

# MARITIME SIKHS

JULY 2025 Edition



*A Quarterly News Magazine  
of Maritime Sikh Society, Halifax*



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## MEMORABLE MOMENTS

MOMENTS OF  
SANGAT,  
SEVA,  
AND SPIRIT



## KHALSA SAJNA DIWAS CELEBRATIONS APRIL 2025

**KHALSA SAJNA**, THE MOMENTOUS INITIATION DAY OF THE KHALSA ORDER, WAS COMMEMORATED AT THE GURDWARA MARITIME SIKH SOCIETY WITH PROFOUND REVERENCE AND DEVOTION ON APRIL 13 AND 14. THIS OCCASION HERALDS THE SIKH HERITAGE MONTH IN CANADA, A TIME DEDICATED TO RECOGNIZING AND CELEBRATING THE RICH TAPESTRY OF SIKH HISTORY, CULTURE, AND THE INVALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS OF SIKH CANADIANS ACROSS VARIOUS FACETS OF CANADIAN SOCIETY. AT THE GURDWARA MARITIME SIKH SOCIETY, THIS TWO-DAY EVENT IS HELD ANNUALLY, FEATURING A VIBRANT VAISAKHI FAIR, DIWAN, COMPLIMENTARY FOOD STALLS, SIKH CULTURAL PRESENTATIONS, THE NISHAN SAHIB CHOLA CEREMONY, AND A MYRIAD OF OTHER PROGRAMS CONDUCTED IN AN EXUBERANTLY COLORFUL MANNER. SIKHS FROM ACROSS THE PROVINCE PARTICIPATED IN SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS WERE INSTITUTED TO FACILITATE THE TRANSPORTATION OF ATTENDEES, ALONGSIDE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT AND LANGAR SEWA INITIATIVES ORCHESTRATED BY COUNTLESS DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS.



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## MEMORABLE MOMENTS

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## SIKH SAPLINGS ACADEMY

**SIKH SAPLINGS ACADEMY WAS ESTABLISHED IN JANUARY 2023**, COMMENCING WITH 35 STUDENTS AND 6 VOLUNTEER EDUCATORS. ITS MISSION IS TO SERVE AS A CULTURAL CONDUIT, ASSISTING CHILDREN IN OUR COMMUNITY IN REMAINING STEADFAST IN SIKH VALUES AND TRADITIONS WHILE SEAMLESSLY INTEGRATING INTO THE RICH TAPESTRY OF NOVA SCOTIA'S DIVERSE ENVIRONMENT.

WE EMPLOY AN ARRAY OF ENGAGING AND MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES TO FOSTER OUR STUDENTS' DEVELOPMENT. UNDER THE ASTUTE LEADERSHIP OF THE VISIONARY TEAM FROM THE MARITIME SIKH SOCIETY, THE ACADEMY EMBARKED ON A NEW PHASE OF GROWTH ON APRIL 14, 2024. TODAY, WE TAKE PRIDE IN ENROLLING 75 STUDENTS.

IN ADDITION TO GURMAT AND KIRTAN, THE ACADEMY PROVIDES ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION IN CORE SUBJECTS SUCH AS ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE, AND SOCIAL STUDIES. THESE DISCIPLINES ARE IMPARTED BY CERTIFIED NOVA SCOTIAN EDUCATORS, THEREBY ASSISTING IMMIGRANT STUDENTS IN ALIGNING WITH LOCAL CURRICULUM STANDARDS AND THRIVING IN MAINSTREAM EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS. OUR APPROACH NOT ONLY REINFORCES PRIOR KNOWLEDGE BUT ALSO INTRODUCES INNOVATIVE LEARNING METHODOLOGIES.

THIS INITIATIVE EXTENDS ITS SUPPORT TO PARENTS BY OFFERING INSIGHTS INTO NOVA SCOTIA'S EDUCATIONAL FRAMEWORK, THEREBY FOSTERING A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR CHILDREN'S ACADEMIC MILIEU. WE ARE PARTICULARLY PROUD TO IMPART GATKA, THE TRADITIONAL SIKH MARTIAL ART, WHICH STUDENTS RELISH WHILE ACQUIRING VALUABLE SELF-DEFENSE SKILLS.

PRINCIPAL DR. ANUROOP KAUR, ALONGSIDE TEN DEDICATED VOLUNTEER EDUCATORS, IS COMMITTED TO INSTILLING ROBUST MORAL VALUES GROUNDED IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF NAAM JAPO, KIRAT KARO TE VAND CHAKKO THROUGH BOTH CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION AND EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING. THESE EXPERIENCES ENCOMPASS LANGAR SEWA IN THE LANGAR HALL, PAATH SEWA, AND KIRTAN SEWA IN THE MAIN DIWAN HALL OF THE GURDWARA SAHIB. FURTHERMORE, WE ORGANIZE MIRI-PIRI CAMPS AND SAFAR-E-SHAHADAT CAMPS FOR THE STUDENTS, WHO ALSO PARTAKE IN GURPURAB CELEBRATIONS.

THIS INITIATIVE BY THE MARITIME SIKH SOCIETY HAS BEEN ENTHUSIASTICALLY EMBRACED BY THE WIDER COMMUNITY. FAMILIES FEEL A PROFOUND SENSE OF CONFIDENCE AND REASSURANCE IN ENTRUSTING THEIR CHILDREN TO A SANCTUARY WHERE EDUCATION IS INTRICATELY WOVEN WITH CULTURAL VALUES AND COMMUNITY SERVICE.



## MEMORABLE MOMENTS

MOMENTS OF SANGAT, SEVA, AND SPIRIT



## CRISIS INTERVENTION PROGRAM

ON APRIL 18, THE GURDWARA SAHIB HOSTED A FIRST OF ITS KIND EVENT, WHERE FIVE GUEST SPEAKERS TOOK THE STAGE AND SPOKE ABOUT VARIOUS TOPICS AIMED AT IMMIGRANTS, AND THE CHALLENGES THEY FACE IN A NEW HOME. THE THEME OF THE EVENT WAS CRISIS INTERVENTION FOR NEWCOMERS AND INVITATIONS WERE SENT TO THE ENTIRE IMMIGRANT COMMUNITY IN THE HRM AREA.

THE EVENING WAS OPENED BY LONG TIME MSS SENIOR, DR. S.S. SODHI, CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST, WHO SPOKE ABOUT THE NEED FOR CRISIS INTERVENTION WITHIN THE SIKH AND LARGER IMMIGRANT COMMUNITY.

THE GUEST SPEAKERS, PROFESSIONALS IN THEIR FIELDS, COVERED 5 MAIN AREAS INCLUDING

- **HEALTHCARE:** DR. SANTOKH SINGH DHILLON - PEDIATRIC CARDIOLOGY, IWK HEALTH CENTER,
- **MENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL WORK:** AYESHAH ALI - SOCIAL WORK THERAPY,
- **FINANCIAL:** PAVNEET SINGH, MEMBER MSS,
- **HUMAN RIGHTS:** VISHAL BHARDWAJ, N.S. HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION RETIRED, AND
- **LAW:** MADELEINE GOLDSMITH, DIVERSITY OFFICER HRM POLICE ALONG WITH 4 SIKH POLICE OFFICERS).

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE WERE SEVERAL REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE MUNICIPALITY (SHAHAB MATAR - IMMIGRANT SERVICES ADVISOR, HRM DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION), AND A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE HALIFAX IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP, WHO PROVIDED HANDOUTS, AND WERE EAGER TO COLLABORATE WITH THE SIKH COMMUNITY GOING FORWARD. THIS LED TO A MEETING HELD AT A LATER DATE WITH THE MUNICIPALITY, ATTENDED BY MSS BOARD CHAIR SATNAM SINGH RANDHAWA, MSS SECRETARY BALBIR SINGH, AND MSS CRISIS INTERVENTION COORDINATOR HARKIRAN KAUR.

THE CREATION OF A CRISIS INTERVENTION PROGRAM WAS INSPIRED BY SEVERAL TRAGIC EVENTS OVER THE LAST YEAR WHERE YOUNG MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY LOST THEIR LIVES, WHILE OTHERS ENCOUNTERED MEDICAL, LEGAL, OR FINANCIAL HARDSHIPS AND APPROACHED THE GURDWARA FOR HELP.

THE LECTURE EVENING FOR NEWCOMERS SAW AN EXCESS OF 80 ATTENDEES, AND WAS PART OF A LARGER PROGRAM INITIATED TO BOTH DEAL WITH FUTURE CRISIS EVENTS AS THEY ARISE WITHIN THE COMMUNITY, AND TO PREVENT HEARTBREAKING SITUATIONS FROM HAPPENING. DUE TO ITS SUCCESS, THE LECTURE EVENING FOR NEWCOMERS HAS INSPIRED PLANS FOR SIMILAR ENGAGING EVENTS LATER IN THE YEAR.



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## MEMORABLE MOMENTS

MOMENTS OF SANGAT, SEVA, AND SPIRIT



## LANGAR FOR HUNGER

A COMMUNITY SERVICE INITIATIVE OF MARITIME SIKH SOCIETY FOR FOOD DELIVERY TO SHELTER HOMES. EVERY SATURDAY, THE MARITIME SIKH SOCIETY PROUDLY UNDERTAKES A COMPASSIONATE INITIATIVE TO PROVIDE FRESH, NUTRITIOUS MEALS TO SHELTER HOMES THROUGHOUT THE COMMUNITY. THIS ENDURING ENDEAVOR EPITOMIZES THE SOCIETY'S PROFOUND COMMITMENT TO SEVA (SELFLESS SERVICE), A FUNDAMENTAL TENET DEEPLY EMBEDDED IN SIKH TRADITION.

VOLUNTEERS FROM THE SOCIETY, UNDER THE ASTUTE GUIDANCE OF EXECUTIVE MEMBER GAGANPREET SINGH, CONVENE EACH WEEK TO ASSIDUOUSLY PREPARE, PACKAGE, AND PERSONALLY DELIVER NOURISHING MEALS TO INDIVIDUALS CONTENDING WITH HOMELESSNESS OR ADVERSITY. THEIR PRESENCE NOT ONLY PROVIDES SUSTENANCE BUT ALSO REINSTATES DIGNITY, COMPASSION, AND A PROFOUND SENSE OF CONNECTION TO THOSE FREQUENTLY MARGINALIZED BY SOCIETY.

THIS WEEKLY SERVICE HAS EVOLVED INTO A LIFELINE FOR MANY AND STANDS AS A TESTAMENT TO THE SOCIETY'S UNWAVERING DEDICATION TO UPLIFTING VULNERABLE POPULATIONS. THROUGH STEADFAST EFFORT AND HEARTFELT GENEROSITY, THE MARITIME SIKH SOCIETY CONTINUES TO FORTIFY THE BONDS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY, REMINDING EVERYONE THAT KINDNESS AND HUMANITY SHOULD NEVER TAKE A DAY OFF. FURTHERMORE, LANGAR IS GENEROUSLY PROVIDED TO DALHOUSIE MULTI FAITH SERVICES FOR MONDAY NIGHT MEAL WHENEVER REQUESTED.



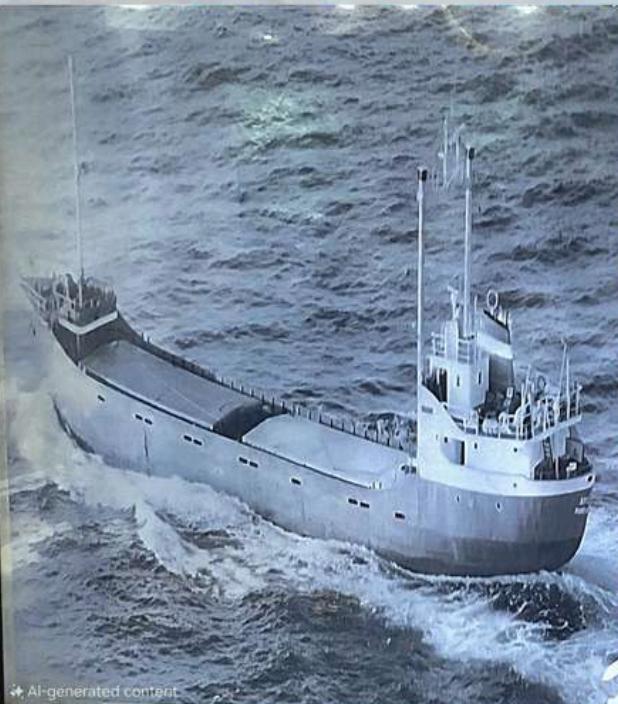
## UNEARTHING STORIES FROM OUR SOCIETY'S PAST

### REFUGEES OF '87: A TALE OF RESILIENCE AND DETERMINATION

THIS IS AN EPIC ODYSSEY OF A GROUP OF DESPERATE SOULS WHO, IN CONFRONTING RELENTLESS ADVERSITIES, WERE RESOLUTELY COMMITTED TO REACHING CANADA, A BASTION OF OPPORTUNITY AND FREEDOM. ON JULY 12TH, 1987, A CARGO SHIP BEARING 174 PASSENGERS MADE LANDFALL ON THE SHORES OF NOVA SCOTIA, TRANSPORTING SIKHS FROM INDIA. THESE INDIVIDUALS HAD EMBARKED FROM ROTTERDAM, COMMENCING A VOYAGE THAT WOULD IRREVOCABLY ALTER THEIR LIVES.

THIS MOMENTOUS EVENT SIGNIFIED A PIVOTAL SHIFT IN CANADIAN IMMIGRATION POLICY AND ILLUMINATED THE DIRE CIRCUMSTANCES FACED BY SIKHS IN INDIA UNDER A REPRESSIVE REGIME. THE MAJORITY OF THE PASSENGERS WERE SIKHS FLEEING INDIA DUE TO THE POLITICAL TURMOIL OF THE LATE 1970S AND EARLY 1980S, CULMINATING IN OPERATION BLUE STAR. THE INDIAN ARMY'S ASSAULT ON THE GOLDEN TEMPLE AND OTHER GURDWARAS RESULTED IN WIDESPREAD DEVASTATION AND LOSS OF LIFE, INFILCTING DEEP TRAUMA UPON THE SIKH COMMUNITY. FOLLOWING PRIME MINISTER INDIRA GANDHI'S ASSASSINATION BY HER SIKH BODYGUARDS IN 1984, ANTI-SIKH VIOLENCE SURGED, LEADING TO THOUSANDS OF EXTRAJUDICIAL KILLINGS. MANY SIKHS SOUGHT ASYLUM ABROAD TO ESCAPE PERSECUTION. AGAINST THIS BACKDROP, NUMEROUS YOUNG SIKHS FLED TO EUROPE. WHILE THERE, THEY BECAME AWARE OF AN OPPORTUNITY TO TRAVERSE TO CANADA AND MADE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS. ENCOURAGED BY CANADA'S ACCEPTANCE OF TAMIL REFUGEES IN NEWFOUNDLAND IN AUGUST 1986, THEY RESOLVED TO SET SAIL. HOWEVER, DETAILS REGARDING THE VOYAGE WERE SCANT, AND THE PASSENGERS REMAINED OBLIVIOUS TO THE SHIP'S CONDITIONS OR PROVISIONS.





## UNEARTHING STORIES FROM OUR SOCIETY'S PAST (CONT...)

THE VESSEL WAS AN ANTIQUATED CARGO SHIP, AND THE REFUGEES WERE CONFINED TO THE HULL, ENDURING INADEQUATE REST AND SANITATION FACILITIES. THE JOURNEY WAS ARDUOUS, PLAGUED BY TUMULTUOUS ATLANTIC WATERS AND RUST CASCADING FROM THE HULL. PASSENGERS ENGAGED IN CONTINUOUS PRAYER DURING THE 19-DAY ODYSSEY, BESEECHING A SAFE ARRIVAL IN CANADA. WHEN THE SHIP'S ENGINE FAILED, ONE PASSENGER WITH MECHANICAL EXPERTISE SUCCESSFULLY MANAGED TO RESTART IT. AS FOOD SUPPLIES DWINDLED, THE REFUGEES SUBSISTED ON A SINGLE WATER BOTTLE EACH PER DAY FOR THE FINAL FOUR DAYS.

ON JULY 12, 1987, THE SHIP NEARED NOVA SCOTIA, THE ATLANTIC PROVINCE ON THE MIDST DENSE FOG. INSTEAD OF DOCKING, THE REFUGEES WERE INSTRUCTED TO UTILIZE A MARINE EVACUATION SLIDE TO REACH THE SHORE. FORTUNATELY, THE WATERS WERE SHALLOW UPON DISEMBARKING, MITIGATING INJURIES. LOCKING ARMS, THE REFUGEES TRAVERSED THROUGH THE SHALLOW, MUDDY WATERS TO THE LAND. AFTER GATHERING FOR PRAYER AND AWAITING THE CARGO SHIP TO RE-ENTER INTERNATIONAL WATERS AS DIRECTED, THEY VENTURED FURTHER INLAND, ENCOUNTERING A PICKUP TRUCK DRIVER WHO CONFIRMED THEY WERE INDEED IN CANADA. COLD AND FAMISHED, THEY FOLLOWED HIGHWAY 3 TO CHARLESVILLE, ARRIVING AT THE RESIDENCE OF VERNON AND TIM MALONE. THE RCMP AND FIRE DEPARTMENT WERE SUMMONED. DESPITE OFFICIAL ADVISORIES AGAINST INTERACTION, THE MALONES AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY EXTENDED THEIR GENEROSITY, PROVIDING THE REFUGEES WITH THEIR FIRST MEAL IN DAYS—PEANUT BUTTER SANDWICHES. IN A POIGNANT DISPLAY OF HUMANITY, THE RESIDENTS OF CHARLESVILLE EMPTIED THEIR REFRIGERATORS TO ASSIST. THE REFUGEES WERE SUBSEQUENTLY TRANSPORTED TO THE WOODS HARBOUR FIREHALL AND LATER TO A LOCAL MILITARY BASE FOR PROCESSING.

ON RECEIVING THE NEWS, THE MARITIME SIKH SOCIETY IN HALIFAX, UNDER THE ASTUTE AND JUDICIOUS LEADERSHIP OF ITS PRESIDENT, KULVINDER SINGH DHILLON, EXTENDED A HEARTFELT WELCOME TO THEIR SIKH BRETHREN. THE MSS DILIGENTLY MOBILIZED RESOURCES TO CHAMPION THE REFUGEE CAUSE. NOURISHMENT WAS METICULOUSLY PREPARED IN THE GURDWARA LANGAR AND DISTRIBUTED TO THOSE IN NEED. THE MSS GARNERED SUBSTANTIAL SUPPORT FROM SIKHS ACROSS CANADA. THE MSS MEMBERS, SATNAM SINGH RANDHAWA, NARINDER PAL SINGH, PYARA SINGH, GURSHARAN TOOR, JAGPAL SINGH TIWANA, AND OTHER MEMBERS OF OUR SOCIETY WERE NOTABLY PROACTIVE AND FERVENT ADVOCATES FOR THE REFUGEE INITIATIVE, ALSO SERVING AS INTERPRETERS. NARINDER PAL SINGH CULTIVATED A PERSONAL CONNECTION THAT FACILITATED THE RELEASE OF THE FIRST REFUGEE, AMRIK SINGH DHINDSA, FROM DETENTION. DHINDSA WAS SUBSEQUENTLY PROVIDED WITH SHELTER WITHIN THE GURDWARA.

## UNEARTHING STORIES FROM OUR SOCIETY'S PAST (CONT...)

NEWS OF THE REFUGEES' ARRIVAL REVERBERATED ACROSS CANADA, IGNITING A DEBATE REGARDING THEIR FATE. MANY CANADIANS CONTENDED THAT ILLEGAL ENTRANTS SHOULD BE REPATRIATED, FEARING THAT CANADA MIGHT BECOME A SANCTUARY FOR REFUGEES. OTHERS EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT THE VIOLATION OF CANADA'S BORDERS.

NEVERTHELESS, THE CANADIAN SIKH COMMUNITY RALLIED TO SUPPORT THE REFUGEES, ENGAGING LAW FIRMS AND ADVOCATING FOR THEIR RIGHT TO REMAIN. THERE WAS A PALPABLE SENTIMENT TO AVERT A RECURRANCE OF THE GURU NANAK JAHAZ INCIDENT (COMMONLY REFERRED TO AS THE KOMAGATA MARU) OF 1914. THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT'S POSITION WAS IN STARK CONTRAST TO THAT REGARDING THE TAMIL REFUGEES WHO ARRIVED MERELY A YEAR EARLIER, WHEN PM BRIAN MULRONEY'S REMARKS SILENCED HIS CRITICS, STATING, "WE ARE NOT IN THE BUSINESS OF TURNING AWAY REFUGEES." HOWEVER, DURING THIS INCIDENT, THE PRIME MINISTER ORDERED AN EMERGENCY RECALL OF PARLIAMENT TO DELIBERATE ON THE REFUGEES' FATE, EXPRESSING A STRONG INCLINATION TO REPATRIATE THEM. THE WORLD SIKH ORGANIZATION (WSO) ASSUMED A PROMINENT ROLE IN THE SUBSEQUENT PROCEEDINGS. SARDAR GIAN SINGH SANDHU, PRESIDENT OF WSO CANADA, ENGAGED WITH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS TO DEVISE A RESOLUTION FOR THE RELEASE OF THE REFUGEES. WORKING IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE LEGAL REPRESENTATIVES ENGAGED BY THE WORLD SIKH ORGANIZATION (WSO),

THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT MADE A GROUNDBREAKING DECISION TO PERMIT THE REFUGEES TO REMAIN IN CANADA, CONTINGENT UPON THE POSTING OF BONDS FOR EACH INDIVIDUAL. INITIALLY, THE WSO'S LEGAL TEAM PROPOSED A COLLECTIVE BOND OF \$600,000 FOR ALL REFUGEES, A PROPOSITION THAT WAS ULTIMATELY DECLINED. INSTEAD, INDIVIDUAL BONDS WERE ESTABLISHED BASED ON ASSESSED RISK LEVELS. THIS DECISION WAS NOTABLY INFLUENCED BY THE PRIOR DEPORTATION OF ONE OF THE REFUGEES FROM CANADA. DESPITE HAVING NO PRIOR CONNECTIONS TO THE REFUGEES, COMMUNITY MEMBERS ALTRUISTICALLY POSTED BONDS FOR ALL 174 INDIVIDUALS. THE CUMULATIVE COST FOR THE BONDS ALONE AMOUNTED TO \$750,000, WITH TOTAL EXPENDITURES SURPASSING \$2 MILLION.



### TIME CAPSULES

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES



## UNEARTHING STORIES FROM OUR SOCIETY'S PAST (CONT...)

IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT NOT ALL PASSENGERS WERE SIKH; ONE WOMAN WAS OF TURKISH HERITAGE, AND SEVERAL OTHERS IDENTIFIED AS HINDU AND MUSLIM. NEVERTHELESS, THE SIKH COMMUNITY DEMONSTRATED SOLIDARITY BY POSTING BONDS FOR ALL, IRRESPECTIVE OF RELIGIOUS OR ETHNIC BACKGROUND. OVER THE YEARS, THE SIKH REFUGEES WHO ARRIVED IN NOVA SCOTIA IN 1987 HAVE MADE PROFOUND CONTRIBUTIONS TO CANADIAN SOCIETY. THEY HAVE WOVEN THEMSELVES INTO THE RICH MULTICULTURAL TAPESTRY OF CANADA, ENHANCING IT WITH THEIR DISTINCTIVE CULTURAL HERITAGE, VALUES, COMMUNITY SERVICE, AND TRADITIONS. THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS ARE EVIDENT ACROSS VARIOUS SECTORS, WITH SOME INDIVIDUALS EMERGING AS SUCCESSFUL ENTREPRENEURS AND ESTABLISHING BUSINESSES THAT BOLSTER BOTH LOCAL AND NATIONAL ECONOMIES. THESE ENTERPRISES RANGE FROM MODEST VENTURES TO SIGNIFICANT CORPORATIONS, GENERATING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND FOSTERING ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT. ADDITIONALLY, MEMBERS OF THEIR FAMILIES HAVE EXCELLED IN FIELDS SUCH AS MEDICINE, ENGINEERING, LAW, AND ACADEMIA, BRINGING THEIR EXPERTISE AND COMMITMENT TO THEIR RESPECTIVE PROFESSIONS.

IN JULY 2024, IN A GESTURE OF GRATITUDE AND RECOGNITION FOR THOSE WHO SUPPORTED THEM 37 YEARS PRIOR, THE REFUGEES REGROUPED AT MARITIME SIKH SOCIETY GURDWARA AND ORCHESTRATED A CARAVAN FROM HALIFAX TO CHARLESVILLE, ADORNED WITH CANADIAN FLAGS AS A TRIBUTE TO THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO ALLOW THEM TO REMAIN. THIS EVENT ALSO SYMBOLIZED THEIR PRIDE IN BEING CANADIAN CITIZENS TODAY. THROUGHOUT THE WEEKEND, THOSE WHO PROVIDED ASSISTANCE TO THE REFUGEES DURING THEIR TIME OF NEED WERE HONORED, INCLUDING LOCAL RESIDENTS OF CHARLESVILLE, SIKH SOCIETIES AND GURDWARAS, COMMUNITY MEMBERS, LEGAL REPRESENTATIVES, AND CANADIAN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.

FURTHERMORE, THE 1987 REFUGEES ESTABLISHED AN ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP FOR A CHILD FROM CHARLESVILLE PURSUING HIGHER EDUCATION, CONTRIBUTED FUNDS TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY CENTER AND FIRE DEPARTMENT, OFFERED TO FINANCE BOOKS FOR THE LOCAL LIBRARY, AND PLANNED TO ERECT A MONUMENT IN A PARK WHERE THE CARGO SHIP HAD DOCKED. THEIR NARRATIVE IS ONE OF GRATITUDE INTERWOVEN WITH ADVOCACY AND ACTIVISM, REFLECTING A STEADFAST COMMITMENT TO SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY THAT EXTENDED ITS HELP DURING THEIR TIME OF NEED.

AS CANADA CONTINUES TO EMBRACE MULTICULTURALISM, THE EXPERIENCES OF THE SIKH REFUGEES IN NOVA SCOTIA STAND AS A POIGNANT TESTAMENT TO SUCCESSFUL INTEGRATION AND MUTUAL ENRICHMENT. THEIR STORY HIGHLIGHTS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PROVIDING REFUGE TO THOSE IN NEED AND THE PROFOUND IMPACT THAT SUCH HUMANITARIAN ENDEAVORS CAN HAVE ON BOTH INDIVIDUALS AND SOCIETY AT LARGE.

## COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

## STARS OF THE COMMUNITY



### "DOUBLE TROUBLE: THE BADMINTON BROTHERS' SUCCESS STORY"

#### PRABHJOTVIR SINGH SAGOOG:

- SECURED GOLD IN THE BNS SCOTIA SERIES
- ACHIEVED GOLD IN THE PEI ATLANTIC SERIES
- ATTAINED THREE GOLD MEDALS AT THE ATLANTIC CHAMPIONSHIP

#### MANJOTVIR SINGH SAGOOG:

- CLAIMED GOLD IN THE BNS U17 CATEGORY
- TRIUMPHED IN THE BNS MIXED DOUBLES EVENT
- ADVANCED TO THE QUARTER-FINALS OF THE NATIONAL JUNIOR ELITE YONEX TOURNAMENT.

TOGETHER, THEY GARNERED BOYS' DOUBLES GOLD IN BOTH THE ATLANTIC CHAMPIONSHIP AND THE BNS SCOTIA SERIES. ORIGINATING FROM THE JALANDHAR DISTRICT IN PUNJAB, THEIR PARENTS, CHARANPREET KAUR SAGOOG AND HARVINDER SINGH SAGOOG, IMMIGRATED TO HALIFAX, CANADA, IN NOVEMBER 2019, WHEN THE BOYS WERE MERELY 9 AND 10 YEARS OF AGE, RESPECTIVELY.

## COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

### *Pyara Singh Randhawa*

MAY 7, 1938 - APRIL 9, 2025



## TRIBUTES AND TRIUMPHS: REMEMBERING PYARA SINGH RANDHAWA

ORIGINALLY HAILING FROM VILLAGE RANDHAWA (MASANDAN), DISTT. JALANDHAR, PYARA SINGH ARRIVED IN NOVA SCOTIA IN 1965. INITIALLY, HE TOOK UP THE ROLE OF A SCHOOLTEACHER; HOWEVER, HIS FERVOR FOR CONSTRUCTION SIMMERED WITHIN HIM, AWAITING THE OPPORTUNE MOMENT TO MANIFEST. IN 1978-79, HE ASCENDED TO THE PRESIDENCY OF THE MARITIME SIKH SOCIETY. PYARA SINGH CAME WITH A RESOLUTE DETERMINATION TO INVIGORATE THE COMMUNITY AND TO ESTABLISH A GURDWARA FOR ITS MEMBERS. CALM AND COMPOSED, UNIVERSALLY RESPECTED, AND ENDOWED WITH IMMENSE PATIENCE AND TOLERANCE, HE WAS INDEED THE RIGHT INDIVIDUAL, WITH THE RIGHT PASSION, AT THE RIGHT JUNCTURE.

UPON ASSUMING OFFICE, HE DEDICATED HIMSELF WHOLEHEARTEDLY TO THE BUILDING PROJECT WITH UNWAVERING COMMITMENT. THE FOREMOST CHALLENGE HE FACED WAS THE IMPERATIVE TO SECURE FUNDING FOR THE NEW EDIFICE. AT THAT TIME, THERE WERE APPROXIMATELY FIFTY SIKH FAMILIES RESIDING IN NOVA SCOTIA. RANDHAWA TRAVESED FROM TOWN TO TOWN, AND FROM HOUSEHOLD TO HOUSEHOLD, SOLICITING DONATIONS. "I SEEK \$1000 FROM EACH FAMILY WHERE BOTH SPOUSES ARE EMPLOYED; \$500 FROM FAMILIES WITH A SINGLE BREADWINNER," INSISTED PYARA SINGH, HAVING PERSONALLY WRITTEN THE INAUGURAL CHEQUE OF \$1000 FOR THE COLLECTION. NUMEROUS HINDU FAMILIES ALSO GENEROUSLY CONTRIBUTED TO THE BUILDING FUND.

IN 1996-97, WHEN S. PYARA SINGH RANDHAWA WAS RE-ELECTED AS PRESIDENT, A BUILDING COMMITTEE WAS ESTABLISHED TO PROVIDE COUNSEL AND ASSISTANCE IN EXPANDING AND RENOVATING THE GURDWARA. PYARA SINGH DEVOTED COUNTLESS DAYS AND NIGHTS TO THE GURDWARA, SUPPORTING CONSTRUCTION WORKERS WHENEVER AND WHEREVER NECESSARY. HIS UNWAVERING DEDICATION AND REMARKABLE WORK ETHIC DID NOT GO UNNOTICED WITHIN THE COMMUNITY. "THE HEART AND SOUL BEHIND THIS NEW ENDEAVOR IS NONE OTHER THAN THE CURRENT PRESIDENT OF MSS, S. PYARA SINGH RANDHAWA, A TRUE AND HUMBLE 'SEWADAR' OF THE COMMUNITY," REMARKED INCA PRESIDENT YASHWANT RAI IN THE INCA NEWSLETTER.

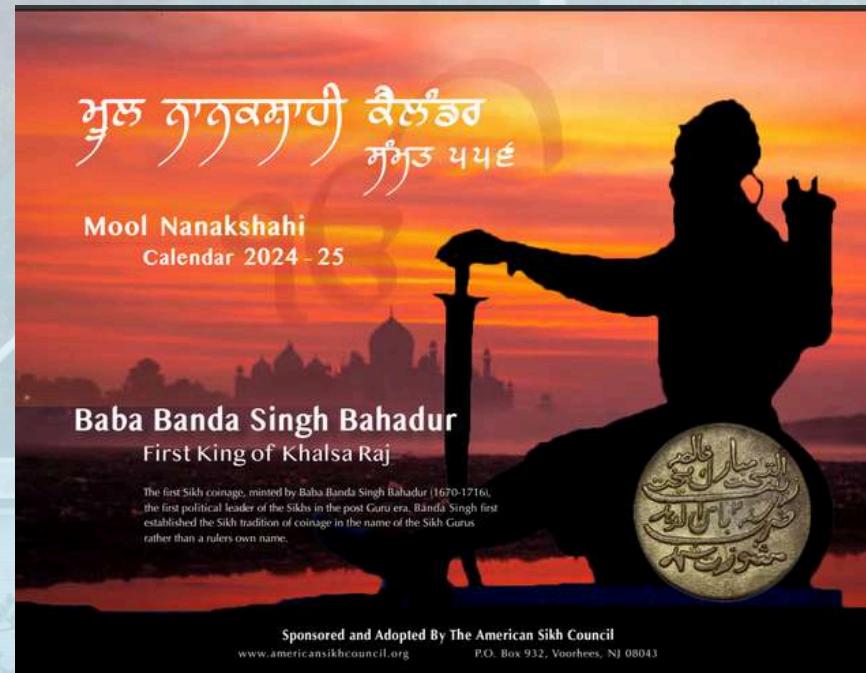
IN 2019, UPON BEING ONCE AGAIN APPOINTED PRESIDENT OF MSS, HE PROMPTLY INITIATED THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW GURDWARA BUILDING, RESPONDING TO THE RAPID EXPANSION OF THE COMMUNITY. DESPITE THE GURDWARA HAVING ONLY MODEST SAVINGS, HE EMBRACED THE CHALLENGE. WHEN QUERIED ABOUT THE SOURCE OF FUNDING, HE WOULD GRACIOUSLY RESPOND, "THIS IS GURU'S OWN WORK, AND THE GURU KNOWS HOW TO COMPLETE IT." HIS PROFOUND FAITH IN THE GURU AND HIS OWN CAPABILITIES CULMINATED IN THE DISMANTLING OF THE OLD GURDWARA BUILDING. AS THE STRUCTURE WAS TAKEN DOWN AND THE FOUNDATION EXCAVATED, THE ONSET OF COVID-19 INTRODUCED FORMIDABLE CHALLENGES TO THE PROJECT'S COMPLETION. UNPRECEDENTED DELAYS, FUNDRAISING OBSTACLES, AND RESTRICTED WORKING HOURS ENGENDERED WIDESPREAD APPREHENSION REGARDING THE PROJECT'S VIABILITY. INSPIRED BY HIS COMMITMENT AND FAITH, NUMEROUS VOLUNTEERS RALLIED TO HIS SIDE, WORKING DILIGENTLY UNTIL THE GURDWARA WAS COMPLETED AND INAUGURATED FOR THE SANGAT IN 2022.

PYARA SINGH WAS RIGHTFULLY HONORED ON SHUKRANA DIVAS WITH A SIROPA, A ROBE OF HONOR, AND A MEMENTO PRESENTED BY DR. SIMARDEEP KAUR HUNDAL ON BEHALF OF THE BUILDING COMMITTEE AND THE SANGAT ON AUGUST 6, 2024. AT THE VENERABLE AGE OF 87, HE DEPARTED FROM THIS WORLD ON APRIL 9, 2025. MAY HIS ENDURING LEGACY CONTINUE TO INSPIRE US TO EMBODY KINDNESS, COMPASSION, AND GRACE TOWARDS ALL.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR (UPCOMING EVENTS FOR THE NEXT QUARTER)

- A CALENDAR OUTLINING THE NEXT THREE MONTHS
- SPECIAL EVENTS, INCLUDING VISITS FROM RAGI JATHAS/PERSONS



Mool Nanakshahi Calendar (NS) combines the Original Nanakshahi Calendar as approved and introduced by SGPC in 1999 (commemorating 300th anniversary of Khalsa Sajna Divas); and also accurately fixes the date for Bandee Shord Divas.

January ( ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ )	February ( ਸਾਹਿਬ - ਦੇਵੀਤ )	March ( ਦੇਵੀਤ - ਗੁਰ )
Jan 5th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Parkash Panjabali-10 Jan 13th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Mela Maqhi Makhsas Foundation Jan 19th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Chalsa da Marcha Jan 26th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Birthday - Baba Deep Singh ji Jan 29th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Birthday - Bhagat Ravidas ji Jan 31st (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Parkash Panjabali-7	Feb 8th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Vadda Ghallughara Feb 11th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Birthday Sabhiseada Ajit Singh ji Feb 12th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Bande Shord Divas Feb 21st (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Saka Naokan Sabh Feb 21st (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Jainta da Marcha	Mar 14th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Holla Micha Mar 14th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Gurbajdi Panjabali-7 Mar 14th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Nankhai New Year Day Mar 15th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Dukhi Fateh Bhai Baghel Singh Mar 19th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Jaita Panjabali-6 Mar 25th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Shahzadi Bhai Sobeg Singh, Bhai Shabha Singh
April ( ਸਤਿਗੁਰ )	May ( ਪੰਜਾਬ - ਸੋਵਰ )	June ( ਸਤਿਗੁਰ )
Apr 9th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Birthday Sabhiseada Abulhaq Singh ji Apr 14th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Parkash Panjabali-1 Apr 14th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Khalsa Sajna Divas Apr 14th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Vasakhee Apr 16th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Gurbajdi Panjabali-3 and 9, Joti-Jot Panjabali-2 and 8 Apr 18th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Parkash Panjabali-2 and 9 Apr 20th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Birthday Baba Parv ji	May 2nd (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Parkash Panjabali-5 May 17th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Chaura Ghallughara May 23rd (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Parkash Panjabali-3	June 6th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Ghallughara 1704 June 11th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Gurbajdi Panjabali-6 June 16th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Shahzadi Panjabali-5 June 18th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Birthday - Bhagat Kahir ji June 25th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Shahzadi - Bala Banda Singh Bahadur June 29th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Baisi Maharaja Ranjit Singh
July ( ਸਤਿਗੁਰ )	August ( ਸਤਿਗੁਰ - ਸੋਵਰ )	September ( ਸਤਿਗੁਰ )
Jul 2nd (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Foundation Day Sri Akal Takht Sahib Jul 5th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Parkash Panjabali-6 Jul 9th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Shahzadi Bhai Mani Singh ji Jul 16th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Shahzadi Bhai Tari Singh ji Jul 21st (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Miri-Peri Panjabali-6 Jul 23rd (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Parkash Panjabali-8	Aug 30th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Completion of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji at Damdama Sahib	Sep 1st (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) First Parkash of Sri Guru Granth Sahib at Harmandir Sahib Sep 5th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Gurbajdi Panjabali-4 and 5, Joti-Jot Panjabali-3 and 4 Sep 8th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Gurbajdi Panjabali-2 Sep 22nd (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Joti-Joti Panjabali-1
October ( ਸਤਿਗੁਰ )	November ( ਸਤਿਗੁਰ - ਸੋਵਰ )	December ( ਸਤਿਗੁਰ - ਗੁਰ )
Oct 9th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Parkash Panjabali-4 Oct 20th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Gurbajdi Panjabali-8, Gurbajdi Guru Granth Sahib, Joti-Jot Panjabali-7 Oct 21st (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Joti-Jot Panjabali-10 Oct 28th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Saka Ponja Sahib	Nov 1st (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Birthday Mata Sahib Kaur ji Nov 12th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Birthday Bhagat Namdev ji Nov 13th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Shahzadi - Bala Deep Singh ji Nov 24th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Shahzadi Panjabali-9, Bhai Mati Das, Bhai Sati Das, and Bhai Dyal Gurbajdi Panjabali-10	Dec 12th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Birthday - Sabhiseada Fateh Singh ji Dec 21st (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Shahzadi - Elder Sabhiseada and Shahzadi at Chausar Dec 26th (ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ) Shahzadi - Younger Sabhiseadas and Mata Gajri ji

## THOUGHT COLLECTIVE FEATURE



### A DESIRE FOR CONNECTION

A MAN RETURNED HOME FROM WORK LATE, FATIGUED AND IRRITABLE, TO FIND HIS FIVE-YEAR-OLD DAUGHTER EAGERLY AWAITING HIM AT THE DOOR.

DAUGHTER: "DADDY, MAY I POSE A QUESTION?"

DADDY: "OF COURSE, WHAT IS IT?"

DAUGHTER: "DAD, HOW MUCH DO YOU EARN PER HOUR?"

DADDY: "THAT'S NONE OF YOUR CONCERN. WHY DO YOU INQUIRE ABOUT SUCH MATTERS?" THE MAN REPLIED, IRRITATION EVIDENT IN HIS TONE.

DAUGHTER: "I SIMPLY WISH TO KNOW. PLEASE TELL ME, HOW MUCH DO YOU EARN PER HOUR?"

DADDY: "I EARN \$35 AN HOUR."

"OH," THE LITTLE GIRL MURMURED, HER GAZE DROPPING. AFTER A MOMENT, SHE LOOKED UP AND ASKED, "DAD, MAY I PLEASE BORROW \$20?"

THE FATHER WAS INCENSED. "IF THE ONLY REASON YOU ASKED IS TO BORROW MONEY FOR SOME FRIVOLOUS TOY OR OTHER NONSENSE, THEN MARCH YOURSELF TO YOUR ROOM AND GO TO BED. REFLECT ON YOUR SELFISHNESS. I WORK DILIGENTLY EVERY DAY, AND I WILL NOT TOLERATE SUCH CHILDISH BEHAVIOR."

THE LITTLE GIRL QUIETLY RETREATED TO HER ROOM AND CLOSED THE DOOR. THE MAN SAT DOWN, HIS ANGER SIMMERING AS HE REFLECTED ON HIS DAUGHTER'S QUESTIONS. HOW DARE SHE ASK SUCH THINGS MERELY TO PROCURE MONEY?

AFTER ABOUT AN HOUR, THE MAN BEGAN TO CALM DOWN AND RECONSIDER HIS REACTION: "PERHAPS THERE WAS SOMETHING SHE GENUINELY NEEDED TO PURCHASE WITH THAT \$20, AND SHE RARELY ASKS FOR MONEY!" THE MAN APPROACHED THE DOOR OF HIS DAUGHTER'S ROOM AND GENTLY OPENED IT.

"ARE YOU ASLEEP, MY DEAR?" HE INQUIRED.

"NO, DADDY, I'M AWAKE," THE GIRL REPLIED.

"I'VE BEEN REFLECTING AND REALIZE THAT I MAY HAVE BEEN TOO HARSH ON YOU EARLIER," THE MAN SAID. "IT HAS BEEN A LONG DAY, AND I UNFAIRLY VENTED MY FRUSTRATION ON YOU. HERE IS THE \$20 YOU REQUESTED."

THE LITTLE GIRL SAT UP STRAIGHT, BEAMING. "OH, THANK YOU, DAD!" SHE EXCLAIMED. THEN, REACHING UNDER HER PILLOW, SHE RETRIEVED SOME CRUMPLED CURRENCY NOTES. THE MAN, NOTICING THAT HIS DAUGHTER ALREADY POSSESSED MONEY, FELT A SURGE OF IRRITATION ONCE MORE.

THE LITTLE GIRL METICULOUSLY COUNTED HER MONEY, THEN LOOKED UP AT HER FATHER.

"WHY DO YOU NEED MONEY IF YOU ALREADY HAVE SOME?" THE FATHER GRUMBLED.

"BECAUSE I DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH, BUT NOW I DO," THE LITTLE GIRL REPLIED.

"DADDY, I NOW HAVE \$35. MAY I PURCHASE AN HOUR OF YOUR TIME? PLEASE COME HOME EARLY TOMORROW; I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE DINNER WITH YOU."

THE FATHER WAS TAKEN ABACK BY HIS DAUGHTER'S REQUEST.

THE LITTLE GIRL'S SIMPLE YET PROFOUND REQUEST HAD AN IMPORTANT LESSON THAT THE MOMENTS SHARED WITH LOVED ONES ARE THE MOST PRECIOUS TREASURES IN LIFE.



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- **CHIEF EDITOR:** CHAIRMAN, MARITIME SIKH SOCIETY OF HALIFAX
- **EDITOR:** BALBIR SINGH
- **COPY EDITORS:** KANWAL SIDHU, HARKIRAN KAUR, SATNAM SINGH RANDHAWA
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- **CONTRIBUTING WRITERS:** DR. ANUROOP KAUR, DR. S. S. SODHI, HARKIRAN KAUR, SATNAM SINGH RANDHAWA

FEATURING ARCHIVAL CONTRIBUTIONS FROM JAGPAL S. TIWANA AND VOICES FROM ACROSS THE GLOBAL SIKH DIASPORA

902-477-0008

[Info@maritimesikhsociety.ca](mailto:Info@maritimesikhsociety.ca)

[www.maritimesikhsociety.ca](http://www.maritimesikhsociety.ca)

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DO YOU HAVE ANY SUGGESTIONS FOR HOW WE CAN IMPROVE OUR NEWS MAGAZINE? PLEASE SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS AND IDEAS WITH US SO THAT WE CAN CONTINUE TO PROVIDE YOU WITH THE MOST RELEVANT AND ENGAGING CONTENT.

WE EXTEND OUR PROFOUND GRATITUDE FOR THE INVALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS OF JAGPAL SINGH TIWANA'S ARCHIVES, ALONGSIDE A MYRIAD OF OTHER DISTINGUISHED SOURCES, WHICH HAVE SUBSTANTIALLY ENRICHED THE CONTENT PRESENTED IN THIS EDITION OF MARITIME SIKHS.