

# GLASGOW TO GOA- the journey continues

**Simi Arora**

After a flying start to a once in a lifetime journey from Glasgow to Goa, Pardes Weekly caught up with Inderpal Shergill to find out how his journey had been so far. Here Inder talks to Simi Arora.

**Saturday, Sept 29**

I arrived at Calais in the early hours of the morning. From Calais I drove to Lille and had breakfast at a restaurant. Here I met a French man who started talking to me and expressed great interest and enthusiasm as he found out about my journey. As it was quite early in the morning the streets near us were being jet- cleaned. The man spoke to the workers in French and before I knew it they were cleaning my car. It was a very thoughtful gesture. I set off on my journey after a hearty breakfast. I reached Luxemburg having crossed Belgium on the way. After a brief stop-over in Luxemburg I started for Munich. I experienced the biggest traffic jam of my life on the way to Munich. Arrived at Munich at 10pm.

**Sunday, Sept 30**

Human hospitality amazes me as I crossed all boundaries last night. I was looking for a hotel or a travel lodge to stay for the night. Due to Oktoberfest everything was booked and I saw people were sleeping at train and bus stations. Fortunately all the Indian

newspapers in Europe had covered the news of my journey (I had no clue). I went to an Indian restaurant where the staff recognised me instantly and I was given a standing ovation from all the staff and guests. The staff at Taj Mahal and Maharani (Stiglmaierplatz Street) tried their level best to find accommodation for me. Eventually the staff took me in with them and gave me a private apartment of my own. They would not charge me for the food (I have given up on insisting) They hosted me until I left on Monday morning. Staff accompanied me for security reasons as I wanted to cover the festival on my camcorder. They even arranged for a garage to check my diesel leak first thing on Monday morning. Thank you is a very small word but Thank you thank you and thank you all!!!!!!

**Monday 1st October**

Oktoberfest should be attended by everyone, once in a lifetime at least. I have never seen so many people in one place drinking beer from 8am in the morning to 2 am the next day...millions and millions of litres. The beer is served in a standard size of one litre and the food is amazing. On weekends one has to get in by 10 am or else you do not get entry into the tent (which holds over 5000 people at one time). I was accommodated when got there at 1 pm. The owner of the place came to meet me

with his security and gave me special permission to take a video clip and loads of picture. I was given security until the end of the day to make sure I don't have any problems anywhere. I met a few of their VIPs and national heroes (musicians). Then I was invited to a special party which was organised for certain VIP's at the end of the day. The staff at the restaurant called me at midnight as they were waiting for me and so I had to make my way back. One of the guys "Laddi" came to escort me back.....German hospitality has bowled me over.

**Tuesday 2nd October**

My next stop was at Zurich. I left Zurich for Innsbruck where I went to a Toyota garage who repaired the leakage in my car. Since they had to order the parts, they did a temporary fix and I will be ordering the parts for repair in Greece. They also fixed other small things and refused to take money for it.

From Innsbruck I left for Italy. I reached the town of Brunick (which was deserted at 8 pm) I felt lost. I asked someone walking down the road for a hotel not feeling sure if he understood English. Turns out he was an Indian and drove with me to the hotel but did not allow me to check-in. He took me home where I was treated to some home cooked food and sweets (Jalebi). He offered me a room to stay.....which I



refused as I decided not to break journey. We went out for a cup of coffee and that's when I asked his name. We had a good laugh without even knowing even each others names. I had met his family and we had spent the last 2 hours talking about the journey. I think that is called human spirit.

**Wednesday 3rd October**

I am over in Graz, Austria at a friend's place. Ingrid is Austrian but every year comes to Goa to stay for a few weeks. She helped me with the decoration of my house in Goa and the house warming party that followed. It is good to catch up with her after almost 2 years. The Austrian country side is beautiful and the sunshine has added a perfect touch to it. I wish I could have a house in this part of the world.

*Follow Inder's travels in our next issue.*

## GURUJI DR. CHANDRA BHANU SATPATHY JI HONORED IN SEATTLE, STATE OF WASHINGTON

**SEATTLE, WASHINGTON STATE, USA:** At a recent event, WASITRAC (Washington State India Trade Relation Action Committee) presented Guruji Dr. Chandrabhanu Satpathy ji with the "Building Bridges Across the Nations award" at the Intiman Playhouse, Seattle Center for his immense contributions in connecting the whole world though his literary excellence and humanitarian endeavors. The event was celebrated as part of the opening reception of the first Washington state summit on US-India Trade. Mr. Debadutta Dash and Mr. H. Habib Co-Chair of Wasitrac hosted the event.

On this occasion, the City of Seattle recognized Guruji's contribution in spreading the message of humanism, purity, love, compassion and tolerance as taught by Shi Shirdi Sai Baba. The recognition from the office of the Mayor, City of Seattle, Mike McGinn was delivered by Mr. Thao Tran. Further, Lieutenant Governor Brad Owen recognized Guruji on behalf of State of Washington noting that the message Guruji brings to the world comes at a time when events should cause us to reflect upon the need for greater humanity and compassion as taught by Guruji. The State of Washington invited Guruji to return to Seattle many more times to celebrate Shirdi Sai movement.

Consul General N. Parthasarathi and Washington State Lt. Gov. Brad Owen were the guest of honors and chief guest respectively, who addressed the gathering on this occasion. Consul General congratulated

Guruji for the award and wished him more such awards in future. This was followed by a cultural program of Indian dance and music and then of Pacific Islanders.

Speaking on occasion Brad Owen offered assistance to help Indians in all their needs. The program was also attended by a high level delegation from the state of Assam, India comprising of senior civil servants.

Accepting the award, Guruji Dr. Chandra Bhanu Satpathyji emphasized the need of involving cultural, educational and need based initiatives among nations to build better bridges and fill gaps. He further said, that the gaps can be filled by encompassing two vital principles in addition to existing models in planning ventures at all levels, first is to create happiness in the people involved in the processes; and second is to ensure maximum happiness among the maximum number of people for the maximum period of time for those who will benefit by the venture.

He acknowledged the influence of spiritual perfect master Shri Shirdi Sai in his life. In his closing remark he thanked the organizers, City of Seattle and State of Washington for the honor.

Christine Gregoire, Governor State of Washington and Secretary of State, United States, Hillary Clinton and Kiran Ahuja, Executive Director, White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders sent best wishes and congratulatory messages for the event.

## President Obama Receives Personal Thanks from Sikhs after Wisconsin Shooting

**Washington, September 26, 2012:** President Barack Obama received personal thanks on behalf of the Sikh community from Dr. Rajwant Singh, Chairman of the Washington based Sikh Council on Religion and Education, yesterday in New York. Dr. Singh was invited by the White House to a reception by the President for diplomats and UN ambassadors at Waldorf-Astoria hotel at the eve of his important speech at the United Nations.

Dr. Singh said to the President, "We thank you deeply for your kindness and your support during the tragedy at the Sikh Gurdwara in Wisconsin. We really appreciate it." President responded by saying, "It was needed and more will come and you can be assured of that." Dr. Singh said, "We prayed for you and will continue to pray for God's blessings upon you." Obama responded, "I need that every day."

Dr. Balvinder Kaur, a child Psychiatrist from Washington and wife of Dr. Singh, said, "Mr. President, we are grateful that you lowered the US flags at half staff. President Obama responded and said, "It was a senseless killing and it should not have happened.

President Obama talking to Dr. Balvinder Kaur Dr. Rajwant Singh also thanked the first Lady, Michelle Obama by saying, "Your visit to Wisconsin to see the family of victims was really healing for all of us. It was gratefully appreciated by all Sikhs. She responded, "I was touched by sentiments and spirit of the

families especially the youth. They are all so kind."

Dr. Rajwant Singh talking to Michelle Obama and Dr. Balvinder Kaur on the right and President Obama in the back Dr. Singh further requested to Michelle Obama, "We would like President to be seen with the Sikhs to send a positive message all across the nation perhaps he can have a delegation at the White House or he can visit a Sikh center. She responded, "We certainly will work on it."

Dr. Kaur said to the first lady, "I had to be trained to deal with kids but the way you are handling the issues related to kids is amazing." Michelle Obama said, "We need people like you and we will do it together."

Dr. Balvinder Kaur speaking to Michelle Obama Dr. Rajwant Singh also had long exchange with Valerie Jarrett, Obama's senior most political advisor for future initiatives to help the issues of the Sikhs in the US. She assured of the support of the President and his administration.

Dr. Rajwant Singh in exchange with President Obama's Senior Political Advisor Valerie Jarrett

Dr. Singh and Dr. Kaur with Valerie Jarrett Dr. Singh also thanked Senator Patrick Leahy, the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, for having a hearing on hate crimes and domestic extremism at the US Senate and inviting Sikh victims of Wisconsin Gurdwara tragedy for the testimonials.