

Mera Pind-fame Gurdit Singh expresses concern at westernisation of youngsters

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Deeply perturbed over the overshadowing of written word and literature by West-oriented television programmes, Giani Gurdit Singh, the world renowned Punjabi author of "Mera Pind" fame, feels that the growing lack of interest among younger generation in serious literature was a huge loss with far-reaching consequences for the nation.

Giani Gurdit Singh had shot into fame with the huge success of his novel, "Mera Pind," which was published for the first time in 1961, and which was still in print after its seventh edition hitting the market in 2003. The novel, depicting village life of Punjab in its very true sense, had not only fetched a UNESCO award, but also earned a wide acclaim. Khushwant Singh said of the novel, "Mera Pind is a collection of delightful essays on various aspects of village life in the Eastern Punjab. The book gives us a live-



Eminent journalist Kuldeep Nayyar (far left) at a function organised by Doordarshan Kendra, Jalandhar, on Saturday, May 28. He was awarded the Doordarshan Panj Pani Sanman-2005 for his contribution to journalism. Other eminent awardees are from left: Dalip Kaur Tiwana (literature); Mrs K S Duggal; Kartar Singh Duggal (broadcasting) and Giani Gurdit Singh (heritage and culture). Second row centre: Budh Singh (NRI) and Nek Chand (Fine Arts).

ly picture of pastoral life, written in delectable prose, studied with aphorisms, proverbs and songs. The one thing which will give Mera Pind a long lease of life, if not immortality, is the fact that the author has used the Punjabi

language as it is spoken by the common people. The Punjabi of Mera Pind is full-blooded and masculine." On the same lines, the online edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica found the book to be "one of the most outstanding novels

depicting rural life in Punjab... almost a classic in Punjabi literature."

Giani Gurdit Singh, who was at the Browser Bookstore here for a literary interaction, shared his thoughts with Jalandhar Plus. "I don't agree

that the importance of the written word has vanished. But at the same time, I don't relish the hard fact that a big section of the younger generation has somehow lost interest in literature. Most of the youngsters are interested in

watching those television programmes, which either present the fragmented Punjabi culture or distort it to a certain extent. Can they tell the message weaved in "Shakuntala", which is an immortal classic?" questioned Giani Gurdit Singh.

Asked to explain the role of media in the propagation of Punjabi culture, he quipped, "I don't understand."

"But I would say that if we continue to be indifferent towards literature, particularly the genre which explains our culture, we are going to suffer a lot. It would be an irreversible loss and it would continue to haunt us for generations together," he said.

He expressed his concern at the way in which different "Birs" of Sri Guru Granth Sahib were not being preserved on account of their being "old". On his part, he has decided to do an elaborate research on the history of "Birs" of Guru Granth Sahib. "I am also likely to go to the UK for this purpose soon," he added.