, and appreciated the roots of inspiration drawn from Gurbani. Bhagat Singh commented afterwards that he found the presentation to be *"a very insightful experience discussing Sikh principles on the basis of Guru Nanak Sahib's actual philosophy."*

Wednesday the tour moved to the London School of Economics, for the presentation "[Bharat, India or Hindustan: A Minority Report](#)." Paviter Singh Devgun, said of the talk, which covered key questions and trends in relations to the rights of minority groups in India, attitudes toward women, and potential remedies for the harsh political responses exhibited in recent years to agitation for rights and recognition: *"The speaker used data and sources which were not biased and did not try to press a particular view. Relevant problems were addressed and ideas for solutions were presented which did not focus on hatred or revenge, but on clear reasoning"* Sandeep Singh, another attendee, added that he found the talk very informative and came away with a new insight into the workings of Indian politics.



The tour rounded out with two events on 16 February: "[How Do I Become Panthic Today](#)" presented at Sri Guru Singh Sabha Southall, and "Sikhi: Faith & People" at the Leicester Sikh Alliance. The Leicester talk was tailored especially for civic, government and religious leaders in the area looking to understand the Sikh faith and its adherents. Amandeep Singh Rai, of the Leicester Sikh Alliance, commented on the talk afterwards: *"The Sikh Seminar was a great success. I felt that Harinder Singh was able to deliver a presentation which articulated the basics of Sikhi, in terms of doctrine and history, to a non-Sikh audience in an effective manner, without over bombarding them."*

The final event on 17 February, "Khalsa Raj: Nation-State in 20 Months," was also held at Sri Guru Singh Sabha in Southall, and traced Banda Singh Bahadur's establishment of the Khalsa Raj in under two years after being given the mission to do so by the Tenth Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh.

"During this trip SikhRI presented at a wide variety of venues and audiences in addition to the usual Gurdwara settings, that were extremely well received," said Jagdeep Singh Gill, SikhRI's UK Coordinator. *"In the coming year, in line with the Institute's ten year plan, we look forward to further our partnerships to develop educational resources, and continue to facilitate an annual Sikh Educational Conference in the UK"*

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