

# QUADRICENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS OF THE COMPILATION OF THE AAD GURU GRANTH SAHIB

## FOURTH INTERNATIONAL IUS SEMINAR 2003 *PHILOSOPHY AND TEACHING OF AAD GURU GRANTH SAHIB* Saturday, September 18, 2004

### PREAMBLE

**T**he Fourth International IUS Seminar was the final seminar in the series of celebration of 'Quadricentennial of Compilation and Installation (*Parkash Divas*) of the Aad Guru Granth Sahib'. It was one of the recognized conferences by the Shiromani Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar for the celebration of Quadricentennial of compilation and Installation (*Parkash Divas*) of the Aad Guru Granth Sahib. The seminar was held in collaboration with the North America Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Surrey, BC; Academy Of Guru Granth Studies, Arlington, Taxes; and Sikh Virsa, Calgary, Alberta on September 18, 2004 in Amethyste Hall of Radisson Hotel Laval, 2900 boul le Carrefour, Laval, Quebec.

Before the seminar was declared open, a Sabd, *Vidyia vichai tan parupkaari...*, was recited by Bhai Satnam Singh and his associate. It was arranged by Mr Prithipal Singh Saluja, President of Gurdwara Sahib Quebec, Montreal.

Bibi (Mrs) Kiranjot Kaur, Executive Member of Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC), Amritsar and the Official Representative of the SGPC, was Guest of Honor for the seminar. Bibi Kiranjot Kaur declared the Seminar Open for deliberation on the '**Philosophy and Teachings of the Aad Guru Granth Sahib**'. Thereafter, Prof Devinder Singh Chahal, President of the IUS, awarded an IUS 'Plaque of Honor' to her. (See pictures at pp 40-41.)

During this seminar the scholars from India, USA and Canada presented their research papers and discussed various topics on the philosophy and teachings of the AGGS. During the first session, Chaired by Dr Jit Singh Chandan, New York, USA Dr Dharam Singh, PhD, Professor in Department of Encyclopedia of Sikhism,

Punjabi University, Patiala presented his paper on Guru Granth Sahib and the Sikh World-view. Dr Avtar Singh Dhaliwal, MD from Johnson City, Tennessee, USA presented his paper on Doctrine of Soul in Gurbani. Prof Devinder Singh Chahal, PhD, IUS discussed about Universal Acceptability of Nanakian Philosophy. Dr Jodh Singh, MD from New York, USA talked about Ethics in Sikhism.

During the Second Session, Chaired by Dr Surinder Singh Sidhu, MD, Brampton, Ontario, Dr Parminder Singh Chahal, PhD, IUS presented the Contributions of the Institute for Understanding Sikhism. Thereafter, Dr Parminder Singh Chahal requested Bibi Kiranjot Kaur to release the book, **SABD GURU TO GRANTH GURU – An In-depth Study**, of Prof Devinder Singh Chahal to Dr Harjit Singh Bhabra, President of Canadian Sikh Council. Dr Bhabra thanked Bibi Kiranjot Kaur and appreciated the contributions of Prof Chahal. This book deals with the intrinsic values of 'Sabd', 'Guru', and 'Sabd Guru' and a brief history of transformation of 'Sabd Guru' to 'Granth Guru'. (See pictures at pp 40-41.)

Then Mr Mohinder Singh Jheeta presented the Achievements of Prof Devinder Singh Chahal, President of IUS and Editor-in-Chief of Understanding Sikhism – The Research Journal. He requested Bibi Kiranjot Kaur, Representative of SGPC to present a Plaque of Honor to Prof Chahal for his Contributions\* in Sikh Journalism, Gurbani and Sikhism. The contributions\* of Prof Chahal and overall good work done by the IUS were appreciated by Bibi Kiranjot Kaur. (\*See contributions at page 80.)

During the second part of the Second Session Dr Jit Singh Chandan, New York, USA presented his paper

on Ego. It was followed by next three papers about Akhand Paths, a very common practice in many Gurdwaras: Mr Harcharan Singh, Editor, **Sikh Virsa**, Calgary, Canada discussed Is Akhand Path a Devotion or Ritualism? Mr Gurdev Singh Sangha discussed Recitation of Gurbani. Dr Harbans Lal, Taxes, USA discussed Guru Granth Worship – The Sikh Way. All these papers were stressing upon the importance of understanding of Gurbani and put the teachings in practice rather than mere repetition of whole AGGS within specific time and in various combinations with other Bani. There was a great concern of the speakers and the audience to understand if there were any spiritual or secular benefits of mere recitation of the AGGS within specific time without listening and understanding the teaching and philosophy enshrined in the AGGS. (See Resolution at page 76.)

During the Third Session, chaired by Mr Abnash Singh, IUS, Mr Nirmal Singh Nilvi, Texas, USA discussed Multiple Interpretations of Gurbani. Col Perminder Singh Randhawa, Chandigarh, India explained the Dissemination of Message of the Aad Guru Granth Sahib Via Electronic Media. Mr Gurcharan Singh Bhatia, IUS, Montreal discussed his paper on a very important question to the Sikhs, Are the Sikhs following the Message of Guru Nanak?

Every year the IUS honors personalities and dignitaries, irrespective of their sex, color and religion, who have done some outstanding work for Sikhism and Multiculturalism in Canada. During the first Seminar Hon Mr Baljit Singh Chadha, PC for his contributions to support Education in general and Sikhism in particular and Multiculturalism; during the second Seminar S Amar Singh Chhatwal, the Editor of *Sikh Courier*, UK for Journalism in Sikhism; and during the third Seminar Dr Kulbir Singh Thind for development of Punjabi Font and preparation of CD of the Aad Guru Granth Sahib, were honored by the IUS.

The fourth Seminar is the biggest and final seminar in this series of celebration of Quadricentennial of Compilation and Installation of the Aad Guru Granth Sahib; therefore, Bibi Kiranjot Kaur, Member of the SGPC and Official Representative of SGPC, Amritsar honored the following dignitaries at the Harmony Dinner at Radisson Hotel Laval. The dinner was sponsored by Mr Jaswinder Singh Rana, SGR Industries (Bleaching), Montreal North:

**1. Honorable Ms Sheila Copps, Ex-Deputy Prime Minister and Ex-Heritage Minister of Canada**, was awarded a gold plated Plaque of Honor and Mr Nachhattar Singh Sangha, then President of the Abbotsford Gurdwara and Mr Gurnam Singh Sanghera, representative of the team were honored

with *Saropa* from SGPC and Plaque of Honor from IUS for declaration of Abbotsford Gurdwara in BC as the National Heritage of Canada. The other two members of this team, Mr Balwant Singh Gill, President of Guru Nanak Gurdwara, Surrey, BC and Mr Jarnail Singh Bandhal, President of Khalsa Diwan Society Gurdwara at Ross Street, Vancouver were honored by the President of IUS at a conferences held in Surrey and Squamish, BC, respectively on September 9 and 11.

- 2. Hon Mr Michel Bissonnet, President (Speaker) of the National Assembly of Quebec, Canada** was honored with gold plated Plaque of Honor from SGPC for Recognition of Quebec Sikh Community and the 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Compilation of the Guru Granth Sahib
- 3. Mr Gerald Tremblay**, Mayor, City of Montreal and **Mr Pierre Bourque**, Opposition Leader, City of Montreal were awarded with gold plated Plaques of Honor from SGPC for Recognition of Montreal Sikh Community and the 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Compilation of the Guru Granth Sahib. (The Plaque of Honor of Mr Gerald Tremblay was received by his brother since he could not make it.)
- 4. Mr Jaswinder Singh Rana, Prof Pavittar Singh Bhandhari, and Mr Khetharpal** were honored with Plaque of Honor from SGPC and Plaque of Honor of IUS for their contributions in this respect.
- 5. Finally Prof Devinder Singh Chahal**, President of IUS was presented for his contributions with the gold plated Plaque of Honor from SGPC. (See pictures at pp 40-41.)
- 6. All Speakers**, who presented their research papers, were honored with IUS Plaque of Honor by Bibi Kiranjot Kaur at the conclusion of the Day-long Seminar.

**Proceedings:** All papers presented at the seminar have been reproduced here. Besides an article on the compilation of Aad Guru Granth Sahib has been added. This article on the AGGS is followed by articles on the recitation of the AGGS, then articles on some specific topics. Finally, there is a ‘Mini Debate on Soul’, which is initiated by the article by Dr Avtar Singh Dhaliwal followed by invited articles on the same topic.

**Declaration:** *The readers may find that interpretation of even the same verse from the AGGS by an author is different than that of the others. Since there is no unanimity on interpretations of some verses of the AGGS amongst the Sikh and non-Sikh scholars, therefore, the IUS neither approves nor disapproves any interpretation of any author.*

**Devinder Singh Chahal**  
Editor