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Wednesday 17th January 2024

The Avenue School Community

Dear parents and carers

Please join us at The Avenue School to acknowledge:

BIRTHDAY OF GURU GOBIND SINGH (1666 CE)

17th January 2024 (Bakrami Lunar Calendar)

Shiki

This day is celebrated as the birth anniversary of the tenth Guru, who instituted the Five Ks and established the Order of the Khalsa on Vaisakhi (Baisakhi).

Gobind Rai was born on December 22, 1666. His father was Guru Tegh Bahadur, the 9th Guru of Sikhism. In 1675 at the age of nine he became the 10th Guru on his father's death and was the last of the ten human Gurus of the Sikhs. He was a student of Punjabi, Sanskrit, Brj Bhasha, Arabian, Persian and a number of other languages, and was highly regarded for his wisdom and leadership qualities. Throughout his life he wrote many poems about love, the worship of the Divine, equality and the putting away of superstition and idolatry.

On his birthday, historical lectures are conducted and poems are recited in praise of the Guru. Special dishes that are unique to this occasion are prepared and served during the festivities. Like other anniversaries associated with the lives of the Gurus, the day is referred to as a gurburb, and is marked by the ending of an akhand path, an unbroken reading of the whole of the Guru Granth Sahib. This lasts for 48 hours.

In April 1699 Gobind Rai established the Order of the Khalsa after which point all initiated Sikh males were given the name **Singh** (meaning **lion**), and females the name **Kaur** (meaning **leader**) to emphasise equality and to remove caste distinctions. The Guru asked his devotees to bless him with initiation into the Khalsa and became Guru Gobind Singh. The Guru was a military genius, and when other approaches failed, he accepted the use of power and the sword to fight against tyranny in the defence of religious freedom. He fought twelve battles and his four sons were killed in campaigns against Mughal oppression. He instilled a martial spirit into his followers so that they would not fear the persecutions of the Mughal Emperors. He also gave Sikhs the new greeting of 'Waheguru ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru ji Ki Fateh', meaning 'The Khalsa belongs to God; all victory is the victory of God'.

In 1708 Guru Gobind Singh was assassinated as he attempted to make peace with the Emperor, Bahadur Shah I. He left a great number of writings and his greatest contribution to Sikh tradition is that he instructed his disciples to consider the Guru Granth Sahib (the collection of writings from the previous Gurus), as their eternal Guru, and that this would be the source of the Gurus' teachings, which would guide all their future decisions.

kindest regards **Avenue team**

Headteacher: Rachel Rai

The Rise Partnership Trust CEO: Jayne Jardine

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