

Punjab History Conference in Patiala

“Spirituality was the main thrust of theology and theosophy of Sikhism as enshrined in Guru Granth Sahib, the holy scripture of the Sikhs,” said Sardar Tarlochan Singh, MP a former chairman of the Minorities Commission of India, in his address at the valedictory function of the 41st Punjab History Conference, which concluded at the Punjabi University’s Senate hall, Patiala.

The conference on the theme “Concept of martial race and the Sikhs” was organised by the department of Punjab Historical studies, which was attended by over 300 scholars from all over India.

Dr Jaspal Singh, Vice-Chancellor, who presided, said the concept of martiality was being ‘misused’.

[Courtesy: *The Tribune*]

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SGPC should have a Prachar Taskforce

Sardar Tarlochan Singh, MP has suggested that the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee should set up a special task force which should be entrusted the sole task of preaching Sikhism. The SGPC should also earmark special funds for this purpose and focus more on the areas where ‘dera culture’ was taking roots to help wean away Sikhs from the deras.

In an exclusive interview, Tarlochan Singh lamented that the SGPC had failed in its duty of propagating and preaching the tenets of Sikhism, Tarlochan Singh said that the low priority accorded by the SGPC to preaching Sikhism had led to rise of the ‘dera culture’ in Punjab, in particular.

The MP said that Sikhs should also avoid a confrontation with the dera as Sikhism preached peace. He said that Sikhism preached peaceful coexistence and tolerance. He said that the Haryana government should ban public meetings by Dera Sacha Sauda chief, Sant Ram Rahim Singh, in the state as these meetings aroused communal passions which led to peace being threatened.

[Courtesy: *The Tribune*]

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Dr Harjinder Singh Dilgeer honoured as “National Professor”

Well known historian, Dr Harjinder Singh Dilgeer has been given the honorific: “National Professor of History” for his contribution to Sikh history. The award was presented to him at a special function at Chandigarh, in March 2009.

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Heroism of Naib Subedar Bana Singh

The iconic soldier of the 8th Jammu and Kashmir Light Infantry has the rare honour of a 22,143-ft-high post on the Siachen Glacier field named after him.

Earlier known as ‘Quaid’ and now renamed Bana Top, this post was controlled by the Pakistan Army prior to June 1987, when 38-year-old hero surprised the enemy with an

audacious assault and captured what was then considered 'an impregnable glacier fortress' with 1,500-ft-high vertical ice walls on either side. This heroic act won him the highest gallantry award two decades ago.

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Fewer Sikh pilgrims visiting Pakistan

According to a PTI report, datelined Lahore, there has been a sharp fall in the number of Sikh pilgrims visiting Pakistan from India, and other countries, to observe Vaisakhi festival, in the wake of recent terror attacks in that country.

"A total of 375 Sikhs from India, and over 100 from Britain, Canada and other countries arrived in Lahore to take part in the festival being held at Panja Sahib," Mr. Fraz Abbas, deputy director (shrines) with the Evacuee Trust Property Board, told PTI.

Mr Abbas said it appeared that recent terror attacks in Lahore had kept away a large number of pilgrims.

Last year, over 4,000 Sikhs from India had attended the festival, but the figure is lower this year due to tensions between the two countries in the wake of the Mumbai terror attacks.

The government made elaborate arrangements to provide security to the visiting Sikh pilgrims, by deploying the paramilitary Pakistan Rangers for the first time to guard them. CCTV cameras, walk-through gates and metal detectors have also been installed at the holy shrines, to be visited by the pilgrims.

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Shoe of Anger

Jarnail Singh, the Sikh journalist who slung a shoe at P. Chidambaram last April, did it out of frustration when the Home Minister refused to address a perfectly legitimate question about the 1984 anti-Sikh 'riots'.

