

How Dayton Gurdwara celebrated the First Sikh Environment Day, March 14, 2011



Hundreds of Gurdwaras in India, the US, Canada, England and other countries celebrated the Gurgaddi Diwas of 7th Guru, Guru Har Rai Ji and Sikh New Year as Sikh Environment Day.

The Sikh Society of Dayton, Ohio, USA, observed Sikh Environment Day at the new Dayton Gurdwara Sahib site during its regular Sunday Divan to share reflections on the Environment and Sikhism with the Sangat. Sangat members including adults, youth and even 3 year old kids all took part in the celebrations. Sangat members were requested in advance to wear Green on this

day and show their support for the Environment Day. Sangat gave a green touch to the environment in Gurdwara.

Shabad Kirtan focused on the environment enshrined in the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji were recited by the youth and elders during the Kirtan Darbar. Ravjot Kaur explained the message of the Shabad “Pavan Guru Paani Pita” and recited the Shabad as well. Goonmeet Kaur sung the Aarti “Gagan Mein Thal” and Harleen Kaur “Balhari Kudrat Vaseya Tera Aanth Na Jaaye Lakheya” and Prabjit Kaur “Sooraj Eko Rut Anek”. Even 3-5 yr old kids, Pahulpreet Singh, Pabanpreet Kaur, Husanpreet Kaur and Sunvir Kaur joined in the celebration by reciting “Dhan Hai Dhan Hai, Guru Har Rai Ji Dhan Hai”.



Several speeches were presented by the youth. They shared the message of Guru Har Rai Ji inspiring Sikhs to care for the nature and environment. Simran Kaur said that our Gurus knew and preached the importance of clean environment and preservation of the earth. Guru Har Rai ji was especially known to be concerned about our mother nature and the preservation of earth for future generations. Gurbani has many references to keep our environment clean. Manpreet Singh said we can do many things that can go long way in keeping our environment clean. He suggested that we can reduce waste at the Gurdwara Sahib by using steel plates instead of Styrofoam and keeping a recycle bin.

Arman Singh narrated the famous Sakhi (story) of young Guru Har Rai ji being told by his grandfather Guru Hargobind ji to take care while strolling in the garden and Guruji’s resolution on never to harm anything in the world, even the flowers close to the ground. Guru Har Ji established a zoo and garden. Ravjot Kaur told the importance of reciting Shabads about nature together as a community to make the earth a better place to live. Tanveer Singh translated the Shabad “Sooraj Eko Rut Anek” in his speech. Sameep Singh, using slides, showed the Sangat how our Gurus laid stress upon having a cleaner environment. He also presented an overview on the vision and objective of the EcoSikh 5 year plan and the purpose of holding such events.

An exhibition was organized at the Gurdwara Sahib with posters created on environment by Dayton Sikh youth and elders to raise awareness about our relationship to the air, land and water system through careful reflection on the words of the Sikh Gurus enshrined in the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. The display of posters covered various topics. One poster had a sketch of the Baaz that is becoming extinct; others showed a green Khalsa City, Khanda with Go Green message, stop wasting water, don't cut trees and many more such themed posters were displayed in the exhibition.

The members of the Gurdwara Sevdar Committee thanked all participants especially Sikh youth, volunteers and Sangat members. They announced steel plates would be used after the completion of new Kitchen at the Gurdwara. At the end, a ceremonial tree was planted on the Gurdwara land.

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