

# GURMAT STUDY

Using Technology, To Spread the message of Sikhism  
Gurmat | Education | Youth | Community Development & Welfare

**Website:** [www.GurmatStudy.com](http://www.GurmatStudy.com) **E-mail :** [gurmatstudy@gmail.com](mailto:gurmatstudy@gmail.com)

---

## [Q & A : The Sikh Tradition of Hola Mahalla](#)

### **Q. HOLI OR HOLA?**

A. Holi is a Hindu festival celebrating the victory of the Saint Prahlade over his evil aunt Holika who tried to burn him alive. However the reasoning behind this festival had long been forgotten, even during the time of the tenth guru, Guru Gobind Singh Jee it had become a meaningless day of throwing colour on each other. Guru Gobind Singh Jee ordered that his Khalsa would not celebrate Holi and instead introduced the tradition of HOLA MAHALLA. Hola is the masculine form of the word Holi. The literal meaning of Hola Mahalla is military exercises or manoeuvres.

### **Q. When was Hola Mahalla first celebrated?**

A. Hola was celebrated for the first time in the year after the birth of the Khalsa, 1700 AD and from then on has been celebrated every year in the fields of the Holgarh Fort at Anandpur Sahib.

### **Q. How is the Hola Mahalla festival celebrated?**

A. Guru Gobind Singh Jee wanted to make his Khalsa army into a superior fighting force and so asked his followers to come together to have mock battles at the fort of Holgarh to learn the necessary fighting tactics that they would need in a real battle. The Khalsa armies would demonstrate their skills of horsemanship, soldiery, swordsmanship and archery. Each year thousands of Sikhs including large numbers of Nihang Singhs gather at Anandpur Sahib and take part in the procession from the fort of Holgarh to the fort of Fatehgarh. Fighting skills such as Gatka, Archery and Horsemanship are demonstrated as well as more modern sports.

### **Q. Why did Guru Jee feel the need for Hola?**

A. This was further emphasising the importance that Guru Jee laid upon making his Khalsa an army of SAINT-SOLDIERS. He wanted to rid the people of cowardice and make the "sparrow hunt the eagle". Guru Jee knew that the Khalsa would have to fight against oppression, tyranny and persecution and history has borne witness to this throughout the 500 years of the existence of the Khalsa Army. Countless tyrants have tried to crush the Khalsa but each time with, Guru Gobind Singh Jee's blessing, it rises a stronger force.

### **Q. What should we learn from the Hola Mahalla Festival?**

A. Each year the Sikhs should treat Hola as an opportunity to refresh their martial spirit and abiding by Guru Jee's hukam we should all strive to be true SAINT-SOLDIERS who can stand against injustice wherever it occurs in the world.

GurmatStudy Team

Visit us at [www.GurmatStudy.com](http://www.GurmatStudy.com) e-mail: [gurmatstudy@gmail.com](mailto:gurmatstudy@gmail.com)