



Centre for Indo Canadian Studies

15th Anniversary

Community leaders approach UCFV with the idea to establish a Centre for Indo Canadian Studies. UCFV management agrees to further the development of a Centre.

A Fundraising Committee kicks off the campaign locally, nationally and internationally, raising \$500,000 in the first ten months.

Punjab Chief Minister, Captain Amarinder Singh, visits UCFV to share his Government's position on the potential for greater business collaboration between British Columbia and Punjab.

With the fundraising campaign approaching its deadline of February to raise the matching \$1.25 million, UCFV hosts a radio-thon on Sher-e-Punjab radio raising an impressive \$200,000 in 8 hours for the campaign.

May
2003

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May
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April
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July
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Nov
2005

University College of the Fraser Valley's (UCFV) President Dr. Skip Bassford and Dean of Research Yvon Dandurand meet with community leaders to discuss the possibility of a BC Research Chair on India Canada Business.

UCFV presents a proposal to the BC Leading Edge Endowment Fund to establish a Research Chair. Under the terms of the program UCFV must match LEEF's \$2.5 million endowment by raising \$1.25 million by February 24, 2006.

Premier Gordon Campbell announces government support of \$1.25 million For a BC Regional Innovation Chair on Canada India Business and Economic Development.

UCFV hosts its first international speakers and dignitaries: Dr. B.S Ghuman and Dr. Dhian Kaur of Panjab University, Chandigarh, India, the Vice Chancellor of Punjabi University, Dr. Swarn Singh Boparai, India's High Commissioner to Canada, Her Excellency Shyamala Cowsik and India's Consul General in Vancouver, Dr. George Joseph.

Dr. Kuldip Gill becomes UCFV's first writer-in-residence. A 2005 honorary degree recipient, Dr. Gill, the Mission-based writer published two books of poetry and offered advice on creative writing to UCFV students, faculty, and staff.



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The CICS hosts Afghan Member of Parliament and women's rights activist Malalai Joya who speaks to need of the hour to establish human rights protection in Afghanistan for women and children.

The CICS Signs a MoU with the University of Mumbai during the BC Education/Trade mission to India headed by Gordon Campbell, Premier of BC.

The Royal Bank of Canada, the University College of the Fraser Valley, and the BC Regional Innovation Chair on Canada-India Business and Economic Development sign a sponsorship agreement worth \$250,000.00 on March 26, 2008 for RBC to sponsor information forums about doing business in and with India.

UCFV becomes a University. "The new University of the Fraser Valley will build on its international reputation for criminology and criminal justice programs, for its aviation program carried out in cooperation with Coastal Pacific Aviation, for its specialization in Indo-Canadian Studies, and for its trade and technology programs where it will initiate a new alternative fuel vehicle maintenance and repair program," said the Premier of BC, Gordon Campbell.

Nov
2007

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Dec
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Feb
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July
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Sep
2008

The Centre for Indo-Canadian Studies officially opens after a successful fundraising campaign where the community raises the matching funds of \$1.25 million. Dignitaries including the UCFV President Dr. Skip Bassford, Indian Consul General Shri Ashok Kumar, MLA Mike De Jong and Federal MP Ujjal Dosanjh grace the occasion.

BC Premier Gordon Campbell visits UCFV India students in Chandigarh and gives a keynote address on the future of Canada India relations.

CICS organizes its first study tour to India with twenty-two UCFV students and participants taking part in an exhilarating study tour of Northern India, visiting six cities in 25 days.

CICS hosts Ghazal and Indian folk song singer Kiran Ahluwalia and her four piece band who wow a captivated audience at UCFV. A Juno award winner, Kiran blends classical ghazals with modern music to create a delectable treat for the ears.

A new India Canada Studies Certificate is offered by UCFV supporting building knowledge of the growing importance of India on the world stage and to our local community.



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CICS hosts an anniversary symposium on the 'Continuous Journey' legislation, cross-border issues, trade issues with India and Pakistan, and urban planning with cities in India with Dr. Rita Dhamoon, Dr. John Belec and Cherie Enns and Dr. Zareen Naqvi.

UFV's writer in residence is friend of the CICS, Dr. Jaspreet Singh, author of *Chef and 17 Tomatoes*.

The CICS student-led group, the South Asian Peer Network Association (SAPNA), hosts screening of "*A Warrior's Religion*" a documentary by Mani Amar who believes that the combination of art and activism will bring a strong positive message to the audience.

The Fraser Valley Indo-Canadian Business Association (FVICBA) joined together to support UFV students demonstrating leadership qualities by endowing the Indo Canadian Pioneer Endowment Leadership award with a gift of \$12,500.

Oct
2008

The CICS hosts its annual 'Ehsaas' Film Festival with films that have significant historical and current relevance, while highlighting social justice issues that were of concern during the partitioning of India into East Pakistan, West Pakistan, and India.

The *Udaari* Pioneer exhibit presents the history of Indian pioneers in British Columbia in celebration of the 150th anniversary of the founding of BC as a crown colony in 1858.

Nov
2008

Dec
2008

TD Canada Trust announces the India Canada Studies Endowment Bursary to help ensure that students who otherwise could not afford to study this discipline will have the opportunity to do so. The bank's total gift of \$50,000 will be paid out over five years, with \$1,000 available each year as a bursary and the balance set aside as an endowment fund

Feb
2009

Apr
2009

The BC Provincial Government establishes a labour market presence in Punjab in partnership with the BC Regional Innovation Chair on Canada-India Business and Economic Development, Professor DJ Sandhu. The Province invests \$150,000 to support the position.

May
2009

June
2009

UFV presents honorary degrees Dr. Dalip Singh Gill for his noteworthy contribution to the Fraser Valley community in the field of education. Dr. Parm Bains also received an honorary Doctor of Letters degree for his philanthropic work.

June
2009

Oct
2009

UFV faculty, friends, and students participate in the installation ceremony of the translated, four-volume set of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji in the UFV library. The text is translated by Sardar Pritam Singh Chahil and was donated by Mr. Ivor Thompson of Toronto to former UFV President Dr. Skip Bassford as a valuable resource to students, faculty and community members alike.



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British Columbia opens a new "BC Opportunity Office" in Chandigarh in collaboration with UFV's BC Regional Innovation Chair on Canada-India Business and Economic Development to facilitate economic, business, social, and cultural ties with North India.

CICS supports Dr. Nicola Mooney's SSHRC funded "Diasporizing Punjab, Disorienting Bhangra," workshop, in collaboration with UBC's Department of Asian Studies and Centre for India and South Asia Research and the Vancouver International Bhangra Celebration.

As part of Asian heritage month, the CBC Early Edition broadcasts live from Abbotsford on May 28, in the early hours of the morning. Abbotsford currently has the highest percentage of South Asians in any metropolitan area in Canada and Early Edition host Rick Cluff and his team discussed the stories that have shaped this community and the issues they face today. The Director of the CICS joins a panel of South Asian leaders in front of a live studio audience.

Jan
2010



Nov
2009

Award winning author M.G. Vassanji visits the CICS to read from *The Assassin's Song*, which was published in 2007 and has since been short-listed for the Giller Prize, the Governor General's Award, and the Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize. Vassanji received the 2009 Governor General's award for non-fiction for his memoir: *A Place Within: Rediscovering India*.

Feb
2010

CICS undertakes its second study tour to India, visiting seven cities and providing diverse cultural and educational experiences for the students.

May
2010



Mar
2010

The CICS co-sponsors exhibit *From Different Perspectives* at the Reach Gallery and Museum, which tells the stories of Indo-Canadian and Mexican farm workers in the region.

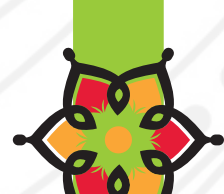
May
2010



June
2010

CICS hires five UFV BBA India students as interns to undertake research on topics of interest to the Centre. The students spend two months researching the need for social development programs in Punjab, India

June
2010



The first BBA students from the UFV Chandigarh campus celebrate their success as they graduate and take part in the convocation ceremonies on June 11 at UFV.



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On December 28, 2010, the Indian Ministry of Agriculture approves the import of Canadian Spruce, Pine and Fir species of wood into India. BC can now begin the process of market development to tap the lucrative Indian market for wood, which is estimated to be \$5.3 billion with an annual growth rate between 6 – 7%. The collaboration between India and BC is made possible by the efforts of the BC Regional Innovation Chair Professor DJ Sandhu.

The CICS and UFV's Department of English present the Ehsaas South Asian Readers and Writers Festival. Anosh Irani headlines the evening by reading from his newest novel *Dahanu Road*, followed by readings by Gurjinder Basran from her second novel *Everything was Goodbye* and Tariq Malik reading from *Chanting Denied Shores*.

The CICS hosts *Transnational Punjabis in the 21st Century: Beginnings, Junctures, and Departures*, an international conference in honour of the Centennial of the National Historic Site. Many dignitaries, including UFV President and Vice Chancellor Mark Evered, UFV Provost and Vice President Academic Eric Davis, Abbotsford Mayor George Peary, Indian High Commissioner to Canada Shashishekhar M. Gavai, Consul General of India in Vancouver Ashok Das, and Sikh Foundation Chair Narinder Singh Kapany are present. The conference sheds light upon the issues that Punjabi traditional culture is facing but also upon the richness, roots, and identity of the culture. The conclusion of the conference is the '*Virasat Pioneer Gala*' paying homage and honouring the Fraser Valley South Asian pioneering community.

Dec
2010



Fall
2010

South Asian Lectures Series at the CICS features: Dr. Harinder Sandhu from Mata Sundri College in the University of Delhi, Dr. Jan Neels from the University of Johannesburg, Dr. Bidisha Biswas from the University of Western Washington, Dr. Surinder Dhanjal from Thompson Rivers University and Gilli McLaren from Mission.

Jan
2011

The City of Abbotsford Proclaims 2011 as the year of the National Historic Site Gur Sikh Temple in Abbotsford. The Gur Sikh Temple celebrates 100 years of service in the community. The CICS signs a historic agreement with Khalsa Diwan Society and The Reach Gallery and Museum to undertake the development of a Sikh Heritage Museum on the ground floor of the National Site.

Mar
2011



Mar
2011

Professor Yogendra Yadav, Senior Fellow of Delhi's Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, presents a rich and informative lecture at the CICS. Professor Yadav argues that the dominant nation-state model, which expects political boundaries of a state to coincide with the cultural boundaries of a homogeneous community, is mistaken.

May
2011



June
2011

Mr. Scott Slessor, Consul General of Canada in Chandigarh, India visits the CICS. Professor DJ Sandhu discusses various issues with the Consul General and updates him on some of the successful initiatives undertaken in India. As Counsel General, Mr. Slessor is responsible for the states of Punjab, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh.



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The Sikh Heritage Museum is officially opened by Lieutenant Governor Mr. Stephen Pionte in the National Historic Site Gur Sikh Temple. The CICS curates its first exhibit entitled *100 Years of Settlement and Integration* on the pioneer families of the local region.

CICS hosts International Women's Day. CICS in collaboration with Abbotsford community services, International Centre for Criminal Law Reform and Criminal Justice Policy, South Asian Peer Network Association (SAPNA), and Mission Community Services celebrated International Women's Day on March 8.

The University of Mumbai establishes the Indo Canadian Studies Centre. UFV Associate Dean of Arts Susan Fisher goes to Mumbai to represent UFV at the opening. This Centre, supported by a grant from the government of British Columbia, is intended to be a "sister" centre to the Centre for Indo-Canadian Studies. The formal establishment of the ICSC will result in even stronger connections between UFV and the University of Mumbai, leading to student and faculty exchanges and collaborative research and conferences.

Dec
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Mar
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Aug
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Nov
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2013

CICS organizes Gur Sikh Temple centennial celebrations in partnership with the Khalsa Diwan Society, Abbotsford. On August 26 a special three-day prayer (Akhand Path) commences at the historic Gurdwara. The event is attended by the Right Honourable Prime Minister of Canada, Stephen Harper and the Honourable BC Premier, Christy Clark. This is a very important event for the Sikh community and the community as a whole, as people from the entire community participate in commemorating the centennial. Volunteers work very hard in the evening as OMNI TV goes LIVE on location, presenting their newscast from the grounds of the Gurdwara. The event is a great success and the credit goes to the Centre for Indo-Canadian Studies, the Indo-Canadian Business Association, OMNI TV, Khalsa Diwan Society, the City of Abbotsford, Punjabi Patrika, the Abbotsford News, the Reach Gallery and many other organizations who worked with great dedication to make this special event a memorable success.

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CICS signs a MoU with Punjabi University, Patiala to develop links on Punjabi language, Diaspora research and student internships.

CICS in partnership with Abbotsford Building Connections hosts "Interfaith Dialogue: Sacred Texts and Religious Expressions," featuring small table discussions with people from different faiths.

CICS organizes conference titled, "*Interpreting Ghadar: Echoes of Voices Past.*" The academic conference features 12 presenters who present unique perspective on the impacts and significance of the Ghadarites in the early 20th century.



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A dark moment to commemorate the Centennial of the Komagata Maru in Canadian history is marked on Sunday, January 26th at the Sikh Heritage Museum. The CICS curates its sixth official exhibition since the Sikh Heritage Museum's inauguration in 2011 with an exhibition titled: *"Challenge and Denial – Komagata Maru 100 years later 1914-2014."*

On Tuesday, September 29th at 5pm in the UFV S'eliyemetaxwtexw Art Gallery, the CICS curates and launches an exhibition on Sikh Feminism's entitled: *(Mis)Interpretation: Sikh Feminisms in representations, texts and lived realities*. The critical Sikh feminist ethnographic exhibition is created in partnership with the Visual Arts Department and officially opens on September 29th.

CICS supports the staging of a cultural intervention at the Royal BC Museum. The staging of this event in the provincial museum is significant for the Indo Canadian community, conspicuously and publicly marking what all hope is the beginning of a committed long-term relationship and a defining moment in the provincial correction of past omissions, erasures and oversights of South Asian heritage in BC.

Punjabi Intercultural History Project with the CICS and RBCM completes its first phase by collaborating with regional institutions, on community consultations throughout the province to gather feedback from the Punjabi community. The goal is to connect with this pioneering group that has made a significant impact on the province's cultural, economic and social history.

Jan
2014



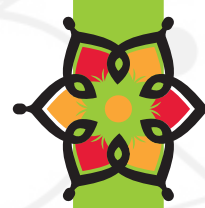
Nov
2013

CICS officially launches its first publication: a book entitled *A Soldier Remembers* based on the memoirs of Lieutenant Colonel Pritam Singh Jauhal. The book is co-authored by Pritam Singh Jauhal, the veteran at the centre of the story, and Sharanjit Kaur Sandhra, coordinator of the CICS.

Nov
2014

CICS commissions and produces a play by Dr. Rajnish Dhawan on the Komagata Maru, *That Land Beyond the Waves*. The opening night and matinee are sold out events with an audience enthralled by the moving performances of the actors and the stellar script which combined humour and emotion. The cast and crew receive a standing ovation for their efforts at both performances.

Sep
2015



Nov
2015

CICS opinion featured in national media during the announcement and appointment of Mr. Harjit Singh Sajjan as Canada's Minister of National Defense. CICS Director was featured on the CBC National Edition, the Globe and Mail and the Toronto Star.

Nov
2015



Sep
2016

CICS launches a much awaited publication, *Reluctant Rebellions: New and Selected Non-fiction*, a collection of speeches and essays by Shauna Singh Baldwin.

Dec
2016

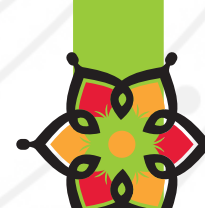


The Sikh Heritage Museum, located in the National Historic Site Gur Sikh Temple (the oldest still-standing Sikh Gurdwara in the Western Hemisphere) was recently honoured by the BC Museums Association. The Sikh Heritage Museum receives the 'Award of Merit' for its exhibit *Canadian Sikhs in WWI: A Forgotten Story* curated by the CICS.

Nov
2016



Feb
2017



Sikh Heritage Museum's *Canada 150* Exhibit Launches with great success. Seven months of intense research, curatorial work, design and implementation came to a successful culmination with the Sikh Heritage Museum launching its exhibit *(Dis) Enfranchisement 1907-1947: The Forty-Year Struggle for the Vote* on Sunday, February 19th. The exhibit launch is attended by an estimated one hundred community members including dignitaries and South Asian pioneers and their descendants.



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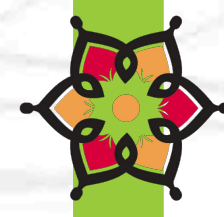
CICS celebrates 10 years of serving as a centre of activity, events, information, scholarship, and research and is extending its focus to embrace all the regions of South Asia. Centre Director Satwinder Bains announced the name change to the South Asian Studies Institute (SASI) saying, "As we enter our second decade, we felt it was important for our identity to reflect the broader field of South Asian studies."

The South Asian Studies Institute, in partnership with the Sikh Heritage Museum, National Historic Site Gur Sikh Temple, hosted author Amardeep Singh as he discussed his second pictorial publication: *The Quest Continues: Lost Heritage The Sikh Legacy in Pakistan*. The second collection, much like his first book, motivates all communities to become aware of their past, and through it, learn to live in harmony for mutual progress.

Dr. Joanne MacLean was appointed President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of the Fraser Valley on May 1, 2018. Dr. MacLean is dedicated to leading UFV in its mission of engaging learners, transforming lives, and building community and ensuring UFV's endeavours are guided by its values, strategic directions, and commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion.

The SASI was pleased to host the winning authors of the 2018 Dhahan Prize in Punjabi Literature on October 24, 2018. The SASI has an MoU with the Dhahan Prize in Punjabi Literature which includes an annual reading of the winning authors at the SASI. In addition to hosting the authors, the SASI provided translation by Dr. Kusum Soni (SASI coordinator) and editorial support for the 2017 award winning Punjabi language novel 'Us Pal' (That Moment).

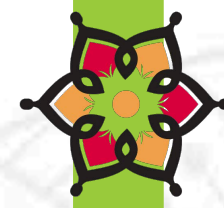
May
2017



May
2017

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau had a private tour of the Sikh Heritage Museum and gave a brief address in the courtyard. The visit from the Prime Minister was arranged through the office of MP for Mission, Matsqui, Fraser Can yon, and former UFV Board Member, Mr. Jati Sidhu.

June
2017



UFV bid farewell to Dr. Mark Evered and First Lady Maureen Evered on a sunny day in June, 2017. Dr. Evered guided academic restructuring, expanded student support services, athletics and recreation while championing the development of a vibrant Alumni Association in his tenure.

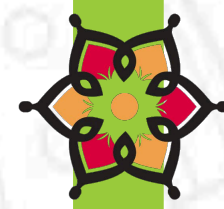
Apr
2018



Apr
2018

Dr. Andy Sidhu was installed as UFV's third Chancellor, taking over from former Chancellor Dr. Gwen Point. Dr. Sidhu said "I'm extremely honoured and proud to join the University of the Fraser Valley in this capacity. UFV has a rich history of in inclusivity and community leadership. Needless to say I'm very excited to contribute as we move forward together."

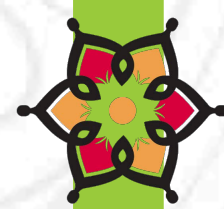
May
2018



Aug
2018

The inaugural 'Building Bridges Community Golf Day' which took place on Friday, August 24, 2018 at the Chilliwack Golf & Country Club was a great success. Tournament founders Dr. Malwinder Singh Dhami and Dr. Amarjit Singh Bajwa are both members of the SASI Community Advisory Committee. 51 teams participated in the event and had great fun at a beautiful setting under great conditions.

Nov
2018



Aug
2019

Tournament founders Dr. Malwinder Dhami and Dr. Amarjit Bajwa are pleased to announce that the second annual Building Bridges Golf Day was a great success. The days' golf participants as well as sponsors for the day each supported scholarly research aimed at investigating questions and addressing issues that matter in the Fraser Valley and beyond.



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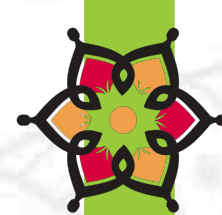
SASI curated a new exhibit: (Dis)Enfranchisement:1907-1947 in partnership with the Reach Gallery Museum Abbotsford and the Khalsa Diwan Society, Abbotsford.

Political activist and intellectual Yogendra Yadav spoke about the India's farmers movement. The Indian diaspora has taken special interest and played a key role in this movement. Focusing on extraordinary milestones and the hopes ahead, Yadav instilled a sense of optimism and hope.

A new five-part Knowledge Network series titled "British Columbia – An Untold History," launched in October, 2021. The series explores how Indigenous, Chinese, Japanese, Punjabi, Black, and European stories are woven together (to) present an astute look at the complicated histories that shaped BC as we know it today. SASI coordinator Dr. Sharanjit Sandhra contributed a chapter.

The South Asian Canadian Legacy Project launched six projects that raise awareness and knowledge of the valuable contributions of South Asian Canadians to British Columbia's diverse cultures, history, heritage, economy, and society.

Apr
2020



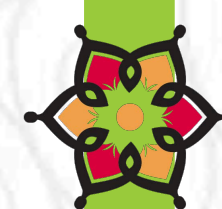
Nov
2019

A lecture by SASI Faculty Associate Dr. Adrienne Fast, and curator of visual art and visual culture at the Reach Gallery Museum, Abbotsford presented how the artists and their art were affected by the 1943 Bengal famine.

Jan
2021

Noted scholar Dr. Suraj Yengde, a Senior Fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School and author of bestseller "Caste Matters" presented on salient issues that continue to persist on caste discrimination

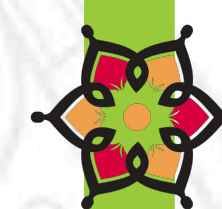
Jun
2021



Sep
2021

The 2021 golf tournament was renamed the 'Bajwa Dhami Building Bridges Community Golf Day' in honour of the philanthropy, passion and commitment of the golf tournament founders and Abbotsford residents – Dr. Amarjit Singh Bajwa and Dr. Malwinder Singh Dhami.

Nov
2021



Nov
2021

The Honourable Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport, Melanie Mark visited the Sikh Heritage Museum, National Historic Site Gur Sikh Temple and she re-emphasized the significance of the cration of a South Asian Canadian Museum, a one-of-a-kind project across Canada.

Apr
2022



May
2022

The SASI partnered with the Surrey Art Gallery on 'Rajesh Vohra: Everyday Monuments', which documents domestic sculptures mounted on roof northwestern Indian state of Punjab that tell a story of identity, diaspora, family, and cul



Aug
2022

Rails, Jails and Trolleys documents history's largest farmers' protest and the Canadian diaspora's response to it. This ground-breaking SASI produced documentary captures the electric ethos of a protest that received international attention and the resounding response by Canadians to the movement



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