

Aurangabad Gurdwara

A Repository of rare Manuscripts

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The historic Gurdwara which had been built here in the memory of Bhai Daya Singh, first of the Panj Piaras, is a repository of rare Sikh manuscripts dating back more 300 years. Some manuscripts have beautiful ornamental calligraphy and outlining in gold and blue.

One of the rare handwritten manuscripts is “Zafarnamah” (Epistle of Victory) written in Persian. It was sent by 10th Sikh master Guru Gobind Singh to Mughal emperor Aurangzeb in 1705. Its manuscript seems to be written by a Muslim devotee, who has also written the date of its writing on it.

In the “Zafarnamah”, Guru Gobind Singh reminds Aurangzeb how the King and his henchmen had broken their oaths sworn upon the Koran. SGPC President Avtar Singh, who visited Aurangabad to attend a function to commemorate the tercentenary of Guru Gaddi Diwas of Guru Granth Sahib, was so delighted to see the commitment of the gurdwara management to preserve those manuscripts that he announced a grant of Rs 1 lakh to the gurdwara.

Wrapped in beautiful cloth, the gurdwara has two more handwritten Adi Granth and other religious pictorial graphics. Some manuscripts have been written in golden ink. As many as 6,000 words of one of the manuscripts are written in golden ink.

Although the five beloved enjoyed equal status as the Guru’s confidants, Bhai Daya Singh had always been regarded as the first among equals. He was Guru Gobind Singh’s emissary sent from Dina village in Punjab to deliver the “Zafarnamah” to Aurangzeb.

Another important letter preserved here is of Bhai Chanda Singh. It is written in Persian script and urges the Sikhs to join the ‘kar sewa’ of Takht Hazur Sahib, which was started by Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

However, letters on some of the ancient manuscripts have become discoloured.

[Courtesy: *The Tribune*]

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A Note from Lt. Col. K.S. Grewal (Retd.), Advocate, Punjab & Haryana High Court, 1511, Sector 36-D, Chandigarh. 160 036.

I forward a copy of clip from *The Tribune* (Nov. 4, 2008). It is so very heartening to note that the Gurdwara committee has taken pains to preserve these rare manuscripts for so many years. Since these rare MSs have been exposed to the media, it becomes all the more important to protect them from unscrupulous people. **The Management should enlist the services of an expert agency to evaluate and preserve the MSs, get the same photocopied by latest techniques and keep the set at different places for protection.**

So many agencies and (even the state) are out to destroy the Sikh culture: VHP, RSS even foreign missionaries. The Centre has not returned the valuable treasure and MSs taken away from Harmandir Sahib in 1984 though it is virtually admitted that it is lying somewhere!

Likewise, there are many old Sikh Gurdwaras and Udasi Deras where contemporary literature can be found and taken note of and preserved, even if costs money which the Sikh sangat will surely contribute in ample measure.



