

## **Cambridge honours Dr. Manmohan Singh**

Fifty years after he graduated from Cambridge, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh revealed how deep his feelings for his alma mater ran. In his speech at the university's Senate House on Wednesday, he said: "The colour light blue is one of my favourites and is often seen on my head." Everyone in the audience knew what he meant. Dr. Singh always wears a light blue turban – and light blue is the colour of the Cambridge University.

Dr. Singh graduated with a first class honours degree in economics from Cambridge in 1957. He returned to the campus last October to be honoured with a doctorate of law, before an audience of 450-odd invitees. In a moving speech, he acknowledged that Cambridge had "made" him.

A former student at St. John's College, the Prime Minister recalled his association at Cambridge with Piero Sraffa, Amartya Sen, Jagdish Bhagwati, Mehbub-ul-Haq and Rehman Shobhan, "all renowned economists from South Asia who became, and remained life-long friends".

Receiving the doctorate from Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh and chancellor of the university Dr. Singh said: "I am deeply conscious of the honour that you have bestowed upon me." The citation described him as a scholar and a public servant of great distinction. "He is, in the words of the Greek poet Simonides, cool, calm, well aware of justice that serves the State, and a man of healing virtue," the citation stated.

[Courtesy: *The Hindustan Times*]

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## **The Patriotic Maharaja who was 'deported' to South. Tamil Nadu Governor pays homage to Ripudaman Singh of Nabha**

Governor Surjit Singh Barnala, recently paid homage to Maharaja Ripudaman Singh of Nabha, a princely State in Punjab before Independence, (and now a sub-division of Patiala), at a spot where he was cremated on Kodaikanal.

Maharaj Kumari Charanjit Kaur of Nabha, daughter of the king, also paid tributes to her father. The local people call this spot 'Raja medu,' which is situated on a marshy land near the lake. Later, the Governor along with Ms. Charanjit Kaur, held discussion with the Collector, R. Vasuki and officials over construction of a memorial for the king in the lake area. They inspected three vantage points near 'Raja medu' – in front of Sai Babha bungalow and near the boathouse for erecting the memorial. The Nabha Foundation Director, Lt. Gen. (retired) Sathish Chopra, said the Foundation would give funds for construction of the memorial.

[Courtesy: *Dr. N. Muthumohan, Head Guru Nanak Devji Chair, Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai 625 021 Tamil Nadu*]

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## **H. S. Bedi takes over as C.J. Bombay High Court**

Mr. Justice H.S. Bedi who was till recently Acting Chief Justice of the Punjab and Haryana High Court, today took over as Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court, the biggest High Court in the country.

He was administered the oath by the Maharashtra Governor, Mr. S. M. Krishna, this evening at Author of a series of landmark judgments, including the one which ordered the release of all Pakistani prisoners lodged in various jails of Punjab despite completion of their prison term. Chief Justice Bedi was known for swift disposal of cases. As acting Chief Justice,

Chief Justice Bedi initiated the practice of having special benches in the High Court on Wednesday to deal with long-pending cases of civil and criminal nature.

Such was his popularity in the Punjab and Haryana High Court that 17 sitting Judges of the High Court and 40-odd lawyers, including senior Advocates, apart from retired Judges, were present in Mumbai to attend the oath taking ceremony.

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### **CBI reopens the '84 massacre cases**

The CBI last Sept. registered two criminal cases relating to the 1984 riots against "some unknown persons", which were referred to it by the Union ministry on the recommendation of the Nanavati Commission.

In August the Centre had referred 10 cases, mainly relating to Congress leaders Sajjan Kumar, Jagdish Tytler and Dharam Dass Shastri, to the CBI asking it to examine if these cases can be reopened for investigation.

The cases registered by the CBI are FIR 178/84 registered in the Mongolpuri police station in which a medical superintendent, Iqbal Singh Chadda, was killed by a mob, and FIR no 250/84 registered in Sultanpuri police station, in which rioters burnt a Gurdwara in Budh Vihar and set a large number of vehicles on fire.

The government had referred the cases to the CBI following an assurance by the Prime Minister that the government would reopen cases against those whose names figured in the Nanavati Commission report in which adverse inferences had been drawn about their conduct or behaviour.

As part of Dr. Manmohan Singh's commitment the home ministry went into the Nanavati Commission's report and sought the law ministry's views on the issue. The issue was raised during the monsoon session of Parliament when Commission's report was tabled.

The 339-page report of the commission had also pointed fingers at several local Congress leaders including Sajjan Kumar, Shastri, Tytler and HKL Bhagat. The Commission had, however, absolved the Congress saying there was no evidence to suggest that former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi or any other high ranking leader had "suggested or organized" the attacks in which over 3,000 people were killed.

[Courtesy: *The Statesman*]

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### **Mystic Music: Top Score**

Rabbi Shergill, who mesmerized audiences with his soulful *Bulla ki jana*, makes his debut as a composer and lyricist for a Hindi film. The Sufi singer will compose the music, write the lyrics and even sing parts of a few tracks for *Delhi Heights*, a film starring Jimmy Shergill and Neha Dhupia. "I wasn't keen on films earlier but this offer gave me a chance to write, compose and sing," says Shergill, "It is modern, contemporary music; the way popular film music should be." He is also working on a new album, which will be launched this July. Rabbi fans have a lot to look forward to.

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### **Impressive Interfaith Gathering in Houston**

Houston (Texas): The Sikh Center hosted Interfaith Ministries Gathering of Women last August. Mrs. Jasmeeta Singh welcomed 110 delegates in the facilities of The Sikh Center of Gulf Coast Area, Inc. [situated at 8819 Prairie Drive in Northwest Houston]. The Center was founded in 1973 when the Media hailed it as "First Time Expansion of Religious Horizon in Houston beyond Judeo-Christianity". Jasmeeta Singh mentioned that Sikh

religion is 5th largest but the youngest religion, only 500 years old, a monotheistic revealed religion has over 22 million followers all over the world, primarily in Punjab, India.

Interfaith Ministries came into being in 1922 from its roots in 1955 in the Church Welfare Organization. The following Faiths are active participants in Interfaith Ministries (IM): Bah'ais, Buddhist, Christians, Hindus, Jains, Jews, Muslims, Sikhs, Unitarian and Zoroastrians. The Mission of the IM is to open dialogues in the various faiths to remove prejudices and understanding thereby promoting Peace and Harmony. Who can deny that Today's world needs this laudable effort.

Jasmeeta was assisted and complemented by Monica Singh, a young attorney, and Dr. Mrs. Chatha in presenting a brief Introduction to the doctrine of Sikhism and its practices. Dr. Chatha handled the Question and Answer session: The Basic belief of Sikhism is that all are One God's creation, so Sikhs cannot but LOVE every human being. The Sikh daily prayer seeks well being of entire humanity.

Sikhs settled in USA around turn of the 19th century, establishing their First Gurdwara in 1906 in Stockton, California. Sikhism gives equal status to women, and since there is no priestly class, any Sikh, male or female can perform all religious ceremonies, including congregational prayers. The delegates had a glimpse of the congregational worship activities in the Sikh Gurdwara, followed by traditional sumptuous meal.

[Courtesy: *Jasbir Singh Sethi*]

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## **Female Foeticide In Punjab**

An ancient religious scripture says,

"The birth of a daughter, grant it elsewhere, here grant a son".

This saying in the holy scripture sums up the Indian attitude towards female children who are subjected to multifarious travails inflicted by the society on them. The situation in Panjab, which claims to be a progressive state, is no exception, rather worse in comparison to the other states in India.

Initiating the dialogue on the same lines, Bhai Vir Singh Sahitya Sadan, New Delhi organised a lecture "Gender Imbalance in Punjab: Alarming Trends" on September 20<sup>th</sup> 2006, attended by scholars, social activists and students. Prof. Ravinder Kaur of IIT, Delhi, presented the paper and the session was presided by Dr. Mary E. John, Director, Centre for Women Development Studies.

Prof. Ravinder Kaur explored the socio-economic and cultural dimensions of Indian patriarchal society, which has lead to horrid practices like female infanticide and female foeticide. She linked it with societal attitudes and usage of advance medical technology. With data and statistics, Prof Kaur emphasized that the girl child is considered to be consumer rather than a producer, and this narrow viewpoint despite the growing prosperity of Punjab still prevails. She conclusively showed on the basis of statistical data that since 1901 demographic pattern of girl-child is indicating decline.

A strong appeal was made to the medical community to follow the medical ethics and let this noble profession not become an industry. It was also felt that time has come when the Sikh leadership including the Jathedar of Akal Takhat should issue *Hukamnamas* to the community boycotting those indulging in female foeticide, as was done in the case of those killing their daughters condemned as *kurimars*.

[Courtesy: Dr. Mohinder Singh, Director, Bhai Vir Singh Sadan, New Delhi.  
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