

Ban reversed: Sikhs win turban battle

Washington: Sikhs in USA will be allowed to serve in uniform with their beards and turbans under a legal settlement reached with US Department of Homeland Security, a Sikh advocacy group claimed.

In a statement, Sikh Coalition said the Department of Homeland Security has agreed to pay Raghbir Singh, an observant Sikh who wears a beard and turban in accordance with his religious beliefs, monetary damages for his wrongful termination in 2005.

“Holding the federal government accountable for discriminating against Sikhs sends a strong message to private employers. If the government includes Sikh-Americans in its workforce, it should encourage other employers to do the same,” said Harsimran Kaur, legal director, Sikh Coalition.

“Beyond monetary recognition, we’re pleased the government recognised the need to edit its policies to accommodate for religious differences,” said Khari Tillery, who represented Singh along with the Sikh Coalition and Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights.

“Singh’s turban and beard did not affect his ability to perform his job duties and he was an exemplary employee,” he argued. Singh is a former contracted federal security guard who was fired from his Fresno post in 2005 when his supervisors reported that his beard and religious turban failed to comply with homeland security uniform.

In June 2007, Singh’s lawyers filed a complaint in federal court asserting religious discrimination claims against the private security company that employed Singh and free exercise and Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) claims against several federal employees.

Claims with the private security firm were settled in 2008 for monetary damages, the statement said.

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“United Sarbat Khalsa” initiative:

A volunteer organization of dedicated Sikhs recently published “Sikh- Khalsa Profile” in color. *It embodies basic information on Gurbani - to bring about awareness on Sikhism. With the free distribution of 10,000 copies efforts are on to print new edition in INDIAN / Foreign languages (Spanish, French, Italian, Russian etc) soon. For full details please visit website: www.unitedsarbatkhalsa.com & or Email at: [khalsa@united.sarbatkhalsa .com](mailto:khalsa@united.sarbatkhalsa.com)

Simultaneously in order to show case our presence world wide and for getting recognition/affiliation to world body – UNO, United Sarbat Khalsa is compiling world’s first Sikh Directory, major Institutions, Gurudwaras, NGOs along with their budget / yearly spending pattern on welfare activities, assistance rendered during floods, cyclones, natural, calamities, feeding and shelter for refugees etc. around the globe. This shall give a clear picture of contribution being made by one single – SIKH Community working for social welfare / uplift of mankind following – SARBAT DA BHALLA mission unknown to world community.

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‘300 Sal Guru de nal’ celebration

In extension to the Tercentennial celebration of Sri Guru Granth Sahib - a book on the life and achievements of Guru Gobind Singh: **“In The Foot steps of Guru Gobind Singh”**, was released by Indian Prime Minister’s wife, Mrs. Gursharan Kaur at India International Centre, New Delhi last October. Written by renowned scholar Dr. J.S. Neki (published by Himalayan Books and Institute of Punjab Studies) the album contains 80 rare photographs, with short notes on the Glorious Dasam Patshah.

[Courtesy: Partap Singh]

