

“Bhai Gurdas” award for Dr. Sarup Singh Alag

Ludhiana-based International Bhai Gurdas Award, for the year 2006-07, has been awarded to the renowned Scholar Dr. Sarup Singh Alag, Chairman “Alag Shabad Yug International Charitable Trust,” for his meritorious service through threescore and more publications disseminated in various language throughout the world. Dr. Alag’s is the only organization in the Panjab which has been distributing soul stirring and character building literature across the board for the last 15 years.

The award carries Rs Ten Thousand along with a Citation, Memento and Siropao. Incidentally, on the occasion of Vaisakhi, 10 thousand copies of the various publications were distributed in Los Angles, USA. Another shipment comprising 12 thousand books is on its way to U.S.A. for distribution during the celebration of Guru Arjun Martyrdom Quadri centenary.

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Never too late for Justice:

3 convicted in anti-Sikh riots case

Twenty-Three years after three members of a family were brutally killed during the anti-Sikh riots in Delhi, a city court has convicted three accused – Harparsad Bhardwaj, R.P. Tiwari and Jagdish Giri. They have been found guilty under various Sections of the Indian Penal Code, including 147 (rioting) and 302 (murder).

The convicts were sentenced to life imprisonment. The ASJ, however, acquitted accused Kamlesh and Suraj Giri of the charges due to lack of evidence.

The three convicts had led a mob on November 1 and 2, 1984 and attacked the house of complainant Harminder Kaur in an east Delhi locality after anti-Sikh riots broke out following the assassination of then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

According to the prosecution, Niranjn Singh - a head constable with the Delhi police who was on duty at Shahdara Railway Station on November 1, 1984 – was lynched and set ablaze by a violent mob led by the three convicts. They had chased him down before killing him in front of his house in Manasarovar Park, east Delhi. Singh’s 17-year-old son, Gurpal, and his son-in-law, Mahender, were killed the next day by the same men.

Singh’s widow, Harminder Kaur, who survived the riots, filed an affidavit with the Jain and Banerjee Committee constituted to look into riot cases. Following this, an FIR was lodged in the case in 1996.

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Babri-hit IAS officer back in office

Sher Singh, an IAS officer of 1976 batch of Bengal cadre, was dismissed from service in 2000 for writing a controversial book on Babar and giving defamatory speeches against the then ruling BJP party at the Centre.

Calcutta High Court last March shot down Singh’s dismissal and ordered his reinstatement to service within one month with all his service benefits maintaining his seniority, if he has not crossed the normal age of retirement.

Justice Bhaskar Bhattacharya and K. K. Prasad also directed the centre and state to pay full salaries for the period of his suspension from service within two months. The case dates back to 1994. The state had suspended Sher Singh and served him with a chargesheet for departmental proceedings against him on five counts of misconduct. Sher Singh was the director of evaluation, monitoring and manpower, West Bengal. He had been charged with getting his controversial book (*title The Secular Emperor Babar*) published even after the state and the Centre refused permission.

Acting on a petition filed by Singh, the central administrative tribunal (CAT) on December 8, 1999 directed the state to complete departmental proceedings against Singh within three months, failing which the charges against him would stand quashed.

The state, however, dismissed Sher Singh from service on November 22, 2000 on the basis of the recommendation of UPSC dated October 13, 2000.

Challenging this, Singh moved the CAT, which rejected his plea on December 10, 2002. He then appealed to high court.

Allowing Sher Singh's petition, the judges said, "In view of the CAT's order fixing a time limit for the departmental proceeding, the state could not conduct proceedings beyond the stipulated time and conclude the same by dismissing Singh. The continuation of departmental proceedings beyond stipulated time was without jurisdiction."

[Courtesy: *Hindustan Times*]

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The Living Legend Sr. Khushwant Singh Honoured

Not many of our readers may recollect that the doughty. Sr. Khushwant Singh had, in June 1984 returned to the President of India, the civilian honour Padma Bhushan (that had been conferred in him in mid 1970's) in a spontaneous protest against the army's assault of Sikhism's holiest shrine in what was officially a-la-Machiavelli – designated as "Operation Bluestar".

Now, almost a quarter century later, the government has tried to make amends by conferring on the redoubtable Sardar (and the acknowledged Historian) the second highest civilian award: Padma Vibhushan on March 23, 2007.

- Ed. SR.

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Honours for Dr. Amrit Kaur Raina

Former Principal, S.D. College Mansa and Member, Punjabi University Syndicate/Senate, Dr. Amrit Kaur Raina has been conferred with the "Bhai Santokh Singh Sahitya Shiromani Award" by the Haryana state Punjabi Sahitya Akademy. The award, that includes Rs. one Lac, a memento and a shawl, was publicly presented to the veteran scholar by the education minister, Haryana at a Panchkula in January 2007.

This is the highest literary honour accorded by Government of Haryana. We offer our heartiest felicitations to Dr Raina - daughter of late Prof. Harnam Dass who contributed frequently to The Sikh Review in its first two decades of publication.

We are equally gratified to know that Dr. Amrit Kaur has been awarded a major UGC Research Project for undertaking comparative study of various religions on the basis of the text of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji.

- Ed. SR.

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Progressive Changes in US Universities

Jasbir Singh Sethi (Houston) writes: Apropos The Sikh Review, February 2007, I want to share with your readers, a latest news item. S. Tejinder Singh Bindra has been included in The Board of Trustees of Hofstra University, New York.

Hofstra University is a very prestigious private university in Long Island, New York. Mr. Bindra is the one who has established a fully endowed Chair in Sikh studies. His inclusion in the Board of Trustees ia giant leap forward, indicating that the University is really reaching out to the Sikh community and also want the community leaders to participate in

decision-making for the University. Email: jsethi03@yahoo.com

