

## **Sikhism in Fiji Islands**

I must thank Sr. Joginder Singh Kanwal's informative piece on "The Sikh community of Fiji" (SR: Dec. 2003). It is perhaps the first time that anyone has given the information that the Sikhs have also played a role in Fiji. One is gratified that, inspite of being in small numbers, they have set up one college and four schools, as also many Gurdwaras. *The Sikh Review* is a good forum, providing information about Sikhs settled abroad and people should follow the example to disseminate information on Sikhs in other countries.

**TARLOCHAN SINGH**

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### **Perversion on TV: To view or not to view**

Congratulations on writing the Editorial of SR, December 2003! It is a breath of fresh air, as it highlighted a palpable, prevailing problem and a cloaked conspiracy: PERVERSION on TV.

I have seen these and many others TV serials. Agreed that this is a deliberate depiction to merge Sikhism into Hinduism. Unfortunately, Sikhs are a minority and have a divided house. They love to denigrate each other, discriminate each other and they are the worst victims of corruption, greed, falsehood, nepotism and illiteracy with the most prominent politicians exemplifying. Examples of Illiteracy are our clergy and people of Punjab - no wonder the literacy rate has gone down during the past decade!

I agree with your dictum, "The pen is mightier than the sword" but your hopes of conceptualising a Sikh TV channel is fanciful. All the Sikh journals put together are fewer in circulation than India Today or any other journal. For some unknown reasons, Sikhs do not like to read a journal or a book, even if they get free.

Protest processions are easy for the Sikhs, they have done many times; what one needs is a slogan.

Akal Takht Jathedar is busy sub-serving the causes of his bosses. They perform as instructed by the politicians. And the politicians are under the command of BJP, RSS, and SS. The biggest Sikh leader had Havans with Chandra Swami for his health. Another minister had Ramayana Paaths in Gurdaspur.

Sikhs should not worship Idols. A Punjabi Hindu said, "Watch the morning services at Durbar Sahib! What do Sikhs do? Wash the floor with milk. They finish reciting WAK in 5 minutes but take 20 minutes to clean Roomalas and decorate AGGS. We know that our Idols are made of wood and clay. We realize it but we worship them with devotion. AGGS is paper and ink. Sikhs buy most expensive clothes and hide the book, folded in multiple clothes. They usually do not read AGGS, and they understand very little of what they read or listen and they seldom follow what Gurus have said." I was rendered speechless.

By the way, Ravi Kapoor, you referred to in the editorial is Gurmit Singh Sethi. Many Sikhs are involved in movie industry in India. You cited one example of your brave relative; I can give you million examples, both from Punjab and Diaspora, on the other side. But the people who are tied up in tassels are bent upon cutting their own limbs by calling others as apostate, "cut-surd" and million more epithets and treat them as 4<sup>th</sup> class citizens and push them out of Sikhism. However, they do dream of converting 40 million Sikligars, Banjaras and others from MP, AP, Maharashtra and Karnataka! Good luck to them!

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I fully endorse and support the concerns voiced in December's editorial about the misinterpretation of Sikhs by the "popular Hindu-centric " serials aired on StarPlus, Zee TV and Sony TV.

We must wake up to the consequences of such blatant dis-illusions. If the pen is indeed mightier than the sword - let us wield it to the best of our capabilities and shake up the slumber of our Sikh brethren to awaken and let it be known through all means possible about the great indiscriminatory visulations of Sikhi values and traditions.

**This visual "rape" of our culture must stop.** We must all unite on a common fora to voice our protest. Only a collective effort will work. A beginning has been made. But we need more hands and voices from all over to join in.

An "Online" petition could be started - for example. Lets all join hands - lets all speak with one voice!

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## **Congested Chandni Chowk**

The historic Gurdwara Sis Ganj Sahib located in Chandni Chowk, Delhi, is the hallowed place where the Ninth Guru, Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji, sacrificed his life for the protection of Hindu religion. Chandni Chowk is now so congested that it is impossible to pay homage at the shrine. The approach whether from Red Fort, Delhi Rly. station or Fatehpuri side, is choked with traffic. While there is parking space inside the Gurdwara for the pilgrims, the Administration has closed the entrance to Gurdwara from Delhi Rly. Station and Fatehpuri sides, by erecting footpath in front of parking gate of the Gurdwara and therefore, no vehicle coming from these sides can enter the Gurdwara. Vehicles coming or entering the Gurdwara face a lot of problem and there is no arrangement for voluntary sewadars.

May I also touch on the perverse TV serials? These misrepresent the Sikh in a bad light, distort our culture and dishonour our moral tradition.

I request awakened youth and Sikh organisations to take up the matter for redressal.

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