

12 arrested as Sikhs battle cops

By STEVE PAYNE
Staff Writer

Violence broke out at an emotional demonstration by 500 Sikhs in Toronto last night and at least 12 were arrested.

Metro Police were involved in several scuffles with demonstrators, but there were no reports of serious injuries.

One ethnic-relations squad officer was taken to hospital with minor cuts to his finger and lip after being struck on the back and knocked down with a ceremonial sword.

One Sikh dressed in traditional garb went to draw his sword and was pounced on by half a dozen policemen. He was led away in handcuffs.

The demonstration was outside Toronto Harbor Commission headquarters where the Indian Consulate had organized a party to celebrate India's Independence Day.

Guests arriving and leaving were surrounded in their cars. Some cars were kicked and pelted with eggs.

Each time a car left, mounted police and police on foot moved in to keep the demonstrators back.

The Sikhs accuse the Indian government of genocide against their people in India and claim up to 15,000 Sikhs have been killed in the Punjab.

"This is a day of mourning for us," said Balbir Singh, a member of the Weston Road Sikh Temple.

Organizers of the demonstration said they wanted the public to know what was going on in India.

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— veronica milne, sun

ANGRY SIKHS scuffle with Metro Police during a demonstration last night outside the Toronto Harbor Commis-

sion building, where the Indian Consulate held a party to celebrate India's Independence Day.