

## **Sardar S.S. Khurana - G.M. Eastern Rly.**

S.S. Khurana has taken over as the new general manager of the Eastern Railway from May 4. He has replaced Shyam Kumar, who retired from railway service on April 30.

Sardar Khurana was the additional general Manager of the North East Frontier Railway. He has got wide experience in working in several key positions in his 34 years' of service.

Before coming to the ER, he had held key posts in Allahabad, Dhanbad, Adra, Ambala and had also worked on the research and design aspects of electric locomotives in the research Design and Standards Organisation, Lucknow. The electrical engineer from IIT Roorkee belongs to the 1971 batch of the Indian Railway Service. He obtained advanced training in Sweden and Japan.

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- **Dr. Harnam Singh Shan honoured**



The Punjab University, Chandigarh, where Dr. Harnam Singh Shan has had an outstanding career in Punjabi Studies and as an Oriental scholar, has conferred on him the title of Professor Emeritus for his life-long contribution to study of Oriental languages and conspicuous services.

This recognition ensures his continued participation in relevant academic activity, especially in grant research projects and consultancy.

**A resolution to this effect was passed by the University Syndicate in March 2006 and communicated by the Vice Chancellor, Prof. KN Pathak**

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## **British Columbia recognizes articles of Sikh faith**

*Kirpan* sporting Sikhs allowed entry in Provincial Assembly for the first time

While the French Sikhs are fighting against the ban on the turban in Schools there, the Sikh community got some good news from Canada as the provincial assembly of British Columbia unanimously passed a resolution to recognise Baisakhi and the five articles (*kakaars*) of the Sikh faith. With this, British Columbia has become the second province in Canada to recognise the foundation day of the Khalsa and the five articles. The Manitoba province had already recognised these.

Stating this, Dr. Raghbir Singh Bains, the author of Encyclopedia of Sikhism, who was also conferred the Order of British Columbia, told *TOI* from Surrey that the resolution was adopted by the provincial assembly after a unanimous decision by

the Supreme Court of Canada on March 2, recognition the wearing of *kirpan* by Sikh students in educational Institutions throughout the country. The resolution for the purpose was tabled by NDP MLA Jagrup Singh Brar while Dave Hayer of BC Liberal Party supported the motion.

Minister Michael De Jong who had recently visited Punjab while supporting the motion paid tributes to Sikh pioneers who went to Canada more than a century ago and contributed to the prosperity of British Columbia. Bains said Harbhajan Singh Lali, NDP MLA, gave a brief account of the history of Sikhs.

“The gallery had the presence of Sikhs hailing from throughout Canada and all the *kirpan* wearing visitors were allowed for the first time to enter the assembly without being asked to take it of,” he recalled. All the 18 MLAs from the ruling and the opposition party who took part in the one-hour debate supported the motion with one voice and both parties congratulated each other for bringing the motion up. The motion was unanimously passed by the house of 79 MLAs. Other Sikh MLAs who took part in the debate were Harbhajan Singh Lali, Harry Singh Bains and Raj Chauhan.

Bains said, “With the passing of the unanimous motion in recognition of both Baisakhi and the five *kakaars*, a new responsibility has fallen on the shoulders of the Sikh community to contribute more diligently and positively towards the development of British Columbia and Canada.”

[Courtesy: *The Times of India*]

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### **Popularizing Gurmukhi: A DSGMC Initiative**

The Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee, under the able guidance of its President, Sardar Harvinder Singh Sarna, organized a “Gurmukhi Diwas” on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2006 at Gurdwara Bangla Sahib to mark the “Prakash Utsav” of Sri Guru Angad Dev Ji. Special arrangements were made at the Gurdwara Complex, where some 600 men, women and children participated to learn the basics of Gurmukhi script.

The main purpose of the one-day camp was to motivate the new generation to learn Gurmukhi in order to acquire knowledge of Gurmukhi as well as our rich heritage. Those who actively participated to train the learners were DSGMC’s Senior Vice Present, Sr. Joginder Singh Walia, Dharam Prachar Committee’s Chairman, Sr. Tarsem Singh and its Member Sr. Kulmohan Singh. The Committee also declared that from now every year the Prakash Diwas of Guru Angad Dev Ji will be celebrated as “Gurmukhi Diwas” and also appealed to all Sikh Gurdwara Committees and other Sikh Institution in Delhi to organize similar camps at their own level to motivate and to popularize the Gurmukhi Script and Punjabi language among new generation.

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### **Kirtan Festival - Voices of Faith**

Delhi: Praise the Lord. The lawns of the Talkatora Gardens reverberated with the strains of Gurubani at the kirtan-durbar. “Guru Mannyo Granth,” from April 28 to 30, which presented singers from India and Pakistan. Gurubani is the singing of the Guru Granth Sahib, which contains the mystical poetry of virtually every saint-poet, from Kabir and Namdev to Bulle Shah and Nanak. The festival will open with a rendition by classical singer Surinder Singh followed by raagi from Nanakana Saheb of Lahore, Ashiq Ali Bhai Lal. He is the 17<sup>th</sup> generation descendant of Bhai Mardana,

the companion of Guru Nanak Dev. On the second day, apart from Kartar Singh, Gurnam Singh and Bhai Nirmal Singh Khalsa, the surprise inclusion is the *bhajan samrat*, Anup Jalota. The last day will feature Bhai Harbans Singh Jagadhari of Ludhiana. One can also listen to students from Miri Piri School in Amritsar singing the poetry of the gurus, and enjoy the innocence of their soprano voices. A bouquet of various styles and verses. Spend some quiet prayerful evenings at Talkatora Gardens before it gets too hot.

### **Vaisakhi in Nova Scotia**

The Maritime Sikh Society, Halifax, (Canada) assigned the whole month of April for Vaisakhi celebrations. While speeches and sang *shabads* and make speeches relating to Vaisakhi on Sundays April 2 and April 9, April 16 Sunday was reserved for Children to sing *shabads*, make speeches or read poems. Ragi Jatha of Bhai Amrik Singh ji has been invited from Toronto to do Shabad-Kirtan on April 21- 23.

It was a sheer delight to hear speeches and shabads from sweet little children, the youngest could be three year old or less! The guest speaker of the dewan was the budding Sikh scholar, Dr. Pavna Sodhi Kalsi. She presented a paper, “ Punjabi Resources for Third - generation Punjabi Children”. Dr. Kalsi is a specialist in this area. She did her Ph.D on “ethnic identity formation of Punjabi women living in Eastern Canada” from the University of Toronto in 2002.

Her paper was based on her personal experience of raising her two year old daughter Nadya in a Punjabi milieu. She makes an effort spending quality time with family year round, visiting the local Gurdwara, and gradually introduced her to the Punjabi music and delicious Punjabi cuisine.

Towards the end of her presentation she provided a list of the resources that would spontaneously assist parents to speak more Punjabi in the household. She continues to use the resources to preserve language in her home.

[Contributed by Jagpal Singh Tiwana]

