



WSN commemorates the 100th birth anniversary of Panth Rattan Bhai Sahib Sirdar Kapur Singh with this Special Edition to rejig our memories

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The spirit of peace and terror demands that both New Delhi and Islamabad change their intentions. South Asian polity has seeds of trouble sown inside it



Sikh Kirpan Bill In California Assembly

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LOS ANGELES

At a time when even the Indian Government is not cooperating with the Sikh community to ensure their religious rights are protected at all times, the Diaspora Sikhs seem to be making their point with a vigour and dedication worthy of emulation. Thanks to a concerted and well argued campaign underlining the integral need of community symbols for any practising Sikh, California Assemblyman from Long Beach, Warren Furutani, has now introduced a Bill to make sensitisation and awareness about "kirpan" mandatory for law enforcement officers.



Oklahoma legislation may bar turbans

OKLAHOMA: The recent passage of a legislation in Oklahoma that would prohibit individuals from wearing head scarves and head garments for driver's license photographs has caused resentment among various religious groups. Members of the House had voted 88-8 in favour of the measure. A US-based advocacy group, American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF), has called upon members of Oklahoma Senate to emphasize that religious freedom was a state policy. The legislation was introduced by Oklahoma Rep Rex Duncan in response to news that a Muslim woman was allowed to wear 'hijab' in her driver's license photograph at her local Department of Motor Vehicles. Because the proposed law forbids all headcoverings, the religious rights of observant Sikhs who wear religiously mandated turbans are in jeopardy.

If passed, legislation AB 504 will require police officers to receive instruction about the Sikh faith. Sikhs have in the past experienced prejudiced behaviour, harassment and discrimination often emerging out of complete lack of awareness about their religious symbols. Such a measure, if introduced, will also go a long way in establishing the separate identity of the Sikhs in American people's minds who, because of their lack of knowledge, often end up confusing the community with Arabs or Muslims. Kirpan is one of the five articles of faith that any baptised Sikh is required to carry at all times. In hundreds of years, there has never been a single incident of a baptised Sikh misusing his integral symbol of kirpan in any untoward activity, a fact grudgingly acknowledged even by detractors of the community.

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Bad Q: 'Ab Pakistan Ka Kya Karen?'

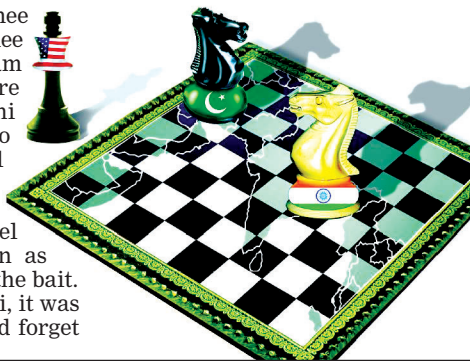
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slanging political match between Delhi and Islamabad. Indian media, notoriously more nationalistic than sagely, unleashed interpretations, questions and programming to underline that Pak's isolation was complete.

"Ab kabhi bhee koyee bhee team, chahe woh koyee bhee khel ho, kam se kam Pakistan jaane ke baare mein sapne mein bhee nahi sochegi (Now, no team, no matter what the sport, will never ever even dream of going to Pakistan)," one after the other TV channel picked up the theme even as sombre anchors also fell for the bait. So soon after 26/11 Mumbai, it was surprising how India could forget

that it too was a frontline state when it comes to terror. "Kya karna hoga ab Pakistan ka? Is ka kiya kya jaye? (What will now have to be done to Pakistan? What should we do to it now?)" This was Praseon Vajpayee of Aaj Tak, admittedly a foremost Hindi TV channel. Neither was English language NDTV any different.

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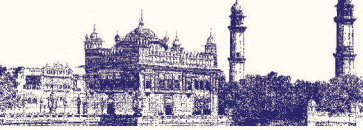
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WSN perceives events through the prism of the faith community so that the community is proud of the website and the website keeps faith with the community.



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