




Speech By
Bart Mellish

MEMBER FOR ASPLEY

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Vaisakhi Mela

 **Mr MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (2.10 pm): Last Sunday I had the pleasure of attending the Vaisakhi Mela at Taigum in the electorate of Sandgate. Joining me were the members for Sandgate and Nudgee and the councillor for Deagon ward, Jared Cassidy. The event was put on by Singh Sabha Brisbane, the Sikh temple in Taigum which welcomes a large number of families and members from all over Brisbane including many from the Aspley electorate. Singh Sabha is one of only two Sikh temples in Brisbane, the other being in Eight Mile Plains. Prior to Singh Sabha opening, many of its current members, many families from the north side, travelled to Eight Mile Plains for worship.

Vaisakhi Mela is an annual event which celebrates the birth of the Sikh faith community. It is one of the most important dates in the Sikh calendar. The Khalsa was founded as an order in 1699 to protect the freedom of conscience and religion for all. That is what they are celebrating. Vaisakhi also celebrates the spring harvest and is a traditional festival for those from the Punjab region. What a great Vaisakhi Mela it was on the north side. There was sunshine, a huge crowd, a fantastic inclusive atmosphere and a great family event for all who came. I am also now an even bigger fan of kabadi, a sport which would make many a Rugby League front rower weep in terms of the toughness and endurance needed.

Ms Pease: A great game.

Mr MELLISH: Absolutely. The festival was also for the first time combined with a citizenship ceremony. What a terrific way to not only celebrate our growing local Sikh community but also have 18 new citizens from a variety of countries at the ceremony integrated into the festival. All in all, it was a wonderful celebration promoting cultural traditions and goodwill towards our neighbours and friends, something I am always very happy to support.

I also acknowledge the federal candidate for Lilley, Anika Wells, and the federal candidate for Petrie, Corinne Mulholland, for coming along to the day. Anika and Corinne are both already well known in their communities as hardworking locals who can get things done. Already I have seen them getting some great local wins on the north side and I look forward to seeing more of this in the coming months.

I would also like to acknowledge a few recent grant recipients in the electorate of Aspley from the Gambling Community Benefit Fund. It was very pleasing to see the Aspley Little Athletics Centre get over \$21,000 for a new long jump track; Guide Dogs Queensland receive \$33,000 for air conditioning; and the Aspley Orchid Society, which has a show on 12 May, get over \$8,500 for the purchase of equipment.