

US film offends Sikh sentiments

Sr. Tarlochan Singh's Protest to US Ambassador

National Commission for Minorities Chairman, Sr. Tarlochan Singh urged US Ambassador last April to delay the release of an American comedy film "Dysfunctional Family" and to delete certain portions from it, as the film had the potential to incite "hate crimes" against American Sikhs.

In a letter to Mr Blackwill, Mr Tarlochan Singh said the film's trailer, running in theatres throughout the USA showed Eddie Griffin as saying: "I can't figure out why they can't find Osama bin Laden - six feet six with nappy beard and a towel on his head." When an elderly Sikh gentleman wearing a turban walks by, Griffin points at him and says, "bin Laden! I knew he was around here."

Sr. Tarlochan Singh pointed out that though the film was a comedy, "this is no laughing matter".

"Since the war in Iraq began, the FBI has witnessed an increase in hate crimes against Arabs, Muslims and American Sikhs. Sikhs, who sport beards and wear turbans as a requirement of their religion, bear the brunt of these crimes. By associating the Sikh image with terrorism and the war in Iraq, the film is creating a climate where innocent people can be harmed and possibly killed. The image in this movie will add fuel to the fire of backlash and hate crimes," he said.

Pointing out that almost everyone living in the USA who wore a turban was a Sikh, the NCM chairman said in the wake of the September 11 attack, the film industry had edited certain movies in order to be sensitive to current events.

* * * * *

U.S. Award For Dr. Sarup Singh Alag

Humanist and scholar Dr. Sarup Singh Alag, Chairman of Alag Shabad Yug Trust, Ludhiana, has been nominated by ABI, Inc. of North Carolina, U. S. A, for the 'Award of Praise' for year 2003. The nominations of this prestigious title are arrived at through close scrutiny of biographical archives of over one million individuals. Dr. Alag has been nominated for this rare accolade as an important activist for the Welfare Unto All "*Sarbat da bhalla*" and his selfless services to World society through his writings and humanitarian endeavour.

* * * * *

Our rep. in New Zealand Honoured

Sardar Santokh Singh Bhullar of Taumarunui becomes a Member of The New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM). Mr Bhullar was a foundation member of the New Zealand Sikh Society in 1971 and its first president. He was instrumental in organizing funding to build the country's first Sikh Gurdwara in Hamilton.

Mr Bhullar, believed to be the first Punjabi and the first Sikh admitted as a barrister and solicitor in New Zealand, has been a member and office holder in the New Zealand Indian Central Association assisting in literary and immigration matters.

He had a prominent role in the Indian association's country section, for Indians living in rural areas, and was its president from 1978 to 1985. Mr Bhullar has also been involved with Jaycees, Rotary — serving as president in both — and the Turaki School Board.

* * * * *

In the footsteps of Guru Nanak

Harminder Singh's Exemplary Honesty

Setting an example of honesty, an employee of the State Education Institute, who had found an "account payee" cheque for Rs 6 lakh and two Bank pay orders for Rs 2.5 lakh, lying on the road, not only informed the payee, but personally went to deliver the documents back.

While returning home from work, young Harminder saw some papers lying scattered on the road separating Sectors 29 and 30. He stopped by and found that these were a Vijaya Bank cheque for Rs 6 lakh and SBI pay orders for Rs 1 lakh and Rs 1.5 lakh.

These cheques and pay orders had been issued by Haryana Stores Limited in favour of Adani Wilmak Limited. He picked up the documents and called up the people at Adani Wilmak. He then personally went to their office and delivered the bank documents.

[Courtesy: *The Tribune* & Sr. Harbans Singh Noor]