

## Does Nanking in China celebrate Guru Nanak?"

Sir, - *The Sikh Review* of November 2005 recalls to mind a similar query raised a few years ago when a Sikh gentleman from Amritsar inquired whether this name of Chinese city 'Nanking' has anything to do with Guru Nanak? I wrote to him that as an officer of Indian Mission in China I lived in Nanking, now called Nanjing, from December 1946 to February 1950. Subsequently, I was posted to Peking (now called Beijing) till September 1952. In Nanking our Sikh watchman of the Indian Embassy, Sardar Opar Singh [who had served in the Indian National Army of Subhas Chandra Bose] mentioned that no one has ever verified Guru Nanak's visit to far east. In Mandarin language, the word 'Nan' means 'South' and 'King' (pronounced as 'Ching') means 'capital' so Nanking means only the "southern capital". Nanking has been the capital in past Ming and later Manchu dynasty century and also under the Kou-mintang (Chinese Nationalist) regime of Chiang-Kai-Shek. Similarly, the word 'Peking' consists of the two words 'Pek' pronounced a 'Pei' which means in Chinese 'north' so Peking means 'North Capital' which the current Chinese communist Government made on assuming power on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 1949. But, Americans who thought that north China was ruled by war overlords so there was no peace, and they called it as 'Peiping' meaning 'northern peace'. I trust readers of *The Sikh Review* will find it interesting – if not clinching.

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## Guru Gobind Singh and Goddess Durga

Sir: I have seen an account of Dussera (Durga Puja, Durgotsaya) from "Festivals and Holidays of India" by P. Thomas. He has given a fine account of this ten days festival, including the nine nights of *Navratri*, culminating with the worship of *Devi*, on the tenth day. As Sakti Mata, she represents cosmic dynamics and animates all things. Even Shiva, otherwise her HUSBAND, is Shava (corpse) to her..... It is the first time, that the female form of Supreme Almighty overtakes his male form. It makes sense. All come from the supprme source and go back to the ultimate source of spirituality.

It makes men and women equal. The days of the physical strength, to dominate the women, are long gone. The sooner, our Granthis and Takht Jathedars accept it, the better. In modern times, it is the superiority of cerebral brain, irrespective of male brain, that rules the day.

The writer goes on to say, "Guru Gobind Singh, who organised the Sikhs into a militant band against the Moghuls, introduced the worship of Durga into his cult of sword". I find it difficult to digest it. sword in one shape or the other, was available in all parts of the world. It was a straight sword in Europe and somewhat curved sword in Middle East and South East Asia. It was a tool to defend oneself. It has nothing to do with any deity, of any religion.

Guru Gobind Singh and Shivaji Maratha, had advocated guerilla warfare, which was effective and sensible, against a much more powerful enemy. They stood no chance against the Moghuls, in a straight face to face battle. Guerilla warfare was developed to perfection, much later and more recently by Maotse Tung, in China, when he had the upper hand against the Chang Kai - Shek of Nationalist China.

Our Kirpan is just a sword and Miri Piri conception stands for our defence. For our Defence, it is just a symbol today and we have to adopt the latest weapons, much more sophisticated and effective, for our defence. Let us have the opinion of other readers.

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### **Nagar Kirtan cause traffic chaos**

The metropolitan city of Delhi witnessed three huge Nagar Kirtan in recent months. The day after the newspapers reported how these Nagar Kirtans cause a lot of inconvenience to public at large because of traffic jams. Some miss their flights, others cannot reach hospitals though they may be critically ill and need urgent medical attention. When our great Gurus sacrificed their lives to give comfort and justice to the people and lived in great simplicity, how can we justify grandeur of the garish kind and show of every type by displaying Golden palkies?

Can we not simplify our religious ceremonies and utilize the resultant savings on charitable causes like orphanages, old homes, etc? Let the Sikh sangat and Gurdwara Prabandhaks apply their mind to this plea.

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