

Book on Sikh soldiers' valour launched in Singapore

A glowing tribute was paid to Sikh soldiers who died fighting wars in Europe, Africa and Asia in a book "*Saluting Sikh Soldiers of World Wars I and II*" launched in Singapore early this year. Speaking on the occasion, India's Deputy High Commissioner to Singapore, Rajesh K. Sachdeva noted the sacrifices of the Sikhs and said the book, appropriately launched on India's Republic Day, was a masterpiece of Sikh history.

The book, authored by a Singapore-based educationist and social worker, Surjan Singh, was launched by Raja Randhir Singh of the royal family of the erstwhile Patiala state, whose grandfather Maharaja (Lt. Gen. Sir) Bhupinder Singh led the Sikh soldiers in Belgium in 1915.

Mr. Randhir Singh especially came down to Singapore to launch the 1,065-page book comprising more than 40,000 names of Sikh soldiers who left one famous message on the Kohima War memorial: "When You Go Home Tell Them Of Us. And Say For Your Tomorrow, We Gave Our Today."

The author said he spent nearly four years compiling the names and data of the soldiers with the help of the London based Commonwealth War Graves Commission. The photos and historical information was gathered from letters written by the soldiers from the European war trenches in the early 1900s to their families in Punjab.

Youth Camp in USA

Guru Harkrishan Institute of Sikh Studies (GHISS) is pleased to announce the 12th Annual Sikh Youth Gurmat Camp in Maryland, USA from July 28 - August 4, 2007. The registration deadline is July 9, 2007 and only the first 100 registrants with completed applications will be accepted. From our experience of prior years, we anticipate the capacity of 100 to be filled sooner than the deadline. Early registration is thus encouraged.

The camp is for youth of ages 7-19 years. It is an endeavor to expose the Sikh youth of the western world to the principles and values of Sikhism. It is an attempt to create a Sikh environment and provide a glimpse of the Sikh way of life. The camp is lead by motivated Gursikhs. To help our youth identify their roots, Sikh History has been kept an important focus of the camp. The camp comprises of Kirtan and Tabla classes, Gatka training, daily Kirtan Diwans, organized seminars, discussions, sports, and various competitions and other activities.

Further information about the camp can be obtained from the **Gurmat Camps** section of the official website of GHISS at <http://www.ghiss.org>. The website has pictures from past camps (including Camp 2006!). You can register online using the online registration form or download the form in Adobe Acrobat (PDF) format.

Please pass on this information to your local Gurdwara, family and friends, and to any other Sikhism-related mailing list you belong to.

Please feel free to email Gurdeep Singh at gurdeep@sikhlink.net for any further information.

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Vice-admiral Anup Singh is India's Deputy Naval Chief

Vice Admiral Anup Singh took over as the Navy's new Deputy Chief last April. A resident of Chandigarh, he relieves Vice-Ad. Miral R.P. Suthan, who proceeded to Vishakhapatnam as Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Eastern Naval Command.

Anup Singh was commissioned in the Indian Navy in 1973. A specialist in navigation and direction, he has held a mix of operational and staff appointments.

As the Fleet Commander, he led 'Operation Sukoon', the evacuation of civilians from

war-torn Lebanon in July 2006 in what came to be the largest post-Independence civilian evacuation operation under UN auspices.

He has also held command and staff appointments afloat and ashore, including Assistant Controller of Carrier Projects and Warship Production and Acquisition at the Naval Headquarters, Chief Instructor (Navy), Defence Services Staff College, Wellington, and Chief of Staff, Western Naval Command.

He was the sailing master of the first-ever square-rigged sail training vessel 'Varuna' in 1981-82, and skippered the Naval yacht, 'Samudra', for the Pacific crossing during her round-the world voyage in 1989. As the Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff, he will be heading the 'Operations' branch of the Navy, including foreign cooperation.

[Courtesy: *Hindustan Times*]

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Punjab on the boil after 'insult' to Guru Gobind Singh Ji

Pretender Tenders Apology

Last month, Punjab exploded in protests as followers of Dera Sacha Sauda – a cult aligned to Congress – clashed with members of various Sikh groups. The violence, with its infectious mix of religion and politics, swept across large swathes of the state, joining large towns like Bathinda, Amritsar, Jalandhar and Ludhiana in one uncontrollable upsurge. The violence spilled over to Jammu and parts of Rajasthan, forcing the Punjab government to get into a huddle to handle the situation.

It all began when the Sirsa-based Dera head, Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh, appeared at a public function, dressed as Guru Gobind Singh, the 10th Guru. Sikh organizations almost immediately formed counter attack groups and burnt effigies of Rahim Singh, which in turn instigated his supporters to go on the rampage.

The violent clashes, that first erupted in Bathinda before spreading to Amritsar, Mansa, Moga, Ludhiana, Sangrur, Jammu and Sriganganagar, revived dark memories of the Sikh-Nirankari clashes of 1978 and sent the three-month-old Akali-BJP government into a tizzy.

The five high priests issued an "appeal" to Sikhs to be prepared for any sacrifice while thwarting anti-Sikh and anti-Panthic element. Giani Joginder Singh Vedanti, *jathedar* of the Akal Takht, said Sikh clerics had decided to hold a Panthic convention of all Sikh organisations to chalk out their future course of action. May 22 witnessed a total closure (Bandh) of Punjab (virtually) paralysing the state.

[Courtesy: *Times of India*]

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Malkit Kaur wins Truman Scholarship

Malkit Kaur Singh is among seven Indian Americans selected as Truman scholars. A Sociology major at George Mason University, Malki "Mona" Singh plans to practice medicine in underserved areas, focusing on AIDS and other problems of living turned into medical illness.

She serves as University Scholar Class Representative, President of the American Society for Microbiology, volunteers for the Hospital Elder Life Program, and is on the Ek Taal Dance Team. This past summer, Mona studied HIV/AIDS treatment in South Africa. She has also undertaken medical research at the Krasnow Institute for Advanced Study.

[Courtesy: *Dr. Harbans Lal*]

Kesh - Integral to Sikh Religious Identity

Directive by DSGPC

Sikh students of schools run by the religion's top body in the capital will have to abide by a "hair code" or face expulsion.

The Delhi Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee today declared it would not allow Sikh students who cut their hair to study at any of its 13 schools some of which are highly rated even among non-Sikhs.

While Sikh boys would have to wear turbans and beards, girls would be forbidden from cutting their hair.

But the committee clarified it had "no intention" of enforcing the code on non-Sikhs studying at their schools.

The schools – known as Guru Harkrishan Public Schools – have 50 per cent reservation for Sikh students.

"This is the only way to ward off attacks we are facing from both the East and the West," committee chairman Paramjeet Singh Sarna said.

Sarna also attacked the RSS for trying to "deny Sikhs their independent identity".

"The young generation is influenced by the West so much that children are turning away from all religions. RSS statements claiming that Sikhs are a part of their Hindu *samaj* are, however, attempts from the East to negate Sikhism as an independent religion," he said.

[Courtesy: Telegraph]