

# Dr. Gurcharan Singh: An Obituary

*Shamsher Singh (USA)\**

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Professor Emeritus Dr. Gurcharan Singh, of Plainview, Long Island New York, who taught Political Science and International Studies at Marymount College, Manhattan, died in an accident while crossing a street opposite Gurdwara Plainview, on March 30, 2007. He was 77.

Dr. Singh worked and taught till the last day of his life. He taught at the Marymount College Manhattan for 17 years starting in 1980 and retiring as Professor Emeritus of Political and International Studies in 1997. Dr. Singh taught two courses each one semester (International Law in the fall, Conflict in the spring) Gurcharan lived a full and vibrant personal and professional life and was loved by his associates, personified as a beloved teacher, well liked by his fellow *satsangis*, and very popular among his friends – **who sought his counsel and** constructive advice. True to his training and profession, he was instrumental in resolving conflicts and brought reconciliation among the warring parties. He was loved by all who knew him for generosity and kindness.

Born in Rawalpindi (West Punjab) in 1929 he migrated after partition of India and initially settled with his family in New Delhi, India. Prior to coming to New York, his early education was at the Punjab University College, New Delhi, where his writing skill and forceful expression blossomed as editor of the college magazine. He started his career with the Foreign Ministry. His assignment at the Foreign Ministry in India brought him to New York. This provided him an opportunity to further advance his educational qualifications. He obtained an M.A. from the City University of New York and Ph.D. also from the graduate Center of the City University of New York.

Dr. Singh was passionately in love with Gurbani and tried to mould his life and actions according to lofty principles. In 1966 he organized, along with other friends from New York, the first Gurburab in the northwest. This led to regular congregations, resulting in the establishment of SIKH CULTURAL SOCIETY of New York, that purchased a building in Richmond Hills in 1969. He was expert in writing constitutions for non-profit organizations and getting them approved by the IRS. During his lifetime he saw the establishment of five Gurdwaras in the New York cosmopolitan area he was associated with all of them, but stopped short of managing them, being a selfless worker who never sought recognition or control.

He was instrumental in helping to establish SRI HEM KUNT FOUNDATION for the benefit of children's education, an International annual competition on a worldwide basis. His attachment to Bhai Vir Singh's literary writing and inspirational poetry and prose is without parallel. He regularly participated in Punjabi poetry and prose discussions.

He was an excellent organizer on Sikh religious symposiums, participated in interfaith dialogues religious discussions, and initiated dialogues. Sikh Renaissance Association and Sikh Heritage association which disseminated issues on human rights, social justice and equality of sexes were his brainchildren. He wrote articles and participation in professional societies.

He is survived by his wife Shan G. Singh, two sons, a daughter and four grandchildren they live and work in New York. □

