

### **PM's wife releases Khushwant book**

Well-known author Khushwant Singh released his latest book, *Songs Of the Gurus*, consisting of translations of his favourite and selected hymns from Sikh epics.

Mr Singh turned to religion in turbulent 1950s after quitting his government job. "After leaving my government job, I wanted to specialise in something, Sikh religion and Sikh history came to my mind first. So I embarked on this task by translating Japuji Sahib first and then zeroed it down to one hymn a day. After that I got a teaching assignment in Tokyo where I pursued it," he said. "I kept translating on and off and the book is a collection of that only," he added. The idea of bringing out the translations in the form of a book dawned upon the late Ravi Dayal, son-in-law of Mr Singh, a couple of years ago.

Talking about Dr Manmohan Singh's wife Gursharan Kaur, who released the book, Mr Singh said: "She has attained the status of a Bollywood star and is much sought after these days." Ms Kaur expressed surprise that contrary to Mr Singh's image of an atheist, he has celebrated the existence of God in his book. She added that apart from the translations, the illustrations by Arpana Caur, one of India's most celebrated artists, made the book a collector's item.

It consists of translations of a selection of verses from the Guru Granth Sahib and other sacred texts like Guru Tegh Bahadur's *Vairagmayi Bani* and Guru Gobind Singh's *Dasam Granth*.

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### **Guru Granth and Holy Quran the size of stamps in the Museum of Rare Books**

A museum of rare books and manuscripts collected by the Department of Modern Indian Languages of Delhi University was opened by the then Vice-Chancellor, Dr. C D Deshmukh, in the campus 50 years ago.

The earliest published work in the museum which has 100 books and MSS, is an English-Bengali vocabulary by H.P. Forster, published in 1799. It is claimed that Willam Cary based his Dictionary of the Bengali Language, the source of all later Bengali dictionaries on Forster's work.

There are also two miniature editions of the Guru Granth Sahib and the Quran Sharif, each the size of a postage stamp. The Granth runs into 1,430 pages and the Quran into 571. The types are so small that they can be read only with a magnifying glass. The books are reported to have been printed some time in the 18th century in Germany.

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### **First Sikh Inspector in Pakistan**

Islamabad: A 25-year-old practising homeopath has become the first Sikh to be appointed as a traffic warden in Pakistan. Gulab Singh, who hails from the holy town of Nankana Sahib, the birthplace of Guru Nanak, joined the service in the rank of a Sub Inspector and within two days has become a sort of local celebrity in Lahore where he is posted. Singh, who has a doctorate in homeopathy, said, "Joining the force as a sub-inspector was a dream come true for me," he was quoted as saying in *Daily Times*.

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### **The Sikh Doctrine calls for Eternal Vigilance**

As you have rightly pointed out, recitation of the verse, ਛੱਡੀ ਕਉ ਪੂਤ ਰੋਂ, ਬਾਮਣ ਕਉ ਨਾਹਿ । in Sri Darbar Sahib, "knocks out all the systematic demolition of caste system undertaken by Guru Nanak. "I am bringing it to the notice of the SGPC Chief, Sardar Avtar Singh. This line occurs towards end of *Krishnavtar*, in the Dasam Granth; photocopy of the

Chhand No. 2489 is enclosed. As you are well aware, many of the compositions in the Dasam Granth, including *Krishnavtar* are not of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, according to general consensus among Sikh scholars. Even if it be presumed that this composition is one of those from the court poets of the Tenth Guru, probability of later apocryphal interpolations, like the line under reference, cannot be ruled out.

By Dr Jasbir Singh Ahluwalia, Vice-Chancellor, Sri Guru Granth Sahib World University, Fatehgarh Sahib,  
[in reply to Editor's query]

