




Speech By
Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe

MEMBER FOR SANDGATE

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ADJOURNMENT

Vaisakhi Festival

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (10.49 pm): According to the 2016 census, more than 12,000 people of the Sikh faith now call greater Brisbane home. As the member for Sandgate and the Minister for Multicultural Affairs, I am proud to say that many reside in my electorate. The Sikh community makes a positive contribution to my local community and to the broader Queensland community.

Tonight, I rise to acknowledge this contribution through the tremendous work of Singh Sabha Gurudawara Brisbane. This terrific organisation held its annual Vaisakhi festival last Sunday at the Sandgate Hawks AFL Sporting Club. It gave me great pleasure to attend the festival along with my parliamentary colleagues the member for Nudgee and the member for Aspley and Deagon ward councillor Jared Cassidy.

As expected, Vaisakhi 2018 was a colourful event that was well attended by people with a wide range of backgrounds from Taigum and beyond. Vaisakhi marks the founding of Khalsa, of the Sikh faith, which is traditionally celebrated across the northern Indian subcontinent, particularly in the Punjab region, coinciding with the Punjab new year and the harvest festival.

The annual Vaisakhi festival at Taigum has become a great opportunity for people to celebrate with those of the Sikh faith and enjoy the best of food, culture and sports. Along with the member for Aspley, I particularly enjoyed the kabaddi contest. For those who have not been initiated into the joys of Kabaddi, I point out that it is a combination of red rover and wrestling. It is pretty impressive to watch. Vaisakhi not only keeps alive the rich cultural traditions of the Sikh community but also extends to northsiders more broadly an opportunity to get to know their Sikh neighbours. By promoting goodwill towards our neighbours and friends we can all play a role in creating a more inclusive and fairer society for us all.

This was also a very special day for 18 new Australian citizens who formally cemented their ties with our great nation at the Vaisakhi festival through an integrated citizenship ceremony. I think it is particularly important to note that the people who became Australian citizens were not all from the Sikh faith. People from 13 different countries were represented at that ceremony.

The Palaszczuk government is working to create a more inclusive and welcoming Queensland. There is no doubt that, in this regard, events such as the Vaisakhi festival have an important role to play. I want to acknowledge in particular Parminder Singh, Randip Singh and Garry Singh for their continuous engagement in their local community and the way in which they worked very hard with a whole bunch of other volunteers to put on a terrific Vaisakhi festival and the work and assistance of everyone else who is associated with Singh Sabha Gurudawara Brisbane.