



Sri Hemkunt Foundation

25th International Speech Symposium

And 7th Annual Keertan Darbar

ਸੇਵਾ ਕਰਤ ਹੋਇ ਨਿਹਕਾਮੀ ॥ ਤਿਸ ਕਉ ਹੋਤ ਪਰਾਪਤਿ ਸੁਆਮੀ ॥



Washington DC August 1-4 2013

<http://www.HemkuntInternational.Org>

Welcome from Convener



On behalf of the US Capitol Zone, Sangat and Local Gurdwaras, I am most honored to welcome all our guests from all over the country and the world to the 25th Annual Sri Hemkunt Foundation Symposium and Seventh Annual Kirtan Darbar.

All of the youth have worked very hard and truly became winners the day they stepped up to the podium or onto the stage at their first regional or center competition. We hope that everyone has an exceptional symposium experience, and leaves with great memories, new friends and a strengthened

commitment to their heritage.

I would like to thank Sri Hemkunt Foundation, their board members, and the zonal and center conveners, who are really the backbone of this network of education that touches so many young people. My sincere thanks are to the Management and Sangat of Guru Nanak Foundation (Silver Spring), Singh Sabha (Braddock Road), Sikh Foundation of Virginia (Fairfax) and Sikh Center of Virginia (Manassas) Gurdwaras for their support in every possible way. I would like to acknowledge the effort of the core planning committee who has met for hundreds of hours in person and through conference calls. They worked on thousands of details. You all are an incredibly dedicated, talented, organized and gifted group of people with large hearts, high energy and unending patience.

On a very personal note, I would like to recognize my late brother Dr. Balwant Singh who always provided inspiration to me and all the children of the community, and who had always gone above and beyond the call of duty when it came to anything for that community.

Finally, with deep gratitude to Akal Purakh for providing the opportunity to do this sewa, and we hope that we were able to make this a successful and memorable 25th International Hemkunt Symposium.

**Sincerely,
Satinder Kaur
August, 2013**

Welcome Message



Gurpreet Singh Chana

TheTablaGuy.com Fame- Canada



Gurpreet Singh Sarin

From American Idol 2013 Maryland, USA

Dear Hemkunt Family & Friends

Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh!

First, we'd like to congratulate all the Hemkunt Symposium participants for making it to the final level of the symposium. You should be very proud of yourselves for following your passion and spreading the message of Sikhi.

We' are pleased to announce that we have the honor and pleasure of attending the Hemkunt Banquet on August 2nd. & look forward to meeting all of you and sharing our experiences.

I wish you the best of luck and hope you continue to live in Chardi Kala!

Sincerely,

Gurpreet Singh Chana

Gurpreet Singh Sareen

Tejpal Singh - Keynote Speaker



Tejpal Singh Chawla is an Assistant United States Attorney in the District of Columbia. In 2003, he became the first turbaned Sikh Assistant U.S. Attorney in United States' history.

The U.S. Attorney's Offices are part of the U.S. Department of Justice, and they are tasked with prosecuting most of the federal crimes in the United States. Tejpal is presently a Senior Prosecutor in the Felony Major Crimes Section of the Office. In that role, he prosecutes violent crime offenders.

His cases include violent shootings, aggravated assaults, kidnappings, gang violence, robberies and carjacking, home invasions, and hate crimes. He works closely with victims of crime, witnesses, and sworn law enforcement officers.

From 2009 to 2011, Tejpal was the Deputy Chief of the General Crimes Section of the Office. During this period, he supervised a team of 35 prosecutors and staff, and oversaw the prosecution of thousands of general misdemeanor offenses brought by the Office.

Tejpal also worked on a variety of high-profile fraud cases involving banks, federal and state health care programs, publicly traded securities, real estate schemes, and government procurement. He has investigated and prosecuted public corruption cases, including incidents of misconduct by federal and local law enforcement personnel, officers and FBI agents. Tejpal also worked closely with the local community as a Community Prosecutor. In that role he consulted with the community, and reviewed thousands of arrests made by law enforcement officers to determine whether criminal charges should be brought. As a prosecutor, he has tried over sixty-five criminal cases (including thirty jury trials), indicted over sixty cases, and handled over fourteen criminal appeals. Tejpal was awarded Special Achievement Awards by the U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia.

Prior to working at the Office, Tejpal worked at a large law firm in Washington, D.C. and served *pro bono* as Counsel to the Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund. In that role, he advocated for the Sikh community, and worked on post-9/11 hate crime issues, including working with victims, investigating complaints of biased policing and discrimination, and improving government outreach and understanding of problems facing the community.

Tejpal received his BA in Political Science from Boston University, *magna cum laude*, and his JD with Honors from the George Washington University Law School. He also served as Chair of the 1998 George Washington University Law School Commencement Committee.

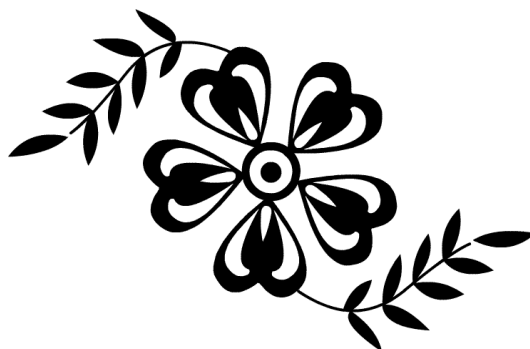
While in high school, Tejpal also participated in the Hemkunt symposium.

Past International Venue/Host/Speaker

#	Year	Zone	Zonal Convener	Guest Speaker
1	1989	Plainview, New York	S. Amarjeet Singh	Dr. J. S. <i>Neki</i> , India
2	1990	Plainview, New York	S. Amarjeet Singh	Dr. Arjan Kirpal Singh, U. K.
3	1991	Hemkunt House, U.K.	Sdn. Parkash Kaur	Dr. J. S. <i>Neki</i> , India
4	1992	Washington, D.C.	Dr. Ujagar Singh	
5	1993	Toronto, Canada	Dr. Amarjit Singh	Dr. Indarjit Singh, U.K.
6	1994	Nairobi, Kenya	Sdn. Ajeet Kaur	S. Saran Singh, India
7	1995	Chicago, US	S. Kuldip Singh	Malhi, Canada
8	1996	Orlando, Florida	S. Ram Rachpal Singh	T. Sher Singh, Toronto
9	1997	Leeds, U.K.	Sdn. Gurdeep Kaur	
10	1998	California, US	S. Madanjit Singh	S. Sat Jiwan Singh Khalsa
11	1999	Long Island, New York	S. Tejinder Singh	S. Saran Singh, India
12	2000	U.S. Capitol	S. Gajinder Singh	S. Ravneet Singh & S. Bhavdeep Singh, U.S.
13	2001	Garden State, New Jersey	Sdn. Devinder Kaur	S. Manjit Singh, U.K.
14	2002	Philadelphia, Delaware	S. Paramjitender Singh	T. Sher Singh, Toronto
15	2003	California, Northern	S. Gurmeet Singh	Dr. Chiranjeev Singh <i>Kathuria</i> , U.S.
16	2004	London, UK	Ms. Parkash Kaur	Dr. Rema Kaur, U.K.
17	2005	Big Apple, NY	S. Surinder Singh	Navdeep Singh <i>Bains</i> , M.P., Canada Navneet Singh <i>Narula</i>
18	2006	California, Silicon Valley	S. Gurinder Pal Singh	Dr. J. S. <i>Neki</i> , India
19	2007	Florida	S. Madanjit Singh	Nirmal Singh, Connecticut
20	2008	Tri State	S. Harkishan Singh	T. Sher Singh, Toronto
21	2009	California, Los Angeles	S. Ravinder Singh	S. Tejinder Singh, New York
22	2010	London, Mata Khivi	Sdn. Naginder Kaur	Multiple
23	2011	Sun Belt	S. Harcharan Singh	S. Mandeep Singh
24	2012	Finger Lakes	Sdn. Raman Kaur	Mallika Kaur, California

Proposed Future International Hosts

#	Year	Zone	Zonal Convener	Previously hosted
26	2014	Delaware	S. Paramjitender Singh	2002
27	2015	California, Northern	S. Gurmeet Singh	2003
28	2016	Grand Canyon	Dr. Jaswant Singh	None, zone since May 2007
29	2017	California, Capitol	S. Narinder Singh	None
30	2018	Garden State	S. Baljit Singh	2001
31	2019	London, Greater	S. Ramandeep Singh	2004, 2010 by another London Zone
32	2020	California, Gadri Babbe	S. Gurdeep Singh	None
33	2021	Florida	Dr. Inderpaul Singh	1996, 2007,
34	2022	California, Orange County	Dr. Arinder Singh	2009 (jointly with LA)
35	2023	Big Apple	S. Harjeet Singh	1989, 1990, 1999, 2005
36	2024	California, Silicon Valley	S. Gurumukh Singh	2009
37	2025	Tri State	S. Harkishan Singh	2008



S Shamsher Singh the visionary...



Popularly known as “Uncle ji”, he - dedicated his entire life to educating children/ youth about Sikhi. He was born on September 17, 1924 in the village of Bakharbar, District Sargodha. He graduated from Punjab University. He started his first enterprise in Moghalpura, Lahore under the name of S. P. Engineering Corp. This unit started producing vegetable oil extraction machinery. In 1948, after partition, he restarted the factory in Kanpur. Within 15 years, he became one of the leading exporters of industrial machinery from India to Burma, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Cambodia, Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria etc.

For 16 years he worked as member, secretary and general secretary in Patna (Bihar) - the sacred birthplace of Guru Gobind Singh on the Prabandhak Committee Takhat Sri Patna Sahib. The new buildings of Janam Asthan, Takhat Sahib, Darbar Hall, offices and various residential blocks were designed and built during that period.

Since 1960, he worked as a Founder Trustee and general secretary of Gurdwara Sri Hemkunt Sahib Management Trust. The buildings designed and erected at Sri Hemkunt Sahib, Gobind Dham, Gobind Ghat, Joshimath, Srinagar (Garhewal), Rishikesh and Hardwar during this period are really amazing. The facilities created in difficult terrain has resulted in the number of pilgrims rising from 115 in 1960 to over million a year.

In 1980, he established Sri Hemkunt Foundation Inc. in New York, USA for the sole purpose to convey the Guru's message to the children/ youth Diaspora. He imported books on Sikh history, Sikh philosophy and Sikh principles from India and distributed to children/ youth (6 – 25 years age). He organized Symposium based on these books and awarded gold medals to winners. In the last 30 years, the participation has grown from 19 to over 2,000. The program has reached various parts of USA, Canada, Kenya and London, Presently, 69 Gurdwaras in the western hemisphere participate in the program.

In 2007 (at the age of 82 years), he started a Kirtan Darbar program. Under this program, youth (10 – 25 years age) recite Shabads in the same Raags that were written and recited by Guru jees themselves. Every year three different Raags are prescribed, one to each of the three age groups. The primary objective of the program is to revive the use of string instruments – Rabab and Saranda – which were used by Guru jees while reciting the Shabads. Participants are decorated with golden medals.

Shamsher Singh ji, the founder of Sri Hemkunt Foundation Inc., passed away on June 13, 2011 while he was resting at his home at Kanpur, India, where he had earlier lived from 1946 – 1979.

Uncle ji's sudden death has shocked tens of thousands of Sikhs whose lives have been touched by him. He will be dearly missed. The Sikh community has lost a rare gem in the passing of S. Shamsher Singh ji. His wife – Jagjit Kaur (his companion since 1949) – had passed away in 2003. He is survived by five daughters, one son, 11 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

May his blessings keep us moving forward with a brilliant future of our Sikh generations.





Dr. BALWANT SINGH

----- Eulogy -----

Dr I.J. Singh

Sardar Balwant Singh was a friend and a colleague. We met in the early 1970's when I returned to New York. He was in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania where Balwant was a professor in economics at Lewisburg (Bucknell University). There were hardly any Sikhs – the nearest ones were Tejbhan Saini and Ujagar Singh Bawa about 50 miles away.

He had a daughter (Tripat) and son (Ravinder). He was deeply concerned about how to keep them connected to Sikhi. It was not uncommon for him and his wife (Bimla) to drive 3 to 4 hour (one way) in to New York to come to New York to a gurdwara.

A group of New Sikhs evolved that included Balwant and Ujagar Singh (New York based social work man), many with growing children who would periodically gather in my office at NYU to discuss the matters of young Sikhs children in local schools.

From these discussions evolved the idea of developing a Summer Youth Camp – perhaps the first in the country. Ujagar Singh and Balwant Singh took charge. Much of the curricular offerings and the development of those programs became Balwant's responsibility. Into Bimla's lap fell the responsibility of keeping the 100 plus campers fed and happy. Summers became fun but busy. The Camps continue today and have been cloned by many.

In his later years Balwant also got seriously involved in the Hemkunt Foundation's Youth Symposia. Naturally his responsibility became the overall selection of books and discussion themes – no easy task.

These were the responsibilities in the Sikh community. In academia he was just as busy having worked with Nobel Prize winning investigators in Econometrics.

But death must come to all. I spoke with Balwant, at his initiative, just four days before he passed away. He said to me “Doctors have done what they could and have sent me home; there is nothing more they can do. My time is now finished and I am ready to go on. I am at peace.” And then we exchanged a pointless joke -- but a joke it was. This is the essence of “Hukum” and “Chardi kalaa.”

Gurbani gives us at least two imageries of death: 1. Completion of a mission, 2. merging as of a ray into the light or a wave into the ocean from which it arose.

And then like Socrates, Guru Amardas offers a terse and challenging measure of a life, “*Eh sareera merya iss jug meh aye ke kya tudh karam kamayya*” in other words, what footprints will you leave in the sands of time.

I would offer that Balwant’s footprints were larger than life. His life was fully and well lived. It was productive. His life deserves a celebration not mourning. Balwant will always be remembered. May he rest in peace.



25 Years of History in the Making

In the words of

Late Shamsheer Singh Ji

Founder Sri Hemkunt Foundation



A seed was sown in the U.S. 25 years ago. A team of 11 dedicated persons took care of the seedlings, fed it properly, and watered it carefully. It came out a beautiful tree with a strong trunk, green branches, large leaves and multicolored flowers. Anyone, who sees and comes near it, enjoys its fragrance.

The above was result of a meeting held in 1977 at Rishikesh. There, some experienced, dedicated, visionary persons observed that the Sikh youth who go to the western countries for studies and the children born in those countries lose their Sikh identity on account of lack of knowledge regarding the high ideals of Sikhism.

Some research was done and Sri Hemkunt Foundation (the Foundation) was established in November 1980 in New York with the broad objective of sharing universal brotherhood with the community. With this objective, an environment was created in which children could learn the spiritual, moral and religious teachings of Sikhism. The promotion of learning Punjabi language in Gurmukhi script, Kirtan, Gurbani, philosophy, history and Sikh culture has been the cornerstone of the Foundation.

In 1981, the Foundation organized a study tour of 50 children, of different age groups, to visit India. The goal of the expedition was to give the youth a firsthand experience of the history and culture of Sikhism.

Their journey led them to see some of the glorious cultural heritage, which they had not seen before. Visits were arranged to various religious and historic places, as well as educational institutions throughout India. One of the highlights of this trip was the exhilarating and breath-taking visit to Sri Hemkunt Sahib in the lofty Himalayan Mountains. It is located at more than 15,000 feet above sea level. It was an experience enjoyed by everyone!

Next came the distribution of religious books written by the versatile saint scholar and inspirational author, Bhai Vir Singh. A milestone for the Foundation came in 1983 when a symposium on Rana Bhabor was organized. Nineteen children participated. This was the first symposium sponsored by the Foundation. The changing pattern of the Sikh Diaspora and the interest of parents combined with the vigorous zeal of conveners led to the growth of the Foundation. The number of age groups increased from one to five, centers to 70, zones to 16 and participants (from London to Nairobi and Miami to Toronto) to between 1800 and 2000.

This is the result of gross root workers; center and zonal conveners who work zealously throughout the year to achieve better results.

Since 1991, international Symposium is rotating amongst zones like London (U.K). Washington D.C., Toronto, (Canada), Nairobi, (Kenya), Chicago (USA), Florida (USA), Leeds (UK) and San Francisco (USA). The venue for an annual competition is decided collectively by Zonal Conveners, with active advice of the centers.

The concept of inviting guest speakers was introduced in 1990. Sikh scholars who are held in high esteem in the Sikh community, have an impeccable record of community service, achievement in their chosen profession, and can serve as role models for the youth, were invited as keynote speakers. We had the privilege of inviting Sikh leaders and eminent scholars. Among them was a political leader and educationist Dr. Arjan Kiirpal Singh (UK); writer and scientist, Dr. Jaswant Singh Neki; efficient administrator and successful editor, S. Saran Singh I.A.S. (Retd.); prolific writer –editor and eloquent orator Dr. Inderjit Singh (UK); Honorable Gurbax Singh Mahli, Member Parliament (Canada), all were the invitees in earlier years. Among the luminaries, Justice Mota Singh, Attorney and Sikh leader Sat Jiwan Singh, famous Human Rights Advocate and leader Manjit Singh Gill (UK); great politician and leader Sher Singh Sher (Canada); entrepreneur and budding political leader from Illinois Dr. Chirinjeev Singh Kathuria; student leaders Ravneet Singh, Bhavneet Singh and Dr. Reema Kaur (UK) were the keynote speakers and chief guests at the International Symposium.

In 1992, the Foundation introduced the program ‘Nitnem’ for the children during summer and winter vacations. It has become so successful that hundreds of children have learned ‘Nitnem’ in New York and various other centers.

In 2005, when we are celebrating Silver Jubilee of the Foundation together with 17th International Symposium at Long Island, New York on Aug 4-7, a new dimension is a live play ‘Sundari’ at the stadium of Hofstra University.

The parents, participants and zonal Conveners meet every year, at the time of annual convention. They discuss all issues pertinent to the symposium and make recommendations. Zonal Conveners bring issues to the Foundation during the year as and when these arise. The Board meets four times a year to oversee the functioning of the various committees- ad hoc and standing, along with functional groups and consider recommendations of the Zonal Conveners. S. Karamjit Singh, who is International Symposium Coordinator, works very hard throughout the year to coordinate activities of the Foundation.

The growth created a tremendous burden in the selection, procurement and distribution of books. The Foundation is meeting this challenge with the active help of various groups and the Conveners. Selection of books and the framing of questions are the most important topics to make the Symposium a success. The Foundation receives honest, productive, useful and sincere advice from various sources. The Literary Group is comprised of highly qualified individuals who have life long experience in teaching. The group was initially headed by Prof. Gurcharan Singh, then by Mrs. Rajinderjit K. Singh and now for over a decade by Prof. Dr. Balwant Singh, Bucknell University, PA. The selection of books is an ongoing and a year round project. It takes about 18 months to review multiple books for each age group and check their availability before the books are recommended to the Board. A tentative plan is framed for about five years in order to facilitate the allocation of topics for each group. A progressive system of learning is devised so that the children learn Sikh history in a systematic way. As the youth progresses through time, they should be *aware* of the social issues in a methodical way.

What is said above is by the Grace of Satguru. But is a drop in the ocean. Teaching high ideals of Sikhism is not an easy job. It is a challenge for the workers of the Foundation to set ambitious goals and plan to achieve these by 2038 while celebrating the Golden Jubilee.

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2013
International
Symposium
Speech
Competition
Judges

25th International Symposium Judges 2013

#	International Judge	Room	Contact info.	Group	Coord
1	Sarvinder Kaur, New York		ninabagga@yahoo.com 516-633-8369	I/III	Savinder Kaur (Rani)
2	Harcharanjit Singh, New York		harcharandhillon@yahoo.com 917-957-7194		
3	Dr. Arinder Singh, Orange County		drchadha@hotmail.com (714) 357-6804		
4	Rajinder Kaur, New York		rkbaveja@yahoo.com C: 516-790-2856		
5	Ramandeep Singh, London		Rammy27@hotmail.com C: 777-613-1631		
6	Nina Kaur, Delaware		Ngrewal1@gmail.com 610-653-0501	Alternate	
1	Maj. Harinder Singh, New York		Harry5786@yahoo.com H516-937-0349, © 404-863-2830	II/IV	Lajwant Kaur
2	Hardeep Kaur, New York		Anoopsareen@gmail.com © 516-974-5371		
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6	Arvinder Kaur		Lilduke91@yahoo.com 570-640-5825	Alternate	
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3	Dr. Jaswant Singh, Phoenix		jaswantsachdev@gmail.com C: 602-996-3180		
4	Dr. Parampreet Kaur, Delaware		Mini.46@hotmail.com 610-417-8778		
5	Harcharan Singh, Houston		Hsingh42@gmail.com C: 919-539-7157		
6	Surinder Singh, New York		chawlasurinder@hotmail.com 516-456-8444	Alternate	

International Judges' Coordinator: Ravinder Kaur
ravinderkdhillon@yahoo.com; 917-957-7195

Sarvinder Kaur – Group I and III Judge



"Sarvinder was born in Madhya Pradesh, India. After she graduated with a Bachelors of Science degree, she then completed her masters in Economics. She moved to the United States after her marriage to Jogendra Singh Bagga, P.E. She has two sons and a daughter, and loves participating in their school-related events. Whether it be PTA meetings or attending local soccer games, you can always count on her being there

with a smile on her face.

Her involvement with the Sikh community started many years ago in Sacramento, California. She began by teaching Gurmukhi on Sunday mornings at the local Gurudwara. From there, she further dedicated her time to community programs, including the eminent and annual Vaisakhi celebrations. Her devotion allowed the programs to flourish and become a success.

Soon enough she began to work with the Sri Hemkunt Foundation. She devoted over four years, proving to be a hardworking individual. After living in California for over 20 years, she and her family moved to Long Island, New York. Although she relocated, she did not stop giving back to her Sikh community. She continues to work with the Foundation to this day. She not only encourages the community to participate in the annual symposium, but has her own children participate as well.

Her focus and dedication is evident in the success of her children. Her eldest son has successfully completed his medical degree, while her daughter has finalized her education as a dentist. Her youngest son has just recently graduated from New York University.

S. Harcharanjit Singh – Group I/III Judge

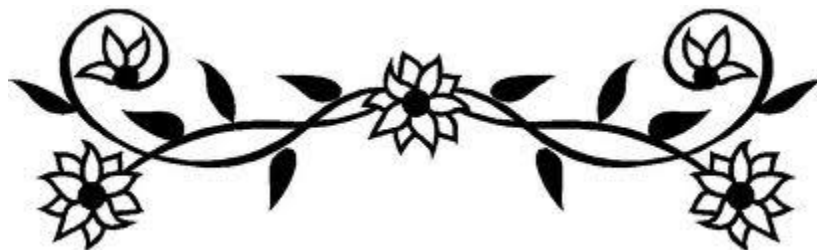
Harcharanjit Singh was born in Amritsar and spent his early life in Delhi. He obtained his graduation degree in Architecture from Delhi School of Architecture.



He has worked as an architect in Delhi, Chandigarh, Iran and Libya. He migrated to USA in 1998. Currently he is working in New York City Department of Buildings as an Architect.

He is married to Ravinder Kaur and lives in New York. He has two sons and one grandson and loves participating in their school related events. He loves to travel and has visited more than 50 countries.

He has been associated with The Hemkunt Foundation since 2002. He also has been devoted to the Sikh community. He has offered his expert opinion for the designing/renovating of the local gurdwaras.



Dr Arinder Singh – Group I and III Judge



Dr. Arinder Singh has been working for the State of California with the Department of Correction in Chino as Chief Medical Officer for the past five years. Before that, he was the director of a hospital program and medical clinics in Riverside. He came to the U.S. in 1998 and after moving to California in 2002, he became involved with a variety of interfaith organizations and is now serving on the board of directors for five of them. For the past 10 years, as part of his activism towards spreading awareness about Sikhism, he has organized and hosted countless interfaith events and has spoken at universities, county and state organizations, law enforcement agencies, and various places of worship about the Sikh faith and Sikh way of life. For his work in this realm, he was recognized as a Community Leader by the Orange County Human Relations in 2010.

Additionally, for the past seven years, he has been the Zonal Convener for the Southern California branch of the Hemkunt Speech Foundation, and is now on the board of directors for that organization. He has organized and conducted free medical diagnostic clinics at all of the southern California Gurdwaras for the past four years and is currently the co-founder of a food pantry in Tustin, CA, to serve underprivileged families in Orange County. Most recently, he was nominated to the Board of Directors of the Sikh Center of Orange County, Santa Ana, CA. Additionally; he has served as a Traffic Commissioner for the city of Placentia for the past four years. While doing all this, he earned his Master's in Business Administration [MBA] in Healthcare Management from the University of CA at Irvine. He lives with his wife and two children (ages sixteen and twenty-three).

Rajinder Kaur – Group I and III Judge



Rajinder Kaur is an educational administrator and special education specialist in the New York City Department of Education. She specializes in investigating issues that affect students with learning disabilities and helps place them in appropriate educational settings. She believes in the innate intelligence of human beings who, with the right guidance and training, can achieve dynamic success in their lives.

Her background in education and her commitment to Sikh studies allows her to contribute to the Sikh community in a unique manner. She is very active in Sikh educational activities and has served at Gurdwara Plainview for the last 21 years. She helps teachers design and implement learning plans tailored specifically for each ability level. She is also a very active member of the Sri Hemkunt Foundation and has served as a judge at the center, zonal as well the international level.

She immigrated to USA in 1985 after Blue Star Operation. Despite having a young family and knowing only a limited amount of English, she acquired her Master's in Education from New York University and School Administration Degree from Dowling College.

Currently, she serves as a member of the American Federation of School Administrators and the Council of Supervisors and Administrators of New York City.



Ramandeep Singh– Group I and III Judge



S. Ramandeep Singh

Born and brought up in London UK to a GurSikh family and happily married for 13 years with 3 children. With Guru's kirpa, we are an Amritdhari family and get deeply involved in a variety of sewa ranging from teaching at Punjabi schools, supporting National Sikh History projects and organising UK Hemkunt Symposiums spread around London since 2004.

Studied BSc in Business I.T. and Computer Science at the University of Westminster and followed up with MSc in Data Communication Systems at Brunel University in 1996. In my junior years I played cricket and tennis at county level winning many local accolades and the privilege of playing cricket at Lords

at the young age of 10.

Professionally I've worked with many of the well-known Global Telecom and Network Provider giants and over the last 11 years focused within the Financial Networks arena. Spanning a career of 17 years I started as a Graduate Systems Engineer and am now a Senior Project Manager with Thomson Reuters.

Maintaining a healthy Ambassadorial role in promoting Sikhi I was privileged to be asked to give presentations to the UK Government Department of Transport on Vaisakhi as a Sikh festival and being re-invited to educate the essence of the Saint-Soldier aspect of Sikhi. These events were post 9/11 and 7/7 and influenced decisions made on security measures taken on London Buses which could potentially have been detrimental to Sikhs. Was part of a team that successfully delivered a Sikh Oral-History project in 2008 which provided Sikh History content for the UK national curriculum for school History.

Active founding member of the Sikh Media Monitoring Group exposing the disparity into dedicated religious television documentaries in 2007. The coverage in the press was pivotal in lobbying for change & getting the BBC to mobilise, in making Sikh programmes. Escalated a formal complaint with the BBC Asian Network by meeting with the Directors in 2009 when a BBC radio presenter publicly made disparaging remarks about elements of the Sikh religion.

At the BBC's request, participated in a special 30-min programme called 'The Story of Vaisakhi' aired nationally on Sunday 10-Apr, 2011 on BBC1. Recently managed the stage at the Save a Life Vigil in Westminster, opposite the Houses of Parliament on 6th April 2013, campaigning to abolish the death penalty in India.

Nina Kaur – Group I and III Judge



Education

Doctor of pharmacy from Temple University

Business Mgmt degree from East Stroudsburg Univ

2 years diploma in classical music from

Royal Nepal Academy

Current job

Pharmacist Supervisor at Heartland Pharmacy of PA

Community Service:

Board of director blue mountain Gurdwara

Member of Multi Faith Committee of Parkland School district

Sikh advisor for Interfaith youth counsel of Lehigh Valley

I have been teaching Kirtan and gurbani to children from Sikh faith in the community.

Associate Eastern region Kirtan Darbar coordinator.

Helping promote Kirtan Darbar for Hemkunt Foundation .



Sardn. Hardeep Kaur – Group II and IV Judge



Hardeep is a first generation immigrant to USA.

Born in Pune, India, she did her undergraduate education in Chemistry & collaborated in publishing few papers while working at National Chemical Laboratory. She was also a researcher for a number of years at Ranbaxy Labs in Delhi. After marrying Anoop Sareen, she immigrated to USA in 1976.

She comes from a devout Sikh family and her father, Desa Singh Sodhi, is remembered to this day as

having lived the life of a true Sikh saint, always helping others in need and demanding the same of his children. She carried these traits in her own life and was a dedicated mother in imparting in her three children the same values. All her three children were active participants when Hemkunt Foundation had just started its annual competitions. All three children won several medals in these competitions. She encouraged her children to attend various summer camps held for Sikh youths in Tri-state area.

Her career path in New York was that of a professional librarian having earned a Master's degree in Library Science from C W Post College in Glen Head, Long Island. She was the inspiration in establishing Plainview Gurdwara library and was also the Secretary of this Gurdwara for some time

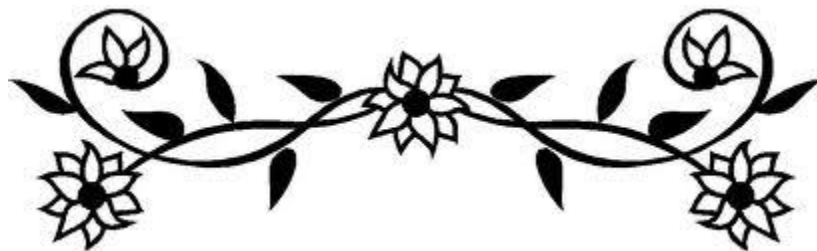
Maj Harinder Singh - Group II and IV Judge



Harinder Singh Oberai was born and brought up in India. He is a graduate of the prestigious National Defence Academy and was commissioned as an officer in the Army. He was a consistent top performer, standing first in the overall order of merit, country-wide, in the NDA examination. He went on to get his Bachelor's and Master's degree in Electronics & Telecommunications,

summa-cum-laude and has authored several technology related papers for leading journals.

He has spent his entire working career in telecommunications and was a pioneer in the field of satellite communications in India, having been deputed to Indian Space Research Organization for early experimental work in 1970s with UN and NASA sponsored projects. He lived in Sultanate of Oman for 10 years before migrating to USA in 1998. His family consists of Savinder Kaur and two sons, Rajveer and Preet. As a new entrant, Harinder is excited to be part of Hemkunt Foundation and is looking forward to be working with seasoned and experienced leaders, and to be learning and furthering the cause of Sikhs and Sikhism, within and outside



S. Upinderjit Singh – Group II and IV Judge



Upinderjit Singh is currently working as Senior Advisor, Strategic Planning at ConocoPhillips, a major oil company in Houston, Texas. He also serves on the Adjunct Faculty at University of California, Riverside where he teaches business and management courses. Upinder originally hails from Chandigarh, India where he briefly worked in an oil company after finishing his engineering education. He came to United States in the early nineties and joined ConocoPhillips after his M.B.A.

Upinder and his wife are active in teaching Kirtan, Punjabi language and Punjabi drama at Orange County Gurdwara. Upinder has been judging at Hemkunt Foundation events for the past many years, and considers his involvement at the foundation as a great honor and privilege.



S. Madanjit Singh – Group II and IV Judge



Education

Degrees in Electrical Engineering

M.Sc Electrical Engineering-Polytechnic Institute of New York(Brooklyn)

M.Sc. Electrical Engineering-Roorkee University

B.Sc, Electrical Engineering – Guru Nanak Engineering College

Registered Professional Engineer- Electrical and Control Systems

Teaching Experience

Lecturer & Senior Lecturer In Roorkee University & in Delhi College Of Engineering Instructor in Community College & San Francisco State in Electrical & Control Systems Engineering

Professional Experience

Worked In Top Engineering Company for 37 years on various positions, Senior Engineer, Engineering Specialist, Engineering Supervisor, Lead Engineer and Principal Engineer

Vice President-Dist 3, International Society Of Automation and President of Savannah River Section. Senior Life Member- ISA and Life Member – IEEE.

Community Involvement

Has been Director/coordinator Guru Angad Dev Khalsa School, El Sobrante CA

Secretary- Sikh Center El Sobrante, CA, Treasurer Sikh Center (Queens)New York.

Active role in construction of Sikh Center, El Sobrante Gurdwara building.

Hemkunt Foundation Involvement

Have been involved with Hemkunt Foundation since 1994. Introduced Youth program in California (El Sobrante, Hayward, Fremont, Fresno, Sacramento), Texas (Houston, Dallas and Austin) and Arizona(Phoenix). Has been Zonal Convener for above centers. Successfully conducted International Youth Symposiums in El-Sobrante/ San Jose, California and in Orlando, Florida with SadhSangat. Has been Trustee of Hemkunt Foundation. Supported first Kirtan Program in the International Youth Symposium at Orlando, Florida

Dr Manmohan Singh – Group II/IV Judge



Dr. Manmohan Singh is Assistant Director and Chief of the General Resources and SDR policy Division in the Finance Department of the International Monetary Fund. Before his current appointment, he was Assistant Director in the IMF's Fiscal Affairs Department and Head of its Fiscal Policy and Surveillance Division for six years.

Prior to that, he was for several years a senior official in the IMF's Research Department, primarily responsible for multilateral surveillance issues, including those relating to the G-7 and G-20. He also coordinated the Fund's interdepartmental group on currency volatility, and headed the taskforce on deflation.

Before joining the Fund he taught at Cambridge University, UK and was a Fellow at Sidney Sussex College.

While on leave from the IMF, he was a Director for Emerging Market Strategy at Credit Suisse for three years. In 2007-2008 he was a visiting Professor at the McDonough School of Business, Georgetown University, and a visiting Fellow at the Kennedy School, Harvard University.

In addition to his professional activities, he has a keen interest in Sikh theology, philosophy and history. He has written a number of articles in these areas and given many talks on them in the US, UK and India. He was the founding President of the Cambridge University Sikh Society, and started the Society's regular newsletter, Khalsa.

He studied at the London School of Economics with a B.Sc. and an M.Sc. in Economics and obtained a Ph.D. from Trinity College, Cambridge University. He is the author of a number of books and papers on a broad range of economic and financial issues.

Dr. Arvinder Kaur– Group II and IV Judge



Arvinder Kaur was born in Nairobi, Kenya. She moved to India when she was ten years old, and spent her formative years in New Delhi. She obtained her MBBS degree from Lady Harding Medical College. She then obtained her MD and went on to teach Pharmacology to medical students at her alma mater.

After her marriage, Arvinder moved to the United States, and has been living in Pottsville, Pennsylvania since that time. She has been active at the gurdwara making significant contributions to teaching children Sikh history, Gurmukhi, and Shabad Kirtan.



Dr. Parampreet Kaur– Group V Judge



Dr. Parampreet Kaur (Mini), a board certified Pathologist from India is born and raised in a Gursikh family in Chandigarh. She has spent her last 14 years in USA.

She did her visiting fellowship in Cytology in Long Beach Memorial Hospital, California and has been living in Pennsylvania for last 7 years. Dr. Kaur is married to Dr. Rajwinder Singh who partners with her in educating Sikh values to the kids. Dr. Kaur is passionate about instilling the Sikh values and tenets in the youth and enjoys spending maximum time with Sikh youth.

She has two kids, ten years old daughter and seven years old son, who have been participating in Hemkunt Foundation over successive years. Dr. Kaur credits her parents for her education and knowledge of Sikh values. Dr. Kaur has been involved in the Hemkunt Foundation as Central Coordinator for last two years and was instrumental in initiating Hemkunt Foundation Programs in Lehigh Valley Area of Pennsylvania.

She is excited to be a part of Hemkunt Foundation and is looking forward to working with experienced leaders and learning and furthering the cause of Sikhs and Sikhism, within and outside USA .

Dr. Harbhajan Singh – Group V Judge



In 1964, Dr. Chawla graduated from Rangoon Medical College in Burma and began practicing medicine. However, when the Communists abruptly seized power in 1964 and nationalized the country, the entire Chawla family was forced to leave the country, and abandon everything they owned. Dr. Chawla left Burma, married Jagjit Kaur from New Delhi, and they both emigrated to the United States in 1968.

Since his arrival in the US, Dr. Chawla has taken on many prominent roles in the Sikh community. In the early 1970s, when the number of Sikh families could be counted on fingers, he co-founded the Guru Nanak Sikh Society of Delaware Valley (GNSSDV). During his presidency and secretarial years, the GNSSDV became the central focus for the local Sikh community for teaching the youth Punjabi, Gurmukhi, and Kirtan while also providing a sangat for the families in the area.

As the Sikh community began to grow, Dr. Chawla made it a point to be intimately involved on the continued education and development of the Sikh youth. He has been a principal organizer of Sikh Youth camps, Punjabi and Gurmukhi education, Sikh history, and kirtan. Dr. Chawla has been a supporter of the Sikh Games and the Hemkunt Foundation since their inception challenging young Sikhs to get involved. Dr. Chawla has volunteered as the camp physician for Sikh Youth camps, and he has served as a judge for the Hemkunt Foundation speech competition since its early years.

Today, Dr. Chawla lives in Cherry Hill, New Jersey. He remains on the faculty as an Associate Professor of Pediatrics at Drexel University School of Medical School in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He works as a pediatrician and a neonatologist. Dr. Chawla and his wife Dr. Jagjit Kaur Chawla have three children who by the blessing of the Guru are all Gursikhs. Drs. Chawla have just become grandparents.

Dr. Jaswant Singh – Group V Judge



Dr. Jaswant Singh Sachdev, MD has been an active member of the Sikh Community of Phoenix Arizona for the last 34 years. In 1976, when he settled in Phoenix, there were not more than 10 Sikh families. With the help of these few other Sikh brethren, he started to hold once monthly Kirtan Darbar at various rental facilities. As the number of immigrant Sikh families started to increase in number, he along with other Sikh families joined hands with a vibrant American Sikh community who already owned an old church and were using it as Sikh Gurdwara when it was not in use by them as Yoga. With his motivation Punjabi Sikh School as well as other religious activities started to take place routinely and regularly.

In mid-nineties with his aggressive efforts and motivation, a new state of the art building for Gurdwara Sahib on the property of Guru Nanak Dwara was planned by the combined community both of the American Sikhs as well as immigrant Sikhs. Dr Sachdev was instrumental in motivating the Sangat for a large amount of donation. Later on, he was one of the lead planners for the construction of Dr Jasbir Singh Saini Sikh community center and Gurdwara Sahib Nishkam Sewa in another part of the metro. This Gurdwara Sahib as well as the community center has been entirely funded by Dr Jasbir Singh memorial foundation. It provides a unique opportunity to Dr Sachdev, where with the help of other volunteer especially Mrs Rang, he holds power point lectures for non-Sikhs whose number may range between 50 to 150 per session.

Dr. Sachdev, a recipient of “OUTSTANDING Asian American CITIZEN’S AWARD 2004 for serving the larger community of Arizona, has been a humble volunteer for spearheading the cause of Sikh Identity in Arizona especially after the senseless killing of S. Balbir Singh Sodhi post 9-11. Earlier a “Homeless Dinner Program” was initiated by Dr. Sachdev and his posthumous friend, Dr. Saini to involve the Sikh Community for sharing its blessings with the unfortunate and needy citizen of Phoenix. This was put on firm footing after 9-11 when Dr. Sachdev along with other 10-15 committed volunteers started to cook fresh dinner and serve about 250 homeless people every third Sunday of the month regularly. Thus far about 25000 meals have been served.

Since Hemkunt foundation started yearly competition in Arizona, Dr. Sachdev, has been serving as a judge for the Grand Canyon Zone. In 2009 he was also honored to serve as a Judge for international competition at Los Angeles, California. Besides being a committed Sikh, he is also a writer dealing with Indian diaspora. His book ‘Square Pegs, Round Holes’ has been widely acclaimed by many members of diaspora for a must read.

S. Surinder Singh – Group V Judge



Surinder Singh Chawla, was born in Loikaw, Myanmar (Burma). His father Sardar Sujan Singh was a successful businessman and a devote Sikh. Sujan Singh was a proficient musician and volunteered to perform weddings and other religious duties all over the country on behalf of the Sikh community.

Surinder Singh Chawla left Burma, married Lajwant Kaur from New Delhi, and they both immigrated to the United States in 1976. Since his arrival in the US, Surinder Singh Chawla has taken on many prominent roles in the Sikh community. During his presidency and secretarial Sewa he became the central focus for the local Sikh community for teaching the youth Punjabi, Gurmukhi, and kirtan while also providing a sangat for the families in the area.

He has been organizing Sikh Youth camps since 1992. He has been a supporter of Sri Hemkunt Foundation since 1992. He is the Board Member. He was Zonal Convener of Big Apple Zone for more than a Decade. Every year on International Level he organizes the Nitname.

Today, Surinder Singh lives in New York. He is a successful businessman. Surinder Singh Chawla and his wife Lajwant Kaur Chawla have one Son and a granddaughter who by the blessing of the Guru is Gursikh.

S. R. K. Janmeja Singh – Group V Judge



Personal Information: Visiting professor, U. C. Berkeley (1991-present) Founding President Emeritus, currently Chief Psychologist Portia Bell Hume Behavioral Health and Training Center, Concord, CA. (1993-present) Previously,, for ten years he was the Dean of Rosebridge Graduate of Integrative Psychology, Assistant Director of a Postgraduate Center for Training in Community Psychiatry, Berkeley, CA for fourteen years.

Community Involvement

The Sikh Center of S. F. Bay Are Gurdwara, El Sobrante, Founding Member, 1964, Secretary. 1973-1974, 1978-1979, Chairman, 1975-1975. The Sikh Foundation of the United States & North America, Founding Trustee Secretary, 1966-74. Gadar Memorial Committee Task Force, Advisory Board to the Consulate General of India, 1973-1975. The Sikh Center Gurdwara, El Sobrante, teaching Gurbani to Youth and children (1991-present). Interfaith Center at Presidio, San Francisco, Member of the Board of Directors (2001-present). Founding President, Ik Onkar Peace Foundation (2002-present) Cooperation Circle of United Religious Initiative.

Message for the Sikh Youth

The purpose of Sikh spiritual practice is to live in Naam Consciousness by understanding and meditating on Gurbani. Naam that manisfests itself in Its Creation that is In Divine Order. Each of us is a part of this Divine Order. Therefore, making punitive value judgments is a reflection of “Ignorance.” If one understands the Divine Order then one is liberated from Haomein(“I am” consciousness) and suffering caused by attachment to it. History is also based on Haomein consciousness. My message to you is to study Gurbani and meditate on Naam.

S. Harcharan Singh – Group V Judge



Education: Master's Degrees in: Political Science and Public Administration, Delhi University, New Delhi.

Master in Computer Science, Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, New York

Experience:

A. Professor of Political Science and Public Administration at SGTB Khalsa College, Delhi University, teaching Under graduates and post graduates

for 12years.

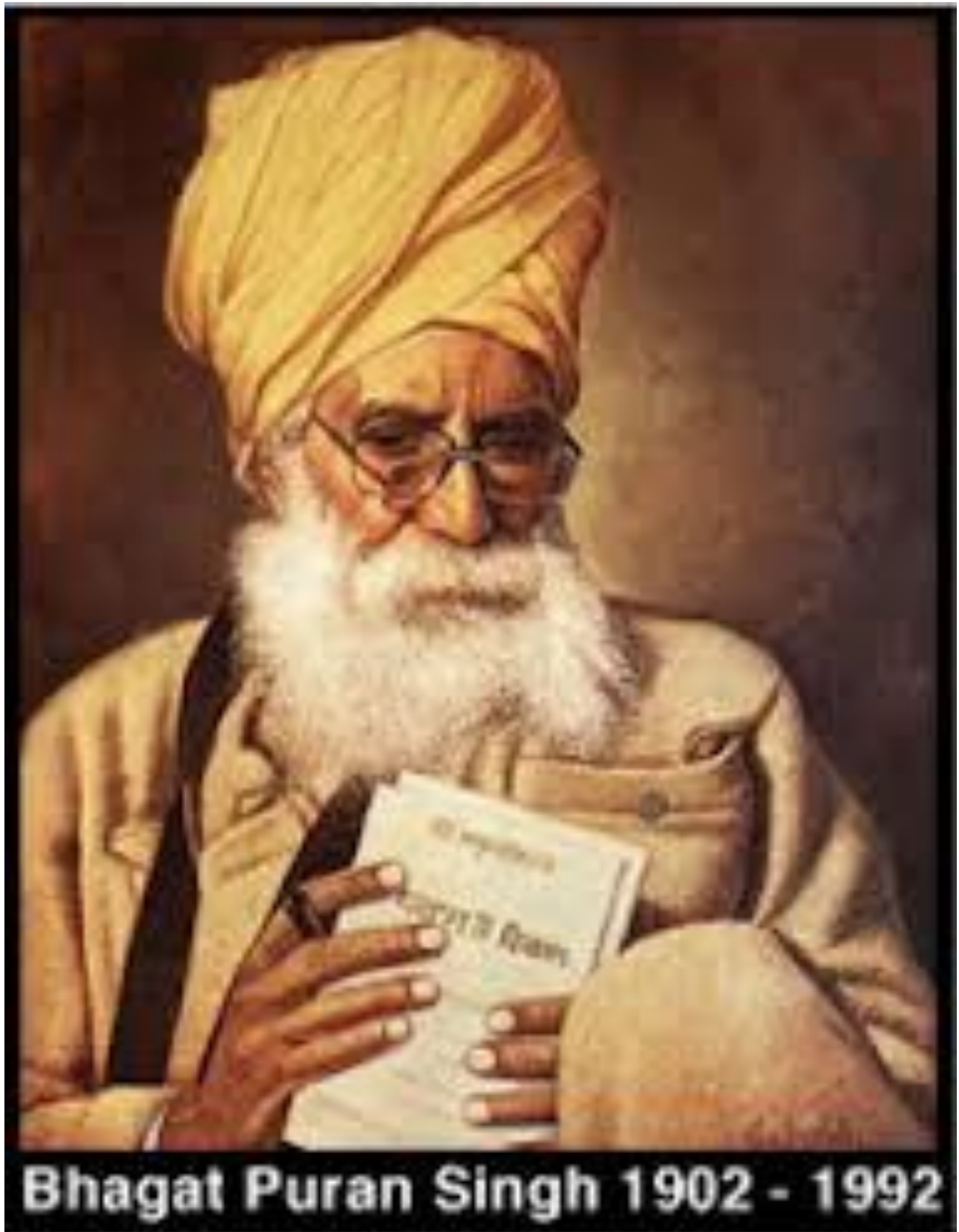
B. IT Professional with IBM for 26 years, responsible for the development of Main Frame Application Development Modules, involved in the Design and integration of Business Processes, Application Architect including specialization in the Client Server Architecture and Project Management for business process and Application Outsourcing.

C. Adjunct Professor of Computer Science at North Carolina Central University in the Department of Mathematics for two years, from 1989-1991 sponsored by IBM

Community Involvement: Elected representative of the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee duly constituted under the DSGMC, served as Joint Secretary, Member the Board of Directors of various Committees of the DSGMC, Manager of Khalsa Girls Higher Secondary School.

While in US, stayed involved with Social, Sikh Community and interfaith related activities in the states of New York, North Carolina and in Texas.

Hemkunt Involvement: Have been associated with Hemkunt Organization, ever since the organization was conceived while in New York and created a Local Center at Raleigh/Durham, North Carolina. Currently very humble Zonal Convener for the Hemkunt Organization of the Sunbelt Zone, Texas



Nishkam Sewa

Surinderpal Singh



My introduction to Nishkam Sewa wasn't so different than many of us have who are born and raised in a village of Punjab. I was born in to a family where there were 13+ members including my grandparents, uncles and aunts. It didn't end there yet, because in a village all the houses you can count around you are also almost part of your family. Here's the trick though, all the houses they can count are their family and thus it is your family too. The day used to start with someone ringing the doorbell; this is just an expression I am

using for your better understanding otherwise we didn't have door locks forget the doorbells. The doors were always open to everyone.

Living in such large families the younger you are in the ladder the more you have to carry on your head and that will be the weight of the authority from elders. Respect the elders, listen to them and serve them were ingrained in you right along with the first feed you ever received.

Soon enough I grew up a little and starting playing at the village's Gurdwara Sahib and that playing converted to Sewa on the special occasions. On the major Gurburab celebrations there were Akhand Paths at the Gurdwara Sahib and we were assigned duties to wake up Paathis, serve them Langar and tea etc. We would take turns to help and cover for others. On the following Sundays, on the actual celebration day, we would help with langar Sewa like cutting vegetables, salads and washing dishes etc. Was it really a source of satisfaction for us or was it just another form of playing I do not even recall that.

The true meaning of Nishkam Sewa didn't come to me till my late twenties when I picked up the book "Garland Around My Neck," a complete story of Bhagat Pooran Singh. This is where I started realizing that the Sewa I had been doing, or at least thinking that I am doing Sewa, was reciprocal, was a contract of convenience that I will do this for you and you do that for me. What Bhagat Pooran Singh was doing was beyond this "I will do this for you and you do that for me," because there was no "I" to begin with. He would go begging, but not for himself; he would beg for the needy. He would ask for favors from the

horse carts people, but not for himself, but for others. The most beautiful part of this book was Pyara Singh, the garland around his neck. How Bhagat Pooran Singh served this crippled child unconditionally and carried him around on his back for years was beyond one's limited understanding. The most beautiful piece of the book was where when Pyara Singh fell so sick that doctor advised that nothing can save him now Bhagat Pooran Singh prayed for him saying that I have never asked anything for myself from you and I will never do, but if something happens to Pyara Singh I will never come to your door again as well. This was to me the ultimate Nishkam Sewa, the ultimate humanity and the ultimate sacrifice. While remembering his picture from the book, where he was shown eating leftover from his one metal bowl he used to carry with him, I also sometime like to put my rice, daal, sabzi and salad in one bowl and eat that way to taste the satisfaction he would have tasted from that bowl; a taste of completeness, which we never find in our lavish lunches and dinners. When he passed away he had some belongings, which are still saved in a museum, which were 1 Long Shirt, 1 and ½ pair of shoes, a cloth bag, a metal bowl and a pair of old glasses. He also left something else, a legacy which will live on for centuries to come. He also left a facility, which was built with his efforts, which serves thousands of crippled, sick and/or mentally and physically challenged people.

The second personality to influence my life with Nishkam Sewa had been Bhai Jasbir Singh Ji Khanne Wale, who went beyond just doing Sewa through his Kirtan and inspired others to donate their eyes and other parts after they die, so others can get another chance of life. He just served and served unconditionally. He used to say, "Please, I beg you, say a loud Fateh only, because I live on your Fateh, otherwise I will not be able to do all this." In many of his audio recordings, which were not recorded through a prepackaged contract, at the end of his Kirtan he would say that many have offered some Maya in respect of Gur Shabad, wherever management feels it is required they can use it. He didn't take any penny for his Kirtan in any shape or form. He ran his store back in Khanna to support his family's needs. And yet he was able to inspire millions to become good Gursikhs, he was able to touch millions of lives and he was able to plant this ever growing tree. Speaking of the tree, he encouraged all to keep the environment clean, make it a drug-free, pollution-free world, so our children can breathe in cleaner air.

The more I studied the lifestyles of such heroes around the globe the more I found out that they didn't exist. They existed through their work, they existed through their Sewa. That's why they never died.

They lived through their Sewa; they still live in the hearts of millions around the world. Through their light many more were born and spread throughout the nations.

There are influential people throughout the horizons, be it the CNN hero Pa Budi of Indonesia, who could see children suffering from the devastation of Tsunami and sheltered some 53 children at his place using the only financial source- his own salary and a little rice farm, or be it Bhapa Ji of Tamil Nadu, who devoted his entire life serving homeless elderly people and people suffering from various diseases. Bhapa Ji lives in hundreds of hearts every day and night. In the morning he is seen washing feet of his people and then dressing them up nicely. Later he visits all the people in his center and spends few minutes with every individual. At night they all sing Kirtan together and close the night in a peaceful way.

Sewa, to me, starts from my home by serving others with love and respect. Then it moves on to my community I live in, my neighbors, helping them carry the heavy trash cans outside, watching for their children at the bus stop if needed and picking up their newspaper from the walkway and dropping at their doorsteps are just some quick ways I can serve. More avenues are available in the parking lot of my work place, in the hallways of my office, there is always something on the floor for me to pick up and trash it in the bin.

Pa Budi said in his video, "If you are only one method of satisfaction, you will never be happy, but if you are able to help someone get a better future that is really rewarding." I have found my means of satisfaction by focusing on others beyond any conditions, beyond any limitations and there is nothing more rewarding than seeing someone smile with watery eyes and trying to murmur the words, "God bless you."

Surinderpal Singh Ji is a web developer by profession. He is also serving at Sikh Foundation of Virginia as PRO and Youth & Education Coordinator. By the virtue of spending some time with people like Gurdeep Singh, founder of Guru Harkrishan Institute of Sikh Studies, Maryland he has been able to serve the needs of our youth through various activities such as, Sikh history jeopardy, movie nights, Turban showdowns etc. These efforts were well received by the children and their parents. He is devoting his energies in making Gurdwara Sahib, not only a place of worship but also successfully building a truly youth oriented place where our children thrive and excel in their career as ambassador of Sikhi.

Selfless Service –From Gurbaani Prospective

Mahinder Kaur

Vich Dunia Sev Kamayia

Ta Dargah Basen Payia

Sewa is the proper suitable word to define the essence of SIKH Religion. If Sewa is done without any expectation for reciprocation, it is Nishkaam Sewa but if it is accompanied by feeling of reward in return then it is not Sewa, leave aside Nishkaam Sewa. Voluntary Sewa or Nishkaam Sewa is a Sewa devoted to the service of mankind. Doing voluntary Sewa is a service which our Guru's have not only preached us rather they practically did it themselves and that is what Gurbani speaks.

Sewa Karat Hoye Nehkami

Tis Ko Hoat Prapat Swami

Sewa and Love remove ego, greed and complexes of superiority and inferiority both. Sewa prepares the ground for spiritual elevation. This kind of Sewa starts with Guru Nanak Devji himself when he fed the hungry sadhu's with the money given to him by his father for some profitable trade. Then came Bhai Lehna who submitted himself so much to Guru Nanak in doing Sewa that he became second Nanak.

Joat Uha Jugat Sai,

Seih Kaya Pher Platiai

Same was the case of Guru Amar Das ji, who at the very old age did so much Nishkaam Sewa that it changed him from Amru Nithawan to Nithawayan da thawan Guru and also in the case of Bhai Jetha, that is Guru Ram Das ji– the fourth Nanak and so on and so forth.

Sacrifice is another way of Sewa which our Gurus did for the sake of humanity as we can see from the sacrifice of fifth Guru - Guru Arjan Dev ji which excelled all the sacrifices and the sacrifice of the ninth Guru, Guru Teg Bahadur ji was par excellence. Guru Arjan Dev ji was tortured so much and in such a way that humanity could not stand it and Guru Teg Bhadur ji sacrificed himself to save other's religion as well as human rights. Guru Gobind Singh ji sacrificed his whole family for the sake of humanity. It is because of this Sewa that this religion is unique in the whole world.

Now question arises – was there any selfish motive behind all this ? . No, not at all. This was all to bring spiritual awakening in the world which was suffering from hatred, fanaticism, falsehood and also enslavement by foreign invaders for centuries. The world had sunk in wickedness and sin. Guru

Nanak devoid of any selfish motive set on a mission to bring social awakening and to free them from the chains of social as well as political enslavement by starting Udasis for the regeneration of humanity not only throughout India but outside India also.

Chadya Sodhan Dharat Lukai

Sikhism believes in the brotherhood of mankind and fatherhood of one benevolent creator. Acting upon this principle Bhai Kanahiya could not differentiate between friend and a foe and started giving water to all injured soldiers. In addition to this there are many other examples of the organizations doing this kind of sewa like Nishkaam Welfare Council, Sikh Human Development Association etc., who are helping orphan children and children of widows as well as, - daily wage earners in pursuing their dreams of getting an education.

Let's not forget Bhagat Puran Singh who gave all his life doing Nishkaam Sewa not only for the able bodied sikh community but any needy person, regardless of religion, caste, community, able or disabled. So now we can say that this voluntary Sewa has become the Sikh way of life. It is so much engrained into this community that whenever any calamity comes - whether it be floods, tsunami, famine or earthquake, the voluntary sewaks or organization of this community are there to help the people in need by opening community kitchens that are serving langar to feed the hungry and give relief of any other kind they need. In the recent past during the earthquake of Kutchh in the state of Gujrat in 2001, the Sikhs put up food camps which was an example of its own kind. Let's also not forget that putting up food camps is not the only Sewa the Sikhs are doing, there are so many other ways we do Sewa e.g. by giving financial help as our Guru Sahibans have told us to give Daswand i.e. sharing with the needy from our honest earnings.

Ghaal Khayae Kitch Hathon Dey,

Nanak Rah Pachaney Se.

Kirth Virt Kar Dharma Di, Hathon Dey Key Bhala Manaiyea

If we are in medical field, we should give free treatment to the poor and needy. Educating the illiterates is another kind of Sewa. We can see there are free dispensaries attached with many Gurdwara's all over the world. Same is the case with the schools imparting technical, religious, moral education as well as Punjabi/Gurmukhi language.

By acting upon the principles of this religion, the believers of this religion are trying to address the humanity as a whole by reaching out to them in the hour of need and contribute in giving some relief to the strife torn world.

To sum up, we should never forget that if we have to follow our Guru Ji's way of life, while doing Nishkaam Sewa to our fellow beings we should do it without any reciprocation but if we want our names

to be inscribed on the walls or the floors of the Gurudwara's , then we have gone away from the essence and principles of Nishkaam Sewa of this great Sikh religion.

Tirath Birt Ar Daan Kar, Man Mein Dhere Guman.

Nanak Nehphal Jaat Teh Jion Kunchar Isnaan.

Mahinder Kaur is Masters in History, BEd in teaching and Giani from Punjab University. In the U.S., She has taught Sikh history and Punjabi/Gurmukhi language. She volunteered for teaching Sikh History, Divinity, Gurbani and Gurmukhi language in Gurdwara schools.

Took part in Sikh Youth camp, Sri Hemkunt Symposium activities and certain other religious activities of the community. Did Sewa as judge for Gurbani Competitions and Hemkunt Symposium Competitions.

Sewa in Sikh Traditions

Rajinder Singh Jolly

SATGUR KI SEWA SAFAL HAI JEY KO KAREH CHIT LAYE

Literal meaning of Sewa is to help or to serve, be it hospitality or to entertain someone. Service has different norms and values for different persons. One has to pay to restaurant and hotels for the hospitality or services one receives from them. Similarly, One has to pay to nursing home, hospital or dispensary even though nursing the injured or sick is known as the noble profession in the entire Universe.

Help and service to others human beings, with love and affection, without any discrimination of any caste, creed or status of society and that too without expecting any reward or price of any kind is called Sewa in Sikh Religion. Now, there are many forms of Sewa:

Physical Sewa: Langar Sewa in Guru Houses (Gurdwaras), cooking the langar(meals) in common kitchen , cleaning the pots/utensils after meals, cleaning of the kitchen before and after cooking etc. Serving water in summer as also Where there is no electricity in Guru's houses (Gurdwaras), fan the Sangat by hands is form of Sewa. Collecting shoes of all big or small at the time of arrival and delivering them back at their departure also constitutes in physical sewa. The purpose of doing such sewa is to make a person feel humble and kill the person's ego.

pakhaa fayree paanee dhovaa har jan kai peesan pees kamaavaa.

(Ang 749)

Waving the fan in the religious gathering (Sangat), carrying water for them, and grinding corn for the humble servants of the Lord all constitute sewa..

The tenth of the honest income obtained from hard labour or a portion which can be easily taken out should be spent on the service for the Gurumukh or needy or help some poor student for education purposes, is also a form of this Sewa.

**ghaal khaa-ay kichh hathahu day-ay.
naanak raahu pachhaaneh say-ay.**

(Ang 1245)

One who works for what he eats, and gives some of what he has. - O Nanak, he knows the Path of GOD

Besides Physical and financial sewa, it is also performed from one's soul and is the most difficult one. Killing one's anger, lust and greed and then serving the lord is very difficult. By following the Guru's Vachan and reciting the Hari's name are also forms of sewa. The most outstanding example in the Sikh religion is Bhai Lehna Ji and Baba Amar Das Ji, who by the virtues of their services became the second and third Nanak Jyot.

satgur kee sayvaa gaakh-rhee sir deejai aap gavaa-ay.

(Siri Rag Mahla 1 Ang 27)

It is very difficult to serve the True Guru. Surrender your head; give up your selfishness

Writer's note: As far as Panjabi's and Sikh tradition and thinking is considered, Sikhs are the crown in the line of sacrifices. During country's war of independences that resulted in the creation of In Pakistan, the biggest loss was borne by Panjabees and Sikhs. During Mughal Raj, Sikhs along with SIKH Guru Sahibs gave numerous sacrifices, sometimes even their lives. The price was announced for the heads of Sikhs. It is a sad thing that historians did not give the right place to Sikhs in history. The sacrifices of Sikhs for salvation of religions they did not believe in, even sacrifices in the struggle of country's freedom did not get due place in the history.

When the whole world was considering the women backward, Guru Nanak Dev ji in his time spoke for the equal rights of the women. He got himself sold three times and abolished the tradition of trade of humans of Ruheliyan. He refused the food of the wealth of corrupt Mailk Bhago and took the food from the Bhai Lalo to show equality of all humans and that there is no difference in upper and lower castes. He himself roared and incited the public by speaking against the Mughal ruler Babar to fight for their rights. Sikh Gurus erased the lines between religious boundaries, and prayed for wellbeing of entire humanity,

**Nanak naam charhdi kala
tere bhane sabrat da bhala.**

Manas ki jaat sabai ekai pahichanbo

(Guru Gobind Singh Ji)

naa ko bairee nahee bigaanaa sagal sang ham ka-o ban aa-ee.

(Ang 1299)

No one is my enemy, and no one is a stranger. I get along with everyone. He gave the message to all public that entire mankind is the son of the same lord.

Guru Amar Das ji spoke against the tradition of Sati, the tradition of burning the wife with dead husband in the same Pyre. He inspired the women to come to the Guru Darbar without the veil; he encouraged the public for equal rights of women. He also ordered Sangat to go through the Langar (Free Common Kitchen) and ordered them to have food together. Through this, he erased the lines between poor and rich and lower and upper caste.

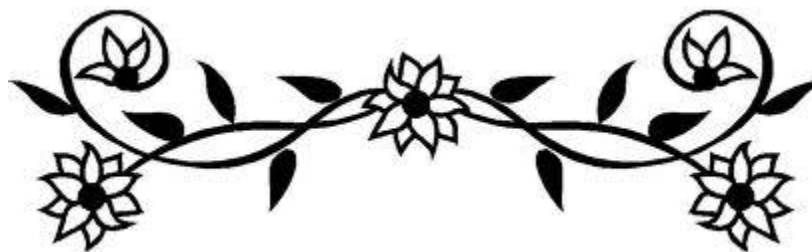
Sri Guru Har Gobind Ji while teaching equality of human race, prompted his followers to carry Sword, learn to ride horses and support Turban which were reserved for Royalties, thus laying the foundation of the human rights struggle in India.

Sri Guru Har Rai Ji laid the foundation stone of today's Red Cross. He, without considering the difference in rich and poor and their religions etc. opened the free medical pharmacies for all. Guru Gobind Singh Ji kept this highest tradition and ordered Bhai Kanhaiya Ji to serve to help quench the thirst of Sikhs and Muslim warriors alike. Bhai Kanhaiya Ji not only gave water to the wounded but also gave medication to the wounded to relieve them from pains, without any reward in return, at the instructions of Guru Gobind Singh Ji.

Sri Guru Tegh Bahadar Sahib Ji peacefully sacrificed his own life along with his three devoted Sikhs for the sake of another religion. Thus became the first human to lay his life the voice for human rights. GOODWILL, SERVICE AND BENEFIT OF ENTIRE HUMAN RACE IS THE ESSENCE OF SIKHISM.

Rajinder Singh Jolly

Virginia, USA



The Power of Sewa

Nankee Kaur (Maryland)



As I was searching for a topic to write about for this essay, I remembered a novel I recently read: *Divergent*, by Veronica Roth. The story is set in a future society where each citizen is placed into a “faction” based on his/her main character trait. There is one faction for every one of five traits – one for intelligence, another for courage, selflessness, honesty, and amiableness. The author later introduces one character who expresses intelligence, bravery, and selflessness equally, a personality type named “divergent.” It struck me that these three qualities are among the core values in Sikhi. The Guru Jis have, through their Bani as well as their actions on Earth, taught us how to inculcate these values in ourselves—that is, how to be “divergent” in a positive sense, in order to attain success and happiness in this world and the next.

As for intelligence, the Bani is our educator, setting us on a path to greater spiritual wisdom and awareness. What is true intelligence if not the ability to navigate one’s way in life; the awareness needed to lucidly solve problems or overcome obstacles, keeping the greater purpose of life in mind?

The next core value is bravery. This quality is certainly emphasized by all our Gurus, most notably Guru Gobind Singh Ji, naming all Sikhs Singhs and Kaurs. Guru Arjan Dev Ji and Guru Tegh Bahudar Sahib Ji also showed immense bravery during the torture leading to their shaheedi, with Guru Arjan Dev Ji only reciting *qyrw klAw mITw lwgY* (Your will seems so sweet to me). They showed steadfastness, upholding their principles even at the cost of their own lives.

Last of the three qualities is selflessness, the ability to put others’ interests ahead of one’s own by setting aside personal wishes. From Guru Nanak Dev Ji who, risking punishment, spent his father’s 20 rupees on a group of hungry sadhus, to Guru Tegh Bahudar Sahib Ji who gave up his life to help another religion, sewa, selfless service, has been shown to be a cornerstone of Sikhism. All Sikhs at a young age are taught that “Vand Chakna” is paramount to being a Sikh. But, it seems that selflessness might be the hardest quality of the three characteristics to attain. The need for self-fulfillment seems to drive many of us in our day- to- day lives. Vices like ego, greed, and pride attempt to rivet our minds on ourselves, rather than those around us.

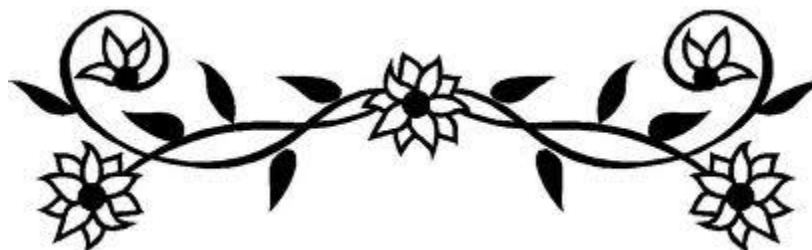
While we do need to rid ourselves of these vices, we need a certain amount of ambition and self-confidence to be comfortable with who we are. It seems as though we can only spread positivity and do sewa if we are content and at peace with ourselves. The question is how to achieve that inner contentment.

Guru Ji answers that ਸੁਖੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਸੇਵ ਕਮਾਈਆ (One shall find peace, doing sewa.)

It seems like a paradox at first; how can doing sewa help us become peaceful if we need inner peace to do sewa? But Guru Ji tells us that small acts of selflessness will lead to greater and bolder altruistic acts. Sewa will reinforce selflessness, leading to more selfless acts; it is a positive feedback system. He advises us to not wait to do sewa until we are selfless or until we have found peace, as the sewa itself will help us achieve that inner contentment or *saahaj*, an important goal for a Sikh to reach.

Although selflessness may not seem as the most powerful of the “divergent” qualities, Guru Nanak Dev Ji reveals that there is immense power in sewa. It brings inner contentment, allowing for an aware, open mind (intelligence) as well as the courage needed to stand by one’s beliefs.

Nankee Kaur is a rising sophomore at Sidwell Friends School, Washington D.C. She started participating in the Hemkunt Speech Symposiums in 2006, and has taken part in the speech or kirtan competitions every year since. Each year, she has advanced to the international level for speech and placed in the first three positions four times. In 2012 she was a semi-finalist in one of the Ayn Rand Foundation’s national essay competitions. Among other activities, she plays the piano, tutors inner city children, and loves reading science-fiction.



Bhagat Puran Singh.....A Visit to Pingalwara

Shawn Singh (Houston)



As Sikhs we have the benefit of having a rich history with many heroes and sewadars. Bhagat Puran Singh, one of these sewadars, is the epitome of what a Sikh is supposed to be. I first learned about Bhagat Puran Singh three years ago in my Punjabi School Class. He was a man who helped the mentally ill and the crippled. He helped those that had nobody there to help them. Bhagat Puran Singh was not just a lover of humanity, but of all living things. Without Bhagat Puran Singh so many helpless people may not have been cared or loved for.

About two years ago I had the opportunity to visit the Pingalwara. It is considered a house for the destitute a place where people who are impoverished, a place where those who are shunned by society have a place to live. Having the opportunity to visit such a place opens up your eyes to the problems that still need to be solved. After visiting Pingalwara, it makes you look at life much differently. Instead of seeing a homeless person or a mentally handicapped person as a burden placed up on society, those people need to be seen with love and humanity.

Sikhism preaches for us to love each other and show compassion every opportunity we get. The Pingalwara facility and the Pingalwara movement preach those beliefs. When my dad and I were taking a tour of the facility, you could see the love shown by the caretakers to those who are forgotten. Bhagat Puran Singh gave everything he had to the forgotten. He used to carry a young boy named Piara Singh who was mentally and physically impaired on his back for 14 years. Although Pingalwara is seen as a just a place for the destitute it is much more, rather it is a symbol of a movement that preaches love for all beings and the environment. The movement that is Eco-Sikh which preaches protecting the environment has just begun to catch fire within the United States but Bhagat Puran Singh was preaching the concept of Eco-Sikh in the 1920's. Bhagat Puran Singh made sure that the Pingalwara facility was environmentally friendly. Bhagat Puran Singh and the Pingalwara did not just love people who were forgotten and lost but also animals that did not have homes. As a result, he also created an animal shelter for sick and stray animals.

This shows Bhagat Puran Singh's love for all living beings. Thousands of people and animals had loving homes as a result of Bhagat Puran Singh's work. Bhagat Puran Singh's work is an inspiration for humanity and I encourage everybody to visit Pingalwara in Amritsar if they have the opportunity. The facility in Amritsar can only hold so many people and there are millions of people who are still forgotten and who do not have a home. I encourage everybody to donate and do whatever they can to positively influence society. Sikhi preaches that God is in everything and Bhagat Puran Singh truly saw that.

Shawn Singh is at Cypress Ridge High School in Houston. He is a native of Texas and loves volunteering and being a part of the community. He strongly believes Sikhism is his life and Guru Granth Sahib is his guide. The teachings from Sikhism that stick out most to him are the concepts of equality and respecting other's beliefs. He enjoys being a part of Interfaith groups and sharing his appreciation for Sikhism with others.



ਨਿਸ਼ਕਾਮ ਸੇਵਾ

ਸਤਪਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਰਾੜ



ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਸੇਵਾ 'ਤੇ ਸਿਮਰਨ ਇਕੋ ਸਿੱਕੇ ਦੇ ਦੋ ਪਹਿਲੂ ਹਨ। 'ਮਨ ਤਨ ਸਉਪੇ ਆਗੈ ਧਰੇ ਹਉਮੈ ਵਿਚੁਹ ਮਾਰਿ' ਕਿ ਸਮਰਪਨ ਭਾਵ ਨਾਲ ਕੀਤੇ ਗਏ ਕੰਮ ਸੇਵਾ ਕਹਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਸੇਵਾ ਦੋ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਦੀ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਕ ਹੈ ਸਕਾਮ ਸੇਵਾ ਤੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਨਿਸ਼ਕਾਮ ਸੇਵਾ। ਸਕਾਮ ਸੇਵਾ ਉਹ ਹੈ ਜਿਹੜੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਫਲ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ ਲਈ ਜਾਂ ਬੰਧਨਾਂ ਤਹਿਤ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ।

‘ਚਾਰ ਪਦਾਰਥ ਜੇ ਕੇ ਮਾਗੈ ਸਾਧ ਜਨਾ ਕੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਲਾਗੈ’

ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਧਰਮ, ਅਰਥ, ਕਾਮਨਾ, ਮੁਕਤੀ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ ਲਈ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਸੇਵਾ ਸਕਾਮ ਸੇਵਾ ਹੈ। ਨਿਸ਼ਕਾਮ ਸੇਵਾ ਉਤਮ ਮੰਨੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ। ‘ਸੇਵਾ ਕਰਤ ਹੋਇ ਨਿਹਕਾਮੀ ਤਿਸ ਕਉ ਹੋਤ ਪਰਾਪਤਿ ਸੁਆਮੀ’ ਸੇਵਾ ਸੰਕਲਪ ਦਾ ਸਿਖਰ ਹੈ।

ਸਿੱਖੀ ਵਿਚ ਸੇਵਾ ਦਾ ਸੰਕਲਪ ਪਰਮ ਅਹਿਮ ਤੇ ਅਹਿਲ ਹੈ। ਪ੍ਰਥਮ ਗੁਰੂ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਦਾ ਭੁੱਖੇ ਸਾਧੂਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਭੋਜਨ ਕਰਾਉਣਾ ਨਿਸ਼ਕਾਮ ਸੇਵਾ ਦਾ ਧੁਰੋਂ ਆਇਆ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਕਿ ਦਸਾਂ ਜੋਤਾਂ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਗੁਰੂ ਵਿਚ ਸਮਾਇਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਅੱਜ ਵੀ ਪੂਰਨ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਸਾਰਥਿਕ ਹੈ। ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੇ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਆਰਥਿਕ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਬੁਲੰਦੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਛੂਹ ਲਿਆ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਮਾਨਸਿਕ ਸੰਤੁਸ਼ਟੀ ਦੀ ਭਾਲ ਜਾਰੀ ਹੈ। ਅਧਿਆਤਮਕ ਗੁਰੂਆਂ, ਮਨੋਵਿਗਿਆਨੀਆਂ, ਬੁੱਧੀਜੀਵੀਆਂ, ਦਾਰਸ਼ਨਿਕਾਂ ਨੇ ਵੀ ਇਹੀ ਸਾਰਤੱਤ ਕੱਢਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਮਾਨਸਿਕ ਸੰਤੁਸ਼ਟੀ ਲਈ ਨਿਸ਼ਕਾਮ ਸੇਵਾ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਹਤਰ ਕੁਝ ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ।

ਨਿਹਕਪਟ ਸੇਵਾ ਕੀਜੈ ਹਰਿ ਕੇਰੀ ਤੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਮਨ ਸਰਬ ਸੁਖ ਪਾਈਐ।

ਹੀ ਅਸਲੀ ਸੰਤੁਸ਼ਟੀ ਦਾ ਵਸੀਲਾ ਹੈ। ਪਦਾਰਥਾਂ ਦੀ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਛਿੰਨ ਭੰਗੁਰ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਪਦਾਰਥਾਂ ਦੀ ਦੌੜ ਲਗਾ ਚੁੱਕੇ ਇਨਸਾਨ ਨੂੰ ਜੀਵਨ ਜਾਂਚ ਲਈ ਸ਼ਬਦ-ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਰਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਉਣਾ ਪਏਗਾ।

‘ਜੇਤੇ ਜੀਅ ਤੇਤੇ ਸਭਿ ਤੇਰੇ ਵਿਣੁ ਸੇਵਾ ਫਲੁ ਕਿਸੈ ਨਾਹਿ’

ਦੀ ਸਿੱਖਿਆ ਧਾਰਨੀ ਸਮੇਂ ਦੀ ਮੰਗ ਹੈ। ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਵੱਡੇ-ਵੱਡੇ ਧਨਾਢ ਧੰਨ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਨਿਸ਼ਕਾਮ ਸੇਵਾ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਸੰਤੁਸ਼ਟੀ ਦੀ ਭਾਲ ਵਿਚ ਜੁਟੇ ਹੋਏ ਹਨ। ਟਾਟਾ, ਬਿਰਲਾ, ਅੰਬਾਨੀ ਪਰਿਵਾਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਅਲੱਗ-ਅਲੱਗ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਨਿਸ਼ਕਾਮ ਸੇਵਾ ਸਾਡੇ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਹੈ। ਮਾਈਕ੍ਰੋਸਾਫਟ ਦਾ ਮੁਖੀ ਅਤੇ ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਅਮੀਰ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਰਹਿ ਚੁੱਕਾ ਬਿਲ ਗੇਟਸ ਵੀ ਆਪਣੇ ਹੀ ਤਰੀਕੇ ਨਾਲ ਨਿਸ਼ਕਾਮ ਸੇਵਾ ਵਿਚ ਲੱਗਕੇ ਸੰਤੁਸ਼ਟੀ ਭਾਲ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ‘ਮਾਨ ਅਭਿਮਾਨ ਮੰਧੇ ਸੋ ਸੇਵਕ ਨਾਹਿ’ ਦੀ ਸਥਿਤ ਲੈ ਕੇ ‘ਵਿਚ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਸੇਵ ਕਮਾਈਐ ਤਾਂ ਦਰਗਾਹ ਬੈਸਣੁ ਪਾਈਐ’ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਜੀਵਨ ਨੂੰ ਸਫਲ ਬਣਾਉਣ ਵਿਚ ਲੱਗੇ ਹਨ।

ਅਮਰੀਕਾ ਵਰਗੇ ਵਿਕਸਤ ਦੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਨਿਸ਼ਕਾਮ ਸੇਵਾ ਦੀ ਸੋਚ ਨੂੰ ਜੀਵਨ ਅਧਾਰ ਬਣਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਕ੍ਰਾਂਤੀਕਾਰੀ ਹੰਭਲੇ ਦੀ ਜ਼ਰੂਰਤ ਹੈ। ਨਵੀਂ ਪੀੜ੍ਹੀ ਨੂੰ ਐਸੋ-ਆਰਾਮ ਦੀ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਨੂੰ ਲਾਂਭੇ ਰੱਖ ਕੇ ਸਮਾਜ ਵਿਚਲੀਆਂ ਸਰਬ-ਵਿਆਪਕ ਮੁਸ਼ਕਿਲਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਸੋਚਣ ਦੀ ਜ਼ਰੂਰਤ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਸੰਪੂਰਨ ਜੀਵਨ ਜਾਂਚ ਸਿਖਾਉਣ ਦੇ ਸਮਰੱਥ ਹੈ। ਸਮਾਜ ਦੀ ਹਰ ਮੁਸ਼ਕਿਲ ਦਾ ਹੱਲ ਹੈ। ਬੱਸ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ। ਅੱਜ ਸਿੱਖ ਬੁੱਧੀਜੀਵੀ ਸਾਡੀ ਆਉਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਪੀੜ੍ਹੀ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਦਾ ਇਹ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼ ਪਹੁੰਚਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਯਤਨਸ਼ੀਲ ਹਨ। ਅਮਰੀਕਾ ਵਰਗੇ ਦੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਜਿਥੇ ਕਿ ਸਾਡੇ ਬੱਚੇ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਦੇ ਹਰ ਖੇਤਰ ਵਿਚ ਨਵੀਂ ਬੁਲੰਦੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਛੋਹ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ਉਥੇ ਇਹ ਬੜਾ ਹੀ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਬਣ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਹੋ ਜੀਵਨ ਜਾਂਚ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਅਤੇ ਸਮਝ ਸਕਣ। ਭੌਤਿਕ ਵਿਗਿਆਨ, ਰਸਾਇਣ ਵਿਗਿਆਨ ਅਤੇ ਕੰਪਿਊਟਰ ਵਿਗਿਆਨ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਵਿਚ ਰੋਟੀ ਰੋਜ਼ੀ ਦੇ ਵਧੀਆ ਸਾਧਨ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਪ੍ਰਦਾਰਥ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਹਾਸਲ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ

ਵਸੀਲਾ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ ਪਰ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਜਿਊਣ ਅਤੇ ਸਮਝਣ ਦੀ ਜਾਚ ਸਿਰਫ ਅਤੇ ਸਿਰਫ ਅਧਿਆਤਮਕ ਪੰਥਾਂ 'ਤੇ ਚੱਲ ਕੇ ਹੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਲਈ ਹਰ ਧਰਮ ਵਿਚ ਇਸ ਖੇਤਰ ਵਿਚ ਆਪੋ ਆਪਣੇ ਵਸੀਲੇ ਮੁਹੱਈਆ ਕੀਤੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਪਰ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਵਿਚ 'ਆਪ ਜਪੇ ਔਰ ਆਪਣਾ ਨਾਮ ਜਪਾਵੇ' ਦੇ ਮਹਾਨ ਕਥਨ ਮੁਤਾਬਿਕ ਸਿੱਖ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਜੀਵਨ ਜਾਂਚ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਦੇ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਾਗਰ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਹੀ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਸਿਧਾਂਤਾਂ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਹਾਸਲ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ। ਬਹੁਤ ਸਾਰੀਆਂ ਸੰਸਥਾਵਾਂ ਇਸ ਮਹਾਨ ਕਾਰਜ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਾਮਿਲ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਸਾਡੀ ਆਉਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਪੀੜ੍ਹੀ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਰਗ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਦਾ ਮਹਾਨ ਕਾਰਜ ਕਰ ਰਹੀਆਂ ਹਨ। 'ਸ੍ਰੀ ਹੇਮਕੁੰਟ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਫਾਂਊਂਡੇਸ਼ਨ' ਅਜਿਹੀਆਂ ਹੀ ਸੰਸਥਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਇਕ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਸੰਸਥਾ ਨੇ ਸਾਡੀ ਆਉਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਪੀੜ੍ਹੀ ਨੂੰ ਸਾਡੀ ਬੋਲੀ, ਸਾਡੇ ਸੱਭਿਆਚਾਰ, ਸਾਡੇ ਵਿਰਸੇ ਅਤੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਧਰਮ ਨਾਲ ਜੋੜਨ ਦੀ ਮੁਹਿੰਮ ਦਾ ਬੀੜਾ ਚੁੱਕਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਜੀਵਨ ਜਿਊਣਾ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ 'ਸਹਿਜ ਅਨੰਦੁ ਰਖਿਓ ਗ੍ਰਿਹ ਭੀਤਰਿ' ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਉਲਝਣਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਨਿਕਲ ਕੇ ਚੌਥੇ ਪਦ-ਸਹਿਜ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ ਸੰਭਵ ਹੈ। ਸੇਵਾ ਅਰਥ-ਭਰਭੂਰ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਲਾਗੂ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ। ਨਹੀਂ ਤਾਂ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ 'ਵਿਣੁ ਸੇਵਾ ਪ੍ਰਿਥ ਹਥ ਪੈਰ ਹੋਰ ਨਿਹਫਲ ਕਰਣੀ' ਜੀਵਨ ਦੇ ਕਾਰ-ਵਿਹਾਰ ਬੇਕਾਰ ਹੋ ਜਾਣਗੇ।

ਆਉ! ਸਾਰੇ ਇਸ ਸੰਸਥਾ ਦੀ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਵਿਚਾਰਧਾਰਾ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਵਾਹ ਦੇ ਵੇਗ ਨੂੰ ਹੋਰ ਤੇਜ਼ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਇਸ ਨਾਲ ਜੁੜੀਏ। ਮੈਂ ਆਪਣੀ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਅਤੇ ਸੰਸਥਾ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਇਸ ਸੰਸਥਾ ਨੂੰ ਪੂਰਨ ਸਹਿਯੋਗ ਅਤੇ ਹਰ ਸੰਭਵ ਸਹਿਯੋਗ ਲਈ ਵਚਨਬੱਧ ਹਾਂ।

ਇੰਜ. ਸਤਪਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਰਾੜ

ਵਿੱਦਿਅਕ ਯੋਗਤਾ: ਸਿਵਲ ਇੰਜਨੀਅਰਿੰਗ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਚੰਡੀਗੜ੍ਹ

ਸਾਹਿਤਕ ਖੇਤਰ ਵਿਚ ਯੋਗਦਾਨ: ਚਾਰ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਕਾਵਿ ਸੰਗ੍ਰਿਹ

- ਜ਼ਖਮੀ ਪਰਿੰਦਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਪਰਵਾਜ਼ (2007),
- ਯਾਦਾਂ ਦੇ ਚੱਕਰਵਿਊ (2008)
- ਸੁਲਘਦੇ ਅਹਿਸਾਸ (2010)
- ਜੀਵਨ ਕਣੀਆਂ (2012)
- ਕਹਾਣੀ ਸੰਗ੍ਰਿਹ ਅਗਨ ਬਾਣ (ਛਪ ਰਿਹਾ)

ਸ਼ਮਾਜਿਕ ਜ਼ਿੰਮੇਵਾਰੀਆਂ

ਫਾਂਊਂਡਰ ਅਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸਾਹਿਤਕ ਅਤੇ ਸੱਭਿਆਚਾਰਕ ਮੰਚ ਵਾਸ਼ਿੰਗਟਨ ਡੀ ਸੀ ਮੈਟਰੋਪੋਲਿਟਨ

ਐਸੋਸੀਏਟ ਮੈਂਬਰ : ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਅਕਾਡਮੀ ਲੁਧਿਆਣਾ

ਰਾਜਨੀਤਕ ਜ਼ਿੰਮੇਵਾਰੀਆਂ

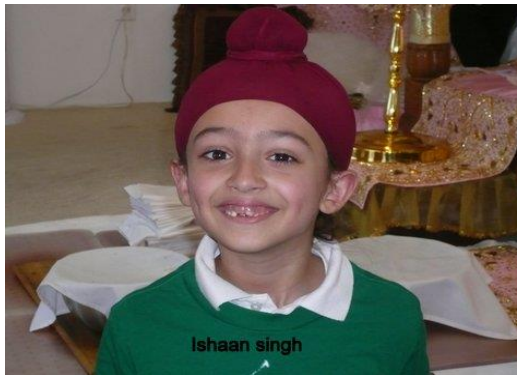
- ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਸ਼ਰੋਮਣੀ ਅਕਾਲੀ ਦਲ ਵਾਸ਼ਿੰਗਟਨ ਡੀ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਵਰਜ਼ੀਨੀਆਂ
- ਚੀਫ ਸਪੋਕਸਮੈਨ ਸ਼ਰੋਮਣੀ ਅਕਾਲੀ ਦਲ ਉੱਤਰੀ ਅਮਰੀਕਾ



SRI HEMKUNT SAHIB

2013
International
Symposium
Speech
Competition
Participants

Big Apple



Ishaan Singh Gr: I



Jessica Kaur Gr: II



Harleen Kaur Gr: III



Gurjit Kaur Gr: IV

Zonal Convener: Harjeet Singh harjeetsingh@hemkunt2.org

California: Capital Zone



Anmol Singh Gr I



Harjn Singh Gr II



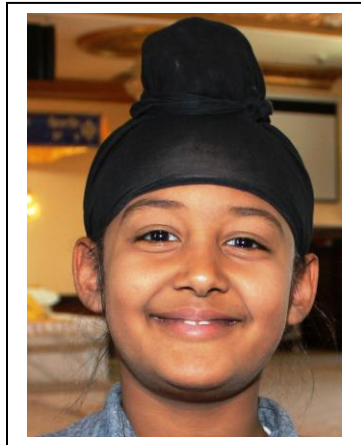
Rajul Singh Gr III



Jaspreet Singh Gr: IV

Zonal Convener: Dr. Narinder Singh parharmd@gmail.com

California: Gadri Babbe Zone



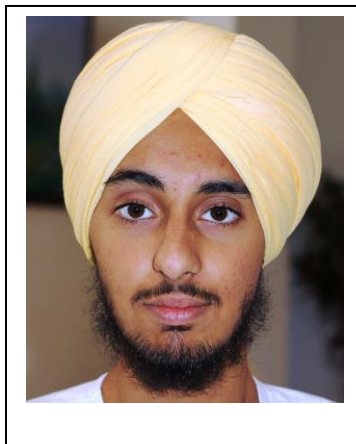
Harmandeep Singh Gr: I



Saajn Singh Gr: II



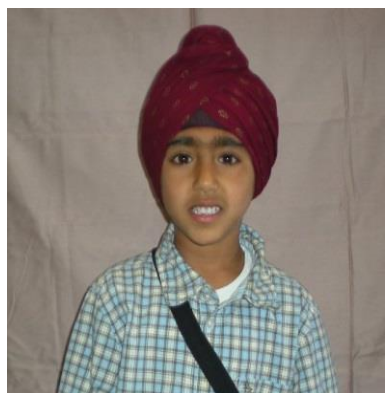
Sahib Singh Gr: III



Tarun Singh Gr: IV

Zonal Convener: Gurdeep Singh gskooner@hotmail.com

California: Los Angeles Zone



Makheer Singh Gr: I



Bikrum Singh Gr: II



Gurbir Singh Gr: III



Avneet Kaur Gr: IV



Gurchit Singh Gr: V

Zonal Convener: Ravinder Singh rsethi@jitco.com

California: Northern Zone



Gursimran Singh Gr: I



Manat Kaur Gr: II



Jujhar Singh Gr: III



Diljit Singh Gr: IV



Gurpreet Kaur Gr: V

Zonal Convener: Gurmeet Singh gurmeetk@yahoo.com

California: Orange County Zone



Amitoj Singh Gr: I



Jessica Kaur Gr: II



Noor Kaur Gr: III



Jaideep Singh Gr: IV



Kamalpreet Kaur Gr: V

Zonal Convener: Dr. Ginny Kaur drchawla123@yahoo.com

California: Silicon Valley



Mahima Kaur Gr: I



Sania Kaur Gr: II



Sukhveer Singh Gr: III



Kiran Kaur Gr: IV

Zonal Convener: Gurumukh Singh gtiwana@gmail.com

Capitol Zone



Sunjum Singh Gr: I



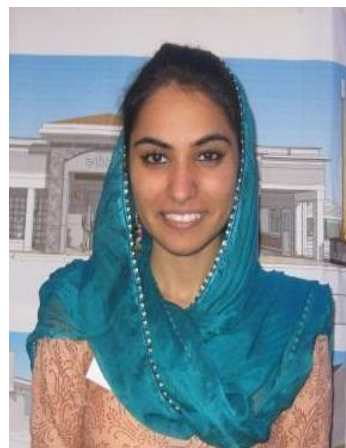
Anjan Singh Gr: II



Harjot Singh Gr: III



Sirtaj Kaur Gr. IV



Amritjot Kaur Gr: V

Zonal Convener: Satinder Sodhi sodhi913@gmail.com

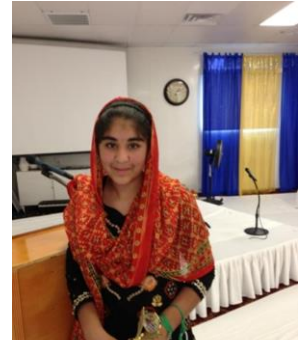
Delaware Zone



Harkirt Singh Gr: I



Gurjot Singh Gr: II



Sukhmani Kaur Gr: III



Arunjit Singh Gr: IV

Zonal Convener: Paramjatinder Singh Dhillon pjdhillon@gmail.com

Finger lakes Zone



Sehej Kaur Gr: I



Jeevin Singh Gr: II



Sarav Noor Singh: Gr: III



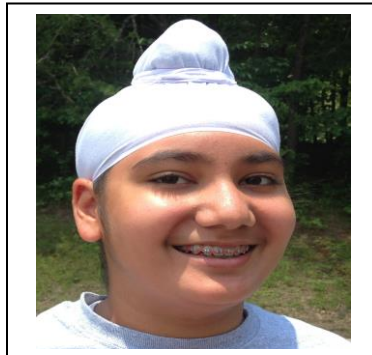
Tanvir Singh Gr: IV

Zonal Convener: Raman Kaur ramankaur@hemkunt2.org

Florida Zone



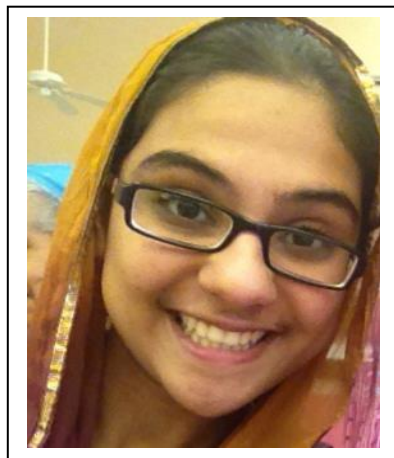
Parneet Singh Gr: I



Adhiraj Singh Gr: II



Jashanpreet Singh: Gr: III



Jasmeen Kaur Gr: IV



Jagmeet Kaur Gr: V

Zonal Convener: Dr Inderpaul Singh singhmd@aol.com

Garden State



Gurjap Kaur Gr: I



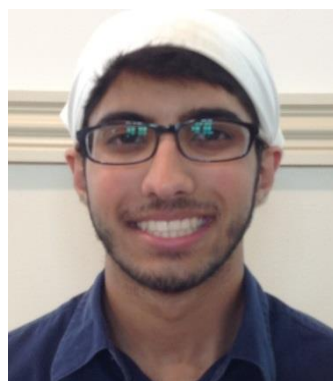
Divleen Singh Gr: II



Mannet Kaur Gr: III



Jasleen Kaur Gr: IV



Gurpal Singh Gr: V

Zonal Convener: Baljit Singh baljit.rana@yahoo.com

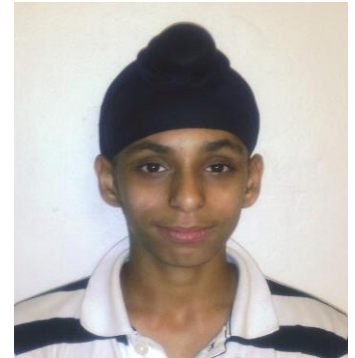
Grand Canyon Zone



Hena Kaur Singh Gr: I



Akarshi Gr: II



Harshpreet Singh: Gr: III



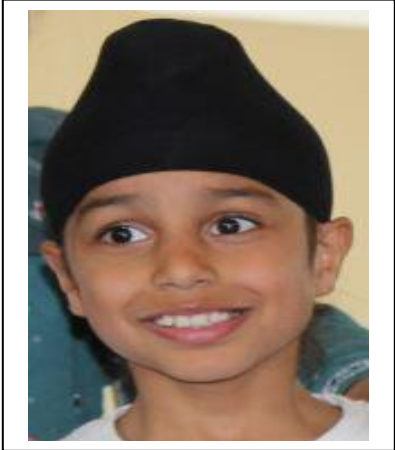
Anhad Singh Gr IV



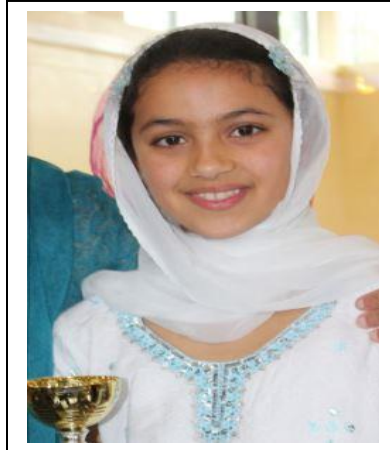
Manmeet Kaur Gr V

Zonal Convener: Jaswant Singh jaswantsachdev@cox.net

London Central



Hushmeet Singh Gr: I



Pavan Kaur Gr: II



Sahiba Kaur Gr: III



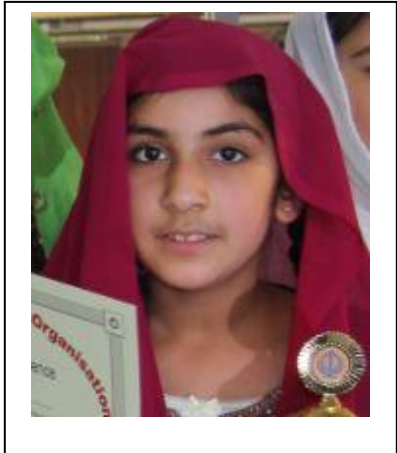
Gurjeet Singh Gr: IV



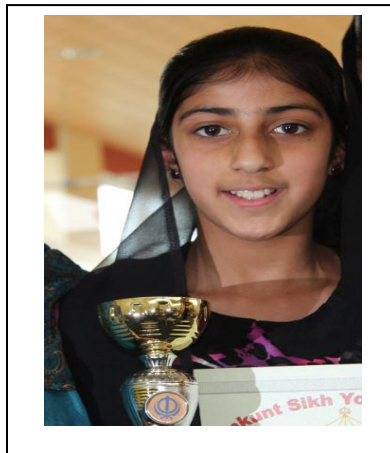
Gurleen Kaur Gr: V

Zonal Convener: Jagtar Singh jthethi@hotmail.co.uk

London Greater



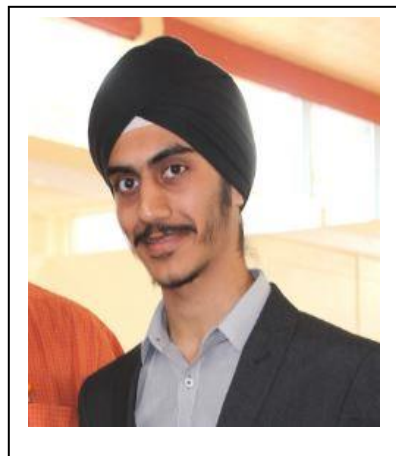
Harleen Kaur Gr: I



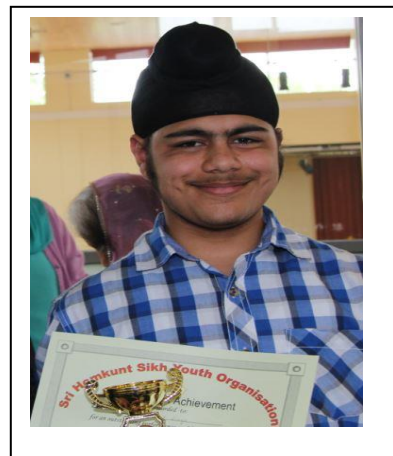
Simran Kaur Gr: II



Guneet Kaur Gr: III



Angad Singh Gr: IV



Avneet Singh Gr: V

Zonal Convener: Mandeep Kaur mandeepksidhu@hotmail.com

London- Guru Nanak



Manshpreet Kaur Gr: I



Jasinder Singh Gr: II



Muscan Kaur Gr: III



Kawalnain Kaur Gr: IV



Mandeep Kaur Gr: V

Zonal Convener : Jasleen Kaur hampardesi@yahoo.co.uk

London Mata Khiwi



Arshleen Kaur Gr: I



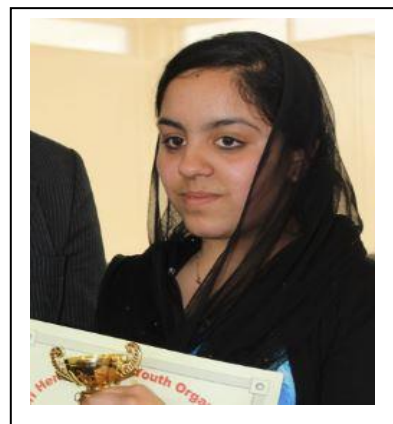
Deneet Kaur Gr: II



Balraj Singh Gr: III



Amandil Kaur Gr: IV



Jasmeen Kaur Gr: V

Zonal Convener : Nirmaljit Kaur nirmaljitkaur@hotmail.com

London West



Ayshmit Singh Gr: I



Simran Kaur Gr: II



Kajol Kaur Gr: III



Ivneet Singh Gr: IV



Gurleen Kaur Gr: V

Zonal Convener : Sukhraj Kiran Kaur sukhrajkirankaur@hotmail.co.uk

Sun Belt



Jia Kaur Gr: I



Raj Veer Singh Gr: II



Jai Paul Singh Gr: III



Mayank Singh Gr: III



Jasleen Kaur Gr: IV



Pranati Kaur Gr: V

Zonal Convener : Dawinder Singh dawinder.khehra@genon.com

Tri State



Sukhpreet Kaur Gr: I



Karanpreet Singh Gr: II



Amitoj Kaur Gr: III



Komal Preet Kaur Gr: IV

Zonal Convener : Harkishan Singh hsjassal@optonline.net

2013
International
Symposium
Keertan Darbar
Participants &
Judges

Bibi Amarjit Kaur – Kirtan Judge



Bibi Amarjit Kaur came to USA as a preacher to teach American Sikhs Gurbani Kirtan. Traveled all over America performed Gurbani Kirtan in *nirdharet raagas*. She is masters in economics and double masters in Indian classical music. Visharad degree from Delhi Gharana. She retired from the World Bank after working for 27 years.

Amarjit Kaur learned classical Kirtan from s Rattan Singh Tansen ji and renowned famous Raggi Bhai Sahib Santa Singh ji. Gurmat Sangeet academy from Boston honored her with life time achievement gold plate for keeping legacy of Bhai Sahib Santa singh ji. Amarjit Kaur was awarded gold medal in the classical Kirtan competition from Bangla Sahib Gurdwara. She participated and won several defense ministry classical music competitions. She was honored many times for being a judge by several organizations including Sri Hemkunt Foundation.



Dr. Manpreet Singh- Keertan Judge



Dr. Manpreet Singh MA (gurmat Sangeet) Gold Medalist, PHD (Classical-Music) former Lecturer at Department of Gurmat Sangeet Punjabi University Patiala. Dr. Manpreet Singh is approved Artist of ICCR (Indian Council of Cultural - Relations.) Performed at various Universities across the World, he is 2-Times Gold-Medalist in Semi Classical and light Vocal in national Youth festivals in India. Performs Gurmat based Kirtan at all Tri-state Gurdwaras.

Dr. Manpreet Singh has been serving at Eastern HKF Kirtan Darbars as a Judge for past 5 years and also at Southern Regional level Kirtan Darbar of 2013. Sikh community is very pleased to have such a humble Sewadar being always ready to extend helping hand to anyone, who seeks knowledge or advice regarding Gurmat-Sangeet.

Gurleen Kaur- Keertan Judge



Dr. Janice Protopapas (aka Gurleen Kaur) specializes in research and study of Gurmat Sangeet from both theoretical and practical perspectives. As a researcher, scholar and practitioner, she writes about the sonic experience of gurmat sangeet from the fields of rural Punjab to elaborate inner sanctum of Harimandir in her she recently published book: Sikh Shabad Kirtan: Musicology of Sacred Memory (publisher: Punjabi

University). This 2013 publication is a must for anyone seriously interested in the rich and complex sacred music tradition and will be available at the competition. She holds a doctorate in ethnomusicology from University of Maryland along with many years of research and study in Indian classical music and Sanskrit studies from Varanasi, India. A disciple of the late Shrimati Mangala Tiwari (Ghalior Gharana) and Dr. Gurnam Singh (Gurmat Sangeet), she teaches Gurmat Sangeet as both a musical and spiritual discipline instilling in the students the need for deep study of the shabad as both an interpersonal, method of self-discovery.

Eastern Zone- Keertan Darbar

Raag Guiri . 1st Pos Group 1A



(Front row) Manmeet K Singh, Divjot Singh, Saminder Singh, (back row) Kirath Kaur, Tamun Puneet Kaur

Raag Guiri Group 1B



Preet singh, Achint Kaur, Manjot singh, Maheep singh, and Vismaad Kaur.

Eastern Zone- Keertan Darbar

Raag Gujree Second Pos Gr I



(Front row) Harjaap Singh, Iksha Kaur, Tarun Pal Singh (back row) Navpreet Kaur and Navneet Kaur.

Raag Maajh Gr II First Pos.



Indervir Singh, Arvinder Singh, Jaskirat Singh, and Manpreet Singh

Eastern Zone- Keertan Darbar

Raag Majh Group II 2nd Pos



Mankaran Singh, Mansimran Kaur, Rasleen Kaur, Amanpreet Kaur and Udampreet Singh

Raag Maal Gaura Group III 1st Pos



Varinder Singh, Jaskirat Singh, Jojhar Singh, Gundeep Singh, and Jagdeep Singh.

Southern Zone- Keertan Darbar

Raj Karega Khalsa - Raag Gujri (Group 1)



KamalNain Kaur, Gurleen Kaur, Harlene Kaur, Jesraj Singh and Noorpreet Kaur

Akal Purakh Ki Fauj - Raag Maajh (Group II)



Sarabnidhan Singh, Dilnoor Kaur, HarNaina Kaur, KamalNain Kaur, and SimarRaj Singh

Southern Zone- Keertan Darbar

Akhand Kirtani Jatha - Raag Maajh (Group II)



Muskaan Kaur, Naveen Kaur, Amol Kaur, Japreena Kaur and Naunihal Singh

Guru Pyare Jatha:- Raag Maajh (Group II)



Pranati Kaur, Harleen Kaur and Jasmine Kaur, and Mayank Singh

Southern Zone- Keertan Darbar

Singh Sabha Jatha - Raag Maleegourahaa



Mandeep Kaur, Taranjeet Singh and Harjeet Kaur



Western Zone- Keertan Darbar

Group I Jatha 1



Harleen Kaur, Jasmine Kaur, Ahdeesh Kaur, Harsimran Kaur and Sukhman Singh

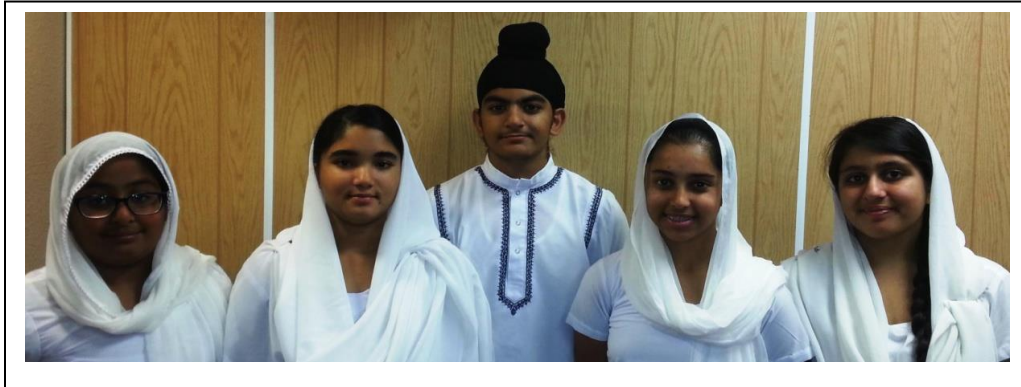
Group I Jatha 2



Gursewak Singh, Arjan Singh, Jashan Singh, Jujhar Singh and Gursimran Singh

Western Zone- Keertan Darbar

Group 1 Jatha 3



Divneet Kaur, Kuljit Kaur, Navkaran Singh, Amarpreet Kaur and Muskan Kaur

Group II Jatha 1



.Gurmehar Singh, Chandanjeet Singh, Manjeev Singh, Amitoj Singh and Amanjeet Singh

Group II Jatha 2



Tarun Singh, Bhavkaran Kaur, Harkiren Kaur, Rajul Singh and Sukhman Singh

*With best compliments to
Sri Hemkunt Foundation and all the participants*



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Best Wishes and Congratulations to All the participants from :

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**WITH BEST COMPLIMENTS TO SRI HEMKUNT FOUNDATION
&
ALL THE PARTICIPANTS FOR
THEIR EFFORT TO PRESERVE
OUR CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS HERITAGE**

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From Editor's desk. . . .

Two years back, I was asked to be a judge at the Sri Hemkunt Center level competition. Just bunch of books were given to me to read. As I was reading those, I realized that was how my childhood had started and felt strong binding with it. During the competition, I recognized that how much these children had invested in preparing their speeches and what it meant to them. Their first performance of public speaking was much better than my first lecture as assistant professor at the university. Evaluating their presentation was much more difficult than grading the master level students.

This great experience motivated me to get closely associated with the activities of Sri Hemkunt Foundation. I got myself intently involved, when I learnt that 25th International symposium will be hosted by US Capital Zone. Satinder Kaur, convener of the program got me associated with all major activities. The Sewa of bringing out a commemorative issue of the magazine got into my plate without having any past experience of doing similar work. The strong support of Core committee members namely Dr Kiran Kaur, Dr Sheena Kaur, Saroj Kaur and the past host of 2012 Raman Kaur was very encouraging. I am indebted to Surinder Pal Singh, Public Relations Officer of SFV Gurdwara Sahib, for his help in the cover design, creating web site and contributing the valuable article

Working with Hemkunt Management, judges and zonal conveners was a roller coaster experience. At times, I received information and material, when I was in planning phase and at times I was still chasing for information after the deadlines. On the whole I am thankful to all of them, the authors of the articles the zonal conveners and sponsors for their contribution.

In spite of all the efforts, I am sure you will find several shortcomings. I hope you will forgive me for these as being only an inexperienced sewadar and join me in praying to Akaal Purkh for giving us strength and wisdom so that we can continue our work for the benefit of our next generation and great Sikh traditions.

*Randhir Singh
Virginia, July 2013*

OUR SACRED 5 TAKHATS

