

## Indian Parliament mum over massacre of Sikhs

While the US Congress and Senate have condemned bigotry and violence against Sikh-Americans in the wake of terrorist attacks in the USA on September 11 last year, the Indian Parliament is yet to condemn the massacre of Sikhs in 1984, Sr Tarlochan Singh, Vice-Chairman, National Commission for Minorities, said in Chandigarh last summer.

Sr Tarlochan Singh, who returned from a tour of the USA and the UK, has circulated among all Sikh MPs copies of the resolutions adopted by the US Congress and Senate in this respect.

"To me it appears all the more intriguing that after cases of hate crimes were reported against Sikh-Americans, the Indian Government took up the matter with the US Government to express its concern and wanted safety and security of all Indian-Americans in general. On the other hand, the Indian Parliament has not passed any resolution about the massacre of Sikhs in 1984," said Mr Tarlochan Singh.

Mr Tarlochan Singh said the resolutions adopted by the Senate and the Congress expressed the anguish of every American after a few cases of hate crime were reported in which one Sikh was gunned down outside his store in Mesa, Arizona.

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### Second IUS Seminar 2002 in Canada

#### Shabad Guru, Conscience, and Consciousness

##### A Report by Prof. Devinder Singh Chahal, Ph.D.

Some 400 years ago, when Guru Arjun, the Fifth Guru, assembled the *Bani* (words) of the first four Gurus and selected Bhagats, and Sufis. He added his own *Bani* and the *Swayiae* (praises/laudations/eulogies) of the first five Gurus, composed by Bhatts (bards). After arranging the collected *Bani* (verses) into different sections and sub-sections under different *Raags* (musical modes) he compiled it with help from Bhai Gurdas . While compiling the *Bani* to give it a form of *Pothi*, Guru Arjun declared this *Pothi* as Parmeswar (the Guru, the Enlightener).

This *Pothi* was declared as **Parmesar/Guru** by Guru Arjun because it contains the *Shabad* - word of God.

All the other five Sikh Gurus, who succeeded to the House of Nanak, also taught from this *Pothi*. *Bani* of Guru Teg Bahadur, the 9th Guru, was incorporated by the 10th Guru, Gobind Singh, in this *Pothi* around 1705 CE. Then in 1708 CE at the time of his demise, Guru Gobind Singh declared that henceforth Guru Granth will remain the **Eternal Guru** of the Sikhs. Every Sikh should seek guidance from this Eternal Guru and preach the wisdom from it to the humanity. He also eliminated priesthood of any type in Sikhism.

The **Institute for Understanding Sikhism** (IUS), in collaboration with le département des sciences religieuses de l'université du québec à montréal held the Second IUS International Seminar on, SHABAD GURU, CONSCIENCE, AND CONSCIOUSNESS, on September 21, 2002 in the auditorium at la Centre des Loisirs du parc à montréal, Canada.

The first session of One-day Seminar was chaired by Prof Mathieu Boisvert of University of Quebec at Montreal. Before seminar was declared open, Parminder Singh Ragi, Gurdwara Sahib Quebec recited a Shabad, *Vidya vichari tan parupkari*. Prof Harjit Singh Bhabra, Vice President of IUS and Chairperson of the Seminar welcomed the delegates and the participants. He explained the objectives of the **Seminar** and of the **Institute for Understanding Sikhism** and its achievements. The Seminar was declared open by Mr Baljit Singh Chadha, a well-known businessman of Canada, a devout Sikh and who has supported various teaching programs on Sikhism and other subjects in various universities and also supported various religious organizations.

The second Session was chaired by Dr Bhai Harbans Lal, Emeritus Professor, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar. Prof Devinder Singh Chahal, President, Institute for Understanding Sikhism presented *A Study: Shabad Guru to Granth Guru*. He emphasized that it is necessary to understand Shabad, Guru, Granth independently and then in combination of 'Shabad Guru' and 'Granth Guru'. He mentioned that more and more attention is being paid to the idolization of the *Granth Guru* rather than on understanding the *Shabad Guru*. Prof Hardev Singh Virk, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar talked about *Concept of Shabad Guru: An Inter-comparison of Science and Spirituality* by referring his work on the importance of Sabd Guru discussed in *Sidh Goshts* and other verses. Dr Pashaura Singh, Asian Languages and Cultures, University of Michigan, USA, discussed about the *Transforming Power of Divine Word (Shabad) -A Focus on Mystical Dimension of Sikhism*. Dr Manmohan Singh, Former Professor of Psychiatry, University of Illinois, USA, discussed *Consciousness of Reality and Truth in Eastern and Western Thought in Light of Guru Granth*.

The third Session was chaired by Prof Balbir Singh Sahni, Professor in Corncordia University, Montreal. Dr Bhai Harbans Lal, Emeritus Professor of Religious Studies, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, India presented his paper on, *Surat: Higher Consciousness of Divine Engagement*. Dr Avtar Singh Dhaliwal, Eastern Tennessee Sikh Association, Johnson City, Tenn. USA presented *Consciousness and Guru Granth* in medical terms. Dr Sukhraj Singh Dhillon, Molecular Biologist, Cary, North Carolina, USA explained *Religious War and New Consciousness in Nanakian Philosophy*. Finally Dr Jarnail Singh of Sikh Social and Educational Society, Kanata, Ontario, talked about the *Conscience of Custodians of Sikhi (Sikhism)* that they failed badly in performing their duties in dissemination of Sikhism to the Sikhs and rest of the humanity.

The fourth Session was chaired by Dr Parminder Singh Chahal, Scientist, Biotechnology Research Institute, Montreal. During this session **Late S Amar Singh Chhatwal** was honored for his outstanding journalist contributions on Sikhism by publishing *The Sikh Courier*. The homage was read by Prof Devinder Singh Chahal. The Plaque of Honor was presented by S Baljit Singh Chadha to the daughter of Late S Amar Singh Chhatwal, Mrs Mohinpreet Magon of Montreal.

The fifth Session was chaired by S Prithvipal Singh Saluja. S Manjit Singh Chatrik presented a poem on *Shabad Guru*. Dr Harbans Lal proposed a resolution. The resolution was about the concern of the speakers and INSTITUTE FOR UNDERSTANDING SIKHISM on the increase of misinterpretation of Gurbani and misrepresentation of Sikhism in the Sikh literature by the Sikh as well as by the non-Sikh scholars. Prof Devinder Singh Chahal presented a recent example of such a misconstruing of < into "EK OM" in Hindi by the Dharam Parchar Committee of the SGPC, Amritsar on the title page of the new magazine, *Gurmat Gian*, in Hindi. The resolution was discussed in length and a committee of five members was suggested to proceed further on this serious issue.

### **Recommendations:**

The seminar concluded with the following recommendations:

- There is a need of making the Sikhs aware of the importance of *vichar* on *Shabad Guru* rather than on idolism of Granth Guru although all due respects are to be paid to the *Granth Guru*.
- All the rituals being performed in Sikhism are to be looked into carefully by testing them on Gurbani, science, and logic – the touchstones of truth. All such rituals, which fail these tests, should be stopped.

For further information contact Prof Devinder Singh Chahal, Institute for Understanding Sikhism, 4418 Rue Martin-Plouffe, Laval, Quebec, H7T 5L9; Phone: 514-681-1254; Email: Sikhism@canada.com

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## **Sikh rare Manuscript in UK library**

PTI reports from London: A manuscript of the centuries-old Sikh religious relic, the *Adi Granth*, was discovered in the collections of the British Library.

The manuscript of the scripture was found in the library's Oriental and India office collections has been shown to date from the middle of the 17th century. It was earlier thought to be an ordinary 19th century copy of the work, a release said.

The manuscript is one of the 20 oldest known copies of the scripture, which was compiled in 1604, and the oldest known version outside India. It is the only known manuscript outside India that dates from the life-times of one of the 10 Sikh Gurus who founded the faith, it added.

The find will be of great significance to the 21-million strong Sikh community worldwide, who view the *Adi Granth* as the spiritual embodiment of their 10 founder Gurus.

There are over 500,000 Sikhs in Britain and nearly one million speakers of the Punjabi language in which the *Granth* is written. Punjabi is the most widely spoken language in Britain after English.

Experts estimate that upto 80 per cent of Sikh scriptural manuscripts have disappeared in the last century due to conflict, neglect and poor preservation, increasing the importance and rarity of this find.

The 400th anniversary of the compilation of the *Adi Granth* will be celebrated in 2004. The manuscript was re-dated by Dr Jeevan Deol of St John's College, Cambridge during a project to create a union catalogue of Punjabi manuscripts in the UK funded by a grant of £56,000 from the heritage lottery fund. The project has received donations from the Wellcome Library.

[Courtesy: *Hindustan Times*, Sep. 24, 2002]

## **Hair (*Kesh*) is basic to all human beings**

### **French Sikhs take issue to European court**

Paris: The Sikh community in France has threatened to drag the French government to the European court of human rights for policies that force Sikhs in this country to cut their hair. Sikhs also have problems keeping their turbans because French rules require that a photograph needed for any official purpose - be it a driving licence, passport or residence card - be taken without anything on the head. "So effectively this means that all my photographs with turbans are rejected by the authorities," said Kanwaljeet Singh, who migrated from Jalandhar in Punjab over a decade ago and now runs a small shop in the Parisian suburbs.

Sikhs plan to go to the European court because, despite appeals, France has refused to change rules. And the law is beyond challenge in French courts. Sikh leaders said most men from their community in France are forced to cut their hair, or face the prospect of not being able to get any official papers. "This is very disturbing for them since they are desperate to find work and, the longer they take in getting their papers, the worse are their prospects of finding employment," said a community leader.

But some do not give up. Shingara Singh Mann migrated to France over three decades ago to learn French. He has since settled down in France, but refused to compromise on his religious beliefs. "When I first had this problem with the authorities over a decade ago, I wrote to the superior officials, explaining the Sikh religion and the importance of hair, since this is one of the five symbols of our religion," Mann said.

However, when his letters had no impact at all, he was forced to move the court.

"But it was here that the administration played dirty with me. The moment they came to know that I moved the courts, they delivered my driving licence with the photograph with a turban. Thus, the judge cancelled the case saying since I had got what I wanted, the case could not stand," said Mann.

However, he soon had to go back to the courts, this time around for his Identity Card. And once again, the same story was repeated.

"This is the trick that they are playing. They don't let the case go up to judgment, since once a judgment is delivered, it will set a precedent and will mean that all Sikhs will be able to get their official documents delivered with a normal photograph. But by delivering my papers when I move the courts, the police ensure that others can not benefit from my case," said Mann.

"Once we have an order from the European court, we will not only ensure that all Sikhs in France are allowed to keep their turbans but Sikhs in other European countries too will benefit," said Mann, a member of the executive committee that runs the lone gurdwara in France.

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## **Gurdwaras in Southern Hemisphere (Oceania)**

**Compiled by Gurmit Singh\***

*\* 25 Orinda Avenue, Gosford, N.S.W. - 2250, Australia. Tel. 02 4325 4808*

### **Australia**

**New South Wales:** Gurdwara Sikh Centre, 10 - Meurants Lane, Parklea, NSW - 2768; Tel. 02-9622 6994

Sikh Mission Centre, 170 - Ninth Avenue, Austral, NSW - 2171, Tel. 02-9606 0270

Northshore Sikh Assn, 81-Kissing Point Rd, Turramurra (South), NSW - 2212, (02 9792 3501)

Sri Guru Singh Sabha, 14-18, The River Road, Revesby, NSW - 2212 (02-9792 3501)

Sunday Sangat (arranged in a Christian Community Hall on rent). Contact: Principal Jagjit Singh, 2/46 - Lucerne St., Belmore, NSW 2192, Tel. 02-9759 7053

Gurdwara Sahib, 33-Marton St., Shortland (New Castle), NSW 2307

First Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara, Hasting St., Woolgoolga, NSW-2456

Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara, 13 - River St, Woolgoolga, NSW-2456 (02-6654 0069)

Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara, 29 - Nullum St, Murwillumbah, NSW-2484, 02-6672 1104

Gurdwara Singh Sabha, 11-Edon St., Yoogali, Griffith, NSW-2680 (02-6964 6080)

### **Victoria State:**

Sri Guru Singh Sabha, 344-Hume Highway, Craigieburn (Mel.), Vic-3064: 03 9305 6511

Sri Guru Nanak Satsang Sabha, 127-White Horse Road, Blackburn (Mel.) Victoria - 3130

**Queensland State:**

Sikh Gurdwara, 2679-Logan Road, Eight Mile Plains, Brisbane, Qld-4114 (07 3841 1987)

Guru Nanak Sikh Mission, Bruce Highway, P.O. Box 161, Gordonvale, N. Qld. - 4865

Qld. Sikh Assn. Gurdwara, Bruce Highway, P.O. Box 316, Edmonton, N. Qld. - 4869

Sikh Welfare of Australia, P.O. Box 1065, Tully, Qld 4854 (07 4066 5565)

**South Australia State:**

Sikh Society of SA Gurdwara, 285-Hampstead Road, Enfield (Adelaide) S.A. 5085

Sunday Sangat & Pangat (arranged in a Christian Community Hall on rent) contact: Khalsa Bhopinder Singh, 29-Oradala Cret., Salisbury Heights, S.A. 5109, Tel. 08-8289 6766/8357 4623;

Riverland Singh Society Gurdwara, Stuart Highway, Glossop, S.A. 5344 (08 8583 2149)

Guru Tegh Bahadur Sikh Gurdwara, 83 - 15th St., Renmark, Sa 5341 (08 8586 4474)

**Western Australia State:**

Sikh Association of W.A., 64 - Banksia Tce, Kensington, (Perth), WA - 6151 (08 - 9367 4817)

Perth Sikh Gurdwara, 13 - Murray St., Bayswater, WA - 6062 (08 -9371 5850)

Intl. Sikh Youth Fed., P.O. Box 1303, Berry, S.A. 5343, Australia. 08-8583 8205

I.S.Y.F., P.O. Box 78 [2/51-Hillend Rd] Doonside, NSW - 2767, Australia. 02 -9621 5916

**Publications:**

Qaumiya (Fortnightly), 26 - Kinlora Ave., Epping (Mel.), Victoria 3076, Tel. 03-9408 9298.

Indo - Times (Monthly), Unit 4, No. 14 - Caroline St., Thomastown (Mel.), Victoria 3074, Tel. 03 - 9466 4884

Sikh Link (Q), P.O. Box 228, Blackburn South (Mel.) Victoria 3130, Fax No. 03-9886 8196.  
Editor: Ranjit Kaur

**New Zealand:**

N.Z. Sikh Society Gurdwara, 120 - Princess St., P.O. Box 22579, Otahuhu, Auckland, N.Z. (0-9 276 9043)

N.Z. Sikh Society Gurdwara, State Highway 1, Terapa Rd., P.O. Box 9464, Hamilton North, N.Z. (07 849 4952)

### **Fiji Islands:**

Gurdwara Sahib, G.P.O. Box 244, Suva, Fiji and Gurdwaras in other cities also.

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## **UK Sikhs warn ruling Labour**

Nick Britten writes from London: The Sikh community warned Labour that it will lose its support after being let down "time and again".

David Blunkett, the home secretary, came in for severe criticism at the first national Sikh convention amid claims that the government is doing nothing to promote their issues. Last year the 700,000 Sikhs in Britain, who make the third largest faith, formed the Sikh Secretariat to present a co-ordinated approach to promoting their issues. However, they said ministers had done little to help them, especially with increased hostilities towards ethnic minorities after the September 11 attacks.

"Traditionally Sikhs vote Labour and the majority of Sikh communities live in Labour constituencies," Devinderjit Singh said. "But unless the government starts showing an interest, that will change.

"Labour MPs come to our meetings on lobby days and say nice things but there is no substance. When you go back a few months later and ask what has been done, the response is very vague."

About 10,000 Sikhs had assembled in Wolverhampton, West Midlands, for a three-day conference. The secretariat was formed last year after the government banned two Sikh organisations, claiming that they were terrorist groups. "We realised then there was no co-ordinated voice to stand up for Sikhs in this country," said Singh.

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## **‘Punjab Today’ Award for Sr. Surjit Singh Barnala**

Sr. Surjit Singh Barnala, Governor, Uttaranchal, has been chosen to receive this year’s ‘Punjab Today Award’. Sr. Barnala gets the award for his "unswerving commitment to decent and dignified conduct in public life and for his outstanding contribution to the propagation of transparency, accountability and sincerity in politics."

Earlier recipients of the award include former Prime Minister, Mr. I. K. Gujral, former Union Finance Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, former Test Cricketer and now international broadcaster, Sr. Navjot Singh Sidhu and spiritualist Sr. Harbhajan Singh Yogi.

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## **Honor for Sr. Hari Singh Everest**

Sr. Hari Singh Everest, a senior citizen and long time representative of *The Sikh Review* in California, has been elected to the office of Member, County Central Committee, Democratic Party, Sutter County of the Third Supervisorial District, State of California, at an election sometime ago. Our felicitations to the veteran educator and social worker.

## **Crusade for Computers: An Offer**

Applications are invited from Sikh organisations in East Punjab for provision of computers (with modems) for Internet connection.

The requirement is a keen motivation and willingness on the part of the applicants to participate in the project for "Raised Sikh Awareness".

### **Objectives**

- To log on to the various Sikh Discussion Lists/Groups to raise the awareness of the Sikh community with regard to the politics and ideology of government of India, to save the glorious Sikh community, advancing in spirituality and wealth all over the world.
- To raise the awareness of groups and organisations, through active dissemination of information about the events in India, and across the globe, that will strongly impact upon the Sikhs worldwide. For example, the ignorance of the Sikh masses prior to the horrendous Partition of Punjab in 1947 (when millions of Sikhs were driven across the newly created frontiers within Punjab) and the treacherous Operation "Blue Star" in 1984 (which created thousands of Sikh widows and orphans) in what we came to regard as free India.
- To act as watchdog for future: At all the crucial junctures of history the Sikhs remained disunited through poor leadership. As a result the concept of territory has been deleted from our spiritual vocabulary.

We shall also look for a few competent computer dealers of East Punjab who will install the systems and later service them regularly on practically no profit basis. Apply to: Sikh Youth Int'l ("Kay for Komputer"), PO Box 42, Wellingborough, NN8 3JP, England. Email: anandpursahib@aol.com

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## **Raunaq Singh: A Tribute**

### **Icon of the Sikh Enterprising Spirit**

Indian industry's perfect rags-to-riches icon Raunaq Singh breathed his last in of September 2002, a fortnight after he formally signed off as chairman of his best known venture, Apollo Tyres.

Sr. Raunaq Singh, arguably among the best known stalwarts of the Old Economy, had been keeping ill-health for the past 2-3 years, which had also pushed him away from active business for the past few years. He is survived by four sons and a daughter.

Sr. Raunaq Singh's journey from Lahore to the bylanes of Delhi in the post-partition era, first as a steel tubes merchant, then as a steel tubes manufacturer, and later as a promoter of Apollo Tyres, is the kind of stuff corporate folklore is made of.

Raunaq Singh started out as a workhand to a Lahore steel pipes merchant, taking home just Rs 8 a month in wages. One day his employer asked him to dispose off his pipes. He located a customer; took Rs 1,000 from him as advance, bought out the old man's stocks and sold the pipes at twice the price. He invested the profit to start his own steel pipes business. Post-partition Raunaq Singh graduated from being a merchant to a steel tube maker.

Sr. Raunaq Singh also holds the distinction of being the only Indian industrialist to have headed two rival apex industry chambers - Ficci and Assocham - during 1980s when they were considered India's biggest industry lobbies.

Industry and trade condoled his death, saying the country has lost an eminent and charismatic first generation entrepreneur committed to the industry association movement in India. CII President, Ashok Soota said his achievements will serve as a role model for many young people. "Though hailing from an ordinary background and starting as a steel trader, Raunaq Singh went on to establish the Raunaq group of industries with a turnover of \$ 525 million, employing over 9,000 people and diversifying into new sectors such as IT, pharmaceuticals and finance."

Ficci termed him as a visionary and said his vast experience and organisational acumen had helped the chamber strike the right chord, which finally acted as the harbinger of the present economic policies.

**[Courtesy: *Times of India*]**

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## **Indo-Iran Trade: Pervinder Singh's Role**

Iran, Tehran - Sardar Pervinder Singh has been appointed Honorary Delegate to the Indian-Iran Chamber of Commerce, the Islamic Republic of Iran. This will allow the Delegate to assist in, and to boost, bilateral trade between the two countries through the public and private sectors.

Iran-based Pervinder Singh (Chandhok) serves as Patron, President, Coordinator and Member of the Board of various organisations including the Sarb Sanja Khalsa Third Centenary Environment Trust, New Delhi, India; the International Punjabi Society, Tehran, Iran; SPICMACAY (The Society for the Promotion of Indian Classical Music And Culture Among the Youth); Iran Hockey Federation; Iran Automotive Industries and the Indian Senior Secondary School in Tehran, Iran. S. Pervinder Singh can be reached via [connect@sikhe.com](mailto:connect@sikhe.com).

