

# GURU NANAK, HIS PHILOSOPHY AND MODERN SOCIETY

EDITORIAL

## Prof Devinder Singh Chahal Editor

The Birthday (*Gurpurab*) of Guru Nanak was recently celebrated on November 6, 2014 and then on the following Sunday on 9<sup>th</sup> throughout the world. In most of the Gurdwaras it was celebrated by reciting some *Pouris* from *Vaaran* of Bhai Gurdas (related to Guru Nanak's life); social and religious atmosphere at the time of Guru Nanak's birth; some *Kavtas* (poems) were recited about the life of Guru Nanak and some short articles appeared in various newspapers, journals and on various Sikh Internets Web sites.

However, the *Institute for Understanding Sikhism* (IUS) celebrated Birthday of Guru Nanak by holding a **SEMINAR:**

**Guru Nanak, His philosophy and Modern Society**, on November 22, 2014 at Library, Gurdwara Sahib Greater Montreal, DDO, Montreal, Canada.

A new booklet, **NANAK – THE GURU: FOUNDER OF SIKHI(SM)**, by Prof DS Chahal, Dr Kulbir Singh Thind, Dr Avtar Singh Dhaliwal, Edited by Jesse Schell, New Zealand was released by Dr Devinder Pal Singh, Center for Understanding Sikhism. Its copies were distribution free at that seminar. This is available as an e-Booklet at the Web site of the IUS-Understanding Sikhism, The Research Journal  
[www.iuscanada.com](http://www.iuscanada.com)

And the site for the e-Booklet: **NANAK – THE GURU: FOUNDER OF SIKHI(SM)** is as follows:

[http://www.iuscanada.com/books/2015/ebook\\_Nanak\\_The%20Guru\\_The\\_Founder\\_of\\_Sikhism.pdf](http://www.iuscanada.com/books/2015/ebook_Nanak_The%20Guru_The_Founder_of_Sikhism.pdf)

**Dr Harjit Singh Bhabra**, Professor and Dean, Concordia University, Montreal and Vice-President of the IUS welcome the speakers and the participants and enlightened them about the contributions of Guru Nanak applicable to the modern society.

**S. Manjit Singh**, McGill University, President, Gurdwara Sahib Greater Montreal presented a paper on *Guru Nanak changed the social and religious face of India*.

**S. Inderjit Singh**, Kathakaar, Khalsa Darbar, Lasal, Quebec presented a paper on *Wonders of Guru Nanak's Bani and Science*.

**Prof Devinder Singh Chahal**, IUS presented his paper on *Nanak – The Guru and his Philosophy rarely preached and taught in Gurdwaras*.

While presenting the above paper Prof Chahal mentioned that Nanak was not only the 'Guru' but was also a great 'Philosopher'. Immediately after his presentation hot discussion started and some were strongly opposing to call Nanak as a 'Philosopher'. In fact even

the word '*philosophy*' is not well accepted among many Sikh theologians. There was also great opposition against his use of this word, *philosophy*, on *Gurmat Learning Zone Discussion Group*. It took more than a year that by and by this word was accepted. However, Guru Nanak as a 'Philosopher' is still not acceptable to many Sikh theologians although Guru Nanak has promulgated a philosophy, which can be easily accepted by the whole humanity if explained logically and scientifically. Therefore, he has decided to write a new paper to describe NANAK not only as a PHILOSOPHER but as NATURAL PHILOSOPHER also. This paper will appear in later issues of the *Understanding Sikhism: The Research Journal*.

**Finally the invited paper** on *Kudrat (Nature) in Guru Nanak's Holistic Vision* was presented by **Dr Devinder Pal Singh**, Physicist, Center for Understanding Sikhism, Mississauga,

### INVITED PAPERS

Some invited papers are also being presented in this issue, which are directly or indirectly related to the *Guru Nanak's philosophy and Modern Society*.

The papers of **Dr Devinder Pal Singh**, that of **S Inder Singh** and the invited paper, *Mode of Creation of the Universe in the Light of Gurbani*, of **S Manjit**

**Singh**, Candidate for PhD and Assistant Professor make us to think:

Did the Universe came into being through CREATION or EVOLUTION? All the three papers are leading us to the conclusion that according Gurbani the Universe and living beings were created by God. Although there is a conflict between scientists supporting EVOLUTION and theologians of other religions, especially, Christian scientists and Christian theologians favour EVOLUTION. Whereas critical study of Bani of Guru Nanak appears to support CREATION. Nevertheless, in-depth study on this topic is needed to discover the truth.

There are two more invited papers which need serious study to work out the proper meanings of Gurbani words, *Gurmukh – Manmukh* and *Sodhey*.

**Dr Baldev Singh**, Retired Professor of Economics and Dean, Punjabi University is discussing the set of attributes of a *Gurmukh* – a symbol of positive externality - and that of its counterpart, a *Manmukh* – a symbol of negative externality in his paper, *Social Externalities and Sikhism: A View from the Prism of Aad Guru Granth Sahib*.

**S Paramjit Singh** from Chandigarh discusses the *Misinterpretation of the Word ਸੋਢੈ (soDhay) in Gurbani*. He is of the opinion that there has been no uniformity in the interpretation of the word ਸੋਢੈ (*soDhay*). He has tried to explain the right interpretation of this word in his lengthy paper. The irony is that the author decided to withdraw this paper at the eleventh hour of being

posted online. In spite of the fact that his paper was prepared under the guidance of the Editor who had edited it many times to make it fit for its publication in the journal.

Finally, **Bimlesh Kumar Gupta**, Associate Professor and Head of the Punjabi Department, Kamla Lohtia Sanatan Dharam College, Ludhiana discusses the *Role of Education in Social Change with Respect to Sikhism*. The basic objective of his research study is to make people aware of the role of education in order to enhance the social and religious values of the people.

