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THE PRIME MINISTER

April 2008

## **VAISAKHI MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER**

I would like to take this opportunity to wish the Sikh community a very happy Vaisakhi.

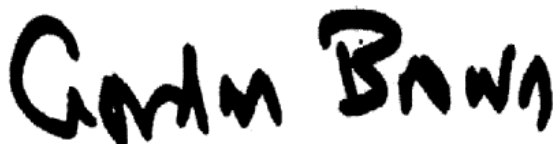
Sikh communities have played and continue to play an important role in shaping British society and in contributing to our economic and social prosperity, something we can all be proud of.

Vaisakhi is an ancient harvest festival in the Punjab and marks the beginning of the new solar year and harvest season. It also celebrates the establishment of the Khalsa to uphold the most fundamental values of humanity. Members of the Khalsa were to dedicate their lives to the service of others and the pursuit of justice for people of all faiths.

These Sikh principles of equality for all people, religious tolerance and respect for other faiths are more important today than ever before. I see the very same principles as the keys to safe, strong and cohesive communities. That's why I want to see stronger inter-faith dialogue to allow people to find the common ground that exists between different religions and communities in the UK, with local inter-faith councils in every community.

I know the Sikh community are very active within their local communities and I would like to again express the Government's recognition of the contribution you are making and our determination to strengthen support for this work.

A very happy and prosperous New Year to you all.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gordon Brown". The signature is written in a bold, cursive style with thick strokes.

**Rt Hon Gordon Brown MP**  
**Prime Minister**