



For Immediate Release  
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### **Educational Events Organized on Significance of Vaisakhi**

Surrey, BC— In response to the positive feedback from last year's informational sessions on the Sikh festival of Vaisakhi, Sikh Research Institute-Canada (SikhRI-Canada) has organized another schedule of events and forums for 2012.

City officials, law enforcement personnel, public school employees, local residents, business owners and others are encouraged to come out and meet with Sikhs to express their opinions and ask questions about the significance of this Vaisakhi at the 4 April event.



The celebration is historically a harvest festival in Panjab and, importantly for the Sikhs, marks the day that the Khalsa was inaugurated by Guru Gobind Singh. The Khalsa formalized the call to Sikhs everywhere to fight against injustice, caste discrimination, sexism and patriarchal hegemony. It is a day of great joy for Sikhs as they revitalize their commitment to break down prejudice and hostility, and to join with others—Sikh and non-Sikh—in a renewed call to work together toward healthier local and global communities.

*“We are delighted to offer this educational forum again this year after an overwhelming desire for such opportunities by the community at large and Canadian Sikh youth in particular,”* said Baljinder Kaur, president of SikhRI-Canada. *“Most people are aware of Vaisakhi as a festival with parades and huge street parties along the route. However, there is a genuine desire by both Sikhs and non-Sikhs to understand the meaning and the significance of Vaisakhi in terms of the cultural and religious context. This year we are also introducing the workshop ‘Model Sarbat Khalsa,’ which we see as an important step forward in community building and encouraging the various Sikh organizations in working collectively on issues of mutual concern.”*

In addition to the public forum, there will be workshops and events designed more for the Sikh community, which will also explore the meaning of Vaisakhi to the community in terms of history and contemporary significance. These events are sponsored in part by Vancity.

On 4 April, **Understanding Vaisakhi and Revealing the Invisible Heritage of Panjab** will be held at the Royal King Palace in Surrey, BC. Doors will open at 5:00pm, and the event will run from 5:30pm-7:00pm. There will be a question and answer session immediately afterward from: 7:00pm-7:30pm. Harinder Singh will be the keynote speaker, and refreshments will be served. Space is limited so please RSVP by writing: [info-canada@sikhri.org](mailto:info-canada@sikhri.org) or calling 604.505.0502.

On 7 April at the Riverside Banquet Hall in Richmond, BC, there will be a **Model Sarbat Khalsa** workshop from 10:00am – 4:00pm. This day-long workshop provides an intensive opportunity to learn the history of the Sarbat Khalsa and to replicate the decision making process. Participants continue to tell us how informative and educational it is to recreate the Sarbat Khalsa and what a profound sense of respect they have for the process after the day is through.

On 9 April, from 10:00am – 4:00pm in Surrey, BC, at the Punjab Banquet Hall, a Saneha session: **The Guru: Connecting with the Divine Light** will be held. This day-long workshop is for ages 16 and older. Lunch will be served. Please join us to explore the themes and meaning of Guru in Sikhi, the prophet-genius of the 10 gurus, and the role and relationship of Guru Granth and Guru Panth. Fee is \$10—to register call [604.505.0502](tel:6045050502).

The Sikh Research Institute to provide educational programming strives to design and host events which bring together the Sikhs, and also the non-Sikh community. We hope you will join us this Vaisakhi, and we want to thank our sponsors for their generous support.

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