

ABSTRACTS OF SIKH STUDIES

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EDITORIAL

ਹਉਮੈ ਏਹਾ ਜਾਤਿ ਹੈ ਹਉਮੈ ਕਰਮ ਕਮਾਹਿ

Sadly India is in the international news for all the wrong reasons these days despite its having one of the best constitutions of the world and its overall consistently positive image of being a modern, liberal democracy among the comity of nations during its little more than seven decades of independence from the British colonial rule in 1947. But with the simultaneous advent of the twenty first century or the new millennium and the RSS oriented BJP Government at the centre, its style of governance both at the centre and the states has seriously dented India's glorious and positive image of a throbbing / thriving liberal, democratic and secular democracy. No wonder several leading international democracy rating agencies like US Freedom House, Swedish V-Dem (Varieties of Democracies), Amnesty International, UN Rapporteur on Human (Human Watch) Rights, Democracy Index by The Economist and Press Freedom Index in their latest 2020 reporting have all downgraded the existing level of India's democracy due to its present style of governance.

Freedom House is a non-profit, non-partisan organization that supports democratic change, monitors freedom and advocates for democracy and human rights. It has evaluated the state of freedom in 210 countries and fifteen territories during the calendar year 2020 and awarded and assigned zero to four points on the basis of twenty five indicators upto an aggregate score of 100. These indicators are grouped into categories of political rights (0-40) and Civil liberties (10-60). On the basis of these totals awarded to each listed country, it declared its status **as free, partly free or not free**. Its methodology is derived from universal declaration of Human Rights and applied to all listed countries irrespective of their geographic location, ethnic or religious composition or level of economic development. As per its 2020 report:

Freedom in the World 2020, it has declared 83 countries and one territory as **Free**, 63 countries and 4 territories as **Partly Free** and 49 countries and ten territories as **Not Free**. On the basis of this evaluation, Freedom House, has downgraded India in 2020 as **Partly Free** from being free earlier, while dropping American Freedom score by eleven points over a decade particularly under Donald Trump and calling America a **Troubled Democracy** “though still remaining in the free category.” Freedom House has also recorded a worldwide deterioration in democracy since 2006 which has continued since then. According to its calculation, 2019 was the 14th consecutive year of decline in global freedom. More than half of the countries that were rated Free or not Free in 2009 have suffered a net decline in the past decade. It states: **Considering Democracy and pluralism as two essential ingredients of a democratic society, it states that not only dictators but “many freely elected leaders are dramatically narrowing their concern to a blinkered interpretation of the national interest. In fact, such leaders including the chief executives of the united State and India, the world's two largest democracies are increasingly willing to break down institutional safeguards and disregard the rights of critics and minorities as they pursue their populist agenda.... Ethnic, religious and other minority groups have borne the brunt of government abuses in both democracies and authoritarian states.**

Summing up India's state of democracy in its 2020 report, it states that “The Indian Government has taken its Hindu nationalist agenda to a new level with a succession of policies that abrogate the rights of different segments of its Muslim population, threatening the democratic future of a country long seen as a potential bulwark of freedom in Asia and the world... The Indian Government's alarming departures from democratic norms under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) could blur the value-based distinction between Beijing and New Delhi. While India continues to earn a free rating and held successful elections last spring, BJP has distanced itself from the Country's founding commitment to pluralism and individual rights without which democracy cannot survive.” Among the major aberrations/ faultiness which freedom House considers are responsible

for downgrading India's status of democracy from **Free** to **Partly Free** are Indian Government's unilateral annulment of the semi autonomous status of Jammu and Kashmir, India's only Muslim Majority State, restrictions on freedom of movement, shutdown of mobile and internet services, publication of a new citizens' register (NRC) in the northeastern State of Assam on August 31, 2019 which rendered nearly two million residents without citizenship aimed at excluding Muslims without immigration mainly documented descendents of Bengalis who arrived in Assam during colonial era and are expected to be placed in detention camps, Passage of the citizenship Amendment Law in December 2019 was a further attempt to exclude / this biggest minority by granting protection to Hindus and adherents of five other non-Muslim religions (Sikh, Christians, jains, Buddhists and Parsees) from the three neighbouring Muslim majority regions of Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan while ignoring similar minority sects from two other neighbouring states like China and Sri Lanka. Indian Home Minister, Mr Amit Shah's repeated assertions to repeat Assam citizen Register process nationwide has raised many other Indian minorities fears about their impending statelessness and non-citizenship. These three Hindutva majoritarian ideology driven acts of abrogation of article 370, NRC and CAA have, in Freedom House's estimation, brought – down the largest score decline of India among the twenty five largest democracies of the world in the Freedom in the world 2020 Index. The peaceful protests by these likely to be affected sections of society against these arbitrary laws and state's brutal suppression have further eroded the democratic character of Indian democracy.

Besides Freedom House's grading of India's democracy, Sweden based V-Dem (Varieties of Democracy) institution at Gothenburg University in Sweden, in its latest report, "Autocratization Turns viral, Democracy Report 2021" has stated that India, the world's largest democracy has turned into an "**Electoral Autocracy**" and included India among the ten decliners in autocracies with Poland, Brazil, India, and Turkey, with Poland at the top. V-Dem produces the largest global dataset on democracy with 30 million data points for 202 countries from 1789 to 2020 involving over 3500 scholars and other countries' experts. It measures hundreds of different attributes of democracy

and enables new ways to study the nature, causes and consequences of democracy embracing multiple meanings. It reflects an accelerating wave of autocratization engulfing 25 nations that hold 1/3 of world's population of 62.6 billion people. Several G-20 nations such as Poland, Brazil, India, Turkey and United States are part of this drift. It states that the world is still more democratic than it was in 1970s and 1980s but the global decline in democracy has been steep during the past ten years and continues in 2020-21. Electoral Autocracies "Continue to be most common regime type in these democracies."

Analyzing India's decline in democracy into "Electoral Autocracy" specifically it states: India recently lost its status as an **Electoral Democracy** and its LDI (Liberal Democracy Index) declined from 0.57 in 2010 to 0.34 in 2020 following government led by Narendra Modi placing restrictions on multiple facets of democracy such as civil society and free speech. It further states, "The worlds' largest democracy has turned into an **Electoral Autocracy**. India's autocratization process has largely followed the typical pattern for the countries in the third wave over the last ten years, a deterioration where freedom of media, academia and civil society were curtailed first and to the greatest extent..." The ruling party has placed constraints on civil society and have gone against the constitution's commitment to secularism. Recently, the unlawful Activities Prevention Act UAPA from 1967 and amended in 2019 is being used to harass, intimidate and imprison political opponents as well as people mobilizing to protest against the governance policies. The UAPA has also been used to silence dissent in academia. Universities and authorities have also punished students and activists in universities engaging in protests." The recent resignations of two eminent professors Prof Partap Bhanu Mehta and Dr Arvind Subramaniam from the prestigious and elite privately funded Ashoka University under duress and imprisonment of several other scholars, social activists under the draconian UAPA are the latest examples of this anti-democracy regime. It goes on to say: BJP (the ruling party government) has used increasingly Foreign Contribution Regulations Act (FCRA) to restrict the entry, exit and functioning of civil society organizations (CSOs) and NGOs. The amendment in this act in September 2019 has further

constrained the foreign contributions to NGOs within India.

The well-known international body “Amnesty International” has severely criticized the present Indian government for “crushing farmers’ protest and demonizing dissenters.” It says, “We have seen an alarming escalation in the Indian authorities targeting of anyone who dares to criticize or protest the governments’ repressive laws and policies. The crackdown on those protesting against the citizenship amendment Acts still has not ended, while new efforts to quell the anti-farm legislation protests have taken shape. The crushing of dissent leaves little space for people to peacefully exercise their human rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly in the country..... at least eight leading journalists and politicians hve been charged with sedition after reporting on the farmers’ protests.”

The Editor’s Guild of India, the Press Club of India, the Indian women’s Press Corps, the Delhi union of Journalists Union and Indian Journalists Union, Reporters without Borders, have all released statements condemning the crackdown on journalists covering these protests. The authorities must stop threatening demonizing, and arresting peaceful protestors and stop treating them as anti nationals and terrorists. ([http//www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org))

Another Human Rights organization, “Human Rights Watch” an independent non-government organization in its 31st World Report 2020 has also indicted the present BJP Government for its gross human rights violations of Indian religious minorities, Dalits, Tribal groups, and their rights to Freedom to Association, Freedom of Expression and Privacy and Women’s Rights and immunity granted to its security forces. It writes, “ The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led government increasingly harassed, arrested, and prosecuted rights defenders, activists, journalists, students, academics, and others critical of the government or its policies. The government continued to impose harsh and discriminatory restrictions on Muslim-majority areas in Jammu and Kashmir since revoking the state’s constitutional status in August 2019 and splitting it into two federally governed territories. Attacks continued against minorities, especially the bigger minority, even as authorities failed to take action against BJP leaders who vilified Muslims and BJP supporters who engaged in violence. The Covid-19 lockdown

disproportionately hurt marginalized communities due to loss of livelihoods and lack of food, shelter, health care, and other basic needs.” This miserable plight of millions of labourers walking on foot to their native places for hundreds and thousands of miles without any government help police brutality on them is too fresh in public memory.

The Economist Group (Legally the Economist Newspapers Limited Intelligence Unit (EIU) has placed India under the category “**Flawed Democracy**”. This research and analysis division of the Economist in its 2020 Democracy Index Report, has included 165 independent states and two territories for its study based on five parameters namely Electoral Process, population, Civil liberties, functioning of Government, Political participation and political culture. Its scores are based on 60 indicators and each country is then classified as one of the four types of regime namely **Full Democracy**, **Flawed Democracy**, **Hybrid regime**, and **Authoritarian regime**. It has declared 23 countries as **full Democracies**, 52 as **flawed Democracies**, 35 as **Hybrid Democracies** and 57 as **authoritarian regimes**. India has slipped two points to 53 position from its earlier position in the 2020 Democracy Index.

Similarly, India stands at 142 in the 2020 **World Press Freedom Index** out of 180 countries because of its constant Press Freedom violations, police violence against journalists” and the Coordinated hate campaigns waged on social networks against journalists who dare to speak or write about subjects that annoy Hindutva followers. World Press Freedom Index, is published every year since 2002 by Reporters without Borders (RWF)

Despite the spirited defence put up by India’s Minister of External Affairs Jai Shankar on the State of democracy in India at the recently held “India Today Conclave” (Saturday on March 12, 13, 2021) and accusing all these internationally acclaimed democracy relating agencies wreaking of hypocrisy, his rebuttal is rhetorical at least and polemical at best. The well-known political analyst Prof Suhas Palshikar has called Foreign Minister’s charge of “hypocrisy” against these agencies as “Churlish” and smacking of developing an “avoidance Syndrome”. He wonders sarcastically when has our national bird changed from Peacock to Ostrich”? Ostrich burries its head in the sand when the

storm comes. (*The Indian Express*, March 17, 2021) These organizations have been publishing their annual democracy ratings for most of the countries of the world for a fairly longtime. It is a fact that India has been consistently falling in every rating of democracy for which it has received severe indictment not only from these foreign entities but also from some of the leading Indian intellectuals and political analysts in their articles in the press during the last month. As Prof. Palshikar has rightly pointed out all these criticisms are not based on the democracy ratings of Freedom House V-Dem and are based on every day happenings such as arrests and gagging of media persons, indiscriminate filing of sedition cases, unleashing of investigative agencies against critics of the government, numerous suspensions of internet in “disturbed areas”, facilitating of space for vigilantes to engage in trolling and name calling on social media, judiciary’s avoidance of hearing important cases and postponing hearing of cases involving challenges against major laws passed and habeas corpus cases, large scale arrest of activists, political workers, comedians and putting them on trial and denying them bail. Expressing his fears about the future of democracy in India, he writes, “A time will come when it will be argued that democracy is a western notion unnecessary for true and spiritual emancipation — moksha. (Note Niti Aayog Amitabh Kant’s remark, “We are too much of a democracy — *The Indian Express*, December 2, 2020) It will be claimed that there is an indigenous meaning to democracy. Liberalism and individual rights are a western fashion, institutional autonomy is a fetish, freedom of expression is a superfluous luxury (and of course, no freedom is absolute). The emphasis on Deendayal Upadhyaya and the unapologetic revival of MS Golwalkar are symptomatic of this first step to arguing that there is an Indian-Hindu version of democracy. A careful reading of more recent speeches by RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat testify to that claim. The claim is often simplistic — that democracy was invented, practised and theorized in Hindu tradition and scriptures much before and independently of western intellectual developments. But beyond that, there is a denial of two key resources on which India’s democratic politics is based — namely, the national movement and the Constitution.” (Democracy, theirs and Ours, *The Indian Express*, March

17, 2021). Expressing similar sentiments and fears, Yogendra Yadav has also written, “It does not disprove widespread anxiety about the worsening state of civil liberties, capture of democratic institutions, erosion in the freedom of media, judiciary and other watchdogs, attack on political opponents and criminalisation of dissent in today’s India. In fact, the whole point of calling India an “**Electoral Autocracy**” is this: elections happen more or less fairly, but the country is non-democratic in between two elections.” (*The Tribune*, March 18, 2021). Vivek Katju, Ex-Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, while commenting on the adverse comments of the various democracy rating agencies, has also cautioned the Govt of India against outright rejection of international liberal opinion. He says, “This should lead to introspection to ascertain the causes of such perceptions. It would be counterproductive to straightaway dismiss them as motivated and mischievous and not examine why they are arising in these times. Such an examination is also important in the context of India’s soft power.” (*The Tribune*, 13, March 2021). Shyam Saran, Former Foreign Secretary and Senior fellow, centre for Policy Research, in his very informative and perceptive article, “Echo Chamber Of Governance: *The Tribune*, March 10, 2021” has mentioned serious apprehensions about more restrictions on media and freedom of expression. He writes: “Recent reports that the government may consider branding journalists as **white, green and black**, signifying pro, neutral or anti-government, and more ominously, seek to ‘neutralise’ the black category, are disturbing; as are some of the elements in the proposed regulation of OTT platforms and digital media.” He concludes, “The great strength of India is in its capacity to manage immense diversity. The very plurality of its society brings opportunities for intense debate, argumentation and the airing of an incredible spectrum of views and perspectives. This is the source of creativity, innovative spirit and adaptability of our people. Putting a monochromatic frame over this plurality has not succeeded in the past, and is unlikely to in the future.” As Julio Reborio has also rightly pointed that even the Supreme Court Bench consisting of justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul and Hemant Gupta while dismissing the frivolous petition filed against the former Chief Minister of J&K and asking for his disqualification as an elected

member of parliament and fining the petitioner has held that **dissent is not sedition and citizens cannot be tried for anti-government views**" (*The Tribune*, March 12, 2021). P Chidambaram has rightly said, "Democracy in India is diminished every day. The world has taken note of the fact that India is only '**partly free**'. The goal of the BJP is to establish one-party rule, an over-sized and rubber-stamping Parliament, a compliant judiciary, an officially sponsored media, obedient corporates, and a subservient people who will be happy with material progress. That India will be no different from China." (*The Indian Express*, March 28, 2021)

All these above mentioned and quoted voices and opinions have been expressed by leading and eminent Indian scholars, political analysts, seasoned administrators who are aware of India's constitution and its fundamental tenets of equality, liberty, fraternity and the pervading spirit of India's freedom movement and India's centuries' old societal diversity and pluralism. They are purely indigenous enlightened Indian citizens whose belief and experience in Indian democracy is legitimate, patriotic and national. Their concerns for the erosion of democratic values and constitutionally established judicial, social, cultural and academic institutions is emblematic of the collective fears of a vast majority of enlightened members of the Indian society consisting of majority community, minorities, backward and Dalits classes who are waiting with a bated breath. They are helplessly watching the terrific march of the rabidly communal, fascist Hindutva Juggernaut threatening to dismantle all the constitutional institutions, statuettes and safeguards, guaranteed fundamental human rights and liberties enshrined in India's Constitution.

This fast erosion and dilution of India's democratic structure is all the more threatening and crippling for the minorities. While the biggest Indian minority is fully conscious about the loss of their life, limb and property and has started exercising their bargaining power in certain pockets of India, the Sikhs do not seem to be as conscious about the impending cultural and economic invasion on their interests. While the mainstream Sikh leadership is in complete disarray following their helpless snapping ties with the ruling dispensation, there is a complete vacuum at the leadership front. The only silver lining in this

otherwise dark scenario is the steadfast and united resistance being offered by the Sikh farmers to defend their economic and even religious and cultural interests. If they succeed in their more than four months old struggle, their leadership holds the potential to clean the Augean stables of the traditional Sikh politics as well. At this critical juncture, it is incumbent upon the Sikh intellectuals and prominent Sikh institutional think-tanks to join these voices of protest against the menacing advance of Hindutva juggernaut. As per the Sikh tradition, the Sikhs have always been in the vanguard of all the national struggles against some of the invasions – be they military, colonial, economic or cultural - against India's national interests. Guru Nanak was the first to raise his voice in the harshest language and vocabulary against Babur's invasion of India. Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Tegh Bahadur sacrificed their lives in defence of religious freedom and human rights. The Sikhs share of participation and sacrifices in the struggle for India's independence against the economically exploitative and brutal British Colonial rule has been much greater than other Indians' share in terms of their miniscule population. The present ruling dispensation's calculated attempts at the dilution of India's federal, democratic structure and repeated attempts at its damaging and homogenization of India's diversity, pluralism, right to dissent, upholding secular and democratic values of India's constitution and overriding all parliamentary procedures are nothing short of a cultural invasion. Now when in this age of globalization, voices are being raised by both by the well-established, credible democracy rating institutions of repute abroad as well as the eminent scholars and political analysts in India, it is incumbent upon the Sikh intelligentsia to join this battle of nerves and battle for survival of India's democracy against this latest intellectual and cultural invasion.

We are starting a series of comprehensive articles on the legendary pioneers in Sikh studies with an article on the life and contribution of Max Arthur Macauliffe by the author. We invite similar articles on other prominent pioneers from our learned readers and scholars of Sikhism to carry on this series.

REVOLT OF 1857
– EVALUATING THE SIKH ASSISTANCE TO BRITISH &
THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE MUTINY –

INDERJEET SINGH*

BACKGROUND

In 1957 the Government of India decided to commemorate the Centenary (1857-1957) of the ‘Revolt of 1857’. A committee by the name of Indian Freedom Struggle Centenary (1857-1957) Souvenir Committee based at New Delhi was formed. During the seminar, the general consensus was that “Indian struggle for freedom (1857) failed as the Sikhs had betrayed and sided with the British”. The Secretary to the Committee, in his letter dated 13th June 1957, asked eminent Sikh historian Dr Ganda Singh to rebut the charge, if possible. Accordingly, Ganda Singh wrote number of articles in “The Tribune” newspaper during the months of August & September 1957.¹ However, even after the lapse of 64 years, the same allegations are being repeated every year.

SIKH POPULATION IN 1857

Dr Ganda Singh states that the Sikhs constituted about 1% of population of united (or pre-partitioned) India. The rest of 99% could have arisen and negated the effect of 1%. In Punjab, the Sikhs were not more than 10% during this period.² Did the rest 99% namely the Hindus and the Muslims rise to the rebellion? If not, why? How many Indian people or the states had joined the mutiny? Let us examine these questions

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WHO DID NOT JOIN THE REBELLION?

Two eminent historians and their works published in 1957 are being used here in this discussion. Ramesh Chandra Majumdar (RCM) wrote *The Sepoy Mutiny & Revolt of 1857*. Majumdar is regarded more of a 'right-wing' historian. While he is particularly liked by the 'Nationalists', Surendra Nath Sen's book *Eighteen Fifty-Seven* was commissioned by the then Government of India and it could be considered as 'Left-wing Marxist' historian's work. Both of them were great historians and for the purpose of this discussion, their contrasting background and philosophy will give readers a balanced picture about this event. Both works have used a lot of contemporary and original sources. Let's examine what these esteemed historians have to say about the role of other states in the 1857 revolt?

Rajasthan: Majumdar states "The people remained quiet and the Rajput chiefs particularly the Raja of Jodhpur helped the British. The only exception was Thakur Kusal Singh, the chief of Ahua who had some specific grievances against the British"³

Bengal: Majumdar writes "Bengal was practically unaffected by the Mutiny with the exception of two sporadic outbursts at Dacca & Chittagong" (both are now in Bangladesh).⁴

Bombay Presidency: The present states of Gujarat, Maharashtra & Sindh (now in Pakistan) were part of it. Majumdar notes "In general the Bombay army remained loyal but there were some sepoys who shared the feeling of their comrades in Northern India. Attempts at mutiny failed at Ahmadabad and Hyderabad in Sindh, and though a mutiny broke out in Karachi, it was easily put down"⁵

South India: Sen writes "The Presidency of Madras remained unaffected all through, though some slight signs of restlessness were perceived in the army. The educated community unreservedly ranged itself on the side of law and order and condemned the rising in unambiguous terms".⁶

Maratha ruler Scindia of Gwalior, Holkar of Indore and Gaikwad of Baroda actively helped British even though Nana Sahib, adopted son of Peshwa Balaji Baji Rao II had plunged into the rebellion. Ranbir

Singh Dogra, ruler of Jammu & Kashmir also assisted British in subduing the revolt.

JC Marshman in *History of India* published in 1867 strongly advocated continuing the princely states of India based on their help in suppressing the revolt. "But so exemplary was their loyalty to the British Government in the days of its extremity, that the advocates of native dynasties (Scindia, Holkar, Gaekwad, Nizam etc) have adduced it as one of the strongest arguments for maintaining them."⁷

WHY DID THE SIKHS NOT JOIN?

Dr Ganda Singh has rightly stated that Sikhs were neither approached nor consulted to join the revolt. The rebel sepoys had declared Bahadur Shah Zafar, scion of Mughal family who lived on British pension and whose influence did not extend beyond Red Fort. This was not acceptable to the Sikhs as Mughals had a history of persecuting the Sikhs. The list is rather long.

- a) Martyrdom of fifth Guru, Guru Arjan Dev by Emperor Jahangir in 1605.
- b) Martyrdom of ninth Guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur by Emperor Aurangzeb in 1675.
- c) Execution of younger sons of Guru Gobind Singh by Mughal governor of Sirhind in 1705.
- d) Royal edict to kill Sikhs on sight by Emperor Bahadur Shah in 1710.
- e) Royal edict to kill Sikhs on sight by Emperor Farrukh Siyar and execution of Banda Bahadur & more than 700 Sikhs in Delhi in 1716.
- f) Killing of Sikhs & putting a price on the head of a Sikhs and persecution under Mughal Governors of Punjab namely Zakriya Khan, Yahya Khan till Mir Mannu's death in 1752.

Mir Mannu later became Governor of Lahore under Ahmed Shah Abdali who was himself involved in destroying Harmandar Sahib, Amritsar twice and killing more than 20,000 Sikhs in a single day. Abdali was not a Mughal but an Afghan ruler who invaded north India no less than 8 times.⁸ The British conveniently reminded the Sikhs of the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur, when rebel sepoys declared

Bahadur Shah Zafar, descendant of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb as the ruler of India. Across Punjab, posters were pasted reminding Sikhs of the Mughal atrocities.

REBEL BENGAL ARMY

There was no love lost between Punjabis (particularly Sikhs) and soldiers of British East India Company who had fought two Anglo Sikh wars in 1845/46 and 1848/49. These soldiers were known as Purbeas (Easterners) or Hindustani. They were mostly Muslims, Brahmins & upper caste Hindus from Uttar Pradesh & neighbouring regions. The Sikhs and Punjabis had sent feelers to these soldiers' during two Anglo-Sikh wars asking them to join them and oust the British from the country but to no avail. Consequently, the Punjabis blamed them for their defeat. The attitude of Hindustani soldiers and treatment towards Punjabis and Sikhs was very hostile during this interim period of 1849-57. As these soldiers had rebelled, it evoked little sympathy from the Punjabis. The British were able to exploit this distrust.⁹

ABSENCE OF SIKH LEADER

Duleep Singh, the son of Maharaja Ranjit Singh had been taken to England by the East India Company. His mother Maharani Jind Kaur was living in exile in Nepal. Chattar Singh and his son Sher Singh Attariwala who had led the second Anglo Sikh war in 1848-49 were exiled in Banaras. The former had already died. Sher Singh had died in 1858. Other prominent leaders of the second Anglo-Sikh war were either dead or forced to live an isolated life. Bhai Maharaj Singh who was exiled to Singapore had died in 1856. Baba Bikram Singh (Bedi) of Una another leader was forced to leave Una and spend rest of his life in Amritsar. All these leaders and those who were expected to cause trouble were under strict surveillance by the British throughout the revolt.

EXTENTION OF THE REVOLT

The Sepoys of Bengal army had revolted at number of places but in most places the people and the local rulers kept aloof. Majumdar writes that the extent of the revolt where people also participated was

limited to Uttar Pradesh, Delhi (& neighbouring areas) and a few parts of Central India. The revolt took a national character in these areas. Hence he writes that he has chosen the title of his book *Sepoy Mutiny and Revolt of 1857*. He has produced letters of Nana Sahib written to British after the revolt (but before he joined) promising loyalty and redressal of their personal grievances. Nana was an adopted son of Peshwa and wanted recognition and pension for his father. They were not unjust demands and Lord Dalhousie's much maligned policy of 'Doctrine of Lapse' where a state would pass on to the British if they did not have a natural heir, was responsible for forcing him, Jhansi and Awadh (in Uttar Pradesh, which was annexed on superficial grounds) to join the revolt.

ATTITUDE OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Maulana Azad a proponent of Hindu-Muslim unity but a scholar captures the attitude of general public in the lengthy foreword to the book written by Sen. He writes, "They were very often mere spectators of the struggle and lent their support to whichever side was more powerful at the moment. An idea of their attitude may be gained from the fate which overtook Tatyá Tope. When he was finally defeated, he resolved to struggle back across the Narmada into Madhya Pradesh. He was convinced that once he reached the Maratha region, the people would offer him support. With almost superhuman courage and tenacity, he eluded his pursuers and did cross the Narmada. When he reached the other bank, he could not find one village which would give him shelter. Everybody turned against him so that he had to fly again and resort to the forests. It was a professed friend who finally betrayed him while he was asleep."¹⁰

Another close confidante of Nana Sahib was Rao Saheb. Sen writes that "Rao Saheb was betrayed, not by a Rajput, but by a man from Maharashtra.

NATIONAL WAR OR FIRST WAR FOR INDEPENDENCE

In early part of 20th century, a number of Indians wrote about revolt of 1857 as 'first war for independence' and glorified the Indian rulers who fought in the revolt as 'freedom fighters'. It was perhaps the need of the hour to instil a nationalist sentiment among the people

of the country. But this is not true. Even in Central India, where the revolt had popular following, there were number of instances where Hindus and Muslims had major disputes and skirmishes. Hence Majumdar has stated **“To regard the outbreak of 1857 as either national in character or a war for independence of India betrays a lack of true knowledge of the history of Indian people in nineteenth century.”**¹¹

Sen is slightly more sympathetic than Majumdar “Outside Oudh and Shahabad there is no evidence of that general sympathy which would invest the Mutiny with the dignity of a national war. At the same time it would be wrong to dismiss it as a mere military rising. The Mutiny became a revolt and assumed a political character when the mutineers of Meerut placed themselves under the King of Delhi and a section of the landed aristocracy and civil population declared in his favour. What began as a fight for religion ended as a war of independence for there is not the slightest doubt that the rebels wanted to get rid of the alien government and restore the old order of which the King of Delhi was the rightful representative.”¹²

BENGAL ARMY’S ROLE IN DESTROYING INDIAN STATES

Majumdar has rightly pointed out that the Bengal Army (consisting of Muslims & upper caste Hindus) was responsible for defeating the Gorkhas, the Marathas and the Sikhs. After helping and assisting the British to win whole of India (there were 7 Indians to 1 British soldier in Bengal Army), the Bengal sepoys mutinied for religious reasons. He writes that Anglo-Sikh war was the most opportune time to revolt against the British, but Bengal soldiers helped British to defeat Sikhs and Indian leaders who revolted in 1857 were still friends with British at this stage. He further writes:

“In this connection a very important fact is often forgotten by those who claim the outbreak of 1857 as a national war of independence, for which patriotic sepoys shed their blood, and political leaders had been preparing grounds for a long time. The Panjab was conquered by the British with the help of the sepoys less than ten years before the outbreak of Mutiny. The battle of Chillianwala which proved the valour and heroism of the Sikhs, and their ability, under

more favourable circumstances, to defeat the English, was fought in 1849, only eight years before the Mutiny. If there were really a movement for freeing India from the British yoke, obviously this was the most suitable opportunity. But we have not the least evidence to show that the Indian leaders like Nana Sahib and others mentioned above raised their little finger to help the cause of the Sikhs. The sepoys themselves, who are supposed to have sacrificed their all for the sake of their country in 1857, had not the least scruple to fight the Sikhs who were the last defenders of liberty in India. There are even allegations that the Sikhs entreated the sepoys to refuse help to the British, but in vain.

Although this cannot be definitely proved, it should have occurred to every sepoy, who had real love for his country, that by defeating the Sikhs he would only forge the last link in the chain by which India was being fettered by the British. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that the attitude and activities of the sepoys in 1849 certainly did not correspond to the patriotic fervour with which they are supposed to be endowed in 1857. Unless, therefore, we suppose that this sentiment was suddenly developed during the short interval of eight years, we can hardly regard the sepoys, who rebelled in 1857, as being inspired by the idea of liberty and freedom. Incidentally, the Sikh War also proves the absence, in 1849, of any serious conspiracy or organisation against the British, although, according to Sitaram Bawa, such conspiracy against the British was going on for many years in almost every native court. Surely the Sikh War would have been the most suitable opportunity, if ever there were any, which the conspirators should have taken “advantage of for organising a war of independence against the British.”¹³

THE SIKHS WHO JOINED THE REBELLION

The general Indian masses are taught that the Sikhs sided with the British East India Company during the revolt of 1857. The Sikh princely states of Patiala and others in Cis Sutlej area supported the British during the Sepoy Mutiny but so did the Maratha states (Scindia, Gaekwad & Holkar) and Rajput states (Jaipur, Jodhpur and Hill Rajputs including Jammu). They all had a subsidiary alliance with the British.

According to Majumdar & Sen, the revolt of 1857 became a popular movement only in Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Jhansi and some surrounding areas. In rest of the country it was a Sepoy Mutiny.

The Sikhs from Maharaja Ranjit Singh's territory (known as Majha Sikhs) were not recruited for they were considered unreliable by the British as they had fought the British twice in a span of 3 years (1845/46 & 1848/49). However, the Sikhs from Cis Sutlej region were recruited to form Regiment of Ludhiana and Regiment of Ferozepur in 1846. Shamsul Islam did a yeoman service in 2007 by writing *Rebel Sikhs in 1857* where using contemporary Indian and British sources he gave instances where Sikhs joined the uprising of 1857. He notes an entry by British spy Gauri Shankar dated 23rd August 1857 that approximately 1500 Sikhs soldiers of the rebel army had been posed to guard the gates of the city (Delhi).¹⁴

Among the academic circles it is known for a long time that Sikhs were both among the 'rebels' and the forces besieging Delhi during May-September 1857, but this is practically unknown among Indian population. Let us now point out to the Sikh participation among 'rebels' at various places.

DELHI - MUNSHI JEEWAN LAL'S DIARY

Munshi Jeewan Lal was the head clerk attached to the British Governor General's agent at Delhi when 'rebel' sepoys at Delhi declared independence on 11th May 1857. Jeewan Lal was instructed to stay back in Delhi and provide information to British, basically work as a spy. Jeewan Lal maintained a diary which was translated and published by Charles Theophilus Metcalfe, a senior British official and a benefactor of Jeewan Lal in 1885. The diary contained material and information to be passed on to the British who had besieged the city. The following entries in the book *Two Narratives of the Mutiny in Delhi* about the participation of Sikhs in the rebellion and defence of Delhi will be an eye-opener for many.¹⁵

28th May 1857 - "About 200 men arrived from Lahore and Ferozepur to join the mutineers."¹⁶

1st June 1857 - "News came from Patiala that the two native regiments sent to assist the English had joined the mutineers, and,

had had a fight with the English. It was reported that the whole of the Patiala force was hostile to the English. The soldiers openly remonstrated with the Maharajah for sympathizing with the English, when the natives were fighting in defence of their religion. They reminded him that he had gained nothing by his behaviour during the Punjab war..."¹⁷

27th July 1857 - "Today two Sikhs came on behalf of the chiefs of Lahore to say that 200,000 cartridges had been safely delivered to the troops in the Nimuch camp. Orders were issued that these were not to be wasted, as the supply in the Magazine was running short."¹⁸

29th July 1857 - "Several Sikhs, retainers of the Rajah Narunder Sing (Narinder Singh of Patiala), deserted from the English camp and appeared at the Durbar, and they reported that the English were badly off for artillery horses, but had plenty of guns."¹⁹

5th August 1857 - "Certain Sikhs presented a petition to the king (Bahadur Shah) complaining that they were in the habit of attacking the English entrenchments, but had to return, as the Purbeahs would give them no assistance and would not co-operate; they prayed to the King to form a regiment of Sikhs from amongst the regiments of Delhi, and to entrust them with two field guns, that they might attack the English with some chance of success. They were encouraged and told not to despair of victory."²⁰

26th August 1857 - "Ghosh Mahommed, the General commanding the Nimuch force...asked for reinforcements. One regiment of Sikhs and four of cavalry were placed under his command."²¹

DELHI - MAHMOOD FAROOQUI'S BOOK

In 2010, Mahmood Farooqui wrote an excellent book on the revolt of 1857 in Delhi titled *Besieged Voices from Delhi 1857* translating contemporary Persian and Urdu sources. The book makes a lot of reference to Sikhs soldiers among the 'rebels'. The author has provided a dateline and particularly interesting are the entries relating to 21st August and 22nd August 1857 which are as follows

21st August 1857 - "Commander in Chief (Mirza Mughal)

forwards Sikhs petition complaining discrimination (from Bengal regiment soldiers) and asking to be formed into a separate regiment.”

22nd August 1857 - “Bahadur Shah Zafar tries to conciliate Sikhs in the Bareilly regiment.”²²

Here in 1857 these ‘rebel’ Sikhs were from Cis-Sutlej territories where rulers were pro-British since 1809 but it seems that the Bengal soldiers could not make the distinction between Trans-Sutlej Sikhs who mistrusted them and Cis-Sutlej who has no history of discontent with them.

DELHI - ABDUL LATIF’S DIARY

Abdul Latif, an elite resident of Delhi wrote a diary in Persian during the siege of the Delhi by the British. The Urdu translation is titled *Tareekhi Roznamcha*. His diary is very good source of information. The important entries related to Sikhs are as follows:

17th August 1857 - “200 Sikhs sepoys belonging to the army of Jammu Raja came to join the rebel forces.”

The Raja of Jammu, Ranbir Singh Dogra sent his army to assist British during the siege of Delhi. Out of this army, 200 Sikhs mutinied and joined the ‘rebel’ forces. Sikhs and Dogras usually paint a rather bleak picture of their relations post 1846 when Raja Gulab Singh Dogra refused to fight first Anglo-Sikh war and gave military intelligence to British officer Col. Wheeler at Ludhiana.²³ Despite all this it did not stop some Sikhs from serving under the ‘Jammu Fox’ and his successor.

REBELLION IN CIS- SUTLEJ PUNJAB

The Sikhs had reasons not to join the rebellion. The Mughals had a history of persecuting Sikhs and as explained earlier there was no love lost between Sikhs and Porbeah soldiers. The British exploited this distrust to their advantage. But in Cis-Sutlej Punjab there were rebellions which were crushed. Sardar Mohur Singh was sentenced to death for his role in rebellion in Ropar.

Reverend J. Cave-Brown, a Christian clergyman accompanied the British forces which moved from Peshawar to Delhi. In his memoirs,

The Punjab & Delhi in 1857 he mentions that the mutinous troops at Ropar had Sikhs. He writes “five men concerned in the riot at Roopar (Ropar) were identified, and tried by a civil commission, and, with the Sirdar Mohur Singh, were sentenced to death.”²⁴

At Ludhiana, a Sikh made an attempt to the life of British officer. The Ludhiana District Gazetteer states “Of the two men of the regiment (of native British troops at Ludhiana) who met their death, one was a Jhelum Mussulman, caught as a spy; another who attempted on Lieutenant Yorke’s life, and was shot by him was a young Majha Sikh.”²⁵

SIKH REBELLION IN AWADH (CENTRAL UTTAR PRADESH)

Martin Richard Gubbins was the Revenue Commissioner and a member of the British Commission which governed Awadh after its annexation for fourteen months just before the revolt of 1857. After the revolt, he became one of the chief advisors of Sir Henry Lawrence (Commissioner of Awadh), managed the Intelligence Department and stayed with the British forces till they were forced to vacate Lucknow in November 1857. His memoirs were published in 1858 in London under the title *An Account of the Mutinies in Oudh* has following details about the Sikh ‘rebels’ in Awadh.

On 31st May 1857, Gubbins led British sepoy were able to capture a group of rebel sepoy in a village outside Lucknow. It was found by Gubbins that “three of the men belonged to the 48th Native Infantry and three to the 13th Native Infantry, and one man was a Seikh (Sikh).”²⁶

GUBBINS ALSO NOTES

“Many of these men (Sikhs) deserted us during the siege; and the rest were, during the whole time, a constant source of alarm and anxiety. They were in constant correspondence with the enemy, through their deserters, who used to come up under the walls of the squares and converse with their brethren inside...The object of these visits of the Siekh (Sikh) deserters was...to induce their brethren to desert also.”²⁷

Gubbins’ narration of Awadh rebellion mentioned the fact that

by the end of July 1857 there prevailed 'great despondency' among the British troops as every day native and Sikh soldiers joined the ranks of the rebels."We daily lost men, sometimes six or seven in a day; and they had begun to think that relief was impossible. Many desertions had taken place, and several of the Seikhs (Sikhs), including sixteen men of the 13th Native Infantry had been of the number."

Gubbins while describing the events of the month of August (1857) wrote that Sikh troops continued giving "much anxiety. Many of them had deserted; and we were not sure that the rest who were known to maintain clandestine communication with the enemy, might not any time follow the example of their brethren."²⁸

SIKH PLOT TO KILL SENIOR BRITISH OFFICER

Gubbins writes the details of an abortive plot which allegedly was hatched by the Sikh soldiers against Gubbins himself. As a precaution he banned entry of Sikh soldiers into his enclosure (tent)."Their plan was stated to be the following: the Seikhs (Sikhs) were to enter my enclosure by twos and threes, on pretence of speaking to me about obtaining an issue of pay. My native artillerymen were then, at a given signal, to turn the guns of my post on the European, when a rising of the native was to take place everywhere, while an attack from the outside was to be made by the enemy."²⁹

BENARAS - LARGE SCALE KILLING OF 'REBEL' SIKH SOLDIERS

The book *Chiefs and Families of Note in Punjab* (Volume I) written by Sir Lepen Griffins contains details of large-scale rebellion of Ludhiana Sikh troops of the British army stationed at Benares (Varanasi) and their massacre by the British. "On the 4th June 1857 the 37th Native Infantry was disbanded at Benares, and some suspicious movement being observed in a corps of Ludhiana Sikhs present on the ground, the guns, which were being served against the 37th, were turned against the Sikhs. The whole affair seems to have been a miserable mistake; and there is no reason to believe that the corps was anything but loyal. But it was not prepared for so severe a test of its loyalty, and accordingly charged the guns; but was repulsed with great loss and driven from the field."

Lepen notes the role played by Sardar Surat Singh, a veteran of 2nd Anglo Sikh war who was exiled in Benaras by the British. Lepen writes, “When the Sikh guard hears of the fate of their comrades, their agitation and rage was extreme, and they would certainly have mutinied, seized the treasure, and attacked the Europeans, had not Sardar Surat Singh one in among them and, by his personal influence and expostulations, kept them to a sense of their duty. Through that long June night, the Sardar, ably seconded by Pandit Gokal Chand, argued and entreated till, towards morning, the little party were escorted to the mint by a European force.”³⁰

JAUNPUR - REBELLION OF SIKH SOLDIERS

The city of Jaunpur which is less than 40 miles from Benaras (Varanasi) has had a contingent of Sikhs soldiers from Ludhiana regiment and they revolted after hearing the massacre of their regiment in Benaras. They killed their commanding officer and marched to Lucknow, the capital of Awadh which was still under the ‘rebels’. Lepen writes

“At Jaunpur another detachment of the Ludhiana (Sikh) Regiment was stationed. When these men heard of the destruction of their regiment, they rose in fury, shot their Commanding Officer murdered the Joint Magistrate, and marched to Lucknow with the treasure.”³¹

ROLE REVERSED - SARDAR SURAT SINGH

Most readers would not know that all Sikh chiefs who joined the second Anglo- Sikh war 1848/49 were treated harshly by the British and their jagirs (lands) were confiscated and given nominal pension. The more serious ‘offenders’ were sent to exile outside Punjab. Sardar Surat Singh was one of them. His jagir worth Rs 22,600 was confiscated and he was sent to Benaras in exile on an annual pension of Rs 720 in 1849. He was under constant surveillance by the British. After lapse of 8 years people had switched sides. The Bengal regiment soldiers who fought from British’ side and did not respond to Sikh’s call to join them and ouster the British in 1848/49 were now fighting the British. Surat Singh who had fought the British before, in 1857 used his personal influence (as a Sikh Chief) to stop further desertions to ‘rebels’ who

were soldiers from Bengal regiment that defeated Sikhs, Marathas and Gurkhas. In India it is common to use the terminology of ‘freedom fighter’ and ‘traitor’ and it is fashionable to see the events in black and white. History is more complex and there is lot of ‘grey’ areas.

SANDHANWALIA SARDARS

The Sandhanwalia Sardars who share the ancestral lineage with Maharaja Ranjit Singh fought in revolt of 1857. Damandeep Singh Sandhanwalia, scion of the family and a bright young man informs the author of the article that Sardar Thakur Singh Sandhanwalia was the son-in-law of Raja Nahar Singh, Jat ruler of Bhallabgarh who joined the rebellion with his father-in-law. Following the capture of the Jat ruler (& subsequent execution) Thakur Singh came to Punjab. His role in Singh Sabha movement and trying to restore Maharaja Duleep Singh to the throne of Lahore is well known. Shamsul Islam has quoted letters from the British spies in his book which confirms that the Sandhanwalia Sardars joined the rebellion in 1857.³²

CONCLUSION

Since the Sikh princely state of Patiala and others had actively assisted British by sending their soldiers and numerous Hindu princely states including Dogra, Hill Rajputs, Marathas (states of Sindhia, Holkar & Gaikwad), Rajputana and state of Travancore actively helped the British in suppressing the revolt, **why are Sikhs specifically targeted for betraying the nation? Is it because they are an easy target and do not form a vote-bank outside Punjab? Both the historians Majumdar and Sen have rightly stated that nationalism was still in infancy among Indians and those who fought the British had some personal grievances against them.**

It is very fashionable across the Raavi to paint the revolt as a Muslim struggle to regain the Empire where the Hindus did not assist them. The Nizam of Hyderabad, Nawab of Malerkotla, Karnal, Punjabi Muslims (except Rai Ahmed Khan Kharal) and Pathans, did not join the revolt even when Bahadur Shah Zafar, scion of old Mughals was declared the Emperor of India. These rulers and communities helped British to crush the revolt.

Sikhs are not devoid of patriotism. The Sikh contribution in freedom struggle against British is not taught outside Punjab. Another myth is propounded by many that Sikhs actively helped British by joining their army. By WW2, Sikhs formed about 20% of the forces, the Punjabi Muslims & Pathans formed a third of all forces (33%) and remaining were all Hindus (about 47%). These figures explode this myth.

Vast majority of the Indian native rulers remained loyal with the British and that included rulers from all three religions. In 1861 The British Government in India gave the 'Most Exalted Order of the Star of India' to Indian princely rulers for their loyalty and help in suppressing the revolt. The list contains the 'usual suspects' namely Nizam of Hyderabad, Scindia of Gwalior, Ranbir S Dogra, Holkar of Indore, Gaekwad of Baroda, Nawab of Rampur & Bhopal, ruler of Nepal and Patiala among others.³³

To blame the Sikhs alone for the failure of this revolt and partial mutiny is to miss the wood for the trees as the documentary evidence produced above goes against the false charge of traitorship against the Sikhs. It is time to sift the grain from chaff and set the record straight. The Sikhs have proved more patriotic than their compatriots at every stage of India's history.

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## HINDUS, MOHAMMEDANS VIS-A-VIS SIKHS

BHAI ARDAMAN SINGH\*

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Sikhs have generally been working under the Hindu spell that they were created only to defend the Hindu Dharam and Hindu Nation. This purpose having been fulfilled, a section of the Hindus who have never tolerated the independent existence of the Sikhs, have begun to suggest that the Sikhs should better merge now into the Hindu fold. This spell had even created a common aversion amongst the Sikhs towards the Muslims as a whole. It will be worthwhile, therefore, to look into the facts and reality of their mutual relations.

Sikhism, the Satguru's way of life, was founded by Guru Nanak. We have seen that when Guru Nanak started this movement in India, the Aryan and Semitic thoughts and cultures were in conflict. Sometimes it took the shape of bloody skirmishes and aggression and tyranny on the physically and politically weak which were the Hindu Aryans. Guru Nanak struck the middle path. It steered clear of both, though it passed through the middle. It was an independent approach. This is vividly and definitely made clear by the tenth Satguru in his significant *Swayya* that we recite every evening:

ਪਾਇ ਗਹੇ ਜਬ ਤੇ ਤੁਮਰੇ ਤਬ ਤੇ ਕੋਊ ਅਖਖ ਤਰੇ ਨਹੀ ਆਨਯੋ ।  
ਰਾਮ ਰਹੀਮ ਪੁਰਾਨ ਕੁਰਾਨ ਅਨੇਕ ਕਹੈ ਮਤ ਏਕ ਨ ਮਾਨਯੋ ।  
ਸਿੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਿ ਸਾਸਤ੍ਰ ਬੇਦ ਸਭੈ ਬਹੁ ਭੇਦ ਕਹੈ ਹਮ ਏਕ ਨ ਜਾਨਯੋ ।  
ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਸਿਪਾਨ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਤੁਮਰੀ ਕਰਿ ਮੈ ਨ ਕਹਯੋ ਸਭ ਤੋਹਿ ਬਖਾਨਯੋ ।

*Since I have embraced Thy Feet, I have brought no one under my eye:  
Ram and Rabim, the Purans and the Quran express various opinions, but  
I believe in none of them.  
The Smritis, the Shastras, and the Vedas all expound so many different*

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*doctrines, but I accept none of them.*

*O Holy God, by Thy favour, it is not I who have been speaking, all that has been said, hath been said by Thee.*

But it was not meant to come in conflict with the already warring elements or to elbow out anyone of them. Instead the Satguru wanted to bring the two systems, at loggerheads with each other, together in amity. That is why Sikhism is also called the third way of life (ਤੀਸਰਾ ਪੰਥ) and independent way (ਨਿਰਮਲ ਪੰਥ). The Satguru has brought together both Hindu and Mohammedan men-of-God, who believed compassion to be the fountain-head of religion and spiritual purification and clean action as the ultimate aim. The presence of the *bani* in the Holy Granth of such different sages, Muslims, Vaishnavs, high castes and untouchables together, and the respectful status equal to that of the Guru thus granted to them, is the living evidence of it. When a Sikh pays his obeisance to the Holy Granth, he bows his head before all of them. In Sikhism, certain philosophical interpretations are similar with Hindu thought, like life after death, while such concepts as the Oneness of God and congregational worship have much in common with Islam. In some ways, it can be said that Sikhism is nearer to Islam than to Hinduism. Sikhism, in fact, is a bulwark against ritualism, formalism and hollow philosophies whether in Hinduism or in Islam. It advocates and preaches the revival of unflinching faith and confidence in the Ultimate Reality, the truth; and interpret this faith and belief in actual life.

It is a basic principle of Sikhism not to bend before brute force, aggression, or tyranny. This has to be opposed tooth and nail even with one's life, first by non-violent and peaceful struggle and then by offering one's. This example was set by the fifth Satguru. If this did not succeed, the struggle was not to be given up in frustration or abject surrender. It becomes incumbent, then, for a Sikh to wield the sword as the sixth Satguru did. It was a mere chance that the rulers, at that time, were Mohammedans and were bigoted, tyrants and aggressors. They had, therefore, to be opposed, while the Hindus were weak, imbecile, oppressed and unable to defend themselves. Naturally they came closer to the Sikhs who became their saviours.

But it is important to keep in mind that Sikhism and Sikhs were not opposed to Islam or the Mohammedans as such. Now it will be proper to have a look at the relations between the Sikhs and other two religions.

Hindus being the victims of the Mohammedan rulers' bigotry fanaticism and tyranny, came closer to the Sikhs to seek protection. Naturally, therefore, most of the conversions to Sikhism happened to be from amongst the Hindus. But conversions from Mohammedans also continued. There is no denying the fact that Guru Nanak Dev and his three successors came from Hindu stock. But after the fourth Satguru, the Guruship remained confined to the Sikhs (ਘਰ ਦੀ ਘਰ ਵਿਚ ਰਹੀ).

History tells us that the first who discerned the Divine Light in Guru Nanak was the Mohammedan Chief, Rai Bular, of Talwandi Rai Bhoi Ki, and Satguru's first disciple and companion was Bhai Mardana, a muslim minstrel, who played on the *rabab* and remained in Satguru's attendance till his end. His last rites were performed by the Satguru himself. Bhai Mardana and his successors, Satta and Balwand, both Muslims had the honour of getting their compositions, included in the Holy Granth. Then we find the third Guru establishing twenty-two *Manjis*, that is, centres of Sikh Mission. One well-known centre was under a Mohammedan called Allahyaar in the area now called Kapurthala.

Emperor Akbar got so enamoured of the efforts and policy of the Guru Darbar in bringing about unity and integration among the different communities at loggerheads with each other, that he came all the way to Goindwal to have an audience with the third Nanak and study the Sikh way, which he later adopted at the Imperial Court.

The present site of Amritsar was obtained from Emperor Akbar in 1577 by the fourth Guru by paying 700 Akbari rupees to the residents of Tung who were the owners of the land.

By the time of the fifth Guru, Mohammedans, especially Sufis, came very close to the Sikhs. So much so, when the foundation stone of the Golden Temple at Amritsar was to be laid, the fifth Guru called Hazrat Mian Mir from Lahore to do this auspicious ceremony.

The sixth Nanak, Guru Hargobind, began to collect volunteers for his forces to protect and safeguard their worldly and religious interests. In these volunteers, there were several Mohammedans too. It will be worth noting that while building the town of Kiratpur in the hilly Sutlej Valley, the Satguru erected, besides gurdwaras, temples as well as mosques, at his own expense. At Sri Hargobindpur also he built a mosque at his own expense for the use of his Mohammedan troops.

Prince Dara Shikoh, like many other Sufis, was an admirer of the Satguru and close to the Sikhs. When pursued by the army of Aurangzeb, Prince Dara Shikoh asked for the Guru's help which was extended by Guru Har Rai by sending out his force to guard the passage of the Beas till the Prince was able to cross and escape.

When the birth of Guru Gobind Singh took place at Patna, Bhikhan Shah, a Mohammedan Pir, sitting at Ghuram in the district of Karnal, now in district Patiala, bowed to the East, when he read his *Namaz* of *Thayjud*. His followers were surprised and asked the reason for it, because Muslims bow towards Mecca in the West. Bhikhan Shah replied that the Divine Light had flashed in that direction, and he marched off to Patna to see the Guru. In the battle of Bhangani near Paonta, Syed Budhu Shah along with his four sons and 700 disciples joined the forces of the Guru against the Hill Rajas who were defeated and routed at the end of February, 1686. Budhu Shah lost his four sons and several of his followers in the battle. We all know of Ghani Khan and Nabhi Khan, the two Pathan brothers of Machhiwara who risked their own lives, staked everything, and took the Guru on a palanquin on their shoulders and with timely assistance of Qazi Pir Mohammed got the Satguru through the enemy lines to safety after the escape from Chamkaur, while the Hindu and Mughal Imperial Forces were in hot pursuit. It was the Muslim Nawab of Malerkotla, who had the courage and daring to protest when the two younger sons of the tenth Guru, innocent children of seven and nine years, were cruelly tortured and put to death by Wazir Khan at Sirhind. We find that this devotion and love of the house of Malerkotla towards the Guru and the Sikhs continues to this day. On the ninth of March, 1969, the Nawab got an *Akhand Path* of Guru Granth Sahib performed

in his Darbar Hall at Malerkotla. At the place of the throne of the Nawab Ruler, the Holy Granth was placed. Personally, orthodox Muslims themselves, His Highness the Nawab and the Begam Sahiba stood in attendance with *chammar* in their hands. I had the pleasure and privilege to be personally present at the occasion. Recently, the Nawab was returned to the Punjab Legislative Assembly on an Akali Ticket. His close relative leading a *jatha* on September 15, 1971, comprising Sikhs as well as Mohammedans to Delhi for liberation of the gurdwaras in the capital, surpasses everything.

The Sikh conception of God resembles more the monotheistic God of the Muslims than any of the gods connected with the polytheistic view of the Hindus. In other ways too like castelessness, congregational worship, community dining, joint action, and positive activities in living, the Satguru's way of life is nearer to Islam than to individualistic, introvert, self-centred Hinduism.

This nearness is confirmed in the words of the tenth Master in *Zafarnama* when he wrote to Aurangzeb that he had to battle the mischievous hill people as they were idol-worshippers and he was an idol-breaker.

It is not correct to say that the Sikh conflict was with the Muslims as a whole at any time. If it were so, Muslims of note like Syed Budhu Shah, Syed Begh, and Maimu Khan would not have fought on the side of the Sikhs against the Mughal Forces. They did so because they appreciated the rightful stand of the Satguru and the cause his Sikhs were fighting for. If it were so, Mata Sundri would not have established her residence at Delhi itself after the evacuation of Anandpur and the barbarous treatment meted out to her family and innocent children, and she could not have issued her writs to the *Panth* from under the nose of the Emperor after Guru Gobind Singh's death. Two orchards and a village presented to the child Gobind Rai by Nawabs Rahim Bakhsh and Karim Bakhsh are to this day with the Patna Sahib Takht. 5,000 acres of land belonging to the Nanak Matta Gurdwara in U.P. was an offering from a Muslim Begum. Sometimes I begin to feel, when studying without prejudice, the *Zafarnama*, the letter of victory written by the tenth Guru to Emperor Aurangzeb, that there was no bitterness at all or any enmity between them. The way the Satguru

puts up his case, reprimands the Emperor for having lost his sense of duty and his failure to administer justice evenly to people who were put under his charge by the Almighty God and reminds him of the day of reckoning, and describes to him the atrocities and tyrannies that his men perpetrated on innocent citizens of the land. All these are certainly not the normal way to address an enemy. This letter was written after the escape from Chamkaur and the deaths of the Satguru's four sons and mother. As a result of this epistle, a meeting between the Emperor and the Satguru was being negotiated when the Emperor expired. After the death of Aurangzeb, we find Guru Gobind Singh taking part in the war of succession and helping win the throne for the right claimant, Bahadur Shah. No enemy would do that.

Similarly, the Sikhs have had very close connections and relations with the Hindus. The first four Gurus having come from Hindu families, the circle of relatives, friends and associates, naturally expanded more with them than with Muslims. Most of the ceremonies and rites performed by the Sikhs are very near to those of the Hindus. Our habits, customs and most of the ways of living are similar to that of the Hindus, though some of our important principles, tenets, and outlook are nearer to Muslims than to Hindus. If the Sikhs came into conflict with the Mughal rulers, it was for the sake of and to protect the Hindus. In fact, the Sikhs have fought the battles of the Hindus. Naturally, therefore, the enrolment of volunteers and conversions to Sikhism came mostly from the Hindu fold. When the Sikhs were fighting their battles against tyranny, as a natural consequence, the Hindus looked after the Sikh families in the villages. It may be mentioned that it was under these circumstances, when the Sikh womenfolk and youngsters came under the Hindu influence that Sikhism began to be corrupted by Hindu ideas. The martyrdom of the ninth Guru, as we have seen, was due to the word he had given to the Brahmins from Kashmir that their *Dharam* would be protected and the Mughal tyranny extirpated. In reality it was a sacrifice for freedom of everybody's faith.

It is surprising to see that in spite of all this suffering, sacrifices, martyrdoms offered by innumerable Sikhs for them, there has always been an important section among the Hindus that has invariably

opposed the interests and the very existence of the Sikhs. They call us as one of them, but in doing so in reality they mean the denial of any separate Sikh identity. At one time, it was Chandu who became instrumental in torturing the fifth Guru to death, at another it was Sucha Nand, who prompted Wazir Khan to execute the young innocent sons of Guru Gobind Singh at Sirhind. When the son and successor of Guru Teg Bahadur, Guru Gobind Singh, was preparing to preserve the link and fulfil the promise that his father had given to the distressed and helpless Hindus, it were the Hindu Hill Rajas who began to harass and attack him. The first battle, therefore, the Guru had to fight at Bhangani, was forced upon him by these Hindu Chieftains. When convincingly routed, these Hindu Rajas approached the Mughal Emperor at Delhi and brought the Imperial Forces to help them against the Guru. Then we have the ignominious Lakhpat Rai who personally commanded the Lahore Forces during the first holocaust (*ghalughara*) at Kahnuwan. It was he who got a general proclamation issued for the extirpation of Sikhs and began to implement it from 10th March, 1746.

This mentality of some of the Hindus has persisted even into our own times. It should suffice to cite just one instance here about it, and that too of no smaller person than Mr Gandhi himself.

In the mid-thirties of this century, alarmed by the spate of conversions of the untouchables to Islam and Christianity, the great Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya and Dr Ambedkar realised that the salvation of the depressed scheduled castes from the unjust oppression and cruel tyranny at the hands of the so-called higher castes since times immemorial could only be in their wholesale conversion to Sikhism. In their wisdom and farsight, they drew up a scheme and agreed to a pact and started to implement it. Dr Ambedkar paid visits to Amritsar and left some of his fellow workers there to study and understand Sikhism and its institutions. The Khalsa College at Bombay is one of the outcomes of this. But to the misfortune of all concerned, this scheme was confided to Mahatma Gandhi on a strict and definite understanding not to let it out till the proper time. But unless the Mahatma was swept by rank communalism and prejudice against the Sikhs, why should he have thrown the confidence reposed in him to the winds and without any qualms of conscience committed a breach

of faith by a premature condemnation of the scheme, saying “It would be far better that the crores of untouchables of India got converted to Islam than they become Sikhs.” Eventually, at his threat to fast unto death the whole effort flopped. Friends who negotiated with Dr Ambedkar and once met him even at Janjira – a small island near Bombay in May, 1937, will bear me out. They included Sardar Narain Singh, then Manager of Nanakana Sahib, Principal Kashmiri Singh, Master Sujjan Singh, Bawa Harkishan Singh Principal, Sardar Ishar Singh Majhail, Sardar Teja Singh Akarpuri and Sardar Gurdit Singh Sethi, then President Singh Sabha, Bombay.

There is another more recent instance also, which I presume most of us clearly remember. In 1929, Sikhs were given a solemn assurance by Hindu Congress leaders, including Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Moti Lal Nehru and Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, and also assured by a formal resolution of the All India National Congress at Lahore, that no Constitution of free India shall be framed by the majority community unless it was acceptable to the Sikhs. Until August, 1947, this was repeatedly re-iterated. But when later on after independence, Jawahar Lal Nehru was reminded of it, he blandly told the Sikhs that circumstances had now changed, as if pledges are given to be broken when convenient. Not only that, we all know that a circular was issued in the Punjab soon after the partition of the country that an eye be kept on the Sikhs. They have since been practically looked upon as if they were aliens.

The same mentality worked when the present Punjab state was presented to us – a torso of a state (*Suba*) without head, arms, or legs.

There are friends and foes among both Hindus and Muslims but sometimes only one side of the picture is projected and that too after having been partially drawn and prejudicially coloured. These facts, some pleasant and some may be unpleasant, are mentioned only to show in what awkward and difficult situations the Satguru’s mission is taken forward. Where there is frontal confrontation, as was the case during the conflict with the Mughal Forces and the Pathan and Durrani invaders, the matter is straight and simple. The steel clanked and blood flowed.

Strong sinews and tough muscles with a courageous heart,

perseverance and faith, along with fighting tact and will to sacrifice, ultimately count. But when the attack is cloaked, surreptitious, camouflaged, and from within, a stab in the back, a hit below the belt, sugar-coated poison administered within our hearths and homes, the matter becomes serious and dangerous, and conflict complicated and difficult. You have to guard and protect every nook and cranny. This is what the Sikhs have to face today when the country has attained independence as Sikhs are being branded as extremists and secessionists.

Unfortunately, Sikh history has not been written without an ulterior and alien bias to it. Some attempts of late have been made by some men of letters to probe and dig deep into facts and to narrate the happenings without any bias, and project a true and factual picture. But writing or rewriting history is a colossal job. It should be tackled effectively on a collective level only rather than individually. It will be an important achievement when this task is fulfilled, because the teachings of the Satguru can best be understood from the anecdotes of history wherein those teachings stand implemented and explained in actual life.

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ਹੋਇ ਇਕਤ੍ਰ ਮਿਲਹੁ ਮੇਰੇ ਭਾਈ ਦੁਬਿਧਾ ਦੂਰਿ ਕਰਹੁ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਇ ॥  
ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੈ ਕੇ ਹੋਵਹੁ ਜੋੜੀ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਬੈਸਹੁ ਸਫਾ ਵਿਛਾਇ ॥

– Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p. 1185

ਜਨਿ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੀ ਆਏ

**LEGENDARY PIONEERS IN SIKH STUDIES**  
**– MAX ARTHUR MACAULIFFE –**

**PROF KULWANT SINGH\***

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Faith, it is said, can move mountains. It can be faith in God, in somebody else's philosophy or faith in one's own instincts, intellectual and spiritual responses. Sometime, someone comes across a person, an environment, a sound, a symphony or a combination of all these impulses which enters one's soul unconsciously and gets embedded permanently in one's psyche. There is always a mysterious design, call it Divine or unseen power, which brings about such an encounter. One such chance encounter took place between a British prolific scholar and a renowned senior British administrator of the elite Indian Civil Service (ICS) and the soulful sacred verses being recited in the Golden Temple premises at Amritsar on the Diwali night shortly after his arrival in Punjab (India) in 1864. Despite his lack of knowledge and understanding of the linguistic medium (Gurmukhi/ Punjabi) of the recitation of these sacred Sikh verses, their spirituo-musical melody entered his soul. It sparked his curiosity to delve deep into this comparatively unknown religion and its sacred text. So soul stirring was this melody and the peaceful ambience at this sacred Sikh shrine that passeth understanding that led to his conversion from Christianity to Sikhism. Consequently, his complete transformation enabled him to become an eminent scholar of Sikhism and a superb English translator of its sacred verses. Because of this monumental work of English Translation, he is also counted among the pioneers in Sikh Studies. The person so much affected, transformed and distinguished

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as scholar of Sikh studies and Sikhism was none other than Max Arthur Macauliffe (Sept 10, 1841 – March 15, 1913) and a British Administrator in Punjab, India from 1864-1893.

Born, bred and educated in Ireland and England and a graduate in broad humanistic education and in Greek, Latin, French and Italian classics in original languages, he qualified and was selected in the elite Indian Civil Services (ICS) and posted as an administrator in 1864 and reached the position of a Deputy Commissioner and a Divisional judge by 1893 when he took a voluntary retirement. Along with his professional, bureaucratic duties, he kept nurturing his passion to explore research, write and publish his writings on Sikhism, Sikh scripture and Sikh heritage with rare love and devotion. His body of academic work consists of various presentations and publications of papers such as, “Diwali At Amritsar and the Alterations of Sikhism” (1881), “The Sikh religion under Banda and its present condition” (1881), “Holy writings of the Sikhs” (1897), “Life and Teachings of Guru Gobind Singh” (1899), in various national and international journals and forums. Simultaneously with these random articles, he has been translating in English selected portions from the sacred Sikh scripture Sri Guru Granth Sahib which culminated in the publication of his monumental work of English translation of the selected verses of this great text in 1909 in six volumes by The Clarendon Press in Oxford under the title “The Sikh Religion - Its Gurus, sacred writings and Authors”. What is more significant, more impressive and more incredible is his enduring passion, his steadfast commitment to his mission and a long series of patronage and cooperation, setbacks and rebuffs and love-hate, relationships of his friends and foes together with his financial, physical and financial ordeals. It will be befitting to catalogue and take stock of some of these events and evaluate his contribution to Sikhism and Sikh studies on the basis of a perusal of these contributing events. It is the impartial evaluation of his utmost devotion and commitment and contribution to Sikhism despite his monumental troubles and tribulations which make him one of the legendary pioneers in Sikh studies.

Besides his own passion to undertake the English translation of the Sikh scripture, it was an earlier English translation of this text

done in 1877 by another British Christian clergyman Dr Earnest Trump and sponsored by the then ruling British India Office which was found to be utterly unsatisfactory, untrustworthy, tendentious and polemical. Moreover, besides being full of imperfections, Trump's translation reflected his colonial bias and his religious contempt towards the Indian culture including the Sikh sacred text. The common perception among the Sikhs that Trump did his translation work while smoking a cigar further hurt the Sikh sentiments. So when Macauliffe volunteered himself to translate the sacred Sikh text into English, it was immediately welcomed among a wide section of the Sikh society. While Trump's shoddy translation was the work done by a hired mercenary based on a purely commercial transaction, Macauliffe's offer as well as his final translated work was his labour of love and a fulfillment of his passion and love for the Sikh text devoid of any financial considerations and advancement of personal reputation. Combined with this selfless motive was Macauliffe's keen desire to present to the world outside especially the European Christian world the comparative sublimity of Sikh religion and profoundness of its sacred text which had impressed him so much that he had voluntarily converted to Sikhism from Christianity. It was also going to facilitate a sizeable section of the new generation of English reading and speaking Sikhs to read their own sacred scripture in English translation.

So when Macauliffe was seriously contemplating to undertake this English translation while posted as a Divisional Judge at Ferozepur in 1893, a supportive letter written by Sri Guru Singh Sabha Ferozepure, forwarded by the Chief Secretary of Khalsa Diwan Lahore arrived to accomplish a complete translation of the sacred Sikh text. It also urged him to get it sponsored by the then Punjab Government as it had earlier been done in the case of Dr Earnest Trump's project. While Macauliffe did not pursue the latter suggestion, he prepared himself to undertake this task voluntarily knowing fully well the financial burden of this project and the physical constraints of his administrative duties as well as the academic, scholastic and linguistic hurdles in translating an unknown oriental language with its distinct cultural and linguistic background into a completely different Western language. But his passion to contribute to the religion and text of his own choice

following his complete religious and psychic transformation overrode all other considerations. So he plunged headlong into this scholarly pursuit with complete devotion and commitment. As he could not afford to resign from his financially very lucrative job to pursue his passion, offers of financial support came from some of the then Punjab royal chiefs and Sikh organizations such as Raja Bikram Singh of Faridkot, Raja Hira Singh of Nabha, Maharaja Rajinder Singh of Patiala, Raja Ranbir Singh of Jind, Tikka Ripudaman Singh of Nabha, Sardar Ranjit Singh of Chachrauli, Gaekwad of Baroda and Khalsa Diwan. Initially, the Punjab Government had also recommended a sum of Rs 15,000/- to be given as an advance to Macauliffe against provision of several copies of translated work to the government. But later on, when the secretary of State Lord Morley reduced this amount to Rs 5,000/-, Macauliffe refused to accept the Government assistance. But despite all these assurances and actual contributions, his expenses and liabilities exceeded his income while completing his voluntarily taken up assignment. Despite all these constraints since this project demanded a full-time engagement, he took a voluntary retirement from his service in 1893 after putting in 29 years of unblemished service and settled permanently in Amritsar in his home on the cantonment road. Thus, started his rendezvous with his favourite mission and a tryst with his destiny.

While preparing himself for undertaking this onerous task, he used the best practices involved in translating this spirituo-religious text into another language. Since, this text is full of vernacular phrases, usages, references and words from several other Indian languages and their dialects and has its own distinct grammar, he studied a number of Indian languages particularly Sanskrit Prakrit, Arabian, Persian, Marathi, Gujarati besides Punjabi in order to master the textual and linguistic complexity of this rare text to procure a nearly compatible and credible English translation. He had also employed two Sikh Gyanis/ Granthis/exegetes to assist him in the understanding of this text. One of them was a considerable scholar well-versed with the Gurbani usages in Gurmukhi/ Punjabi and their meanings but almost illiterate in English language. The other one was so not well versed in Gurbani text but he could understand the first Gyani's interpretation

of Gurbani done in Punjabi and translate it in compatible English and communicate it to Macauliffe with considerable accuracy. Macauliffe could then prepare the final English version of each verse himself in English. After drafting each translated version, he would circulate it among the prominent Sikh scholars, who would analyse each translated draft, discuss it threadbare and then Macauliffe would finalize the finally approved version to include in the draft manuscript.

Describing one of these scholarly discussions held regularly at Macauliffe's residence, Bhagat Lakshman Singh states that he was surprised to see a gathering of such prominent Sikh scholars at his residence. He found Giani Sardul Singh, Bhai Hazara Singh, Sant Hazara Singh Gujarat, Mahant Prem Singh Sialkot, Gyani Badan Singh Faridkot besides three four other Sikh scholars whose names he did not remember. They would analyse and finalize the translated version of each line after which it was allowed to be included in manuscript. He himself kept attending these meetings and was paid one month salary and travelling fare from Rawalpindi to Amritsar and back. Professor Harbans Lal, a Professor at Texas University then and a well-known scholar of Sikhism states that, "Besides availing the services of these Sikh scholars, he even consulted the scholarly Udasi and Nirmala sect saints through direct consultation or through postal correspondence. He kept on this process of consultation till the final publication of this translated version in English. He even used to invite persons interested in examining his work through invitations in the press. Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha, a well-known Sikh scholar of his times, assisted him continuously in this work. We shall deal with his seminal role later on in this article. From this, we could guess about the expenses made by Macauliffe on this project. It is estimated that he spent a whopping sum of two lakhs rupees out of his own sources in addition to the donations received in completing this project in those times.

After completing the translation of the selected verses of contributing Sikh Gurus and other contributors, despite all the burden of his financial academic and professional responsibilities over a period of 15 years from 1893-1907, he prepared for its publication. Earlier, he had aspired to complete this missionary work by 1899, the second

centennial year of the birth of Khalsa, but he could not complete it even eight years after this scheduled date. He had resigned from his prestigious and lucrative job in 1893 after putting in 29 years of unblemished service in view of the volume and size his self chosen monumental task to fulfill and realize his passion. After completing this translation work with the active participation and consultation of his contemporary Sikh scholars and becoming successful in creating a favourable impression about the genuineness and credibility of his English translation, he made efforts to seek a stamp of approval from the highest Sikh authority, Sri Akal Takht. Since he had been receiving letters of appreciation of his work from several eminent Indian and foreign scholars and linguists like J.A. Garrierson (January 11, 1898), Sir William Hunter (October 7, 1898) Sir Edwin Arnold (October 27, 1898) and Professor Max Muller (December 15, 1898), he approached the leading Sikh religious leaders to examine his work and give their response. Consequently, the then Superintendent of Sri Akal Takht Sahib, Col Jawala Singh, called a large congregation of the Sikhs and Macauliffe was called upon to provide proper information about the nature, quality and content of his work to the congregation. The congregation's response was favourable and enthusiastic towards Macauliffe's work and the proposal to constitute a three-member committee comprising three Sikh scholars was approved with a voice vote through the sound of Sikh Jaikaras. A series of Akhand paths of Sri Guru Granth Sahib was also started till the completion of committee report and for the well-being of Macauliffe. The Committee, after a thorough analysis of the manuscript, gave the following decision:

“We, through the agency of learned Sikhs acquainted with English, have carefully perused the translation of the hymns of the Granth Sahib by Mr. Macauliffe. The perusal cost us a month and a half of continuous labour. Wherever any of us found what seemed to be an error, we all met, discussed the passages, and either corrected it or allowed Mr. Macauliffe's translation to stand. Wherefore we now state that Mr. Macauliffe's translation has been fully revised by us, and is thoroughly correct. The greatest care has been taken in making the translation conformable to the religious tenets of the Sikhs. The translation is quite literal, and done according to

all grammatical and rhetorical rules. We now request the Rajas, Maharajas, Sardars, and the learned and accomplished scholars of the Sikh faith to specially read or listen to this translation, if only for once. They will thus become acquainted with Mr. Macauliffe's labours, and reap the advantage of the true instruction of their Gurus. They should also render all necessary aid to the translator, because he has resigned a high post under Government and spent untold wealth on this undertaking."

Similarly admiring comments appeared in the Sikh publication "The Khalsa":

"There can be no denying the fact that the publication of Mr. Macauliffe's work will be the introduction of a new era in our history. Our Scriptures, though written in our own language, have been so much neglected by our people, that it will be no exaggeration if we say that ninety per cent of our co-religionists do not understand them. The Community receiving English education are without any idea of the sublime truths contained in the Granth Sahib. From infancy upwards their minds are moulded in such a way that it becomes almost impossible for them to talk and write in any other language than English; and we shall not be exaggerating if we say that a great many of them find it difficult even to think in their own mother tongue. This being the case, an English translation of our scripture will at once appeal to the ever increasing community of educated men who will be the leaders of thought from the very nature of things. Already prepared by western culture to think and act independently, they will be constitutionally fitted to understand the catholicity of Sikh principles, and will feel a pleasure in spreading Sikh ideas far and wide. Apart from this, a great deal of the misunderstanding that now obtains about the work of our Gurus and Martyrs will be removed, and the thinking public will see with their own eyes the drift of Sikh teachings."

Besides similar favourable comments from Baba Khem Singh Bedi, Baba Sumer Singh Mahant of Patna, Baba Hazara Singh Gyani, the most complimentary address was presented by the Singh Sabha, Amritsar to Macauliffe in the following words:

“We are informed by very trustworthy gyanis, that you have been studying our sacred books for over twenty years, and that, resigning a good appointment, you have now laboured continually for some years at making an accurate translation of them; that you have revised it seven times; and have now made it as complete as can be done by human effort; and in doing this you have not only spent your valuable time, but also a very large amount of money. Dr. Trumpp’s translation is not only generally incorrect, but injurious to our religion; and there was a great want felt for an accurate version when Akal Purukh (the Immortal God) induced you to undertake it and fulfil our desires. It would have been well, had we executed the translation ourselves; but Akal Purukh granted you the credit of the performance. As the holy Guru Tegh Bahadur foretold that men would come from beyond the seas to assist the Sikhs, so you have been rendering us mental and bodily assistance; and we now earnestly recommend to the members of our faith, who can afford it, to render you all possible aid in publishing your work, and we trust our wishes will be fulfilled.”

However, the most laudatory comment came from the illustrious German scholar of Sanskrit and translator of many Vedic Texts, Professor Max Muller from his latest work *Auld Lang Syne* about Macauliffe and his work as follows:

“It is a pity that we possess so little information about the original Sikh reformers. Their sacred book the Granth Sahib exists, nay it has even been translated into English by the late Dr. Trumpp. But it turns out now that Dr. Trumpp was by no means a trustworthy translator. The language of the Granth is generally called old Panjabi; and it was supposed that a scholar who knew modern Panjabi, might easily learn to understand the language as it was four hundred years ago. But this is not the case. The language of the Granth Sahib is full of local dialectic varieties and forgotten idioms, so much so that it has been said to be without any grammar at all. Mr. Macauliffe, who has spent many years among the Sikhs, and has with the help of their priests paid much attention to their Granth Sahib, has given us some most interesting and beautiful specimen of their poetry which form part of their sacred book.”

After receiving such an overwhelming support and approval from the Sikh religious scholars and the Sikh community and foreign scholars especially in contrast to the unsatisfactory and offensive remarks about the Sikh religion and its sacred text by an earlier English translator of German missionary Dr Ernest Trump, what Macauliffe calls his *Oidium theologicum* Macauliff made preparations for the publication of his work. But to the utter shock and surprise of Macauliffe, the publication of this translated work into a book form presented its own problems. Apart from the primitive state of printing industry in India and the exorbitant cost of publication of such a large volume, the most insurmountable hurdle against the publication of this translated version of the sacred Sikh text came from the hostile response of the traditional mindset of the Sikh masses. The voices were raised against the proposed publication of sacred Sikh text in the book form which was considered as *Manmatt* which amounted to be an act of sacrilege which must be curbed and nipped in the bud, as described by Principal Teja Singh in his autobiography "Arsee". In order to cross this hurdle, he entreated Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha, his close confidant and eminent Sikh scholar to intercede and persuade the opposing Sikh opinion makers to allow him to publish his life-long work in a single volume as such. Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha, being well-versed with the traditional Sikh mentality in such sensitive matters apprised Macauliffe about the futility and ultimate failure of such an effort to change the traditional Sikh opinion in such sensitive matters. He, however, suggested an ingenious plan to overcome this problem to change the format and title of his work before its final publications.

He suggested that instead of publishing the whole work in a single volume Macauliffe should write the biographies of contributing Sikh Gurus and other contributors in English and include their sacred verses along with their English translation and publish the entire Corpus of his work in six volumes under the title "The Sikh Religion". Seeing no other way out, Macauliffe accepted Bhai Kahan Singh's suggestion and decided to publish the work along his suggested guidelines. This plan involved more hard work and more research, and more written work. Since there was no alternative, he prepared himself to revise his manuscript and proceeded to publish it from England instead of from

India.

By the time he had finalized the manuscript, his financial position had become quite precarious. Not only had he resigned from his government service, his investments made from his life time savings had also gone haywire. Following the adverse comments given by the then British Lt Governor on the case file containing earlier proposal recommending an advance payment of Rupees fifteen thousand for the publication of Macauliffe's book on the basis of the government remaining neutral towards religious issues, his subordinate secretary of State Lord Morley reduced the government grant from Rs 15,000/- to Rs 5000/- which Macauliffe refused to accept. Following this change in government attitude, some of the other Indian individual and organizational donors also slackened. By this time, some of the leading lights of the Khalsa Diwan had either died or were replaced by a new set of members who started cold shouldering Macauliffe. His main financial supporter Raja Bikram Singh had also expired in 1898. Despite all these setbacks, Macauliff collected his final draft of manuscript and proceeded to England to get it published there. The only silver lining in this otherwise dark scenario was the unstinted assistance of Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha who readily agreed to go to England with him for proof reading and make last minute corrections. As a result of their joint efforts, this whole monumental path breaking work in English translating along with biographical sketches of original contributors was published in 1909 by Clarendon Press in Oxford. Same year, Macauliffe's written description of this work about Sikhism was published in the latest eleventh issue of **Encyclopedia Britanica** which was another landmark contribution of Macauliffe to Sikhism. It will not be out of place here to describe briefly the stellar role and contribution of Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha in lending every kind of support and assistance to Macauliffe in the successful execution and completion of his work on Sikhism. From their chance meeting at Rawalpindi in 1885 during the summit meeting between India's Governor General and emperor of Afghanistan till the completion of Macauliffe's work in England, Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha kept providing his valuable suggestions and scholarly inputs to the latter. After identifying Bhai Sahib's scholarly command on Sikh doctrines, Gurbani

and matching proficiency in English language and Western religious concepts, Macauliffe succeeded in procuring the former's services from Maharaja Hira Singh of Nabha in whose employment Bhai Sahib was serving as a royal tutor to the Crown Prince. As a result Bhai Sahib spent four months with Macauliffe and apprised him with the fundamental concepts of Gurbani and Sikhism. Later on, this short association turned into a life-long relationship. Macauliffe used to stay at the Bhai Sahib's farm house in his native village Pitho in District Bhatinda, Punjab along with his team of Gyanis and other scholars. His timely suggestions to Macauliffe to publish his entire work in six volumes along with the biographical sketches of Gurbani contributors saved his work from the impending damage from the doubting Johnnies among the Sikhs. Bhai Sahib's going to England and doing the entire proof-reading and last minutes corrections before its publications and letters' certifying its copyrights in the name of Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha speaks volumes for his immense contribution and their life-long companionship. It must have compensated all the rebuffs and humiliations that Macauliffe had received from his co-religionists. He writes, "For literary assistance I must acknowledge my indebtedness to Sardar Kahn Singh of Nabha, one of the greatest scholars and most distinguished authors among the Sikhs, who by order of the Raja of Nabha, accompanied me to Europe to assist in the publication of this work and in reading the proof thereof." No wonder Macauliffe had written all the copy rights of his work in the name of Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha.

Even after the successful completion of his lifelong mission, Macauliffe's troubles were still not over. He was in for fresh setbacks and rebuffs. While he was looking for an opportunity for the launch of this publication from a Sikh platform, the dates for the annual Sikh Education Conference for the year 1911 to be held at Rawalpindi were announced. He made plans to come to India with his book and informed the Conference's organizers about his visit through a telegram. According to Principal Taja Singh, when Macauliffe arrived at the Rawalpindi Railway Station nobody had come to receive him despite his advance information. Shocked and frustrated, he hired a horse-driven tonga and reached the home of Bhagat Laxman Singh.

He narrated his tale of woes to his host who promised to compensate for this humiliation and promised to present a resolution in Macauliffe's favor in the subject committee meeting of the Conference being held the next day. But the subject committee refused to pass this resolution after which he felt abandoned by the very custodians of Sikh religion for which he had spent his whole life and his resources. The hostile attitude of the British authorities towards him because of his conversion from Christianity to Sikhism was understandable, but his humiliation by the Sikhs was unbearable. He felt it was the unkindest cut of all the setbacks he had received so far. He returned to England, a highly broken and frustrated man and a mental wreck. His only savior was his personal Punjabi attendant Mohammad who served his master faithfully till the last breath of his life. However, this blunder on the part of the Sikhs was set right next year when a resolution praising the contribution of Macauliffe was passed with an overwhelming majority in the Sikh Educational Conference held in 1912 at Ambala. It was passed with the joint efforts and support of Bhagat Laxman Singh and Diwan Bahadur Leela Ram of Hyderabad Sindh who was also presiding over this Conference. But this belated acceptance of his work could not heal his deeply hurt feelings and he died next year on March 15, 1913. Before his death, he had bequeathed his property among his relatives including his faithful attendant Mohammad. It was a heart moving letter written by Mohammad in his broken hybrid English to Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha, which communicated the sad news of Macauliffe's tragic end. The Manuscript of this letter is still available in the Dr Ganda Singh's collection of papers. He had written that Macauliffe was found reciting lines from Japuji ten minutes before he had breathed his last. Some specimen lines from this valuable letter are being reproduced below: "1913 March today Friday 21 Sir Mister Kahn Singh good morning much better you look. I am sorry you now dear friend very good night come India and I am sorry Saturday 15 tonight last time it is 8 O'Clock past ten minutes lost Sir dear Lost Mister Macauliffe a sleep London now I am sorry."

It is unfortunate that even after his death, a controversy arose about the disposal of his dead body. While the Christians regarded him a non-Christian as he had converted to Sikhism as early as 1860s

and worked his whole life for Sikhism, he could not be given, a Christian burial, a section among the Sikhs there, being wary of inviting the displeasure of the majority community, the Sikhs objected to his remaining a non-*kesadhari* even after his adoption of Sikhism and hence not being entitled to cremation according to Sikh rites. Finally as recorded by Bhagat Laxman Singh and Principal Teja Singh, it was decided that Macauliffe's body, after putting it in a coffin be lowered and kept in a grave for five minutes only, and then should be cremated. So his body was cremated. The fact was that he had adopted Sikhism and was a *Sehajdhari* Sikh in real terms. As Prof Harbans Lal has stated that he (Macauliffe) had given up everything including his job, his perks and privileges, his ancestral religion, his Christian friends and everything else which belonged to him in order to spread the message of Sikhism far and wide which was the mission of his life. According to Bhagat Laxman Singh, Macauliffe had started his career as researcher of Sikhism and he had died as a Sikh whom both his ancestral religion and contemporary co-religionists, the Sikhs had almost excommunicated. The move to raise a memorial fund in memory of Macauliffe by some of his well wishers and admirers and establish a library in his memory also met with failure. According to Principal Teja Singh, despite their desperate appeals and efforts they could collect only around two thousand rupees. So after abandoning the proposal of establishing a library, it was proposed to handover this meager fund to Panjab University, Lahore asking it to award a medal to a Sikh student annually from the interest earned on this fund after holding an essay writing contest. But this proposal too was rejected by the University authorities since it restricted the competition to Sikh students only. Finally, Principal Teja Singh handed over Rs 3245/- collected so far to the Khalsa College Amritsar management. Dr Gopal Singh Dardi, the author of English translation of Sri Guru Granth Sahib had received this medal in 1934 at the age of sixteen years. After this as per the discrete enquiries made by G.S. Bhullar, from whose book most of the references included in this article have been cited, nothing about the fate of this fund and medal has been categorically revealed except that a mention is made in the Khalsa College prospectus every year. Such is the sad state of affairs in Sikh

institutions and Sikh society?

The arrival of Max Arthur Macauliffe in India and his path-breaking work on Sikhism were a Divine God-sent gift and blessing to the Sikhs and Sikhism. The period between fall of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's Sikh empire in Punjab and the Sikh renaissance in the form of the Singh Sabha and Gurdwara Reform Movement in 1920s was a period of all round degeneration in Sikh religion and society. It was an interregnum when Sikh Gurdwaras went into the custody of Udasi Mahants, who being collaborators of the British authorities, had been misusing the Gurdwara funds, usurping the vast Gurdwara properties and following non-Sikh Brahminical practices. Prof Harbans Lal's following lines published in the Oped page of the contemporary news paper, "*Khalsa Advocate*" on December 15, 1904 describe the miserable state of Sikh religion. He summed up, that Counterfeit Gurus had mushroomed in large numbers whose sole aim was to exploit the innocent Sikhs and propagandize their own supremacy. The true spirit of Sikhi had disappeared altogether and faith in the Sikh Gurus had reached its nadir. The Sikh masses were steeped in blind belief and idolatory. Whatever was life sustaining and service of humanity in the Sikh tradition had lost its appeal. Some members of the families even remotely related to Sikh Gurus but belonging to the subcastes like Bedis and Sodhis had raised their own Deras and Chowkies and designed their own codes of conduct/ Rahit Maryada to promote their own worship and amass personal wealth. Brahminical practices like drawing horoscopes of the newly born, putting *gangajal* in the dying person's mouth, immersing the bodily ashes after death in the Ganges, worshipping the Pandas and consulting astrologers for auspicious timings for performance of betrothal and marriage ceremonies crept into Sikh society with a vengeance. The original recension of Guru Granth Sahib called the Kartarpuri Bir which even the mighty Maharaja Ranjit Singh had failed to procure from the Sodhi dynasty was later on sold by one Sadhu Singh Sodhi, a latter Sodhi descendent to a British official for a consideration. Its despatch to London Office was stopped at the Calcutta Seaport at the last moment by the intervention of Dr Earnest Trump who had insisted on doing his English translation from the original version. The Sikh ruler of Kapurthala who had himself

apostatized by renouncing the Sikh form had abolished Sikhism as a State religion in his State. Macauliffe who had been completely mesmerized and transformed by the profoundness and appeal of sacred Sikh verses, the universal and humanitarian teachings of Sikh Gurus and their teachings and had converted himself into Sikhism to spread the invaluable message of Sikhism throughout the world through his lifelong mission of English translation and his other writings and lectures on Sikhism in India and abroad was shattered by the pace of degeneration in one of the finest religions of the world and the series of personal setbacks which he had received from the votaries of this religion. Despite all these personal and religious rebuffs, he, like a true crusader, continued his relentless efforts to stem the rot till the last breath of his life. His nearly perfect and meticulous English translation and it being one of the two earliest versions is his everlasting contribution to Sikhism and Sikh studies. While Vol I deals with Guru Nanak, his selected verses and the originating events of the Sikh religion, Vol II deals with the lives and representative verses of next three Gurus namely Guru Angad Dev, Guru Amardas and Guru Ramdas. Similarly, while Vol III is allotted to the life and verses of Guru Arjan Dev, Vol IV deals with lives of Guru Hargobind, Guru Har Rai, Guru Harkrishan and life and verses of Guru Tegh Bahadur. While vol V is exclusively devoted to life and work of Guru Gobind Singh, Vol VI presents the lives and verses of Bhaktas included in the sacred Sikh scripture. Macauliffe's work tries to restore the originality and essential distinctiveness of Sikh religion and its spiritual and moral teachings which, according to him, were being threatened in some quarters by branding it as a syncretic amalgamation of the two existing religions in India. The modern understanding of the uniqueness and distinctiveness of Sikh religion has to a large extent, emerged from the presentation of his work on Sikh religion. Despite his study of the earlier ideological studies of Sikh religion in English by the foreign scholars like Henry Colebrook, John Malcolm, Joseph Davey Cunningham, Horace Hayman Wilson, Monier Williams, and Fredrick Max Muller and their operative lines in the footnotes of his work, his description and presentation of Sikhism is based on his own study and judgement.

Fortunately, after a temporary fading of interest in his work, his contribution is being widely acknowledged among the enlightened English reading Sikhs across the world. Various academic and Sikh organizations and conferences such as Academy of Guru Granth Studies in USA, Canada and London have started celebrating Max Arthur Macauliffe's centennials in the twenty first century. Will the premier Sikh organization SGPC revise its agenda to include the acknowledgement and celebration of the contribution of these scholarly foreign and Indian Sikh icons like Max Arthur Macauliffe instead of wasting its valuable resources on the crowd-pulling endless chain of Nagar Kirtans and other unproductive rituals/ Practices?

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ਜਨਮ ਮਰਣ ਦੁਹਰੂ ਮਹਿ ਨਾਹੀ ਜਨ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੀ ਆਏ ॥
ਜੀਅ ਦਾਨੁ ਦੇ ਭਗਤੀ ਲਾਇਨਿ ਹਰਿ ਸਿਉ ਲੈਨਿ ਮਿਲਾਏ ॥

– Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p. 749

GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN SIKHISM – THE EPITOME OF WOMANHOOD*

PRINCIPAL PRABHJOT KAUR & DR BIRENDRA KAUR

The times of Guru Nanak (1469-1538 CE), founder of Sikhism,¹ were fraught with social inequalities of every kind, be these based on religion, race, caste or gender. 'Might is right' was the law of the land. Centuries-old social stratification was the cause of exploitation and the degradation of man. In the midst of such an utterly deplorable scenario, the condition of woman was even worse, irrespective of the stratum to which she belonged. She was at par with animals, untouchables, and considered the lowest of the low, a gateway to hell. Her existence was, thus, subhuman. The Guru, however, by arousing the conscience of the people, raised a powerful voice in her favour. In those times of monarchy, kings were considered God-incarnate and, like God, without any blemish. Guru Nanak reasons in the Sikh scripture, Guru Granth Sahib: 'How could woman from whom kings are born be reviled?'²

The Guru's ideology of 'one God of all humanity' addresses not only gender inequality, but every kind of inequality that may be prevalent in any society. He pronounced that 'Almighty is the Father, Almighty is the Mother; and all human beings are God's children'. Guru Nanak also sees a friend/relative in God, and a husband with every devotee denoted a woman. Reference to God with both genders, and reference to men and women with the same gender, renders the issue of gender inequality non-existent, a non-issue. To him, the issue was neither man in relation to man nor man in relation to woman, but to weave a beautiful relationship between the All-Powerful and the

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person, be it he or she, or be one from any religion, region, race or caste.

The Guru, thus, bestows equality as well as dignity to women. A Sikh woman does not have to ask for these; they are her birth rights. Consequently, her life changed drastically as the taboos related to her gender were now gone: now, she was not considered impure during her menstrual cycle or after childbirth; she began to participate in all religious activities; she could be initiated and also initiate others; she could be a religious head; she was not to wear a veil to cover her face; families that indulged in female infanticide were to be socially boycotted; child marriage and dowry were prohibited; widows could remarry.

The Guru created an environment where women could live a life free from any indignities. They recognized as real all feminine urges and emotions. Household duties performed by women were not considered insignificant. Rather, caring for the family, performed so naturally and lovingly by women, is seen as godlike. Spiritual flavour is lent to these activities by comparing the love of a mother for her child to the love of God for His creation.

The nine succeeding Gurus further provided equal opportunities of education, training in martial arts, religious and political leadership roles, and endowed responsibilities and duties on women. Women thus involved themselves wholeheartedly in the making of a new social order. This journey started with Mata Khivi, wife of the second Guru, Guru Angad Dev (1504-1552), who became the first administrative head of the Guru's free communal kitchen, langar, and helped establish it as a permanent institution in Sikhism. Years later, when the third Guru, Guru Amar Das (1479-1574), gave structure to the Sikh *panth* (nation) and organized his preachers into 22 teaching districts or *manjis* (literal translation: type of seat), he put Bibi Amro, daughter of the second Guru, in charge of one of these districts. As the Guru's representative, she also had the responsibility of collecting revenues and making decisions for the welfare of her diocese. By the time of the tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708), women were even confident enough to fight in the battlefield alongside men if needed. Women would also nurse the wounded in the battlefield, and undertake

daring activities. Mata Sundri, the tenth Guru's wife, courageously and successfully steered the Sikh community for 40 years through turbulent times after the Guru's demise. She issued *bukamnamas* (edicts) under her own seal and authority. Later, during the Sikh confederacies and Sikh Rule (1716-1849), women proved to be good administrators, political advisors to the rulers, and rulers themselves.

The community thus raised the self-esteem and confidence of woman. She transformed into a persona and experienced the belief to be able to perform any feat possible in the domain of human capabilities. Women began to venture out with men on equal footing in every human enterprise. In short, they participated in every sphere, and in equal measure, towards improving the lot of one and all. A Sikh woman feels duty-bound to live up to the confidence that the Gurus have reposed in her.

The experience of women in other parts of the world, however, was at a variance. It was in the twentieth century, five centuries later, that they had to protest, organize movements and wage long drawn-out struggles to seek basic human rights.

While women today have excelled in every field, the ideal of a dignified existence for them is still wanting. In the advertising and cosmetics industries, women are portrayed as mere physical beings, and specific standards of beauty and fashion are outlined by fashionist as norms to influence the gullible populace. However, the Guru's concepts of beauty and fashion, delineated centuries ago, put the modern-day notions to question. According to the Guru, beauty is an inner quality, and not the narrowing down to or crowning of 'Miss Universe' or 'Mr Universe'. He broadened the ambit to include one and all, by promoting that beautiful is one who inculcates virtues; that is to say, one who adorns oneself with truthfulness, compassion, contentment and piety. And his pronouncement on the external appearance is to maintain the body in its natural form, respecting the sexual dimorphism that nature has fashioned for humankind. In other words, the Guru expects his followers to be beautiful within and natural without. The Guru also makes statement about what criteria to base one's attire and food habitude upon: Wear and consume not what

causes pain to the body and/or generates negative thoughts in the mind.

Sincere efforts of governments to ameliorate the condition of women, such as introducing social welfare schemes and legislating for their safety at home and in the workplace, are the need of the hour and deserve all appreciation. But without a respectful place in society, woman lacks what it takes to feel like a worthy human being. The Guru's approach is to transform the psyche of both men and women so as to create an ideal world. While the Guru instils self-confidence in women, he highlights to men the importance of woman at every stage of their life. Respect for women had to be integral to their values. Adultery was prohibited. The Gurus had planned to take the *panth* to the pinnacles of glory and for that it was important that people had a strong moral character.

There was a strict injunction never to overpower a weak person in need and rather to rescue such a one. Such values motivated the Sikh warriors to rescue women abducted as booty in wars, even at risk to their own lives. Even the women from the opponent's camp were to be treated with respect. Thus, the Gurus struck the precise balance to raise the very level of existence of both men and women.

The Gurus also redefined prevailing concepts and practices which were derogatory or discriminatory to women in relation to men, by attributing altogether new meanings to these. For example: *yogi* (an ascetic who shuns social responsibilities) is not the one who is celibate, but one who remains committed to one woman; *pati parmashwar* (concept that husband is God) was changed to *parmashwar pati* (God is husband); *pardab* (veil) is not to cover a woman's face, but man's misplaced perception of her; sati is not the wife who is to burn herself on the pyre of her husband, but one who lives in remembrance of her deceased husband. Also, the patriarchal tradition that lineage runs through male members of the family and is projected through their surnames stood negated when the tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh, replaced the surnames of all Sikh men and women with 'Singh' (lion) and 'Kaur' (crown prince) respectively. This meant an independent identity for her, irrespective of whether she is married, divorced or single – she remains 'Kaur' throughout life. Such a nomenclature

abolishes not only the supremacy of man in patriarchy but also that of woman in matriarchy. It's worth noting that in the process of giving equality to one gender, the status of the other is not compromised.

The Guru makes spirituality the vehicle of change. Men and women are considered spiritual beings, whose aim in life is to merge with the Almighty. The Guru, in fact, considers virtues inherent to women as ideal, indispensable to convey the pining of the human soul for the Almighty. He therefore ascribes feminine gender to all human beings in his compositions. For this, the simile of a 'bride' for a devotee and 'spouse' for the Almighty is used in the hymns at places. Husband and wife are not considered those who merely live together, but those who merge their soul with God, and live as two bodies having one soul. The path prescribed by the Guru for the merger of the soul-bride with the Almighty-Spouse is through inculcating God's virtues and attributes in oneself; otherwise all embellishments, such as garlands of flowers, fragrances, mascara and all, as used by a bride to look beautiful, are a waste.

Human virtues, vices and emotions are not gender specific, yet certain qualities and features in the two genders vary, given the specific biological roles each performs as designed by nature for the propagation of the species. Physical differences are mere biological dualities, and mutual appreciation is the only way forward. Femininity and masculinity are thus to be cherished, and each gender is to complement and supplement itself with the qualities intrinsic to the other. As the Guru sees similar potential and promise in both genders to grow in every sphere, be it spiritual, social or political, the Sikh ideal is to be a saint warrior², that is, each is to inculcate the piety of a saint and the bravery of a warrior.

The Guru revolutionized the way women viewed themselves and the way they were viewed by others. His wisdom is indispensable to put an end to all kinds of dichotomies and divisions in society and bring about a healthy shift in the consciousness of the people. The fact that the spiritually-awakened Sikh woman performed so well in all areas of human endeavour without the subjugation of one gender to the other, speaks volumes about the inherent potential in this visionary approach.

Guru Nanak, indeed, is the pioneer of the journey of the emancipation of women. The Guru has bestowed upon women more than what women have sought so far; they are yet to comprehend the vision of the Guru. The dignity and status the Guru accords to women, and which was put into practice more than six centuries ago, is unparalleled. And, it is there for the taking.

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2. *'So kyon manda aakhiyey jit jammey rajaan'*., page 473

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ਭੰਡਿ ਜੰਮੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਨਿੰਮੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਮੰਗਣੁ ਵੀਆਹੁ ॥
 ਭੰਡਹੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਦੋਸਤੀ ਭੰਡਹੁ ਚਲੈ ਰਾਹੁ ॥
 ਭੰਡੁ ਮੁਆ ਭੰਡੁ ਭਾਲੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਹੋਵੈ ਬੰਧਾਨੁ ॥
 ਸੇ ਕਿਉ ਮੰਦਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਜਿਤੁ ਜੰਮਹਿ ਰਾਜਾਨੁ ॥

– Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p. 473

DAMDAMI BIR – THE COMPLETE AND AUTHENTIC VERSION OF SRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB

HARJINDERPAL KAUR*

In this research paper we will discuss about *Damdami Bir*. This is based upon primary and secondary sources. Sri Guru Granth Sahib is the sacred scripture of the Sikhs, which is regarded by them as the final, sovereign and eternal living Guru following the end of the ten human Gurus of the Sikhism. Sri Guru Granth Sahib is written in the *Gurmukhi* script, in various languages, including *Labnda* (Western Punjabi), Braj, Khariboli, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Persian etc. Contents of Guru Granth Sahib contain compositions of six Sikh Gurus: Guru Nanak Dev, Guru Angad Dev, Guru Amar Das, Guru Ram Das, Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Tegh Bahadur; fifteen *Bhagats*, eleven *Bhatts* (bards) and four Sikhs. Generally, the hymns of devotion, the glory of God, men's spiritual efforts and equality of men and women were incorporated in the Holy Scripture. In Sikh history and tradition, there are three major recensions of Sri Guru Granth Sahib namely *Kartarpuri Bir* or *Bhai Gurdas vali Bir*, *Bhai Banno vali Bir* and *Damdami Bir*.

Guru Arjan Dev, the fifth Sikh Guru, compiled the original version of the Guru Granth Sahib in 1604 A.D. Bhai Gurdas was entrusted as the Guru's scribe for the first edition of holy scripture. This original version of Guru Granth Sahib was known as *Pothi Sahib* at that time. Having compiled the Granth, Guru Arjan Dev installed it at Harimandir Sahib (Golden Temple) that he had got constructed at Amritsar. The Guru nominated a prominent Sikh 'Baba Buddha' as the first *Granthi* (custodian) of the Holy Scripture. With the passage of time, the original Granth Sahib passed on from Guru Arjan Dev to

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Guru Hargobind, the sixth Sikh Guru. Subsequently, Dhirmalias got hold of the Holy book and refused to give it to the Guru. Dhirmal intended to use it for having his claims on the succession of the Guruship. This master copy most likely remained with Dhir Mal's family, the Sodhis of Kartarpur. That is why it is known as *Kartarpuri Bir* (recension). Because of first edition, it is also called *Adi Granth*. The *Kartarpuri Bir* is believed to be preserved to this day.

About *Bhai Banno's Bir*, it is described in *Gurbilas Patshahi Chbevin* and *Sooraj Parkash Granth* that Guru Arjan Dev gave the original scripture to Bhai Banno one of his disciples, for binding. He took it for binding to Lahore and on the way prepared another copy of the original scripture. That copy of the original is known as *Bhai Banno vali Bir* (recension). This recension is still in the possession of the descendants of Bhai Banno.

Guru Gobind Singh's greatest work for the Sikh community during his stay in Talwandi Sabo was related to the preparation of complete and authenticated recension of Guru Granth Sahib in 1706 A.D. Guru Gobind Singh undertook to prepare a new edition of the Sikh scripture including in it all the hymns appearing in the original recension *Aid Bir* as well as the verses of his late father, the ninth Sikh Guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur. The Guru dictated the whole Granth to his scribe Bhai Mani Singh

During the struggle with the Mughals, the sixth guru, Guru Hargobind Sahib had to leave Amritsar and settle at Kiratpur. The *Adi Bir* (original scripture) was left with Dhir Mall, which is known as *Kartarpuri Bir* as stated above. Darbar Sahib Amritsar was occupied by Anti-Guru sect called *Minas*. The leaders of *Mina Sampardai* (Prithi Chand and his son Meharban) had made their own compositions in the name of 'Nanak' and tried to interpolate these verses in the original scripture. With the departure of Sikh Gurus from the central Punjab to the Shivalik foothills, many doubts were raised about the authenticity of the Sikh scripture. In addition to the verses of Mira Bai, some other extraneous compositions of *Bhagats* (Devotees) were inserted in several old copies of Holy Book. In the same way, the spurious and unauthenticated compositions were also inserted under the name of Sikh Gurus. There were also disagreements over the total number of

hymns included in the daily evening Prayer (*Nitnem Rebras Bani*). There was also no uniformity about the original form and place of hymns of the ninth Sikh Guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur in old hand written Holy Books. To end such differences forever, Guru Gobind Singh endeavored to prepare the complete and authentic version of Guru Granth Sahib. It is narrated that for this purpose, the Guru tried to obtain the *Adi Bir*, the original scripture compiled by Guru Arjan Dev. The Guru sent some Sikhs to Dhir Mal's descendants, who possessed the original scripture, and requested for its return. But they refused to part with it and asked the Guru to write his own Granth if he was a real Guru. Consequently, the Guru began the task of re-editing the Sikh Scripture.

A special tent was set up near Damdama Sahib and writing material (Paper, ink, reed-pens) were collected for the execution of this great work. In fact, before the commencement of this project, Guru Sahib himself used to make reed-pens daily. Task of writing was entrusted to Bhai Mani Singh, while Baba Deep Singh was asked to assist him.

According to *Gurbilas Patshahi* 6, once the Sikh congregation requested the sixth Guru, "True King! Like the predecessor Gurus, why did you not recite the Gurbani (verses)?" The Guru replied, "I will establish *Guru Ki Kashi* in Malwa. I will recite the entire Granth (scripture) from start up to end and will not make the difference of a single word from the original scripture. All future *Birs* will be transcribed from that authentic Master copy".

*Suni kai ham tanhi ke bainan ko Gur Granth ko adi te ant ucharaun
Achhar ko ik bhed rahe nahin aur saroop vahin so utaraun Kansi rachho tib
malav des mati murh parai hoi budh udaraun Nam Damdama tanhi dharau
so pavan bir kau nama savaraun*

Giani Gian Singh has written about the re-compilation of the recension of Guru Granth Sahib at Talwandi Sabo (Damdama Sahib) in Sri Gur Panth Parkash as follows

*Nahi avakash rachane kera. Milio tha ,bahu badhyo bakhera. Abi
avakash pai Guru gyani, Granth rachan ki tayari thani. Jo jangal mangal par
dai. Ab darbar udar jahan-i. Tanbu taban kanat lagai. Bhitari baithe aap
gusani. Mani Singh ko likhan bithayo, Nit dui pahir sanket tharayo. Satguru
gae ucharat jaise, Bani likhi sikh tib jaise. Puraan turan kai mas main, Aid*

Granth kia tyar tas main.

According to two Sikh historians Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, the view that Guru Gobind Singh reproduced the whole Aid Granth from his memory during the stay at Talwandi Sabo (Damdama Sahib) finds no support in the works of the Sikh writers. It appears that Teja Singh and Ganda Singh have not taken notice of the above two writings of *Gurbilas Patsahi* 6 and *Panth Parkash* by Giani Gian Singh. Guru Gobind Singh was the living embodiment of the earlier nine Sikh Gurus and a great scholar with a phenomenal memory. Moreover, in the old days of bards and story-tellers, it was not unusual for them to recite from memory entire epic poems, such as the *Mahabharata* or *Ramanyana*. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh refuted the fact that Guru Gobind Singh had incorporated the hymns of the ninth Guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur in the Holy scripture at Talwandi Sabo (Damdama Sahib) on the basis that there was a *Bir* of Holy Granth at Patna Sahib, bearing the date of 1748 B.K. (1691A.D.), which contained the hymns of Guru Tegh Bahadur in their proper places. Another such *Bir* lying at Dacca had been inscribed in 1732 B.K. (1675A.D.), the first year of Guru Gobind Singh's accession. G.B. Singh, the writer of '*Sri Guru Granth Sahib Dian Prachin Biran*', claimed that the *Bir* at Dacca is the copy of *Damdami Bir*, prepared by Guru Gobind Singh at Damdama in Anandpur Sahib (Not at Talwandi Sabo). Bhai Jodh Singh has described in details about the *Bir* of Dacca in the '*Prachin Biran Bare Bhullan Dian Sodhan*'. In Bhai Jodh Singh's view, this *Bir* is an incorrect copy of *Bhai Banno vali Bir*. This *Bir* is full of errors. Such an incorrect *Bir* could not have been prepared by Guru Gobind Singh himself. The second manuscript of Holy Granth at Patna Sahib has a note that "This Granth is a copy of *Fateh Chand's Granth* which in turn is a copy of the *Pubkar Granth*. The *Pubkar Granth* has been corrected against the big Granth which the fifth Guru got recorded by Bhai Gurdas." It indicates that this *Bir* was not written under Guru Gobind Singh's supervision. Therefore, it can be stated that both these manuscripts (*Bir* of Dacca and *Bir* of Patna Sahib) had not been got prepared by Guru Gobind Singh. Of course, in many manuscripts written before 1706 A.D., there are the hymns of Guru Tegh Bahadur but recorded in a haphazard manner. These hymns may have been added by someone else but not by the Guru himself.

According to the Sikh tradition, at Damdama, Talwandi Sabo for the first time in 1906 A.D. the tenth Guru Guru Gobind incorporated the hymns of Guru Tegh Bahadur into the Sikh scripture and it was this Damdama version which was conferred the status of eternal Guru by Guru Gobind Singh in Oct.1708 at Nanded in Maharashtra.

When Guru Gobind Singh re-edited the Granth Sahib and gave it the final form, he expunged some spurious and extraneous compositions which had crept into some of the manuscripts written prior to 1706 A.D. These were the following compositions:

- Slok Mahalla 1 ‘*Jit dar lakh Muhammda..... , Es kalio panj bhitio..... , Nanak chbinj pai darvajai....*’. (3 Sloks) attributed to Guru Nanak Dev
- Slok Mahalla1 ‘*Bai aatish aab kbak..... aapio boai ta jbur maran sach sada bakhsund.*’ (16 sloks) attributed to Guru Nanak Dev
- Ratan Mala raag Ramkali Mahalla 1 ‘*Asan sadh niralam*’ (25 stanzas)
- Mira Bai’s shabad (hymn) in raag Maru ‘*Manu hamaro badhio mai kawal nain.....*’
- Complete hymn of *Bhagat* Soor Das at the end of raag Sarang ‘*Chhadi man hari bimukhan ko sang.....*’ (While Guru Arjan Dev had included in the Adi Granth his first verse of six words only i.e. only one *tuk*).
- An extra hymn of *Bhagat* Tarlochan in raag Gujri (*Navnidhi Parsee.....*).
- An extra hymn of *Bhagat* Namdev in raag Dhanasari (*Sat Samund ja ka.....*).
- A couplet of *Bhagat* Kabir in raag *Gauri* (*Dhur amber vich belri.....*) at the beginning of *Var Satt* and *Bhagat* Kabir’s *pada* in raag *Sorath* ‘*Aaudhu so jogi guru mera....*’
- *Hakikat Rah Mukam Raja Shiv Nabh Ki.*
- *Siabi Ki Bidhi*, two versions small and large.
- *Sakhi Mohalla 5* (five dos and don’ts for the Sikhs) as found in *Pothi Bahawal* and some other manuscripts.
- Dates of demise of first nine Gurus.
- *Nasiatnama*, *Hajirnama* and 35 *Akhri* as noted in some *Gutkas* and manuscripts

In addition to it, some hymns were re-adjusted while some others were standardized by the tenth Guru as follows

- *Slok* 54 ‘*Bal bna bandan chbutte*’ as found attributed to *Mahalla* 10th in some *birs*, was standardized as part of *Sloks* of 9th *Mahalla*
- 3 *Sloks* in *Basant Ki Var* by *Mahalla* 5th settled in proper place as found written under *Mahalla* 1st at the end in some manuscripts.
- 9th Guru’s hymns in *raag Jajjavanti* settled under *raag* 31st as they were found to be mixed with and written under *raag Jaitsari* or separate *raag* after *Jaitsari raag* or before and after sometimes with *raag Gauri* in many manuscripts.
- Settled the *Dhunis* (musical modes) at the start of *Vars* missing in some *birs*.
- Composition ‘*Raag Mala*’ was settled at the end of standardized recension as it was noted in *Kartarpuri Bir*, but in many hand written copies *Raag Mala* was missing, ending only with *Mundavani*.
- Settled only two lines of Guru Arjan Dev’s hymn in *raag Ramkali* ‘*Run jhunjhnara gao sakhi hari.....*’ as some manuscripts had complete hymn.
- Completed the *Nitnem Rebras Bani* (daily evening prayer) by addition of four hymns under ‘*So Purakh*’
- Standardized ending pattern of compositions after raags (*Bhog di Bani di tartib*) as found in *Kartarpuri Bir*

Some later commentators claim that the changes made by Guru Gobind Singh also included the alteration of the word *kbhulase* to *kbalase* in a shabad by Bhagat Kabir in Sorath raag. But this claim is not correct. The word was *kbalase* by Bhagat Kabir as found in *Kartarpuri Bir* and other manuscripts.

Thus, the Damdami Bir was completed in four months and this recension of Guru Granth Sahib is known as ‘*Dasam Patshah ka Granth*’ or ‘*Damdami Bir*’. It is this version of the Granth that has been providing the authentic text for the printed copies of Guru Granth Sahib since then.

On the same day on which the *Damdami Bir* was completed along with the *Katha* of the whole Guru Granth Sahib, the Guru declared the establishment of *Guru Ki Kasbi* for the study of Sikhism in the open *divan* and after the conclusion of *divan*, got prepared *Karab Parshad* in large quantity, collected reed-pens used and unused and the remaining ink and accompanied by the *sangat* went to the *sarovar* of *Likhansar*. Here, after the performance of *Ardas*, this writing material was poured with reverence into the *sarovar*, distributed *Karab Parshad* and blessed the place to be a centre of repute in learning and writing .

Several copies of this recension of Guru Granth Sahib were transcribed by Baba Deep Singh (*Shabeed*) at Damdama Sahib. It is believed that four copies of the Granth Sahib were prepared; the first one was sent to the Harimandir Sahib at Amritsar, the second sent to Patna Sahib, the third kept at Damdama Sahib and the fourth was carried by Guru Gobind Singh to Hazur Sahib (Nanded). After the completion of Guru Granth Sahib's writing work, the Guru left for the South. Before the end of his life, Guru Gobind Singh ended the line of personal Guruship by investing the Damdami Bir of Granth Sahib with the status of the Eternal Guru of the Sikhs and his official successor in 1708.

According to *Panth Parkash* by Giani Gian Singh, the *Khalsa* lost this *Bir* (recension) to attacking Afghans in the battle near the village *Kutba Bamani* during the Second Sikh Holocaust-*Vadda ghallughara* in 1762; from there, this recension was supposedly taken to Kabul, where it was kept in a big *dharamshala* in Kabul. But no one has ever located it there. Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha also verified it through British Govt. that there was no such *Bir* in Kabul.

Hence, it can be concluded that it is at Damdama Sahib Talwandi Sabo, where the tenth guru, Guru Gobind Singh prepared the complete and authentic recension of Sri Guru Granth Sahib, which is known as Damdami Bir. Here, the Guru incorporated the compositions of Guru Tegh Bahadur also in the Holy Book, expunged some spurious and unauthenticated compositions and standardized at the whole text hymns. It is this Damdama version of Guru Granth Sahib which was invested with the Guruship by the tenth Guru at Nanded in 1708 and

accepted and recognized by the Sikh Path as the sacred scripture of Sikh religion all over the globe.

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ਆਗਿਆ ਭਈ ਅਕਾਲ ਕੀ ਤਬੈ ਚਲਾਇਓ ਪੰਥ ॥
ਸਭ ਸਿਖਨਿ ਕੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਹੈ ਗੁਰੂ ਮਨਯੋ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ॥

Guru Nanak's Vision of Multicultural Society and Peaceful Coexistence

DR. ARVINDER SINGH BHALLA*

Multiculturalism and the idea of multicultural society tend to solve the problems arising out of cultural assimilation and diversities. Respect for cultural diversity and protection of the interests of people belonging to different religions, colors, sects, languages, occupations, cultures, castes and ethnicities, equal opportunities for development, prohibition of discrimination, equal rights, peaceful coexistence etc. are considered to be the essential characteristics of any multicultural, liberal, democratic and peace-loving society. Multicultural society is a society in which the interests of all religious, ethnic, cultural and social groups are taken care of. In this type of social order, they are provided with equal opportunities of development, while respecting their religious feelings, social values and rituals of the people. In this society, the mentality, behavior, and practices of the people are guided in such a way to understand the fundamental realities of multi-racial, multi-cultural, multi-religious, multilingual society. They are also taught that they should accept these facts and learn to live with them by making an integral part of their lives. In multicultural society, one group of people is prohibited from imposing their will on people of another group, violating their fundamental rights or obstructing their development path. This becomes even more important in situations where different social, economic and political levels of groups live together.

Though the Medieval Indian society was not the kind of the societies that came in to being in the developed Western countries

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after the migration of people from backward and developing countries in 20th century yet the socio-religious, cultural, racial and ethnic diversities existed in the Medieval Indian society for variety of reasons. History bears witness to the fact that as a result of socio-cultural and religious diversities in the Medieval Indian society, there was a strong feeling of religious intolerance, mutual animosity, strife and hatred towards each other among masses even at that time. Although it is generally believed that the concept of multicultural society originated in the 20th century, but it is also a proven fact that the concept of multicultural society was introduced by Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikhism, 550 years ago in India. He advocated an idea of multicultural society to solve the socio-religious and cultural complexities of Medieval Indian society. In fact, his notion of multicultural society is more comprehensive, effective and more meaningful and relevant in the contemporary scenario than the existing Western notion of multicultural society. He gave a wide-ranging idea of a multicultural society in which people of different religions have a sense of tolerance, security, love and respect for one another; where every human being has the right to live according to his or her cultural values; where everyone has equal opportunities to develop in life without discrimination on the basis of caste, religion, language, race, region, occupation; where human rights are respected by the state; where the lower castes are treated equally and there is a sense of trust, security, harmony, peaceful co-existence and mutual respect and co-operation among the people as a whole. He advocated an idea that the culture of any group of persons is needed to be considered as a process not as any stagnant thing. Furthermore, he believed that culture of masses represents a set of certain value patterns and preferences, which in turns also demands to be analyzed in the context of some cultural processes. He pleaded that no one should have any right to violate the individual liberties, right to religious freedom and freedom of expression of others. He tried to inculcate the spirit of unity of humankind, social equality and peaceful coexistence among the masses through his Divine compositions and teachings. His urge for multicultural social order started with his famous saying i.e. '*Na koi Hindu, Na Koi Mussalman*'. In such a multicultural society of Guru

Nanak, there can be no place for religious bigotry, intolerance, mutual hatred, and disregard for human rights, political exploitation, and economic plunder, social and cultural discriminations. In this kind of society, regardless of one's language, religion, culture, race, family background, it is the responsibility of each and every human being as well as of the state to ensure respect and protection of the dignity and individual liberty of every individual.

Guru Nanak pleaded that the goal of creating social unity and emotional harmony among the people can be achieved through the principle of unity of God only. He encouraged people to acknowledge the existence of the only one God and to feel the presence of that one God in all human beings. The main objective of the concept of mutual brotherhood given to the human race by Guru Nanak for the creation of a multicultural society and for the good of all is to establish the harmony in the world to pursue a peaceful resolution of mutual disputes, to give a better future to the generations to come and to bring peace to the people. He advocated that all people should meditate the one God and consider the whole creation as the offspring of that one God. He gave a universal message of unity of mankind to people and persuaded them to rise above the narrow divisions on the basis of caste, culture, creed, color, sex, race, occupation, region, ethnicity etc. For the creation of multicultural society, He persuaded common masses to get rid of their mental bankruptcy, parochial thinking and narrow concerns. He believed that without adopting a world-wide viewpoint during taking care of others' concerns, we will not be able to adapt ourselves to changing times and will not be able to prepare ourselves to face the future challenges.

Guru Nanak encouraged people to learn basic knowledge about different religions, to understand the traditions, values and popular culture of the people. He appealed to people to connect with each other through religion, language and cultural exchanges. In addition to using many languages and dialects in his religious writings, he quoted different religious rituals and symbols and also referred to different names used to address God in different religions. He tried to prove that no religious group has monopoly on the use of any language. In this way, he encouraged people to respect the different languages and

inspired to seek the knowledge of various languages. He used new idioms, narratives, symbols and established new values patterns and motivated people to live together in love and cooperation. Guru Nanak taught people to follow their own cultural values and to keep them in all circumstances. He also prevented people from leaving their rich heritage and ideas under the policy of appeasing the rulers. He also stopped his people from compromising with their unique identities under any political pressure. He strongly condemned the habit of adopting the lifestyle and values of socially and politically powerful and influential classes.

Guru Nanak presented the concept of multicultural society and peaceful coexistence at the ideological as well as institutional level. He persuaded Hindus and Muslims to follow their own religious principles honestly. He stopped people from seeing each other as *mleccha* or *kafir* and taught people to see each other as the creation of the one and only God. He also gave equal status to the depressed classes. He tried to change the age-old perspective about the downtrodden people so that the exchange of values amongst people belonging to different castes or cultural could be increased. He gave the same status to the people belonging to different categories, sex, castes, religions, sects, languages, races, regions, occupations, cultures, etc. through the organization of *Sangat-Pangat* and he encouraged people to give equal respect to all. He tried to transform and change the nature, mentality and behavior of human beings through *Sangat-Pangat*, *Gurudawara* and *Dasvandh*, to create a feeling of love, cooperation and unity among the people. He organized these institutions as a training school and through these institutions trained people to live together in a multicultural society on the basis of intellectual, social, religious, political, cultural and emotional grounds. Guru Nanak's vision of multicultural society is in tune with the modern liberal-democratic principles. He ushered a new global society, which is based on idea of multiculturalism and religio-ethnic diversity. He played an extraordinary role in protection and promotion of multicultural society. His divine compositions and universal teachings provide a unique model of composite culture, spirit of oneness and peaceful coexistence. For the promotion of peaceful coexistence, Guru Nanak, on one hand,

encouraged us to express our views and on the other side to listen to others' ideas. Generally, it is seen that every person speaks his own words but is never ready to listen to other people's thoughts. Here we must not forget that communication between people is very important. He pleaded to everyone that it is extremely important for people to accept and acknowledge the identity and dignity of other people. Guru Nanak created a platform for dialogue among people belonging to various creeds, colors, castes, races, etc. He urged for multicultural and plural society to attain the goal of peaceful coexistence. He firmly held that social and economic democracy is prerequisite to multicultural society. The principle of Guru Nanak's multicultural society and peaceful co-existence is very relevant, meaningful and useful in present-day times. His notion of human unity is very effective to confront the challenges posed by racial discrimination, regional tensions, religious fanaticism and intolerance and cultural differences. In order to resolve the religious, political, cultural, linguistic and ideological disputes at the present level, the communal harmony, mutual brotherhood and unity shared by Guru Nanak show us the path of peace, tolerance, security, prosperity and development. For the bright future of human race, Guru Nanak showed a way of peaceful co-existence. But unfortunately, we do not give much attention to the social, literary, economic, political and psychological aspects of Guru Nanak's eternal message, universal teachings and concerns, while looking at Guru Nanak as a spiritual teacher. Even after the passage of 550 years, we have failed to fully understand his divine compositions. Presently, this is a need of the day that we must adapt our way of life according to the teachings and socio-religious philosophy of Guru Nanak's vision of multicultural society promotes the peaceful coexistence and mutual admiration and cooperation. By doing so, the goal of harmonious and peaceful society can be achieved which leads to prospective welfare of humankind.

GURU GOBIND SINGH: A TRIBUTE AND HOMAGE ON HIS 354TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY

COL BHUPINDER SINGH*

Guru Gobind Rai was born on 22 December 1666 at Patna. Pir Bhikan Shah came all the way from Punjab to see the new born child and test his secularism and neutrality towards Muslims and non-Muslims. Gobind was only nine years old when he became the Guru on 11 November 1675. He was a saint, scholar, poet and warrior and he was also a polyglot. He knew Sanskrit and Persian in addition to Hindi and Punjabi and had knowledge of the Quran. He was a poet of considerable talent and composed poetry. Contemporary poets sought Guru Gobind's patronage and at one time there were fifty-two (52) poets in his court. He was a versatile genius and in elevating the lowly and downtrodden, he did pioneering work long before the birth of Karl Marx and Lenin.

On assessing the situation in the country, Guru Gobind Singh found that a foreign power was ruling the masses and had reduced them to virtual slavery. The state was being converted into form of a purely Islamic nation. There were forced conversions and religious apartheid. In the words of Dr S. R. Sharma, "the Hindus had been reduced to mere "hewers of wood and drawers of water." The Guru's paramount observation was that the people were meek, timid and cowardly and were segregated on the basis of caste and creed. On being confronted or in dire straits, they denied their identity and begged their oppressors for mercy. Above all, he realised that being truthful, good, right, just, peace loving, humane and principled had no value unless it was backed with power. Guru Gobind had a keen insight into human nature and was a natural leader of men. He contemplated the whole problem and came to the conclusion that nothing could be

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achieved unless assiduous preparations were made to fight tyranny. He defined his mission from Bachittar Natak as: “to uphold right in every place and destroy sin and evil; that right may triumph, the good may live and tyranny is uprooted from the country.” He said, “When all modes of redressing a wrong have failed; raising the sword is just and pious.” and “Take the broom of divine knowledge in thy hand and sweep away the filth of timidity.” Thus did he embark on his mission of making the sparrow hunt the hawk; converting the jackal into a lion and making one man fight a legion.

On Baisakhi day of **March 29, 1699** Guru Gobind Singh put his plan into action. He sent *bukammamas* (edicts) to his Sikhs and invited them to assemble en masse at Anandpur Sahib for the Baisakhi festival. He addressed the gathering and selected five Sikhs; created the Khalsa and gave them the five K’s. The purpose of the formation of the Khalsa and the Five K’s had been to choose five men of tested courage and loyalty to constitute the nucleus of the new order, the Khalsa. Guru Gobind Singh was seeking to infuse into a somewhat disorganized band of followers a spirit of unity, courage and discipline. And nor can we doubt his tremendous influence which it has exercised in the moulding of the Sikh character. Khalsa is an order of ‘soldier saints’ dedicated to both piety and justice, and pursuing both with a determination, which when necessity compels, may involve the use of the sword. This is the Khalsa ideal and much that we find in subsequent Sikh history is an obvious response to this ideal.

Guru Gobind’s motto was: *manas ke jaat sab ek he pahchanbo* – recognize all mankind as one caste. Thus the phrase ‘*Deg Teg Fateh*’ came in vogue. Charity and wielding of the sword for a just cause hold a special place in the Sikh Faith. Charity is the greatest gift that saveth life. The Guru said, “He, who serves the poor and needy, serves me. The mouth of the poor and hungry is the Guru’s receptacle of gifts - (*Graib da Munh Guru Ki Golakh*).” The Sword eradicates oppression and tyranny and establishes righteousness. These two things contributed the most to the popularity and power of the Sikhs and their church.

The Khalsa leadership, therefore, came to be comprised mostly of those who from the time of Manu had been denied any respectable

status in the Varna based Hindu society and the Khalsa movement became synonymous with the rise of hereto neglected classes/groups/individuals. It was observed that even those people who had been dregs of humanity were changed, as if by magic into something rich and strange. The sweepers, barbers and confectioners who had never touched a sword, and whose ancestors had lived as groveling slaves of the so-called higher classes, became doughty warriors under the stimulating leadership of Guru Gobind Singh. They never shrank from fear, and were ready to jump into the jaws of death at the bidding of the Guru.

Guru Gobind did not allow his movement to become anti-Islamic, although his father, the ninth Guru, Tegh Bahadur (1621-1675) had been executed by the order of Arungzeb in 1675. And, also despite the fact that two of his sons died fighting the Mughals and the remaining two were executed by the orders of the Muslim Governor of Sirhind, he continued to have Muslim friends and attendants. It is indeed ironical that he was stabbed in October 1708 by two of his Muslims followers. When some Sikhs complained against Bhai Kahnaiya for serving water to wounded soldiers, including those belonging to the enemy camp during the battle, the Guru patted him on the back and said that it was Kahnaiya who had imbibed the real spirit of Sikhism. He asked him to give the wounded soldiers of both the Combatants..

A very important trait of the Guru's splendid personality was his equipoise. Nothing could ruffle him. He took the greatest of difficulties in his stride. Among the disastrous misfortunes, setbacks and circumstances, he stood rock solid and did not lose his equanimity in thought, action and behavior. In the Sikh religion, Guru Gobind Singh occupies a very high and important place and the Sikhs are intensely loyal to his precept and deeds. In the times of Guru Gobind Singh this was more so because it was an adverse and tumultuous period. Guru Gobind was also a military leader of great stature; his inspiring and towering personality supplied a nucleus around which the Sikhs could rally; his disposition, charisma and dynamism gave the Sikhs integration,

cohesion and a sense of corporate unity. It was unity of purpose and 'One for All and All for One.'

The *beau ideal* of the Punjabis, Guru Gobind Singh was a handsome man, whose feats as a cavalier, swordsman and archer were so much captivating as to endear him to a people who gauged a man by his physical prowess. Stories of his prodigious strength and valour multiplied, and he became a legendary figure in his lifetime. The tips of his arrows were said to be mounted with gold to provide for the family of the foe who was fatally hit and he was reputed to be able to send his shafts as far as the eye could see. The Punjabis pictured him leading them to battle on a roan stallion. On one hand fluttered his white hawk; in the other flashed his sabre. Their favourite titles for him were, the rider of the blue horse (*nile ghore da asvar*), the lord of the white hawks (*chitian bajan vala*), and the wearer of plumes (*kalgidhar*). While Gobind Singh's picture was in the minds of the people, his words were on their lips. For the **amant**, there was the sensuous poetry of the earlier days at Paonta; for the downcast, there was the inspiration and reaffirmation of faith; for the defeated, there was his Epistle of Victory (*Zafarnama*), breathing defiance in every line, for the crusader, there was the heroic ballads full of martial cadence in their staccato lines with a beat like that of a wardrum. Above all, in everything he wrote or spoke or did there was a note of buoyant hope (*carbdi kala*) and the conviction that even if he lost his life, his mission was bound to succeed. His immortal lines:

ਦੇਹ ਸਿਵਾ ਬਰ ਮੋਹਿ ਇਹੈ ਸੁਭ ਕਰਮਨ ਤੇ ਕਬਹੂੰ ਨਾ ਟਰੋਂ॥
ਨ ਡਰੋਂ ਅਰਿ ਸੋ ਜਬ ਜਾਇ ਲਰੋਂ ਨਿਸਚੈ ਕਰ ਅਪਨੀ ਜੀਤ ਕਰੋਂ॥

*Oh lord these boons of Thee I ask,
Let me never shun a righteous task,
Let me be fearless when I go to battle,
Give me faith that victory will be mine,
Give me power to sing thy praise,
And when comes the time to end my life
Let me fall in mighty strife.*

- Guru Gobind Singh

These lines still inspire millions of crusaders, freedom fighters and fighters for human rights.

In the Zafarnama (epistle of victory) Guru Gobind describes Aurangzeb as a deceitful fox and an irreligious man whose oaths on the Koran were not to be trusted. He also mentions: "It matters little if a jackal through cunning and treachery succeeds in killing two lion cubs, for the lion himself lives to inflict retribution on you." "I shall strike fire under the hoofs of your horses," he wrote to Aurangzeb, "and I will not let you drink the water of my Punjab." When he learnt about the death of his younger sons and mother, he took the news with stoic calm. "What use is it to put out a few sparks when you raise a mighty flame in-stead?" he wrote.

Guru Gobind fought fourteen battles. The only change Guru Gobind Singh brought in religion was to expose the other side of the coin. Whereas Nanak had propagated goodness, Guru Gobind condemned evil. One preached the love of one's neighbour, the other the punishment of transgressors. Nanak's God loved His saints; Gobind's God destroyed His enemies. (A History of the Sikhs Vol.1 Page 88 by Khushwant Singh). By creating the Khalsa, Guru Gobind Singh defied the might of the Mughal Empire. He had to fight against heavy odds and he sacrificed his parents, four sons, thousands of Sikhs and ultimately himself. Here was a man who sacrificed all that he had for the cause that he espoused. What greater sacrifice can there be? At Nanded Guru Gobind Singh met **Banda Singh Bahadur** (the famous Sikh general) and passed his baton to him for carrying on his struggle. He passed away an hour and a half after midnight on October 7, 1708 after bestowing the Sikh Guruship on the Guru Granth Sahib.

True Guru Gobind Singh did not leave his followers a kingdom; but he laid the foundation of the Sikh military might by setting up a tradition of relentless valour which became a distinguishing feature of Sikh soldiery. They came to believe in the triumph of their cause as an article of faith, and like their guru asked for no nobler end than death on the battle field.

*With clasped hands this boon I crave
When time comes to end my life*

Let me fall in mighty strife.

Exactly a hundred years after Guru Gobind Singh's call to arms in 1699, the Sikh Kingdom was founded in 1799 by Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

CONCLUSION

It is this rich composite legacy and heritage of Guru Gobind Singh which continues to inspire the Sikh generations after generation. for the Sikhs, he is an icon of human struggle against discrimination, injustice and inequality. he is an embodiment of a complete unity of being of soldiership, scholarship and spiritualism.

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## **CELEBRATING TOMORROW IN PAK'S PUNJAB – WITH AN OFFICIAL ORDER – THE ‘PUNJAB CULTURE DAY’\***

**DIVYA GOYAL GOPAL**

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The government of Punjab province (Lehenda Punjab) in Pakistan will celebrate March 14 as “Punjab Culture Day” with officials being told to wear turbans a day before the celebrations and post pictures on social media.

The order, the first of its kind, issued by section officer (culture), Government of Punjab, (copy with The Indian Express), reads, ‘...Government of Punjab is going to celebrate the first ever Punjab Culture Day on 14.03.2021... It has been decided that all Divisional Commissioners, Regional Police Officers, Deputy Commissioners and District Police Officers in Punjab shall wear traditional Punjabi turban on 13.03. 2021 and post their pictures on their respective official web pages as well as on social media to create hype for celebration of Punjab Culture 14.03.2021..’

The order, issued through information and culture department, also mentions that a special committee was constituted by the Chief Minister, Punjab to make arrangements for celebrations and a ‘meeting was held under the convenership of Minister of Culture, Punjab and Additional Chief Secretary Punjab on 5.03.21’ where it was decided that all government officials in Punjab will wear traditional Punjabi turbans on March 13.

The order is being hailed as a significant victory by the activists who have been protesting in Pakistan since months demanding that Punjabi language be made a compulsory subject in schools and that it should also be offered as medium of instruction. Massive protests

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\* Courtesy: *The Indian Express*, March 13, 2021

have been held in Lahore in past months when activists from all faiths and backgrounds gathered wearing Punjabi attires demanding a stature for Punjabi language at par with Urdu and freedom to hold programmes depicting Punjabi culture and Punjabiyat.

One such massive protest was held on February 21 (International Mother Language Day) in Lahore where activists protested with placards, which had slogans such as ‘*Maa boli Punjab da haq, saada haq aithe rakh.*’

The pro-Punjabiyat activists in Pakistan have now planned an array of activities for the day which would include folk music, dances, food, poetry, literary discussions among others.

Speaking to *The Indian Express* over phone, Ahmad Raza Wattoo, from the organization ‘Punjabi Prachaar’ in Lahore, said that the ‘first victory’ has come after a long battle. “For the people living in Punjab, it is not about being a Hindu, Muslim, Sikh etc. We all are Punjabis first and we demand that Punjabi language should be a compulsory subject in schools of Pakistan, at least in Punjab province. And ideally, not just schools but also till graduation in colleges. We held several protests demanding that Punjabi culture and language be given its rightful stature and place that it deserves. Nearly every person who lives in Punjab understands Punjabi but still it is the Urdu that dominates here. We are demanding equal rights for Punjabi as other languages. We can’t let our language die. Earlier we used to organize small programmes to promote Punjabi but it is for the first time that an official order has come from the government and they have recognized a day dedicated to Punjabi culture.”

Shahid Shabbir, a historian working on Sikh history in Pakistan, said that a language cannot be allowed to die in a country and their struggle will continue till Punjabi isn’t made a compulsory subject in schools in Punjab province. “If singers like Gurdas Mann, Sukhwinder Singh, Sardool Sikander etc are the heartbeats of the Punjabis on Pakistan side too, it means that heart of Punjabi is the same wherever it beats – be it India or Pakistan. One of our ministers had passed a very derogatory remark against Punjabis a few months back and we held a massive protest against it. The protests continued in Lahore

because government is still not teaching Punjabi in schools here. The order to celebrate March 14 as Punjab Culture Day is a significant victory for us. In our protests, persons from every faith including Hinduism, Islam, and Sufism etc had participated because we are Punjabis first.”

An array of activities that are scheduled to be held on Mall Road, Lahore on March 14 include Punjabi folk dances, bhangra and giddha, jhumar, folk music such as tappey etc, food stalls, handicrafts, Punjabi poetry & literary discussions, dhol etc. Shabbir said that Punjabi food and drinks such as makki ki roti, lassi, saag, chhole bhaturey, kaanji would be served and some organizations are also planning to hold langar on the day.

Welcoming the move, Ihsan Nadiem Goraya, editor of the magazine ‘Punjab De Rang’ which is published both in Gurmukhi and Shahmukhi Punjabi from Lahore, said, “So many dialects of Punjabi are spoken in India and Pakistan...this language deserves much more. Punjabis should not let their language die.”

□

ਮੈਨੂੰ ਕਈਆਂ ਨੇ ਆਖਿਆ ਕਈ ਵਾਰੀ,  
 ਤੂੰ ਲੈਣਾ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਦਾ ਨਾਂ ਛੱਡ ਦੇ ।  
 ਗੋਦੀ ਜਿਸਦੀ ‘ਚ ਪਲਕੇ ਜਵਾਨ ਹੋਇਓ,  
 ਉਹ ਮਾਂ ਛੱਡ ਦੇ ਤੇ ਗਰਾਂ ਛੱਡ ਦੇ ।  
 ਜੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਈ ਕੂਕਣਾ ਈ,  
 ਜਿਥੇ ਖਲਾ ਖਲੋਤਾ ਉਹ ਥਾਂ ਛੱਡ ਦੇ ।  
 ਮੈਨੂੰ ਇੰਝ ਲੱਗਦਾ, ਲੋਕੀਂ ਆਖਦੇ ਨੇ,  
 ਤੂੰ ਪੁੱਤਰਾ ਆਪਣੀ ਮਾਂ ਛੱਡ ਦੇ ।

– Ustaad Daman

## **Farm Laws & Farmers' Protest....** **(A Catch - 22 Situation)**

**J S GOGIA\***

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One country... One Market .... one nation, is not a new invention of anybody. This slogan was given by the 'World Trade Organisation' as "Whole world is One nation, no boundary but free trade." If we are a protagonist of this slogan, why has India refused to join Regional Cooperation of Economic Programme (RCEP) where 15 nations joined hands by burying all political differences in South East Asia. The answer was 'Chinese goods' will flood our market where we are not competitive.' may be a Himalayan blunder afraid of competition. The same is true of implementation of farmers laws.

Let us have a look at the farm laws, it gives rise to some basic questions:

- What was the hurry for the promulgation of ordinance to enforce these laws?
- Agriculture is state subject in our constitution, but Govt of India bypassed it by making these laws under the provision of interstate movement of goods listed in the concurrent list.
- The bill was passed by the brute majority in both the houses of Parliament without discussion and voting and presented as a trophy to offer the bitter pill to the farmers.
- No need was felt to explain it to the stake holders and Chief ministers of all the states before promulgation.
- The farmers agitation has continued against these bills for more than three months. Instead of talking to the farmers, the economic blockade was carried on in Punjab by not sending the rakes of fertilisers and coal to the state despite clearing the rail tracks by

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\* Ex-General Secretary, International Sikh Confederation, Chandigarh and Ex-General Manger of Chambal Fertilisers & Chemicals Ltd- A K. K. Birla Group of Companies and faculty member on "World Trade Organisation

the farmer protesters.

- The farmers were shabbily treated by the Haryana government by bursts of canons of water, lathi charge and digging the roads.
- To add fuel to the fire, they were abused by the self-styled ultra-nationalists as traitors, khalistanis and a politically motivated lot.
- The available data was wrongly interpreted deliberately to mislead the people. No doubt, the minimum support price is availed on an average only by 6% farmers in India, but 95 % of Paddy and 70 % Wheat is procured from Punjab alone. Therefore, MSP is the economic back bone in Punjab, Haryana and western U.P. As the people who try to cross the river by average depth, get drowned, similarly, the average distance of farmers from Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) is 496 KMs in India, while in Punjab it is just 5 KMs. Every state has its own needs, why to promulgate this law in every state. Let states decide what suits them in the true spirit of constitutional federalism.
- Several rounds of talks have been wasted without conclusion due to arrogance and *rigidity* of the central government not to withdraw the draconian laws which farmers are not ready to accept.

While this game is going on, the farmers from many other states are joining the struggle. According to Sr. Advocate Mr. H S Phulka, The Bar council of India also wrote a letter to the PM that these laws as such are neither good for farmers nor for the consumers. Have you seen such a large gathering so many Indian farmers protesting so peacefully with little inconvenience to the citizens?

Infact, these laws are not new in our country. The contract farming has already been operative at certain places with a mixed reaction. It certainly needs some correction to save the farmers from exploitation by the corporations.

By and large 'Essential Commodity Act' favours the traders and corporations, the farmers have genuine fears and apprehensions that it would encourage the harding and corporations would create an artificial scarcity which is neither in the interest of farmers nor consumers. It has now been passed by the parliament?

The major issue is the Agricultural Produce Market Committees (APMC). These established markets are working well and are a time

tested institution, where both the traders and farmers are comfortable to work with. The the most objectionable point is the establishment of private Markets so that the fee being paid to the APMC is saved by the purchasers (corporations). The major allegation against the APMCs is the collection of market cess 6% and trader fee is around 2.5%. This allegation of collection of Market tax is baseless as the amount collected is being spent for the development of rural roads and infrastructure.

There are two case studies: Bihar repealed the APMC in 2005-06 on the pretext that the traders have made a cartel. Everybody was free to sit anywhere without paying taxes. Consequently, neither any corporation came to establish any private Market, nor any industry came for processing. Bihar farmers were not benefitted. So, it ended up as a complete failure.

Second case study of Maharashtra suggests a mix reaction. In 2005, they were allowed to have private markets along with the APMC under government control. 18 private markets have been established so far by the traders to invest roughly 4-5 crores on the basis of given norms. The famers pay a fee of 1.05%.

These Private markets have only 22% of total share of agricultural produce and that too on two crops of cotton and oil seeds only to feed the need of ginning and oil industry. These two crops make 86% of their turnover. Above all, the corporations cannot purchase below the MSP. But the fact remains that the private markets are also being run by the same traders who are sitting inside the APMCs.

We should not forget that every state has different cropping pattern and different needs. It suits Maharashtra as their main crops are sugarcane, cotton and oil seeds. There is a concentration of textile industry and sugar mills. But it was a failure in Bihar having no industry, being land locked and away from the industrial hubs.

After several rounds of discussions, the negotiations have reached the dead lock due to the hardened attitude on both sides which is neither good for the government nor for the farmers and the nation.

Now, the matter has reached the Supreme Court, perhaps the government is trying to save its face. The game is still going on, but the farmers are in high spirits despite several odds and are determined to continue this protest.

The government of India should repeal these laws for the time being and then workout the much needed reforms in Indian agriculture in consultation with all the major stakeholders, the farmers' representatives, agricultural economists from the Indian agricultural universities and finance department officials. Instead of sitting on a false prestige, the authorities must revise these ill-conceived laws made under the influence of a handful of big corporates and hastily promulgated without any discussion and parliamentary scrutiny. Farmers and farm labour constitute such a large section of India's population which the ruling party can ignore at its own peril, especially when this section has done the country proud and *Atam Nirbhar* during the worst pandemic year and even earlier. Hubris individual or national is always condemned to fall. It is time to mend fences with farmers and sincerely endeavour to make the Indian farming self sustainable and viable. Adopting an American and Western European model of corporatizing Indian agriculture abruptly in the midst of such a large scale unemployment and absence of an alternative avenue or a well-established midsize manufacturing sector (MSME) is neither good economics nor good politics. It is the political hubris of an authoritative and majoritarian regime born out of a politico-corporate nexus which intends to bulldoze its arbitrarily prepared agenda on the unwilling farming community constituting more than half of India's population. Suppression or failure of this Pan-Indian farmers agitation are likely to produce disastrous. It is like killing the hen laying the golden eggs in the form of providing both food to more than one billion population and human resource for India's armed forces which defend and safeguard the nation's territorial boundary and sovereignty. Let statesmanship prevail over petty politics. Let me conclude with Oliver Goldsmith's immortal lines from his "Deserted Village"

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,  
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay:  
Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade;  
A breath can make them, as a breath has made;  
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,  
When once destroyed, can never be supplied.

## REKINDLING THE REVOLUTIONARY SPIRIT\*

SANJAY NAHAR

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This incident dates back to 1898. The farmers in Vidarbha region were severely hit by a drought. When Sardar Kishan Singh came to know about this, he, along with Lala Bishambhar Sahay, Lala Shivram Vakil and other colleagues, reached Vidarbha. They had brought along foodgrains. Imagine the distance between Jalandhar in Punjab and Vidarbha region in Maharashtra, and that too nearly 125 years ago! However, Sardar Kishan Singh's patriotism and his compassion for fellow farmers did not let him sit quiet. He did not merely distribute the relief material and return; he, in fact, took around 50 orphaned children from Vidarbha with him. These children were of the farmers who, unable to deal with their desperate situation, had committed suicide. Kishan Singh started an orphanage at Ferozepur for these children. At that time, Kishan Singh was just 20 years old. If you wonder who Sardar Kishan Singh was, well, he was the father of India's great son Shaheed Bhagat Singh!

Bhagat Singh was born in such a patriotic family. He grew up seeing the life of farmers and the common people. No wonder, bringing about a change in the life of ordinary farmers was his idea of revolutionary work. Today is the 90th anniversary of the martyrdom of Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev. Unfortunately, the issues facing the farmers are just the same even today. One is pained to say that the dreams of the revolutionaries who made the supreme sacrifice for creating a new India are still unfulfilled.

The current issue of the farmers is not limited to Punjab, Haryana and the Jat farmers of western Uttar Pradesh; farmers across India face similar issues. Today, the farmers have taken to the streets raising the slogan '*Pagdi Sambhal Jatta*', but the slogan echoes the feelings of

\* Courtesy: *The Tribune*, March 23, 2021

farmers over a century ago. In 1907, the British had passed three Acts regarding agriculture. Bhagat Singh's paternal uncle Ajit Singh had raised his voice against them by mobilising the farmers of Punjab. He addressed public meetings all over Punjab and had even invited Lala Lajpat Rai, a veteran Congress leader, to these meetings. Lala Banke Dayal had quit his job to join the agitation. He read out the poem 'Pagdi Sambhal Jatta' during this agitation. The poem had a description of the farmers' issues and the injustice being meted out to them. The poem became the signature slogan of the agitation. It became so popular that the agitation itself came to be known by that name. The agitation grew so strong that the British government had to withdraw the Acts. Today, it is our own government. Yet, the agitation has been going on for the past almost four months. History is being repeated.

During my meetings and discussions with Shaheed Bhagat Singh's colleagues, Durga Bhabhi and Virendra ji, and his brother Kultar Singh, the topic as to why Bhagat Singh who had received the Arya Samaj doctrine and who belonged to a religious family, became an atheist, came up often. In this context, I was told about an incident when some of Bhagat Singh's fellow revolutionaries talked about the help his family, Sardar Ajit Singh and Sardar Kishan Singh, extended to the countrymen affected by droughts, floods, earthquakes and other natural calamities. They especially praised the act of adopting orphaned farmer children from Vidarbha. Bhagat Singh had said then, "It was our duty but we need to bring about a change in the system so that no farmer or labourer is forced to commit suicide ever!" It is clear from his words that his journey towards atheism had begun with the farmers' agitation in Punjab.

Bhagat Singh asked himself some questions after witnessing the plight of farmers and the ordinary people. These questions led him to atheism. He asked himself, 'If this world is created by the Almighty, why is it filled with destitution and sorrow?' Next, he asked, 'Why doesn't He free the entire humanity and the workers from the slavery of capitalism?' Bhagat Singh had unequivocally said that the real age of freedom would truly begin only when countless men and women came forward thinking about the farmers and ordinary people and when they would be thinking only about serving the mankind and nothing else.

“The farmers and labourers are the most important elements of society; however, they are exploited the most by society. They are even deprived of their basic rights. The farmers who produce food for everyone are forced to die in hunger. Artisans who weave cloth for others cannot buy enough clothes for their own children. Those who build huge mansions do not have even a simple house to live in. On the other hand, the capitalists who exploit them live a comfortable life,” he said. These thoughts of Bhagat Singh clearly show that he was moved by the plight of farmers and the ordinary people.

A couple of months before he was hanged, Bhagat Singh had written a letter, in which he had highlighted issues such as ‘End of landlord system’, ‘Loan waiver for the farmers’, ‘Nationalisation of lands in order to boost community farming’, ‘Home for everyone’, ‘Complete exemption to farmers from taxation’, ‘Nationalisation of industries’, ‘Education for everyone’, ‘Reduction in the working hours of the labourers’, etc. As a nation, we are still grappling with precisely the same issues.

In this backdrop, the irony of the current farmers’ agitation in Delhi is worth noting. The agitators and the government both are using Bhagat Singh’s photos! Rekindling faith in the minds of hardworking farmers so that they can lead a life of dignity would be a true tribute to martyrs Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev.

□

ਪਗੜੀ ਸੰਭਾਲ ਜੱਟਾਂ, ਪਗੜੀ ਸੰਭਾਲ ਓ,  
 ਲੁੱਟ ਲਿਆ ਮਾਲ ਤੇਰਾ, ਲੁੱਟ ਲਿਆ ਮਾਲ ਓ।  
 ਫਸਲਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਖਾ ਗਏ ਕੀੜੇ, ਤਨ ਤੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਤੇਰੇ ਲੀੜੇ,  
 ਭੁੱਖਾਂ ਨੇ ਖੂਬ ਨਪੀੜੇ, ਰੋਂਦੇ ਨੇ ਬਾਲ ਓ,  
 ਪਗੜੀ ਸੰਭਾਲ ਜੱਟਾਂ, ਪਗੜੀ ਸੰਭਾਲ ਓ।  
 ਬਣਦੇ ਨੇ ਤੇਰੇ ਲੀਡਰ, ਰਾਜੇ ਤੇ ਖਾਨ ਬਹਾਦਰ,  
 ਤੈਨੂੰ ਤੇ ਖਾਵਨ ਖਾਤਰ, ਵਿਛਦੇ ਨੇ ਜਾਲ ਓ,  
 ਪਗੜੀ ਸੰਭਾਲ ਜੱਟਾਂ ਪਗੜੀ ਸੰਭਾਲ ਓ।  
 ਹਿੰਦ ਹੈ ਮੰਦਰ ਤੇਰਾ ਇਸ ਦਾ ਪੁਜਾਰੀ ਓ,  
 ਝੱਲੋਂਗਾ ਅਜੇ ਕਦ ਤੱਕ ਹੋਰ ਖੁਆਰੀ ਓ,  
 ਮਰਨੇ ਦੀ ਕਰ ਲੈ ਹੁਣ ਤੂੰ ਛੇਤੀ ਤਿਆਰੀ ਓ,  
 ਮਰਨੇ ਤੋਂ ਜੀਣਾ ਭੈੜਾ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਬੋਹਾਲ ਓ,  
 ਪਗੜੀ ਸੰਭਾਲ ਜੱਟਾਂ ਪਗੜੀ ਸੰਭਾਲ ਓ।

## SAKA NANKANA SAHIB – A CONTEMPORARY ACCOUNT

COL (RETD) AVTAR SINGH\*

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Saka at Nankana Sahib occurred on February 20, 1921. 156 Sikhs were Killed ( Martyred) by The Mahant Narian Dass. Why and how did it happen, as narrated to me by my Grandmother during 1945-46.

### WHY DID IT HAPPEN

The Gurdwara JanamAsthan at Nankana Sahib was under the control of Mahant NarianDass. These Mahants were hereditary and considered Gurdwara as their personal property. Unfortunately the British Government had also accepted this as the legal position. (They were always at the back of and in favour of the Mahants). The Charat (donations) in the Golak was plenty. This had made the Mahant Narian Dass a debauch and corrupt.

Those who have visited the Gurdwara Sahib know that after climbing three steps, there is a big entrance gate, which opens on to a huge courtyard paved with marble. Towards the far end of this courtyard , there is a room about 10 ft by 10 feet wherein Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Parkash is done and a singh sits in Tabia. The Ragi Singhs sit outside this room and do the kirtan. On the right hand side of the courtyard there is Jand Tree (prosopisspecigera). On the extreme left there is a small door opening into the gali. It is a service door.

The mahant used to get singing and dancing girls from Lahore and make them dance in the premises of the Gurdwara Sahib. There were frequent sessions of drinking and dancing inside the premises.

Those days under the influence of writings of Giani Dit Singh ji and Giani Gurmukh Singh ji, Singh Sabha Movement had started which

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had taken hold in all the District Headquarters of Punjab. These reports about wrong actions of the Mahant were very upsetting and distressing.

**It was resolved to take control of the Gurdwara from the Mahant. The plan was to go the Gurdwara Sahib in a peaceful assembly and request the Mahant to abdicate with sufficient finances being provided for his good living.**

The Mahant through his agents at Lahore came to know about it. He decided to resist the move. For the purpose, he hired Goons, collected plenty of Arms and Ammunition and Kerosin Oil. His plan was to kill all intruders.

#### **HOW DID IT HAPPEN**

It was planned that the Jatha will assemble at the Mana Wala Jhal (A small dam on a canal). Mana Wala is about 10 miles north of Nankana Sahib. The Jatha was to move peacefully to the Gurdwara Sahib.

When the Sikhs at Lahore came to know about the Mahants preparations and Plan to kill the Sikhs, they sent a message for the Jatha NOT to Proceed to Nankana Sahib.

The person who was to deliver this message to the Jatha at Mana Wala, on reaching Nankana Sahib, went to S. Uttam Singh Karkhanewale, had his meals and slept there. There used only one train which ran to and from Nankana Sahib to Lahore. The train arrived in Nakana sahib in the evening to go further to Jarhan Wala and then to Shor Kot Road. The messenger overslept and got up late in the morning.

Meanwhile the Jatha at the Mana Wala Jhal had assembled under the leadership of S. Kartar Singh Jhabal. By the time, this old man from Lahore reached them next morning to deliver the message "NOT to Proceed", the Jatha had already done the Ardas. On receiving the message which was delivered late, S. Kartar Singh Jhabal said, having offered the Ardas, we cannot go back on it. This is not as per the Khalsa ji ethos or history.. Sowe will proceed irrespective of the consequences.

After this peaceful Jatha had entered the Gurdwara Sahib and sat

down to listen to the Kirtan, the Mahant got the main gate closed. (The compound walls at the Gurdwara Sahib are around 4 meters high). He asked his goons to fire on the sitting Sikhs, killing and wounding many. Those who were wounded were also burnt alive after pouring kerosin oil and lighting it.

Two Sikhs who were fully alive under the heap were pulled out, tied to the Jand and burnt alive. They were Bhai Daleep Singh and Bhai Lachman Singh.

The news of this massacre reached Lahore. The Govt got worried and the Governor of Punjab himself came down to Nankana Sahib. The Mahant and his goons were arrested and put on trial. They were awarded Life imprisonment. Those days it meant 14 years behind bars but he got some remission due to good conduct in jail. The Mahant after release went to Una (now in Himachal Pardesh) and settled down there, where he died after a few years.

After his death, his wife, Mahantni (Mahants' wife) asked for forgiveness from the Panth which was granted, because she had no personal role, but given the Tankha (punishment) of walking barefooted from Una to Nankana Sahib; which she did.

I distinctly remember my mom going to Gurdwara Kiara Sahib to receive her. She told us , her thighs were swollen like that of an elephant's leg and they took turns to massage it.

The Mahantni stayed at Nankana Sahib only. She stayed in a house behind Tehsildar Rattan Singh's house in the colony left of grain market as one comes out of Gurdwara Maldi Sahib. She used to come to our house occasionally.

What happened after 1947, I do not know. Where did she go I do not know.

## ਅਕਾਲੀ ਲਹਿਰ ਦਾ ਲਹੂ ਭਿੱਜਿਆ ਪੱਤਰਾ

ਡਾਕਟਰ ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਿੱਧੂ\*

1469 ਈਸਵੀ ਵਿਚ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਦਾ ਜਨਮ ਰਾਏ ਭੋਇ ਦੀ ਤਲਵੰਡੀ, ਜਿੱਥੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਪਿਤਾ ਮਹਿਤਾ ਕਲਿਆਣ ਦਾਸ ਪਟਵਾਰੀ ਵਜੋਂ ਜ਼ਿੰਮੇਵਾਰੀ ਨਿਭਾ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ, ਵਿਚ ਹੋਇਆ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਗਭਰੇਟ ਉਮਰ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਇਸ ਨਗਰ ਤੋਂ ਵਿਦਾ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਵੱਡੀ ਭੈਣ ਬੇਬੇ ਨਾਨਕੀ ਕੋਲ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਸਹੁਰੇ ਪਿੰਡ ਸੁਲਤਾਨਪੁਰ ਲੋਧੀ ਚਲੇ ਗਏ। ਇੱਥੇ ਰਹਿੰਦਿਆਂ ਹੀ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਾਦੀ ਬਟਾਲੇ ਵਿਚ ਹੋਈ। ਉਹ ਸੁਲਤਾਨਪੁਰ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਉਦਾਸੀਆਂ ਲਈ ਨਿਕਲੇ ਅਤੇ ਉਦਾਸੀਆਂ ਉਪਰੰਤ ਜੀਵਨ ਦੇ ਅੰਤਲੇ ਲਗਭਗ ਅਠਾਰਾਂ ਵਰ੍ਹੇ ਕਰਤਾਰਪੁਰ ਨਗਰ ਵਿਚ ਕਿਸਾਨੀ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਬਤੀਤ ਕੀਤੇ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਦੋ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਸਨ: ਸ੍ਰੀ ਚੰਦ ਅਤੇ ਲੱਖਮੀ ਦਾਸ। ਸਾਧੂ ਬਿਰਤੀ ਵਾਲੇ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਚੰਦ ਘਰ ਤਿਆਗ ਗਏ, ਪਰ ਲੱਖਮੀ ਦਾਸ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਪਿਤਾ ਨਾਲ ਕਰਤਾਰਪੁਰ ਵਿਚ ਨਿਵਾਸ ਕੀਤਾ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਜੋਤੀ ਜੋਤ ਸਮਾਉਣ ਪਿੱਛੋਂ ਜਦ ਰਾਵੀ ਦਰਿਆ ਨੇ ਕਰਤਾਰਪੁਰ ਨੂੰ ਢਾਹ ਲਾਈ ਤਾਂ ਲੱਖਮੀ ਦਾਸ ਦੇ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਧਰਮ ਚੰਦ ਰਾਵੀ ਤੋਂ ਪਾਰ ਪੂਰਬ ਵੱਲ ਡੇਰਾ ਬਾਬਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੀ ਸਥਾਪਨਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਇੱਥੇ ਰਹਿਣ ਲੱਗੇ। ਗੱਲ ਕੀ, ਮਹਿਤਾ ਕਲਿਆਣ ਚੰਦ ਤੋਂ ਪਿੱਛੋਂ ਰਾਇ ਭੋਇ ਦੀ ਤਲਵੰਡੀ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਦਾ ਜਨਮ ਅਸਥਾਨ ਬੇਧਿਆਨਾ ਅਤੇ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਸੰਭਾਲ ਪਿਆ ਰਿਹਾ। ਭਾਵੇਂ ਲਗਭਗ ਦੋ ਸਦੀਆਂ ਪਿੱਛੋਂ ਦੀਵਾਨ ਕੌੜਾ ਮੱਲ ਨੇ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਧਰਮ ਅਸਥਾਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਸਾਂਭ ਸੰਭਾਲ ਬਾਰੇ ਉਪਰਾਲਾ ਕੀਤਾ, ਪਰ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਅਸਥਾਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਸਹੀ ਅਰਥਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਦੇਖਭਾਲ ਉਦੋਂ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਹੋਈ ਜਦੋਂ ਮਹਾਰਾਜਾ ਰਣਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਹਜ਼ਾਰਾਂ ਏਕੜ ਜ਼ਮੀਨ ਗੁਰ ਅਸਥਾਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਉਂ ਲਾ ਕੇ ਪੂਜਾ ਪਾਠ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਸੰਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਜ਼ਿੰਮੇਵਾਰੀ ਸੌਂਪੀ। ਜਿੰਨੀ ਦੇਰ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਮਹੰਤਾਂ ਦੀ ਨਿਰਭਰਤਾ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਗਤ ਦੇ ਚੜ੍ਹਾਵੇ ਉੱਤੇ ਰਹੀ, ਉਹ ਸੰਗਤ ਦੇ ਸਲਾਹ ਮਸ਼ਵਰੇ ਨਾਲ ਚੱਲਦੇ ਰਹੇ, ਪਰ ਜਦ ਖੇਤੀ ਯੋਗ ਜ਼ਮੀਨ ਨੂੰ ਨਹਿਰੀ ਪਾਣੀ ਮਿਲਣ ਨਾਲ ਆਮਦਨ ਕਈ ਗੁਣਾ ਵਧ ਗਈ ਤਾਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਗਤ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ ਮਾਲ ਮਹਿਕਮੇ ਦੇ ਕਰਮਚਾਰੀਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਮਿੱਤਰਤਾ ਗੰਢਣੀ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤੀ। ਇਸ ਨੇੜਤਾ ਦਾ ਫਾਇਦਾ ਉਠਾਉਂਦਿਆਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਕਾਨੂੰਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਆਧਾਰ ਬਣਾ ਕੇ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਉਂ ਲੱਗੀ ਜ਼ਮੀਨ ਆਪਣੇ ਨਾਂ ਲਗਵਾ ਲਈ। ਖੁੱਲ੍ਹੀ-ਭੁੱਲ੍ਹੀ ਆਮਦਨ ਨੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਦਿਮਾਗ ਫੇਰ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਅਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਗਤ ਦੀਆਂ ਭਾਵਨਾਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਕਦਰ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ ਪੂਜਾ ਪਾਠ ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਜ਼ਿੰਮੇਵਾਰੀ ਵੱਲ ਬੇਧਿਆਨੀ ਵਰਤਣ ਲੱਗੇ। ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਜਨਮ ਅਸਥਾਨ ਸਾਹਿਬ

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ਦਾ ਮਹੰਤ ਸਾਧੂ ਦਾਸ ਵੀ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਰਹਿਤ ਨੂੰ ਤਿਲਾਂਜਲੀ ਦੇ ਕੇ ਹਰ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਦੇ ਕੁਕਰਮ ਕਰਨ ਲੱਗਾ। ਉਸ ਦੀ ਮੌਤ ਹੋਈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਸ਼ਨ ਦਾਸ ਮਹੰਤ ਬਣਿਆ ਜੋ ਚਰਿੱਤਰਹੀਣਤਾ ਵਿਚ ਉਸ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਵੀ ਚਾਰ ਰੱਤੀਆਂ ਉੱਤੇ ਸੀ। ਉਸ ਨੇ ਇਕ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਰਦਾਰ ਦੀ ਵਿਧਵਾ ਨੂੰ ਘਰ ਵਸਾ ਲਿਆ। ਆਪਣੇ ਭਤੀਜੇ ਦੇ ਵਿਆਹ ਮੌਕੇ ਉਸ ਨੇ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਚੌਗਿਰਦੇ ਦੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਕੰਜਰੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਚ ਕਰਵਾਏ। ਅਸਾਧ ਰੋਗ ਵਿਚ ਗ੍ਰਸਿਆ ਕਿਸ਼ਨ ਦਾਸ ਜਦ ਇਲਾਜ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਲਾਹੌਰ ਹਸਪਤਾਲ ਵਿਚ ਦਾਖਲ ਸੀ ਤਾਂ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਮੌਤ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਚੇਲੇ ਨਰੈਣ ਦਾਸ ਨੇ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਜੇਬ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਜਨਮ ਅਸਥਾਨ ਦੇ ਖ਼ਜ਼ਾਨੇ ਦੀਆਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਚਾਬੀਆਂ ਖਿਸਕਾ ਲਈਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਨਨਕਾਣਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਆ ਕੇ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਦੇ ਖ਼ਜ਼ਾਨੇ ਉੱਤੇ ਕਬਜ਼ਾ ਕਰ ਲਿਆ।

ਨਰੈਣ ਦਾਸ ਨੇ ਮਹੰਤ ਵਜੋਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਗਤ ਦੀ ਸਹਿਮਤੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਲਿਖਤੀ ਵਾਅਦਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਪਿਛਲੇ ਮਹੰਤ ਦੀਆਂ ਕਰਤੂਤਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਦੁਹਰਾਏਗਾ ਅਤੇ ਉਸ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਕੋਈ ਗ਼ਲਤੀ ਕੀਤੇ ਜਾਣ ਦੀ ਸੂਰਤ ਵਿਚ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਗਤ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਮਹੰਤੀ ਤੋਂ ਹਟਾਉਣ ਦੀ ਅਧਿਕਾਰੀ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ। ਪਰ ਜਿਉਂ ਹੀ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਪੈਰ ਜੰਮੇ ਉਸ ਨੇ ਅਸਲੀ ਰੰਗ ਦਿਖਾਉਣਾ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਉਸ ਨੇ ਇਕ ਬਦਚਲਨ ਔਰਤ ਨੂੰ ਘਰ ਵਸਾ ਲਿਆ ਜਿਸ ਦੇ ਪੇਟੇ ਦੇ ਲੜਕਿਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਦੋ ਲੜਕੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਜਨਮ ਹੋਇਆ। ਉਸ ਨੇ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਦੀ ਆਮਦਨ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਦੋ ਘਰ - ਇਕ ਨਨਕਾਣਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਵਿਚ ਅਤੇ ਦੂਜਾ ਰਾਮ ਗਲੀ, ਲਾਹੌਰ ਵਿਚ - ਖਰੀਦ ਲਏ। 1917 ਵਿਚ ਉਸ ਨੇ ਪਿਛਲੇ ਮਹੰਤ ਵਾਂਗ ਹੀ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਵਿਚ ਮੁਜਰਾ ਕਰਵਾਇਆ। ਮਹੰਤ ਦੀਆਂ ਕਰਤੂਤਾਂ ਨੇ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਕਰਿੰਦਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਮੰਦਕਰਮਾਂ ਦੇ ਰਾਹ ਪਾਇਆ ਅਤੇ ਉਹ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਵਿਚ ਮੱਥਾ ਟੇਕਣ ਲਈ ਆਉਣ ਵਾਲੀਆਂ ਇਸਤਰੀਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਦੁਰਾਚਾਰ ਕਰਨ ਲੱਗੇ। ਇਸ ਦੇ ਬਰਖਿਲਾਫ਼ ਅਖ਼ਬਾਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਰੌਲਾ ਪਿਆ, ਸਿੰਘ ਸਭਾਵਾਂ ਨੇ ਮਤੇ ਪਾਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਅਜਿਹਾ ਹੋਣ ਤੋਂ ਰੋਕਣ ਲਈ ਆਖਿਆ, ਪਰ ਸਭ ਯਤਨ ਨਿਹਫਲ ਰਹੇ। ਰੌਲਾ ਰੱਪਾ ਪਾਉਣ ਦੇ ਬਾਵਜੂਦ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਇਸ ਸਥਿਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਸੁਧਾਰਨ ਵੱਲ ਕੁਝ ਨਾ ਕੀਤੇ ਜਾਣ ਦੇ ਫਲਸਰੂਪ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਗਤ ਆਪ ਕੋਈ ਉਪਰਾਲਾ ਕਰਨ ਬਾਰੇ ਸੋਚਣ ਲੱਗੀ। ਨਰੈਣ ਦਾਸ ਨੂੰ ਡਰ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਨਵੰਬਰ 1920 ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਜਨਮ ਪੁਰਬ ਮੌਕੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਗਤ ਦੇ ਇਕੱਠ ਦਾ ਲਾਭ ਉਠਾਉਂਦਿਆਂ ਅਕਾਲੀ ਇਸ ਅਵਸਰ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਉੱਤੇ ਕਬਜ਼ਾ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਵਰਤਣਗੇ, ਇਸ ਲਈ ਉਸ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਚਾਟੜਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਹੁਕਮ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਕਿ ਪੁਰਬ ਮੌਕੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾਨਧਾਰੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪਰਿਸਰ ਵਿਚ ਦਾਖ਼ਲ ਨਾ ਹੋਣ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਜਾਵੇ। ਨਤੀਜਨ ਜਦ ਭਾਈ ਲਛਮਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਧਾਰੋਵਾਲੀ ਨੂੰ ਅੰਦਰ ਜਾਣ ਤੋਂ ਰੋਕਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਝਗੜਾ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ। ਮੌਕੇ ਉੱਤੇ ਹਾਜ਼ਰ ਪੁਲੀਸ ਕਰਮੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਪੈ ਕੇ ਮਾਮਲਾ ਸ਼ਾਂਤ ਕਰਵਾਇਆ। ਇਸ ਘਟਨਾ ਨੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਮਨਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਮਹੰਤ ਪ੍ਰਤੀ ਰੋਹ ਅਤੇ ਘ੍ਰਿਣਾ ਭਰ ਦਿੱਤੀ। ਜਿੱਥੇ ਕਿਤੇ ਵੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਗਤ ਜੁੜਦੀ, ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਜਨਮ ਅਸਥਾਨ ਦੇ ਮਹੰਤ ਨਰੈਣ ਦਾਸ ਦੇ ਦੁਰਾਚਾਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਚਰਚਾ ਹੁੰਦੀ। ਦਸੰਬਰ 1920 ਵਿਚ ਧਾਰੋਵਾਲੀ ਪਿੰਡ ਵਿਚ ਹੋਏ ਦੀਵਾਨ ਵਿਚ ਇਕ ਮਤਾ ਪ੍ਰਵਾਨ ਕਰਕੇ ਮਹੰਤ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣਾ ਆਚਰਣ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਸੁਧਾਰਨ ਲਈ ਆਖਿਆ ਗਿਆ। ਮਹੰਤ ਨੂੰ ਸਰਕਾਰੀ ਅਫ਼ਸਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਹਿ ਸੀ, ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਬਾਬਾ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਬੇਦੀ ਉਸ ਦਾ ਪੱਖ ਪੂਰ ਰਿਹਾ ਸੀ। ਸੋ ਉਸ ਨੇ ਆਪਣਾ ਧੜਾ ਮਜ਼ਬੂਤ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਨਨਕਾਣਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਵਿਚ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਮਹੰਤਾਂ ਦੀ ਇਕੱਤਰਤਾ ਬੁਲਾਈ ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ

ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਦੇ ਮੁਕਾਬਲੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਗਠਿਤ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ। ਮਹੰਤ ਨਰੈਣ ਦਾਸ ਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਅਤੇ ਮਾਣਕ ਦੇ ਮਹੰਤ ਬਸੰਤ ਦਾਸ ਨੂੰ ਸਕੱਤਰ ਬਣਾਇਆ ਗਿਆ। ਕਮੇਟੀ ਦਾ ਖਰਚਾ ਚਲਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਮੌਕੇ ਉੱਤੇ ਸੱਠ ਹਜ਼ਾਰ ਰੁਪਏ ਇਕੱਠੇ ਹੋਏ ਅਤੇ ਮਹੰਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਪੱਖ ਤੋਂ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਜਾਣੂੰ ਕਰਵਾਉਣ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਲਾਹੌਰ ਤੋਂ ‘ਸੰਤ ਸੇਵਕ’ ਨਾਉਂ ਦਾ ਅਖਬਾਰ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਫ਼ੈਸਲਾ ਹੋਇਆ। ਮਹੰਤ ਨੇ ਅਕਾਲੀਆਂ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਸੰਭਾਲਣ ਬਾਰੇ ਕੀਤੇ ਜਾਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਯਤਨ ਨੂੰ ਹਿੰਸਕ ਵਿਰੋਧ ਨਾਲ ਮਾਤ ਦੇਣ ਦੀ ਯੋਜਨਾ ਵੀ ਘੜ ਲਈ।

ਜਦੋਂ ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਨੂੰ ਸਪਸ਼ਟ ਦਿਖਾਈ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਕਿ ਮਹੰਤ ਸਰਕਾਰੀ ਸ਼ਹਿ ਕਾਰਨ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਤੋਂ ਨਾਬਰ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ 24 ਜਨਵਰੀ ਦੀ ਮੀਟਿੰਗ ਵਿਚ 4, 5 ਅਤੇ 6 ਮਾਰਚ 1921 ਨੂੰ ਨਨਕਾਣਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਵਿਚ ਵੱਡੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਇਕੱਤਰਤਾ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਨਿਰਣਾ ਲਿਆ ਗਿਆ। ਇਕ ਇਸ਼ਤਿਹਾਰ ਛਾਪ ਕੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਸਰਕਾਰ, ਸਿੱਖ ਰਾਜਿਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਮੋਹਤਬਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਬੇਨਤੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਗਤ ਨੂੰ ਸੌਂਪ ਦੇਣ ਬਾਰੇ ਮਹੰਤ ਉੱਤੇ ਦਬਾਅ ਪਾਉਣ। ਮਹੰਤ ਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਸੂਚਨਾ ਮਿਲੀ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਇਕ ਪਾਸੇ ਤਾਂ ਆਪਣੀ ਹਿੰਸਕ ਯੋਜਨਾ ਨੂੰ ਨੇਪਰੇ ਚਾੜ੍ਹਨ ਦੀ ਤਿਆਰੀ ਵਿਚ ਜੁਟ ਗਿਆ ਅਤੇ ਦੂਜੇ ਪਾਸੇ ਉਸ ਨੇ ਗੱਲਬਾਤ ਨਾਲ ਮਾਮਲਾ ਨਿਬੇੜਨ ਲਈ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਝੱਬਰ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਬਣਾਇਆ। ਇਹ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਸਿਰਫ ਚਾਲ ਸੀ। ਇਸ ਲਈ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਮੈਂਬਰਾਂ ਨੇ ਜਦ ਵੀ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਵਟਾਂਦਰੇ ਲਈ ਸੌਂਦਿਆ, ਉਹ ਕਿਸੇ ਨਾ ਕਿਸੇ ਬਹਾਨੇ ਮੁਲਾਕਾਤ ਨੂੰ ਟਾਲਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ। ਅਕਾਲੀ ਆਗੂਆਂ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਗਤ ਦੀ ਮਦਦ ਨਾਲ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਸੰਭਾਲਣ ਦੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਕਾਰਵਾਈ ਨੂੰ ਅਸਫਲ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਦੀ ਪੇਸ਼ਬੰਦੀ ਵਜੋਂ ਉਸ ਨੇ ਇਲਾਕੇ ਦੇ ਸੈਂਕੜੇ ਬਦਮਾਸ਼ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਵਿਚ ਇਕੱਠੇ ਕਰ ਲਏ ਅਤੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਛਵੀਆਂ, ਗੰਡਾਸਿਆਂ, ਕਿਰਪਾਨਾਂ ਆਦਿ ਨਾਲ ਸਨਦਬੱਧ ਕਰ ਲਿਆ।

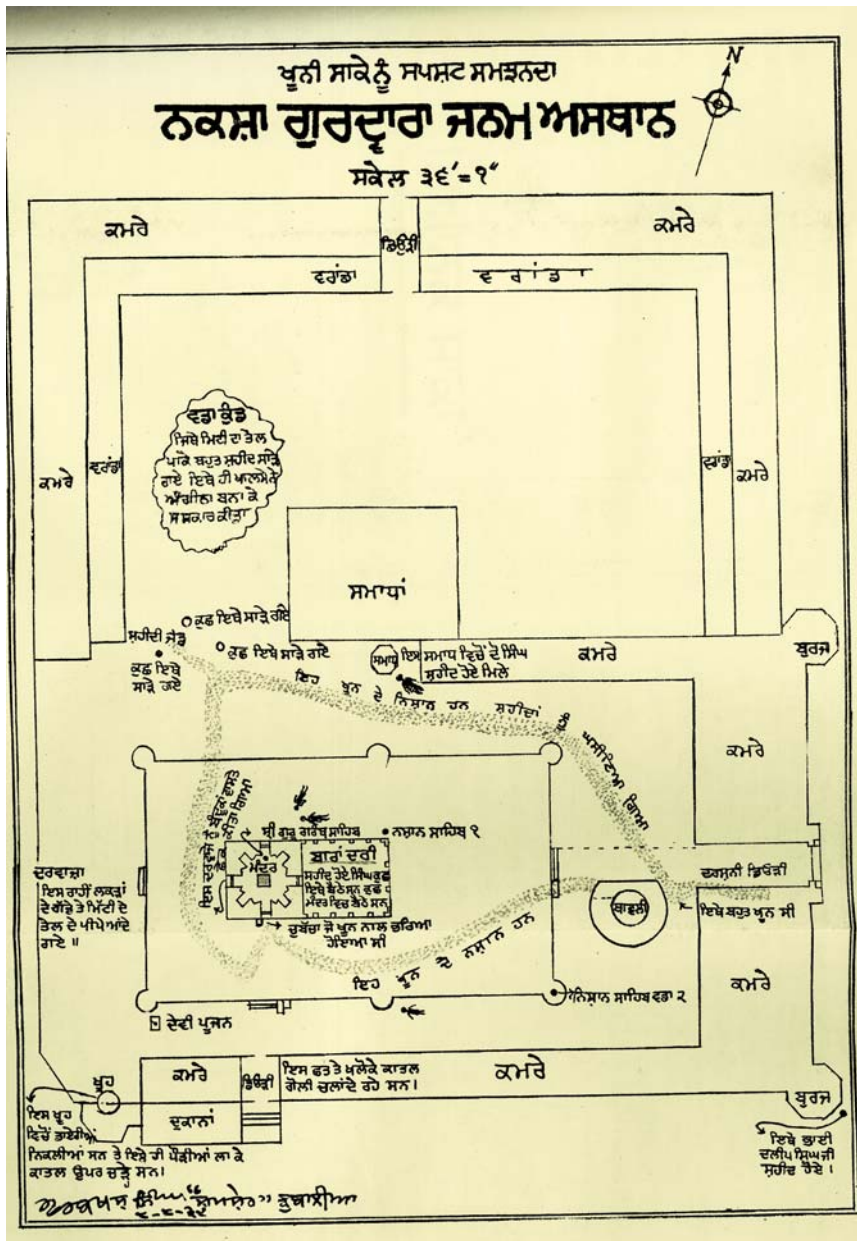
ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਨੂੰ ਸੂਚਨਾ ਮਿਲ ਗਈ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਮਹੰਤ ਨਰੈਣ ਦਾਸ ਤਰਨਤਾਰਨ ਦੇ ਪੁਜਾਰੀਆਂ ਵਾਂਗ ਸਮਝੌਤਾ ਕਰਨ ਬਹਾਨੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਮੁਖੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਦੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਬੁਲਾ ਕੇ ਸਮੂਹਿਕ ਕਤਲੇਆਮ ਕਰਨ ਬਾਰੇ ਵਿਉਂਤ ਬਣਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਮਿਲਣ ਉੱਤੇ ਭਾਈ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਝੱਬਰ, ਭਾਈ ਲਛਮਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਧਾਰੋਵਾਲੀ ਅਤੇ ਭਾਈ ਬੂਟਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ 17 ਫਰਵਰੀ ਨੂੰ ਸਲਾਹ ਕੀਤੀ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਮਿਥੀ ਤਰੀਕ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਹੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਦਿਨ ਜਥਿਆਂ ਸਮੇਤ ਅਚਾਨਕ ਨਨਕਾਣਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਉੱਤੇ ਕਬਜ਼ਾ ਕਰ ਲੈਣ। ਇਸ ਮੰਤਵ ਲਈ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਝੱਬਰ ਅਤੇ ਭਾਈ ਲਛਮਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਜਥਿਆਂ ਨੇ 19 ਫਰਵਰੀ ਦੀ ਰਾਤ ਨਨਕਾਣਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤੋਂ ਕੁਝ ਮੀਲ ਦੀ ਦੂਰੀ ਉੱਤੇ ਚੰਦਰਕੋਟ ਵਿਖੇ ਇਕੱਠੇ ਹੋਣ ਦਾ ਫ਼ੈਸਲਾ ਕੀਤਾ। ਲਾਹੌਰ ਅਕਾਲੀ ਦਫਤਰ ਵਿਚ ਸ. ਤੇਜਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਮੁੰਦਰੀ, ਸ. ਹਰਚੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਮਾਸਟਰ ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਵਿਉਂਤ ਦਾ ਪਤਾ ਲੱਗਾ ਤਾਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਮਹੰਤ ਨਰੈਣ ਦਾਸ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾ ਰਹੀ ਤਿਆਰੀ ਨੂੰ ਵੇਖਦਿਆਂ ਇਸ ਯੋਜਨਾ ਨੂੰ ਖਤਰਨਾਕ ਸਮਝਿਆ ਅਤੇ ਸ. ਸਰਦੂਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਕਵੀਸ਼ਰ, ਮਾਸਟਰ ਸੁੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਲਾਇਲਪੁਰੀ, ਸ. ਜਸਵੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਝਬਾਲ ਅਤੇ ਭਾਈ ਦਲੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਾਂਗਲਾ ਦੀ ਸਹਿਮਤੀ ਨਾਲ ਇਸ ਉੱਤੇ ਅਮਲ ਨਾ ਕੀਤੇ ਜਾਣ ਦਾ ਨਿਰਣਾ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਪਿਛਲੇ ਦੋਵਾਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਮੁਖੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਡਿਊਟੀ ਲਾਈ ਗਈ ਕਿ ਉਹ

ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਝੱਬਰ ਅਤੇ ਦੂਜਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲ ਕੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਕਰਨ ਤੋਂ ਰੋਕਣ। ਉਕਤ ਦੋਵੇਂ ਆਗੂ ਤੁਰੰਤ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਝੱਬਰ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲਣ ਲਈ ਚੱਲ ਪਏ ਅਤੇ ਰਾਤ ਦੇ ਅੱਠ ਵਜੇ ਤੱਕ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਝੱਬਰ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਾਉਣ ਵਿਚ ਸਫਲ ਹੋਏ। ਉਪਰੰਤ ਭਾਈ ਦਲੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਾਂਗਲਾ ਸ. ਲਛਮਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਨਨਕਾਣਾ ਸਹਿਬ ਜਾਣ ਤੋਂ ਰੋਕਣ ਲਈ ਚੰਦਰਕੋਟ ਪਹੁੰਚਿਆ, ਪਰ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਉੱਥੇ ਪੁੱਜਣ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਹੀ ਭਾਈ ਲਛਮਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਆਪਣੇ ਜਥੇ ਨਾਲ ਅੱਗੇ ਨਿਕਲ ਚੁੱਕੇ ਸਨ। ਭਾਈ ਲਛਮਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਾ ਲਗਭਗ ਦੋ ਸੌ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦਾ ਜਥਾ ਪੌਣੇ ਕੁ ਛੇ ਵਜੇ ਨਨਕਾਣਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਨੇੜ ਭੱਠਿਆਂ ਉੱਤੇ ਪੁੱਜਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਭਾਈ ਦਲੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਾ ਪੱਤਰ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਇਕ ਘੋੜ ਸਵਾਰ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲਿਆ। ਭਾਈ ਦਲੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਪ੍ਰਤੀ ਮਨ ਵਿਚ ਸਤਿਕਾਰ ਹੋਣ ਕਾਰਨ ਭਾਈ ਲਛਮਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਪੱਤਰ ਦੀ ਲਿਖਤ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਅੱਗੇ ਜਾਣ ਦਾ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਤਿਆਗ ਦਿੱਤਾ, ਪਰ ਜਥੇ ਦੇ ਇਕ ਮੈਂਬਰ ਭਾਈ ਟਹਿਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਜ਼ੋਰ ਪਾ ਕੇ ਕਹਿਣ ਉੱਤੇ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਆਏ ਹਨ ਤਾਂ ਸ਼ਾਂਤਮਈ ਰਹਿੰਦਿਆਂ ਜਨਮ ਅਸਥਾਨ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਵਿਚ ਨਤ ਮਸਤਕ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਮੁੜਣ, ਜਥੇ ਨੇ ਅੱਗੇ ਚਾਲੇ ਪਾ ਦਿੱਤੇ। ਸਰੋਵਰ ਵਿਚ ਇਸ਼ਨਾਨ ਕਰਨ ਪਿੱਛੋਂ ਜਥਾ ਛੇ ਕੁ ਵਜੇ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਵਿਚ ਦਾਖਲ ਹੋਇਆ। ਮਹੰਤ ਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਜਥੇ ਦੇ ਆਉਣ ਬਾਰੇ ਸੂਚਨਾ ਮਿਲ ਚੁੱਕੀ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਉਸ ਨੇ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਦਾਖਲ ਹੋਣ ਦੇ ਹਰ ਰਾਹ ਉੱਤੇ ਹਥਿਆਰਬੰਦ ਗੁੰਡੇ ਬਿਠਾ ਰੱਖੇ ਸਨ। ਜਿਉਂ ਹੀ ਜਥਾ 'ਬੋਲੇ ਸੋ ਨਿਹਾਲ, ਸਤਿ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ' ਦੇ ਜੈਕਾਰੇ ਗੁੰਜਾਉਂਦਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਦਰਵਾਜ਼ੇ ਤੋਂ ਅੰਦਰ ਦਾਖਲ ਹੋਇਆ, ਸੋਚੀ ਸਮਝੀ ਯੋਜਨਾ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਬੂਹਾ ਬੰਦ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਗਿਆ। ਜਥਾ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਵਿਚ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਮੱਥਾ ਟੇਕਣ ਉਪਰੰਤ ਬੈਠ ਕੇ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਗਾਇਨ ਕਰ ਲੱਗਾ। ਭਾਈ ਲਛਮਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਤਾਬਿਆ ਬੈਠ ਗਏ। ਦਰਬਾਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਅੰਦਰ ਬੈਠੇ ਇੱਕਾ ਦੁੱਕਾ ਮਹੰਤ ਬਾਹਰ ਚਲੇ ਗਏ ਤਾਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਗਤ ਉੱਤੇ ਇਕਦਮ ਉੱਪਰੋਂ ਗੋਲੀਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਬੂਹਿਆਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਇੱਟਾਂ ਰੋੜਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਬਰਖਾ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਹੋ ਗਈ। ਗੋਲੀਬਾਰੀ ਵਿਚ 25 ਸਿੰਘ ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਹੋ ਗਏ ਅਤੇ ਕੁਝ ਗੋਲੀਆਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਬੀੜ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਲੱਗੀਆਂ। ਬਹੁਤੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੇ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਲੱਗਦੀ 'ਚੌਖੰਡੀ' ਵਿਚ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਅੰਦਰੋਂ ਕੁੰਡੀ ਲਾ ਲਈ ਤਾਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਉੱਪਰੋਂ ਗੋਲੀਆਂ ਮਾਰ ਕੇ ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਗਿਆ। ਗੱਲ ਕੀ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪਰਿਸਰ ਵਿਚ ਜਿੱਥੇ ਵੀ ਕੋਈ ਸਿੱਖ ਦਿਸਿਆ ਉਸ ਉੱਤੇ ਜਾਨਲੇਵਾ ਹਮਲਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ। ਗੋਲੀਆਂ ਚੱਲਣ ਦੀ ਆਵਾਜ਼ ਸੁਣ ਕੇ ਨਨਕਾਣਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਕਸਬੇ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਵੱਡੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਅੱਗੇ ਇਕੱਠੀ ਹੋ ਗਈ ਅਤੇ ਜੈਕਾਰੇ ਗੁੰਜਾਉਣ ਲੱਗੀ। ਮਹੰਤ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਗੁੰਡਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਉੱਤੇ ਵੀ ਗੋਲੀ ਚਲਾਉਣ ਦਾ ਹੁਕਮ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਅਤੇ ਕਈਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਰ ਮੁਕਾਇਆ। ਮਹੰਤ ਨੂੰ ਅਜਿਹਾ ਅਣਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਕਾਰਾ ਕਰਨ ਤੋਂ ਵਰਜਣ ਲਈ ਆਏ ਭਾਈ ਦਲੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਮਹੰਤ ਨੇ ਖੁਦ ਗੋਲੀ ਮਾਰ ਕੇ ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਕੀਤਾ। ਇਸ ਪਿੱਛੋਂ ਮਹੰਤ ਨੇ ਚੌਖੰਡੀ ਦੇ ਨੇੜ ਲੱਕੜਾਂ ਦਾ ਢੇਰ ਲਗਵਾਇਆ ਅਤੇ ਮਾਰੇ ਗਏ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਲਾਸ਼ਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਜ਼ਖਮੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਵਿਚ ਸੁੱਟ ਕੇ ਅੱਗ ਲਾ ਦਿੱਤੀ। ਜ਼ਖਮੀਆਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਕਈਆਂ ਨੇ ਉੱਠਣ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕੀਤੀ, ਪਰ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਮੁੜ ਅੱਗ ਵਿਚ ਧੱਕ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਗਿਆ। ਜਿਉਂ ਹੀ ਮਹੰਤ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਕੀਤੇ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਕਤਲੇਆਮ ਬਾਰੇ ਨਨਕਾਣਾ ਵਾਸੀ ਸ. ਉੱਤਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਕਾਰਖਾਨੇਦਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਪਤਾ ਲੱਗਾ, ਉਸ ਨੇ ਤੁਰੰਤ ਗਵਰਨਰ ਪੰਜਾਬ, ਕਮਿਸ਼ਨਰ ਲਾਹੌਰ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਅਧਿਕਾਰੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਤਾਰ ਭੇਜ ਕੇ ਇਸ ਘਟਨਾ ਦੀ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦਿੱਤੀ। ਡਿਪਟੀ ਕਮਿਸ਼ਨਰ, ਲਾਹੌਰ 12 ਵਜੇ

ਆਇਆ ਪਰ ਕਲਮ-ਕੱਲਾ। ਡਵੀਯਨਲ ਕਮਿਸ਼ਨਰ, ਲਾਹੌਰ ਅਤੇ ਡਿਪਟੀ ਇੰਸਪੈਕਟਰ ਜਨਰਲ ਪੁਲੀਸ ਰਾਤ ਨੂੰ 9 ਵਜੇ ਗੱਡੀ ਉੱਤੇ ਆਏ, ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਾਲ 100 ਬਰਤਾਨਵੀ ਅਤੇ ਏਨੇ ਹੀ ਹਿੰਦੋਸਤਾਨੀ ਸਿਪਾਹੀ ਸਨ। ਸਰਦਾਰ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਮਹਿਤਾਬ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਜ ਹੋਰ ਸਿੱਖ ਆਗੂ ਏਸੇ ਗੱਡੀ ਵਿਚ ਨਨਕਾਣਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਪਹੁੰਚੇ। ਪੁਲੀਸ ਅਫਸਰ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਹੁਕਮ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਜਾਣ ਉੱਤੇ ਸਿਪਾਹੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪਰਿਸਰ ਨੂੰ ਚਾਰਾਂ ਪਾਸਿਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਘੇਰ ਲਿਆ ਅਤੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੇ ਵੀ ਅੰਦਰ ਆਉਣ ਉੱਤੇ ਪਾਬੰਦੀ ਲਾ ਦਿੱਤੀ। ਮਹੰਤ ਨਰੈਣ ਦਾਸ ਅਤੇ ਉਸ ਦੇ 28 ਗੁੰਡਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਗ੍ਰਿਫ਼ਤਾਰ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਲਾਹੌਰ ਤੋਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਗਿਆ। ਇਸ ਹਿਰਦੇਵੇਧਕ ਘਟਨਾ ਦੀ ਸੂਚਨਾ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਪਹੁੰਚੀ ਤਾਂ ਉੱਥੋਂ ਸ. ਹਰਬੰਸ ਸਿੰਘ, ਸ. ਸੁੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਰਾਮਗੜ੍ਹੀਆ ਅਤੇ ਕੁਝ ਹੋਰ ਆਗੂ 21 ਫਰਵਰੀ ਦੀ ਸਵੇਰ ਪਹੁੰਚੇ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪਰਿਸਰ ਵਿਚ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਭੈਅਭੀਤ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ ਵੇਖਿਆ। ਸਾਰਾ ਚੌਗਿਰਦਾ ਵੱਡੀ ਕਤਲਗਾਹ ਬਣਿਆ ਦਿਖਾਈ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਸੀ; ਫਰਸ਼, ਜਿਸ ਦੇ ਉੱਤੇ ਜ਼ਖ਼ਮੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਖਿੱਚ ਧੂਹ ਕੇ ਅੱਗ ਵਿਚ ਸੁੱਟਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ, ਉੱਤੇ ਲਹੂ ਦੀਆਂ ਪੇਪੜੀਆਂ ਜੰਮੀਆਂ ਹੋਈਆਂ ਸਨ; ਵਾਲਾਂ ਦੇ ਗੁੱਛੇ ਅਤੇ ਕੰਘੇ ਇਧਰ ਉਧਰ ਖਿੱਡੇ ਪਏ ਸਨ ਅਤੇ ਛੱਤ ਉੱਤੇ ਇੱਟਾਂ ਵੱਟਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਢੇਰ, ਰਫਲਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਚਲਾਈਆਂ ਗੋਲੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਖਾਲੀ ਡੱਬੇ, ਚੱਲੇ ਹੋਏ ਕਾਰਤੂਸ ਅਤੇ ਸ਼ਰਾਬ ਦੀਆਂ ਖਾਲੀ ਬੋਤਲਾਂ ਪਈਆਂ ਸਨ। ਮਹੰਤ ਦੇ ਨਿੱਜੀ ਕਮਰੇ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਵੀ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਢੇਰ ਮਸਾਲਾ ਮਿਲਿਆ।

ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਜਨਮ ਅਸਥਾਨ, ਨਨਕਾਣਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਵਿਚ ਹੋਏ ਇਸ ਸਾਕੇ ਦੀ ਖ਼ਬਰ ਜੰਗਲ ਦੀ ਅੱਗ ਵਾਂਗ ਫੈਲ ਗਈ। ਦੂਰੋਂ ਨੇੜਿਓਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਗਤ ਵਹੀਰਾਂ ਘੱਤ ਕੇ ਨਨਕਾਣੇ ਨੂੰ ਚੱਲ ਪਈ। ਛੋਟੇ ਛੋਟੇ ਜਥੇ ਤਾਂ ਅਨੇਕ ਆਏ, ਪਰ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਝੱਬਰ ਦੀ ਅਗਵਾਈ ਵਿਚ ਜੋ 2200 ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦਾ ਜਥਾ ਪਹੁੰਚਿਆ, ਉਸ ਜਥੇ ਦੇ ਹਰ ਮੈਂਬਰ ਦੇ ਹੱਥ ਵਿਚ ਟਕੂਆ, ਗੰਡਾਸਾ, ਸਫਾਜੰਗ ਆਦਿ ਸੀ, ਨਹੀਂ ਤਾਂ ਡਾਂਗ ਹਰ ਕਿਸੇ ਕੋਲ ਸੀ। ਮਰਨ ਮਾਰਨ ਉੱਤੇ ਉਤਾਰੂ ਇਹ ਜਥਾ ਪੁਲੀਸ ਦਾ ਘੇਰਾ ਤੋੜ ਕੇ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਦਾਖ਼ਲ ਹੋਣ ਉੱਤੇ ਬਜ਼ਿਦ ਸੀ। ਸਰਕਾਰੀ ਅਧਿਕਾਰੀ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਝੱਬਰ ਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਅਤੀ ਛੱਡਣ ਲਈ ਸ਼ਾਮ ਤੱਕ ਪ੍ਰੇਰਦੇ ਰਹੇ, ਪਰ ਨਿਹਫਲ ਰਹੇ। ਅੰਤ ਨੂੰ ਅਧਿਕਾਰੀ ਜਥੇ ਦੀ ਮੰਗ ਅੱਗੇ ਝੁਕਦਿਆਂ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਦੀਆਂ ਚਾਬੀਆਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਆਗੂਆਂ ਦੇ ਹਵਾਲੇ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਮਜਬੂਰ ਹੋ ਗਏ। ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਗਠਿਤ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਸ. ਹਰਬੰਸ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਟਾਰੀ ਨੂੰ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਥਾਪਿਆ ਗਿਆ।

ਗਿਆਨੀ ਪ੍ਰਤਾਪ ਸਿੰਘ, ਸਾਬਕਾ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਤਖਤ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਕੇਸਗੜ੍ਹ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਅਨੰਦਪੁਰ, ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ‘ਨਨਕਾਣਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਹੋਏ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਬਾਰੇ ਮਤਭੇਦ ਹੈ। ਕਈ ਲੇਖਕਾਂ ਨੇ ਗਿਣਤੀ 120, 150 ਅਤੇ 200 ਤੱਕ ਲਿਖੀ ਹੈ। ਸ. ਚਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਇੰਸਪੈਕਟਰ ਪੁਲੀਸ ਨੇ ਪੜਤਾਲ ਕਰ ਕੇ 156 ਲਿਖੇ ਹਨ। ਸਰਕਾਰੀ ਰਿਪੋਰਟਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਗਿਣਤੀ 126 ਅਤੇ 130 ਦਿੱਤੀ ਹੈ। ਸ੍ਰੀ ਨਨਕਾਣਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਨੇ ਜੋ ਸ਼ਹੀਦੀ ਜੀਵਨ (ਲੇਖਕ ਸ. ਗੁਰਬਖਸ਼ ਸਿੰਘ ਸ਼ਮਸ਼ੇਰ ਝਬਾਲੀਆ) ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਿਤ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ ਉਸ ਵਿਚ ਦੋ ਸੌ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦਾ ਜਥਾ ਮੰਨਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚੋਂ 86 ਸਿੰਘ ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਹੋਏ ਦੱਸੇ ਹਨ।” ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੱਡੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਧਾਰੋਵਾਲੀ, ਬੁੰਡਾਲਾ ਚੱਕ ਨੰਬਰ 17 ਅਤੇ 64, ਨਜ਼ਾਮਪੁਰ ਦੇਵਾ ਸਿੰਘ, ਨਜ਼ਾਮਪੁਰ ਮੂਲਾ ਸਿੰਘ, ਧਨੁਆਣਾ ਚੱਕ ਨੰਬਰ 91 ਦੇ ਵਸਨੀਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਸੀ।



ਸਾਕਾ ਨਨਕਾਣਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੂੰ ਸਪਸ਼ਟ ਕਰਦਾ ਗੁਰਬਖਸ਼ ਸਿੰਘ 'ਸਮਸ਼ੇਰ' ਝਬਾਲੀਆ ਦਾ ਬਣਾਇਆ ਨਕਸ਼ਾ।  
 ਫੋਟੋ: ਪੁਸਤਕ 'ਸ਼ਹੀਦੀ ਜੀਵਨ' ਵਿਚੋਂ

## ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ: ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ

ਡਾ: ਗੁਰਮੇਲ ਸਿੰਘ\*

### ਉਦੇਸ਼ ਤੇ ਘੇਰਾ

ਇਸ ਪਰਚੇ ਦਾ ਉਦੇਸ਼ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਨਿਰਮਤ ਉਸ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਦੀ ਸਮਝ ਹਾਸਿਲ ਕਰਨਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ-ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਰੂਪ 'ਸਬਦ' ਦਾ 'ਅਰਥ' ਸਮਝਣ ਲਈ ਅਧਾਰ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਵਿਸ਼ੇ ਦੀ ਅਧਾਰ ਸਮਗਰੀ ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਰਚਿਤ ਵਾਰਾਂ ਹਨ।

### ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ: ਇਕ ਸੰਬੋਧ

ਵਿਸ਼ੇ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ-ਜਗਤ ਗ੍ਰਹਿਣ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਵਾਕੰਸ਼/ਸਮਾਸ ਦੇ ਭਾਵ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣਾ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਹੈ। ਵਿਚਾਰਾਧੀਨ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਗ ਵਿਚ ਦੋਵੇਂ ਪਦ 'ਵਿਆਖਿਆ' ਅਤੇ 'ਸਿਧਾਂਤ' ਤਕਨੀਕੀ ਅਰਥਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵਰਤੇ ਗਏ ਹਨ, ਅਤੇ ਇਥੇ ਇਹ ਇਕ ਸੰਬੋਧ (concept) ਦੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਹਨ।

ਸਿਧਾਂਤਕ ਅਰਥਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਇਕ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਖਿਆਨ ਹੈ, ਜੋ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਪਾਠ-ਵਸਤੂ (text-object) ਉਤੇ ਅਧਾਰਿਤ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਹਵਾਲੇ ਨਾਲ ਇਸ ਦੀ ਸਿਰਜਨਾ ਸੁਤੰਤਰ ਨਾ ਹੋ ਕੇ, ਅਧਾਰਿਤ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਉਂ ਵੀ ਕਹਿ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਬਿੰਦੂ-ਬੀਜ ਦਾ ਬਿਰਖ ਹੈ। ਸਰੂਪਗਤ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਤੋਂ ਇਹ ਸੰਖੇਪ ਦੇ ਇਕਦਮ ਉਲਟਭਾਵੀ, ਵਿਸਤ੍ਰਿਤ ਅਰਥਾਂ ਦਾ ਧਾਰਨੀ ਹੈ। ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਨੂੰ ਇਕ ਸੰਕਲਪ ਵਜੋਂ ਗ੍ਰਹਿਣ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਇਹ ਅਮੂਰਤ (abstract) ਸਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਆਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ, ਪਰ ਜਦੋਂ ਇਸਨੂੰ ਵਿਹਾਰ ਵਿਚ ਲਿਆਂਦਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਇਸ ਲਈ 'ਵਿਆਖਿਆਕਾਰੀ' ਪਦ ਵਰਤਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਵਿਆਖਿਆਕਾਰੀ, ਅਮੂਰਤ ਸੰਕਲਪ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ, ਵਿਹਾਰਕ, ਦਿਸਦਾ ਅਤੇ ਰੂਪਗਤ ਪਖ ਹੈ। ਵਿਆਖਿਆਕਾਰੀ ਵਿਧਾ ਜਾਂ ਰੂਪਾਕਾਰ (genre) ਵਜੋਂ ਸਾਡੇ ਸਭਿਆਚਾਰ ਵਿਚ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਟੀਕਾਕਾਰੀ ਦੇ ਪਰਿਆਵਾਚੀ ਹੀ ਗ੍ਰਹਿਣ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ, ਪਰ ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਥਾਇ ਹੋਰ ਵਰਤੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਪਦ, ਜਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਪਦਾਰਥ, ਭਾਸ਼ਾ, ਕੋਸ਼, ਪਰਿਆਇ, ਕਥਾ ਆਦਿ ਵੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆਕਾਰੀ ਹੀ ਹਨ। ਆਧੁਨਿਕ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਾਰੀਆਂ ਵਿਧਾਵਾਂ (ਕਾਵਿ, ਨਾਵਲ, ਨਾਟਕ...) ਤੇ ਗਿਆਨ-ਸ਼ਾਸਤਰ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਾਰੀਆਂ ਸ਼ਾਖਾਵਾਂ/ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ਾਂ-ਖੋਜ, ਸ਼ੋਧ, ਨਿਬੰਧ, ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ, ਪੁਸਤਕ, ਭਾਸ਼ਣ, ਵਿਚਾਰ-ਚਰਚਾ ਆਦਿ ਸਭ ਵਿਆਖਿਆਕਾਰੀ ਦੀ ਵਸਤ ਹੀ ਹਨ। ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਕਹੇ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਟੀਕਾਕਾਰੀ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਵਧੇਰੇ ਰੂੜੀ ਰੂਪ ਹੈ। ਜਦੋਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਭਾਈ

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ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਰਚਨਾ ਨੂੰ 'ਵਿਆਖਿਆ' ਵਜੋਂ ਪ੍ਰਵਾਨ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਾਂ ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਕਾਵਿ-ਵਿਧਾ (ਵਾਰ ਰੂਪਾਕਾਰ) ਵਿਚ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆਕਾਰੀ ਹੈ, ਜੋ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਅਧਾਰਿਤ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਦਾ ਸਰੂਪ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਮੁਕਾਬਲੇ ਦੁਜੈਲੇ ਪਧਰ ਦਾ ਹੈ। ਜੇ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਮੂਲ ਪ੍ਰਗਾਸ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਕਾਵਿ-ਵਿਧਾ ਵਾਰ ਉਸ ਪ੍ਰਗਾਸ ਨੂੰ ਵਿਖਿਆਨਣ ਦਾ ਢੰਗ ਜਾਂ ਜਤਨ ਹੈ।

ਦੂਜਾ ਪਦ 'ਸਿਧਾਂਤ' ਕੋਸ਼ਗਤ ਅਰਥਾਂ ਵਿਚ 'ਸਿਧ+ਅੰਤ' ਪਦਾਂ ਦਾ ਜੋੜ (ਸੰਧੀ) ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ ਹੈ 'ਅੰਤ ਨੂੰ ਸਿਧ ਕੀਤੀ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਜਾਂ ਨਤੀਜਾ'। ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਵਾਂਗ ਇਸ ਦੀ ਹੈਸੀਅਤ ਵੀ ਦੁਜੈਲੇ ਪਧਰ ਦੀ ਹੈ, ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਇਹ ਵੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ 'ਵਿਚਾਰ' ਦੀ ਨਿਆਂਯੁਕਤ ਮਾਪਦੰਡਾਂ ਨਾਲ 'ਵਿਆਖਿਆ' ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਅੰਤ ਨੂੰ ਸਿਧ ਹੋਈ 'ਸਚਾਈ' ਹੈ। ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਰਚਨਾ ਦੇ ਹਵਾਲੇ ਵਿਚ ਇਹ ਪਦ ਬਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਅੰਤ ਵਿਚ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋਈ ਅਜਿਹੀ 'ਸਚਾਈ' ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਦੀ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਕਰਨਾ ਹਥਲਾ ਉਦੇਸ਼ ਹੈ ਇਕ ਤਥ ਧਿਆਨਯੋਗ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਥੇ (ਵਾਰ ਰੂਪਾਕਾਰ ਵਿਚ) ਵਰਤੇ ਸਾਧਨ/ਮਾਪਦੰਡ ਨਿਆਂਯੁਕਤ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ ਅਭਿਆਸ ਯੁਕਤ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੀ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਦਾ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਸਿਰਜਨਾਤਮਕ ਕਿਸਮ ਦਾ ਹੈ। ਸਾਰੀ ਬਾਣੀ; ਸਾਰੀ ਗੁਰਸਿਖੀ ਦਾ ਤਤ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਅੰਤ ਨੂੰ ਸਿਧ ਹੋਇਆ ਸਚੁ (ਸਿਧਾਂਤ) 'ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ' ਹੈ। ਸੋ ਕੁਲ ਮਿਲਾ ਕੇ ਬਾਣੀ ਅਧਾਰਿਤ ਕੀਤੀ ਕਾਵਿ-ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਦੌਰਾਨ ਜੋ ਅੰਤਿਮ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋਈ ਸਿਧੀ ਹੈ, ਉਹ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ 'ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ' ਹੈ। ਦੂਜੇ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਅਗਾਂਹ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾਵੇਗੀ, ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਦਾ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ 'ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ' ਹੈ।

### ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ: ਪਰੰਪਰਾ ਤੇ ਪਰਿਪੇਖ

ਅਰਥ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਸਮਝੇ ਜਾਣ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਪਾਠ (text) ਦੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾਵੇ? ਇਸ ਸਬੰਧੀ ਵਿਸ਼ਵ ਚਿੰਤਨ ਦੇ ਅਕਾਦਮਿਕ ਅਨੁਸ਼ਾਸਨ ਵਿਚ ਦੋ ਗਿਆਨ-ਸ਼ਾਸਤਰ ਇਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਸਿਧੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਸੰਬੰਧਿਤ ਹਨ। ਪਹਿਲਾ ਹੈ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਗਿਆਨ (linguistics) ਦੀ ਇਕ ਸੁਤੰਤਰ ਸ਼ਾਖਾ ਅਰਥ ਵਿਗਿਆਨ (semantics) ਅਤੇ ਦੂਜਾ ਹੈ ਧਰਮਦਰਸ਼ਨ/ਮੀਮਾਂਸਾ ਵਿਚ ਪ੍ਰਵਾਨਿਤ ਧਰਮ ਗ੍ਰੰਥਾਂ ਦੇ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ/ਨਿਯਮਾਂ/ਢੰਗਾਂ ਆਦਿ ਸਿਧਾਂਤਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਗਿਆਨ-ਅਨੁਸ਼ਾਸਨ: ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਸ਼ਾਸਤਰ (hermeneutics)। ਪਛਮ ਵਿਚ ਬਾਈਬਲ (ਇਸਾਈ ਧਰਮ ਦੀ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਪੁਸਤਕ/New Testament ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼) ਦੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਹੋਵੇ? ਬਾਈਬਲ ਦੇ ਅਸਲ ਅਰਥ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਸਮਝ ਵਿਚ ਆਉਣ? ਜਾਂ ਕਲੀਸੀਆਈ ਧਰਮ (biblical religion) ਦੀ ਸਹੀ ਸਮਝ ਲਈ ਕਿਹੜਾ ਤਰੀਕਾ ਵਾਜਬ ਹੈ? ਆਦਿ ਮਸਲਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਹਲ ਲਈ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਪੂਰਾ-ਸੂਰਾ ਸੁਤੰਤਰ ਅਕਾਦਮਿਕ ਅਨੁਸ਼ਾਸਨ ਹੋਂਦ ਵਿਚ ਆਇਆ, ਉਸ ਨੂੰ hermeneutics ਕਿਹਾ ਜਾਣ ਲਗ ਪਿਆ। ਭਾਰਤੀ ਜਾਂ ਪੂਰਬੀ ਜਗਤ ਵਿਚ hermeneutics ਦੇ ਸਮਾਨੰਤਰ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਸ਼ਾਸਤਰ ਜਾਂ ਅਰਥ ਮੀਮਾਂਸਾ ਸ਼ਬਦ/ਸਮਾਸ ਵਰਤਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ; ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਥਾਇ ਭਾਸ਼ਯ ਵਿਗਿਆਨ ਵੀ ਵਰਤਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਭਾਰਤੀ ਅਰਥ ਮੀਮਾਂਸਾ (Indian theory of meaning) ਵਿਚ ਵਿਆਕਰਨਕਾਰਾਂ, ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਸ਼ਾਸਤਰੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਚਿੰਤਕਾਂ ਨੇ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਹਿਸਾ ਪਾਇਆ ਹੈ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਖਟ ਸ਼ਾਸਤਰੀ

(ਖਾਸਕਰ ਨਿਆਇ ਤੇ ਪੂਰਵ ਮੀਮਾਂਸਾ), ਜੈਨੀ ਤੇ ਬੋਧੀ ਵਿਦਵਾਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਵਡਾ ਹਿਸਾ ਹੈ। ਅਰਥ ਸਮਝਣ ਦੀ ਵਧੇਰੇ ਕਿਰਿਆ ਕਾਵਿ/ਸਾਹਿਤ ਨਾਲ ਜੁੜੀ ਰਹੀ, ਪਰ ਸਮਾਂ ਪਾ ਕੇ ਇਹ ਧਰਮ ਅਤੇ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਦਾ ਹਿਸਾ ਬਣਦੀ ਹੋਈ ਜੀਵਨ ਦੇ ਹਰ ਖੇਤਰ ਵਿਚ ਪ੍ਰਵੇਸ਼ ਕਰ ਗਈ। ਮੁੱਖ ਤੌਰ ਉੱਤੇ ਪੂਰਬੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਸ਼ਾਸਤਰ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਰ ਸਿਧਾਂਤਾਂ/ਸਕੂਲਾਂ ਦਾ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ:

- (ਭਰਤਰਿ ਹਰੀ ਦਾ) ਸਫੋਟ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ
- (ਬੋਧੀਆਂ ਦਾ) ਅਪੋਹ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ
- (ਅਨੰਦਵਰਧਨ ਦਾ) ਧੁਨੀ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਅਤੇ
- (ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਦਾ) ਸਬਦ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ

ਸਾਡਾ ਹਥਲਾ ਸੰਬੰਧ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਦੇ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਨਾਲ ਹੈ। ਵਿਸ਼ੇ ਦੀ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਜੀਵਨ ਬਾਰੇ ਮੁਢਲੀ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਹਾਸਿਲ ਕਰ ਲੈਣੀ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਹੈ।

### **ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ: ਜੀਵਨ-ਮੂਲਕ ਵੇਰਵਾ**

ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਸਿਖ ਵਿਦਵਾਨ-ਜਗਤ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਤਿਕਾਰਯੋਗ ਹਸਤੀਆਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਮੁਹਰਲੀ ਕਤਾਰ ਦੇ ਸਿਖ ਵਿਦਵਾਨ ਹਨ। ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦਾ ਰੂਹਾਨੀ ਅਤੇ ਖਾਨਦਾਨੀ ਸੰਬੰਧ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਨਾਲ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਅਮਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਪਿਤਾ ਤੇਜੋ ਜਾਂ ਤੇਜ ਭਾਨ ਦੇ ਦੋ ਭਰਾ ਹੋਰ ਸਨ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਂ ਚੰਦ੍ਰਭਾਨ ਤੇ ਭਾਨ ਚੰਦ ਸਨ। ਚੰਦ੍ਰ ਭਾਨ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਦੋ ਪੁਤਰ ਹੋਏ, ਇਕ ਦਾਤਾਰ ਚੰਦ ਤੇ ਦੂਜੇ ਈਸਰ ਚੰਦ, ਇਸੇ ਈਸਰ ਦਾਸ ਦੇ ਪੁਤਰ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਸਨ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਪਸ਼ਟ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ, ਗੁਰੂ ਅਮਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਭਤੀਜੇ ਤੇ ਪੰਜਵੇਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਰਜਨ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਮਾਮਾ ਸਨ, ਸੋ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਗੁਰੂਖਘਰ ਨਾਲ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਨਿਕਟੀ (ਰਿਸ਼ਤੇਦਾਰੀ) ਸੰਬੰਧ ਬਣਦਾ ਹੈ।

ਲਗਪਗ ਸਾਰੇ ਵਿਦਵਾਨ ਆਪ ਦੀ ਜਨਮ-ਤਿਥਿ 1551 ਈ. ਸਵੀਕਾਰਦੇ ਹਨ, ਜੋ ਕਿ ਬਿਲਕੁਲ ਠੀਕ ਹੈ। ਆਪ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਲੋਕ ਸਿਧਾਰਨ ਦੀ ਤਿਥਿ ਜੰਤਰੀ (calendar) ਦੇ ਹਿਸਾਬ ਨਾਲ 24 ਭਾਦਰੋਂ 1693 ਬਿ. (25 ਅਗਸਤ, 1636 ਈ.) ਹੈ। ਸੋ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਕੁਲ ਜੀਵਨ-ਅਵਧੀ 1551-1636 ਈ. ਬਣਦੀ ਹੈ। ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਦਾ ਵਿਅਕਤਿਤ੍ਵ ਇਕ ਸਚੇ, ਸਮਰਪਿਤ ਤੇ ਪੂਰਨ ਗੁਰਸਿਖ ਵਾਲਾ ਹੈ। ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਕੀਤੇ ਸੰਕੇਤ ਮੁਤਾਬਿਕ ਆਪ ਗੁਰੂ-ਘਰ ਨਾਲ ਨਾ ਕੇਵਲ ਖਾਨਦਾਨੀ ਸੰਬੰਧ ਹੀ ਰਖਦੇ ਸਨ, ਬਲਕਿ ਇਕ ਸਿਖ-ਗੁਰੂ ਰਿਸ਼ਤੇ ਵਿਚ ਬੜੇ ਹੋਏ ਸਨ। ਵਰਤਮਾਨ ਸਮੇਂ ਤਕ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਆਪ ਜੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਤਿੰਨ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਤਿੰਨ-ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰੀ ਰਚਨਾਵਾਂ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹਨ:

- 40 ਵਾਰਾਂ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿਚ
- 675 ਕਬਿਤ ਸਵਈਏ, ਬ੍ਰਜ ਵਿਚ ਅਤੇ
- 6 ਸਲੋਕ, ਸੰਸਕ੍ਰਿਤ ਵਿਚ।

ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਦੀਆਂ ਰਚਨਾਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਣਿਕਤਾ ਤਥਾ ਮਹਾਨਤਾ ਦਾ ਪਤਾ ਇਸ ਪਹਿਲੂ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਲਗ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਿਖ ਪਰੰਪਰਾ ਨੇ ਆਪ ਦੀਆਂ ਵਾਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਕੁੰਜੀ ਕਹਿ ਕੇ ਵਡਿਆਇਆ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਇਸ ਦੇ ਕੀਰਤਨ/ਵਿਚਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਸਿਖ ਸੰਗਤ

ਵਿਚ ਪ੍ਰਵਾਨਗੀ ਦੀ ਮੋਹਰ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੈ। ਸਿਖ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਵਿਚ ਆਪ ਦੀਆਂ ਗਵਾਹੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਦੇ ਪੁਖਤਾ ਸਬੂਤ ਵਜੋਂ ਵਰਤਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਮਧਕਾਲ ਦਾ ਬਹੁਤ ਸਾਰਾ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਆਪ ਦੀਆਂ ਰਚਨਾਵਾਂ ਉੱਤੇ ਹੀ ਉਸਰਿਆ ਹੈ।

ਵਿਸ਼ੇ-ਵਸਤੂ ਦੀ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਤੋਂ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਵਾਰਾਂ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਥਮ ਲਛਣ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਹੈ; ਇਹ ਲਛਣ ਐਨਾ ਸਪਸ਼ਟ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਉਦਾਹਰਨ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਵੀ ਮਹਿਸੂਸ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦੀ, ਕਈ ਪਉੜੀਆਂ ਤਾਂ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ ਦਾ ਲਗਪਗ ਹੂ-ਬ-ਹੂ ਉਤਾਰਾ ਜਾਪਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਵਿਆਖਿਆਕਾਰੀ ਦੇ ਸੰਬੰਧ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਆਪ ਦੀ ਅਧਾਰ-ਵਸਤੂ ਸਿਖ ਪੰਥ ਜਾਂ ਸਿਖ ਸੰਸਥਾਵਾਂ ਹਨ। ਆਪ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਆ ਕੇ ਤਿੰਨ ਮੁਖ ਕਾਰਜ ਕੀਤੇ:

ਪਹਿਲਾ - ਟੁਕੜਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੰਡੇ ਸਚੁ (ਰੱਬ) ਨੂੰ ਇਕ ਕੀਤਾ: ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਪੂਰਨ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਕਲਿਜੁਗਿ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਇਕ ਦਿਖਾਇਆ।

ਦੂਜਾ - ਇਕ ਸਚੁ ਦੇ ਅਧਾਰ ਉੱਤੇ ਜਾਤਾਂ, ਜਮਾਤਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੰਡੀ ਹੋਈ ਮਨੁਖ ਜਾਤੀ ਨੂੰ 'ਇਕ' ਕੀਤਾ: ਚਾਰੇ ਪੈਰ ਧਰਮ ਦੇ ਚਾਰਿ ਵਰਨਿ ਇਕੁ ਵਰਨੁ ਕਰਾਇਆ।

ਤੀਜਾ - ਇਸ 'ਸਚੁ' (ਇਕ ਰਬ, ਇਕੋ ਮਨੁਖਤਾ) ਨੂੰ ਸਦੀਵਤਾ ਦੇਣ ਲਈ 'ਪੰਥ' (ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ) ਸਥਾਪਿਤ ਕੀਤਾ: ਮਾਰਿਆ ਸਿਕਾ ਜਗਤ ਵਿਚਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਪੰਥੁ ਚਲਾਇਆ। (੧/੨੩;੪੫)

ਆਪ ਦੀ ਦੂਜੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਕਬਿਤ ਸਵਈਏ ਅਨੁਭਵ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਕਹੇ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵਧੇਰੇ ਕਰਕੇ ਆਤਮਿਕ ਜਗਿਆਸੂ ਦੀ ਉਸ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਦਾ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਹੈ, ਜਦੋਂ ਉਹ ਆਤਮਿਕ ਤੌਰ ਉੱਤੇ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਨਾਲ ਇਕ-ਮਿਕ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਇਸ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਲਈ ਪਿਰਮ ਰਸ, ਅਨਹਦ ਨਾਦ, ਉਨਮਨੀ ਅਵਸਥਾ, ਦਸਮ ਦਵਾਰ, ਲਿਵ, ਪ੍ਰਿਅ ਰਸ ਆਦਿ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ/ਸਮਾਸਾਂ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਯੋਗ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ।

ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੇ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਪ੍ਰਗਟਾਵੇ ਦਾ ਮਾਧਿਅਮ 'ਵਾਰ' ਤੇ 'ਸਵਈਏ' ਰੂਪ ਨੂੰ ਚੁਣਿਆ ਹੈ। ਵਾਰਾਂ, ਵਾਰ-ਵਰਗ ਵੰਡ ਵਿਚ ਅਧਿਆਤਮਕ ਵਾਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਕੋਟੇ ਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਸਦਾਚਾਰਕ, ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਅਤੇ ਅਧਿਆਤਮਕ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ ਹਨ। ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀਆਂ ਵਾਰਾਂ ਵਿਚਾਰ, ਕਲਾ ਤੇ ਰੂਪ ਦੀ ਸੁੰਦਰਤਾ ਦਾ ਸੁਭੋਲ ਰੂਪ ਹਨ। ਆਪ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਦੀ ਪੇਸ਼ਕਾਰੀ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਣਾਂ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਣਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਝੜੀਆਂ ਲਾ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੀਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਣ ਵੀ ਜੀਵਨ ਤਜਰਬੇ ਵਿਚ ਆਏ ਜਾਂ ਆਉਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਹਨ। ਵਾਰ ਵਿਚਲੇ ਛੰਦ-ਰੂਪ ਪਉੜੀ ਨੂੰ ਸਫਲਤਾ ਨਾਲ ਚਿਤਰਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਵਾਰ ਲੋਕ-ਕਾਵਿ ਰੂਪ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੇ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਮਾਤਰਾਵਾਂ ਇਛਾਨਕੂਲ ਵਰਤੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਪਖੋਂ ਵਾਰਾਂ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ, ਕਬਿਤ ਸਵਈਏ ਬ੍ਰਿਜ ਤੇ ਸਲੋਕ ਸੰਸਕ੍ਰਿਤ ਵਿਚ ਹਨ। ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦਾ ਗਿਆਨ ਐਨਾ ਗੰਭੀਰ ਤੇ ਵਿਸ਼ਾਲ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਕੋ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਕਈ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀਕੋਣਾਂ, ਵਖਖਵਖ ਉਪਮਾਵਾਂ ਤੇ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟਾਤਾਂ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਮਿਸਾਲ ਲਈ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੀ ਵਿਆਪਕਤਾ ਦਰਸਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਜਲ, ਸਵਾਂਤ-ਬੂੰਦ, ਦੀਵਾ, ਸੂਤਰ, ਕਪਾਹ, ਗੰਨਾ, ਅਗ, ਫੁਲ, ਪਿਤਲ, ਸੋਨਾ... ਗਲ ਕੀ ਅਨੇਕ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟਾਤਾਂ ਦੀ ਝੜੀ ਲਾ ਦਿਤੀ ਹੈ। ਵਾਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸ਼ਬਦ-ਭੰਡਾਰ, ਨਵ-

ਸਮਾਸ, ਮੁਹਾਵਰੇ, ਅਖੌਤਾਂ, ਭਾਰਤੀ ਤੇ ਸਾਮੀ ਪੌਰਾਣ-ਪਰੰਪਰਾ ਦੀਆਂ ਮਿਥਾਂ, ਰੂਪਕਾਂ, ਉਪਮਾਂ, ਅਲੰਕਾਰ ਆਦਿ ਬਹੁਤ ਕੁਝ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀਗੋਚਰ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ।

### ਸਬਦ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ

ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਦਾ ਜੋ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ, ਉਸ ਨੂੰ, ਪਹਿਲੇ ਕੀਤੇ ਇਸ਼ਾਰੇ ਮੁਤਾਬਿਕ, ਇਥੇ 'ਸਬਦ ਸੁਰਤਿ' ਕਿਹਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਸਬਦ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਦੋ ਪਦ ਹਨ। ਸਬਦ, ਬਾਣੀ ਜਾਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਨੂੰ ਸੰਬੋਧਿਤ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਚੇਲੇ, ਸਿਖ ਜਾਂ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਹਵਾਲੇ ਨਾਲ 'ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ' ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਨਿਧਤਾ ਕਰਦਾ ਪਦ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਬਦ ਅਤੇ ਸੁਰਤਿ, ਸਮਾਸੀ ਪਦ 'ਸਬਦ ਸੁਰਤਿ' ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਗ੍ਰਹਿਣ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਦਾ ਅਰਥ ਇਕਾਈ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ 'ਗੁਰ' ਤੇ 'ਸਿਖ' ਦੇ ਮੇਲ/ਸੰਜੋਗ ਦੀ 'ਗੁਰਸਿਖ' ਅਵਸਥਾ ਨੂੰ ਸੰਕੇਤਕ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ (ਗੁਰਸਿਖ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਮਿਲਾਪ ਕੋ ਪ੍ਰਤਾਪ ਅਤਿ... ਸਬਦ ਕੈ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਕੈ ਸਬਦ ਹਰੇ... ॥੨੬੩॥)। ਇਸ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਪ੍ਰਥਮਿਕ ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ 'ਲਿਵ' ਪਦ ਵਧੇਰੇ ਵਰਤਦੇ ਹਨ (ਸਬਦ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਲਿਵਲੀਣੁ ਹੋਇ...੧੫੨੦)। ਸਬਦ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਦੇ ਸਿਧਾਂਤਕ ਸਰੂਪ ਨੂੰ ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੇ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਗ੍ਰਹਿਣ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਇਸ ਦੀ ਵਿਸਤ੍ਰਿਤ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ। ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਵਜੋਂ ਇਹ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦਾ ਹੀ ਪਦ ਹੈ, ਪਰ ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਵਜੋਂ ਅਪਣਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਇਉਂ ਵੀ ਕਹਿ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ 'ਸਬਦ ਸੁਰਤਿ' ਦਾ ਅਸਲ/ਵਿਹਾਰਕ ਪ੍ਰਗਾਸ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਸਿਰਜਤ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ, ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸਿਧਾਂਤਕ ਤੇ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਉਂ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਜਿਥੇ 'ਸਬਦ ਸੁਰਤਿ' ਇਕ ਅਨੁਭਵ ਵਜੋਂ ਪ੍ਰਗਾਸ ਹੋਇਆ ਜੀਵਨ-ਅਮਲ ਹੈ, ਉਥੇ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਦੀ ਹੈਸੀਅਤ, ਇਕ ਚਿੰਤਕ ਤੇ ਵਿਆਖਿਆਕਾਰ ਵਜੋਂ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਆਉਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਧਿਆਨਯੋਗ ਪਹਿਲੂ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜਦੋਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੇ ਇਕ ਚਿੰਤਕ ਜਾਂ ਵਿਆਖਿਆਕਾਰ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਵੇਖਦੇ ਹਾਂ ਤਾਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਆਧੁਨਿਕ ਵਿਆਪਕ ਅਰਥਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਸਥਾਪਿਤ ਚਿੰਤਕ ਜਾਂ ਵਿਆਖਿਆਕਾਰ ਵਜੋਂ ਗ੍ਰਹਿਣ ਕਰਨਾ, ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਸਿਰਜਨਾ ਨਾਲ ਅਨਿਆ ਕਰਨ ਵਰਗੀ ਗੱਲ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ, ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦਾ ਚਿੰਤਨ ਕੇਵਲ ਵਿਚਾਰਧਾਰਕ ਪਧਰ ਦਾ ਨਹੀਂ, ਮਾਨਸਿਕ ਤੇ ਆਤਮਿਕ ਪਧਰ ਦਾ ਵੀ ਹੈ।

ਇਸਾਈ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਦੇ ਜਗਤ ਪ੍ਰਸਿਧ ਬਾਈਬਲ ਧਰਮ ਸ਼ਾਸਤਰੀ ਸਲਾਇਰਮਾਖਰ (Friedrich Schleiermacher 1768-1834) ਨੇ, ਜਿਸ ਨੂੰ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਸ਼ਾਸਤਰ (hermeneutics) ਦਾ ਪਿਤਾਮਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਜਾਣਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ, ਧਰਮ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਦੇ ਅਰਥ (ਅਨੁਭਵ) ਨੂੰ ਜਾਣਨ/ਸਮਝਣ ਲਈ 'ਪੁਨਰ-ਅਨੁਭਵ' ਦਾ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਕਥਨ, ਚੇਤਨਾ ਦੀ ਜਿਸ ਸਿਖਰ ਤੋਂ ਉਚਾਰੇ ਗਏ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ, ਵਿਆਖਿਆਕਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਉਸ ਪਧਰ ਉਤੇ ਜਾ ਕੇ; ਉਹੀ ਸਥਿਤੀ (ਸਿਖਰ) ਨੂੰ ਪੁਨਰ-ਅਨੁਭਵ ਕਰਨਾ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਠੀਕ ਅਰਥ ਗ੍ਰਹਿਣ ਹੋ ਸਕਣ; ਇਹ ਚਾਹੇ ਮਾਨਸਿਕ ਪਧਰ ਉਤੇ ਹੀ ਕਿਉਂ ਨਾ ਹੋਵੇ।

ਉਕਤ ਹਵਾਲੇ ਨਾਲ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜਦੋਂ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਵਲ ਰੁਚਿਤ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਸਬਦ ਦੇ ਉਸ ਸਿਖਰ ਦਾ 'ਪੁਨਰ ਅਨੁਭਵ' ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ, ਜਿਸ ਪਧਰ

ਜਾਂ ਉਚਾਈ ਉਤੇ ਮੂਲ ਕਥਨ, ਕਥਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਇਉਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ/ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਦਾ ਸਰੂਪ ਸਿਰਜਨਾਤਮਕ ਵਰਗਾ ਹੈ; ਇਸ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਮੂਲ ਵਰਗਾ, ਉਹਦੇ ਨੇੜੇ ਦਾ ਅਹਿਸਾਸ ਜਾਗਣ ਲਗਦਾ ਹੈ। ਬਾਹਰੀ ਵਿਧਾ (genre) ਵੀ ਇਸੇ ਕਰਕੇ ਕਾਵਿ (ਵਾਰ/ਕਬਿਤ ਸਵਈਏ) ਜਾਮਾ ਪਹਿਨਦਾ ਹੈ, ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਧਰਮ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਦੇ ਗੰਭੀਰ ਚਿੰਤਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਮਤ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਅਨੁਭਵ (religious experience) ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਹਾਲਤ ਵਿਚ ਦਸਿਆ/ਲਿਖਿਆ ਜਾਂ ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ; ਪਰ ਫਿਰ ਵੀ ‘ਕਾਵਿ, ਰਾਗ ਤੇ ਆਰਟ’ ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਗਟਾਵੇ ਦੇ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਯੋਗ ਸਾਧਨ ਹਨ (ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਸਾਡੇ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ‘ਕਾਵਿ, ਰਾਗ’ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਪ੍ਰਗਾਸਮਾਨ ਹੈ)। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਦੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਲਈ ਸਿਰਜਨਾਤਮਕ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ (transcreation) ਸਮਾਸ ਨਿਰਸੰਕੋਚ ਵਰਤ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਾਂ। ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੇ ਬਾਣੀ ਨੂੰ ਜੀਵਨ ਦੇ ਹਰੇਕ ਛਿਣ ਵਿਚ ਜੀਵਿਆ ਤੇ ਲਿਖਿਆ/ਵਿਆਖਿਆਇਆ ਹੈ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਜੀਵਨ ਹੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਦੇ ਅਸਲ ਅਰਥਾਂ ਦੀ ਭਾਲ ਤੇ ਸਾਧਨਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਨਿਰਾ ਬੌਧਿਕ ਜਤਨ ਨਹੀਂ, ਆਤਮਾ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਤਖ ਕੀਤੀ ਸਚਾਈ ਹੈ। ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਸਕੂਲ ਦੇ ਹੀ ਇਕ ਅਨੁਭਵੀ ਵਿਦਵਾਨ ਪ੍ਰੋ. ਪੂਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ “ਬੌਧਿਕ ਵਿਸ਼ਲੇਸ਼ਣ ਕਦੇ ਠੀਕ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦਾ, ਆਤਮਿਕ ਪ੍ਰਤਖਣ ਕਦੇ ਗਲਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦਾ” (*Spirit of the Sikhs, II, Vol 1, p. 8*)।

### ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ: ਅਰਥ ਦਾ ਸਰੂਪ

ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਬਾਣੀ ਦੇ ਜਿਹੜੇ ਅਰਥਾਂ ਦੀ ਤਲਾਸ਼ ਲਈ ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਦਾ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ, ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਹੋਰ ਕਿਸੇ ਪੂਰਵ ਜਾਂ ਉਤਰਖਵਰਤੀ ਸਿਧਾਂਤਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਤੁਲਨਾਇਆ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ। ਇਹ ‘ਸਬਦੁ ਗਿਆਨੁ’ ਜੋ ਗੁਰੂ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ – ਲਖਾਂ ਸੂਰਜਾਂ/ਚੰਦਰਮਾਂ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਤੋਂ ਕਿਤੇ ਅਗੇ ਦਾ ਹੈ: ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਸਬਦੁ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਨੇੜ ਨ ਦੂਰ ਹੈ...ਸਾਧ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਅਸਥਾਨ ਜਗਮਗ ਨੂਰ ਹੈ...ਲਖ ਲਖ ਸਸੀਅਰ ਭਾਨ ਕਿਰਨ ਠਰੂਰ ਹੈ (੩/੧੦)। ਇਹ ਵਿਰਲਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਘਾਲ ਹੈ (ਰਤਨਾ ਵੇਖੋ ਸਭੁ ਕੇ ਰਤਨ ਪਾਰਖੂ ਵਿਰਲਾ ਸੰਗੀ ॥ ੬/੯)। ਅਸਲ ਗਾਹਕ ਹੀ ਇਸ ਦੀ ਕੀਮਤ ਪਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਫੁਲਾਂ ਅੰਦਰਲੀ ਸੁਗੰਧੀ ਸਿਰਫ਼ ਭਵਰੇ ਨੂੰ ਪਤਾ ਹੈ; ਅੰਬਾਂ ਦੇ ਰਸ ਦੀ ਕੀਮਤ ਕੋਇਲ ਨੂੰ ਪਤਾ ਹੈ; ਬਾਰਿਸ਼/ਮੀਂਹ ਦਾ ਸੁਆਦ ਜੋ ਪਪੀਹਾ ਲੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ, ਹੋਰ ਸੰਸਾਰੀ ਲੋਕ ਨਹੀਂ ਲੈ ਸਕਦੇ; ਘਟਾਂ-ਘਟਾਵਾਂ (ਬਦਲਾਂ) ਦੀ ਲਜਤ ਨਾਲ ਮੋਰ ਹੀ ਨਚ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ (੨/੨੦)। ਇਹ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਦੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਕੀਮਤ: ਅਹੁਦਾ, ਪੈਸਾ ਜਾਂ ਤਾਕਤ...ਨਾਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲਦਾ, ਅਮੋਲ ਹੈ: ਮੁਲਿ ਨ ਮਿਲੈ ਅਮੋਲੁ ਨ ਕੀਮਤਿ ਪਾਈਐ (੩/੫)। ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਦੇ ਇਸ ਮੇਲ ਵਿਚ ਲਖਾਂ ਸੰਭਾਵਨਾਵਾਂ ਪਈਆਂ ਹਨ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਗੁਲੂਰ (ਬੋਹੜ ਦੀ ਗੁਲੂਰ; ਬੀਜ) ਦੇ ਇਕ ਬੀਜ ਵਿਚ ਲਖਾਂ ਬੋਹੜ/ਰੁਖ ਸੁਤੇ ਪਏ ਹਨ, ਇਉਂ ਇਕ ਸਬਦੁ ਵਿਚ ਲਖਾਂ ਅਰਥ-ਸੰਭਾਵਨਾਵਾਂ ਸੁਤੀਆਂ ਹੋਈਆਂ ਹਨ (ਬੀਉ ਬੀਜਿ ਅਤਿ ਸੂਖਮ ਤਿਦੁ ਹੋਇ ਵਡ ਬਿਰਖ ਵਿਥਾਰਾ ॥ ਫਲ ਵਿਚਿ ਬੀਉ ਸਮਾਇਕੈ ਇਕਦੂ ਬੀਅਹੁ ਲਖ ਹਜਾਰਾ ॥ ੬/੪)। ਭਾਵੇਂ ਇਸ ਦੀ ਸੰਭਾਵਨਾ ਮਨੁਖੀ ਜੀਵਨ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਸੰਭਵ ਹੈ, ਪਰ ਇਸ ਸੰਭਾਵਨਾ ਦੀ ਪਛਾਣ ਕਿਸੇ ਵਿਰਲੇ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਸੰਭਵ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਜੇਕਰ ਹੁਣ (ਮਨੁਖੀ ਜੀਵਨ ਵਿਚ) ਇਸ ਦੀ ਸਾਰਥਕਤਾ ਨਾ ਪਛਾਣੀ ਗਈ, ਫਿਰ ਇਹ ਮੌਕਾ/ਵਾਰੀ ਹਥ ਨਹੀਂ ਆਉਣਾ : ਅਉਸਰੁ ਚੁਕਾ ਹਥਿ ਨ ਆਵੈ (੧/੧੮)। ਸੋ ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਇਕ ਗਹਿਰ-ਗੰਭੀਰ

ਅਥਾਹ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਅਨੁਪਮ, ਅਸਚਰਜ, ਅਗੋਚਰ ਸਬਦ, ਖੁਦ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਹੈ (ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗੁਰਸਬਦ ਹੈ...੭/੧੯)। ਇਹ ਸੰਸਾਰੀ ਮਤਾਂ-ਮਤਾਂਤਰਾਂ, ਵੇਦਾਂ-ਕਤੇਬਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਹਰਾ ਹੈ: ਵੇਦ ਕਤੇਬਹੁ ਬਾਹਰਾ ਲੇਖ ਅਲੇਖ ਨ ਲਖਿਆ ਜਾਈ। ਰੂਪ ਅਨੂਪੁ ਅਚਰਜ ਹੈ ਦਰਸਨ ਦ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਅਗੋਚਰ ਭਾਈ (੭/੧੬)।

ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਨੂੰ ਇਕ ਮਾਰਗ ਵਜੋਂ ਪ੍ਰਵਾਨ ਕਰਕੇ ‘ਪ੍ਰਗਾਸ’ (ਗਿਆਨ, ਸਮਝ, ਅਰਥ) ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ ਦਾ ਰਾਹ ਦਰਸਾਇਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ (ਸੁਰਤਿ ਕੈ ਮਾਰਗਿ ਚਲਿ ਕੈ ਉਲਟੀ ਨਦਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਗਾਸੀ ॥ ੧੩੨੯), ਇਸ ‘ਪ੍ਰਗਾਸ’ ਨੂੰ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਨੇ ਸਦੀਵੀ, ਅਛੇਉ (ਛੇਦ ਰਹਿਤ) ਤੇ ਅਖੰਡ ਕਿਹਾ ਹੈ (ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਪ੍ਰਗਾਸ ਅਛਲ ਅਛੇਲੁ ਹੈ। 3/2)। ਇਹ ‘ਲਿਵ’ ਦਾ ਰਾਹ ਤੇ ‘ਹੁਕਮ’ ਕਮਾਉਣ ਦੀ ਕਿਰਿਆ ਹੈ (ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਇ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਕਮਾਇਆ ॥੩/੨੦)। ਇਸ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਵਿਚ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਜੋ ਵਥ (ਪ੍ਰਗਾਸ, ਨਾਮ) ਹੈ, ਉਹ ਸਦੀਵੀ, ਅਚਲ, ਇਕਰਸ, ਅਘੜ, ਅਲਖ, ਅਜਰ ਤੇ ਅਚਰ ਹੈ। ਸਬਦੁ ਇਥੇ ‘ਗੁਰੂ’ ਹੈ; ਗੁਰੂ, ਪੂਰਨ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਰੂਪ ਹੈ (ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਪੂਰਨੁ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਲਿਖ ਅਲਖ ਲਖਾਇਆ ॥੨੪/੫)। ਇਕ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਵਜੋਂ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਸਾਡੇ ਲਈ (ਸਾਡੇ ਪਧਰ ਉਤੇ) ਇਹ ‘ਜਾਣਨ ਜਾਂ ਕਹਿਣ’ ਦਾ ਵਿਸ਼ਾ ਹੈ, ਪਰ ਸਰੂਪ ਵਜੋਂ ਇਹ ‘ਸੁਣਨ ਤੇ ਗਉਣ’ ਦਾ ਵਿਸ਼ਾ ਹੈ; ਇਹ ਧੁਨੀ ਰੂਪ; ਅਨਹਦ ਧੁਨੀ ਹੈ, ਜੋ ਸਿਰਫ ਗਿਆਨ ਵਿਚ; ਸੁਰਤਿ ਵਿਚ ‘ਸੁਣੀ’ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ, ਸਬਦੁ ਵਿਚ ਲਿਵਲੀਨ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਸੁਣੀ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ (ਰਾਗ ਰਤਨ ਅਨਹਦ ਧੁਨੀ ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਲਿਵ ਅਗਮ ਅਲੋਲੇ ॥ ੧੨/੨੦)। ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਸੁਣੀ ਜਾ ਰਹੀ ਅਨਹਦ ਧੁਨੀ/ ਸਬਦੁ ਧੁਨੀ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਦੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰ (ਸਬਦੁ) ਪੰਚ ਸਬਦੁ ਅਲਾਪਦਾ ਹੈ। ਕੰਨ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਦੋ ਹਨ, ਪਰ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਇਕੋ ਹੈ, ਜੋ ਸਬਦੁ ਰੂਪ ਧੁਨੀ ਸੁਣਦੀ ਹੈ, ਜਕਤ ‘ਸੁਣਨ’ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਵਿਚ ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਇਕ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ; ਇਹ ਪੂਰੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਲਿਵਲੀਨ ਸੀਤੇ-ਪਰੋਤੇ ਹੋਏ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ, ਭਾਵ ਗੁਰ (ਸਬਦੁ) ਅਤੇ ਸਿਖ (ਸੁਰਤਿ) ਦੋ ਨਹੀਂ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ, ਇਕ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ, ‘ਗੁਰਸਿਖ’ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ, ਇਕਵਚਨੀ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ (ਇਕੋ ਇਕ ਵਰਤਦਾ ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਜਣਾਸੀ ॥੪੦/੨੧; ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਲਿਵਲੀਨ ਪਰਬੀਨ ਭਏ, ਪੂਰਨ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਏਕੈ ਏਕ ਪਹਿਚਾਨੀਐ ॥ ੧੪੭ ॥)।

ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਇਸ ਜੋੜ (ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਜੋੜ) ਦਾ ਸਰੂਪ ਚੇਤਨ, ਅਨੰਦ ਤੇ ਪ੍ਰੇਮਮਈ ਦਸਿਆ ਹੈ। ਇਥੇ ਹੀ ਪ੍ਰਗਾਸ (ਗਿਆਨ) ਪੈਦਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਇਹੋ ਗੁਰਸਿਖੀ ਦਾ ਰਹਸ ਹੈ (ਗੁਰਸਿਖੀ ਦਾ ਸਿਖਣਾ ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਸਤਿਸੰਗਤਿ ਸਿਖੈ ॥੨੮/੫)। ਸੁਰਤਿ ਕਿਥੇ ਤਕ ਉਡ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ; ਇਸ ਦੀ ਅੰਤਿਮ ਉਡਾਰੀ ਕਿਥੇ ਤਕ ਹੈ? ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਸਬਦੁ ਇਸ ਦੀ ਅੰਤਿਮ ਮੰਜਿਲ ਹੈ; ਸਬਦੁ ਤੋਂ ਅਗੇ ਹੋਰ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਦੀ ਕੋਈ ਮੰਜਿਲ ਜਾਂ ਉਚਾਈ ਨਹੀਂ। ਸੁਰਤਿ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਭਰ ਦੇ ਗਿਆਨ, ਵਿਗਿਆਨ, ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ, ਸ਼ਾਸਤਰ.. ਕਥੇਮਥ ਕੇ ‘ਸਬਦੁ’ ਉਤੇ ਰੁਕ ਜਾਵੇਗੀ, ਬਾਕੀ ਸਭ ਗਿਆਨ ਵਿਗਿਆਨ ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਹਨ (ਲਖ ਗਿਆਨ ਵਖਾਣਿ ਕਰਿ ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਉਡਾਰੀ ਥਕੈ ॥੨੮/੨੨)। ਇਹ ਉਹ ਅਰਥ ਹੈ, ਜਿਥੇ ਹੋਰ ਅਰਥ ਦੀ ਸਮਾਈ ਨਹੀਂ। ਇਹ ਕਥਨੀ ਕਰਨੀ ਬਾਹਰਾ ਸਬਦੁ ਗਿਣਾਤਮਕ ਪਖ ਤੋਂ ‘ਇਕੁ’ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਧੁਨੀ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਬਣ ਕੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਿਮੰਡ ਵਿਚ ਸਮਾਇਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ (ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਏਕੁ ਧੁਨਿ ਏਕੈ... ॥ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ੮੮੫), ਇਸੇ ਵਿਚ ਲਿਵਲੀਨ ਹੋਣਾ ਜੀਵਨ ਦਾ ਉਦੇਸ਼ ਹੈ, ਅਸਲ ‘ਅਰਥ’ ਸਮਝਣਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਸੁਣਨ ਨਾਲ ਜੋ ਪ੍ਰਗਾਸ ਹੁੰਦਾ

ਹੈ: ਸਮਾਜਾਂ, ਪਰਿਵਾਰਾਂ, ਕੌਮਾਂ... ਦੇ ਕਲਿਆਣ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਬਣਦਾ ਹੈ।

ਉਕਤ ਹਵਾਲੇ ਨਾਲ 'ਸਬਦ ਸੁਰਤਿ' ਅਜਿਹਾ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਨਾਲ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਸਬਦ ਦਾ ਉਦੇਸ਼ ਪੂਰਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ; ਅਸਲੀ ਅਰਥ ਸਮਝ ਵਿਚ ਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਲਈ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਬਦੀ, ਕੋਸ਼ਗਤ, ਵਿਆਕਰਨਕ, ਭਾਸ਼ਾਈ ਜਾਂ ਹੋਰ ਅਨੁਵਾਦੀ ਪਧਰ ਦੇ 'ਅਰਥ' ਜਾਣਨ/ਸਮਝਣ/ਸਮਝਾਉਣ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਈ ਦਿਲਚਸਪੀ ਨਹੀਂ, ਉਹ ਤਾਂ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੇ ਨਾ ਕਹੇ ਜਾਣ ਵਾਲੇ 'ਸਬਦ ਸਚੁ ਨੀਸਾਣੁ' ਨੂੰ ਜਾਣਨ/ਸਮਝਣ/ਸਮਝਾਉਣ ਦੇ ਇਛੁਕ ਹਨ (ਸਚੁ ਸਬਦ ਪਰਗਾਸ ਕਰਿ ਸਬਦ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਸਚੁ ਸਚਿ ਮਿਲਾਇਆ ॥ ੩੯/੧੧)। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਲਈ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ, ਮਹਿਜ ਔਖੇ ਕਾਵਿਦਾ ਸੌਖੀ ਵਾਰਤਕ ਵਿਚ ਟੀਕਾ ਜਾਂ ਕਾਵਿ-ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਨਹੀਂ, ਸਗੋਂ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਜੀਵਨ-ਜੀਣ ਦਾ ਅਧਾਰ ਹੈ।

ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਨੇ ਸਬਦ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਦਾ, ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਕੀਤੇ ਇਸ਼ਾਰੇ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ, ਤਦੋਂ ਇਕ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਜੀਵਨ-ਸ਼ੈਲੀ ਵਜੋਂ ਪ੍ਰਸਤੁਤੀਕਰਨ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ, ਜਦੋਂ ਸਬਦ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਨੂੰ ਇਕ ਮਾਰਗ ਵਜੋਂ ਪ੍ਰਵਾਨ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਜੀਵਨ-ਜਾਚ ਜਾਂ ਸ਼ੈਲੀ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਉਤੇ ਉਸਰੇ ਸਮਾਜ ਦੀ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਲਈ ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੇ 'ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਪੰਥ' ਸਮਾਸ ਵਰਤਿਆ ਹੈ (ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਪੰਥੁ ਚਲਾਇਓਨੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਦਾਨੁ ਇਸਨਾਨੁ ਦ੍ਰਿੜਾਇਆ ॥ 23/1)। ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੇ ਸਬਦ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਮਾਰਗ ਉਤੇ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਚਾਲ ਚਲਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਗੁਰਸਿਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਸਮੂਹ (ਸਾਧਸੰਗ) 'ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਪੰਥ' ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਕਿਸੇ ਪਰੰਪਰਾ ਜਾਂ ਪੂਰਵ-ਵਰਤੀ ਮਤ-ਮਤਾਂਤਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਰਾਈ ਜਿੰਨੀ ਓਟ ਨਹੀਂ (ਗੁਰੁ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਬਾਣੀ ਬਿਨਾ ਦੂਜੀ ਓਟ ਨਹੀ ਹੈ ਰਾਈ ॥ 1/42) ਬਾਝੋ ਸਚੇ ਨਾਮ ਦੇ ਹੋਰ ਕਰਾਮਾਤਿ ਅਸਾਂ ਤੇ ਨਾਹੀ ॥ 1/43) ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਮਾਰਗਿ ਚਲਣਾ ਛਡਿ ਖਬੈ ਸਜੈ ॥ 13/15)। ਦੂਜੇ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ 'ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਪੰਥ' ਹੈ; ਗੁਰਸਿਖੀ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਸਿਰਫ ਚੇਲਾ ਤੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਦਾ 'ਪਰਚਾ' ਹੈ, ਤੀਜੇ ਦਾ ਇਥੇ ਦਖਲ ਨਹੀਂ। ਇਹ ਅਨੂਪ (ਅਨੁਪਮ) ਸਚੁ ਦਾ ਨੀਸਾਣੁ, ਸਤਿ ਦੀ ਸੰਗੁ/ਸਤਿਸੰਗ ਹੈ। ਲਖਾਂ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ (ਬੀਜ; ਰਤਰਬੀਜਕਤ) ਇਸ ਦੇ ਬਰਾਬਰ ਜਾਂ ਇਸ ਗਿਆਨ ਚਾਨਣ ਤਕ ਨਹੀਂ ਪਹੁੰਚ ਸਕਦੇ। (ਦਰਸਨ ਦ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਸੰਜੋਗ ਲਖ ਸਬਦ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਲਿਵ ਲਖ ਹੈਰਾਣੈ ॥ ੧੮/੧੮)।

ਇਸ ਲਿਵਲੀਨਤਾ ਨੂੰ ਸੁੰਨ ਨਾਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਤੁਲਨਾਇਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਬੋਧ ਸਿਧਾਂ ਦਾ ਸੁੰਨ ਨਿਰੰਜਨ ਨਹੀਂ; ਸਗੋਂ ਨਾਮੁ ਨਿਰੰਜਨ ਹੈ, ਕਾਇਆ ਦੇ ਅੰਦਰ; ਅੰਦਰਲਾ ਮਾਰਗ ਹੈ (ਇਸੁ ਕਾਇਆ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਬਹੁਤ ਪਸਾਰਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਅਤਿ ਅਗਮ ਅਪਾਰਾ ॥ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ੧੧੨)। ਸਬਦੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਵੀਚਾਰ ਅੰਤਰਿ (ਸੁਰਤਿ) ਕਾਇਆ ਦੀ 'ਗੁਫਾ' ਵਿਚ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ, ਜਿਥੇ ਨਾਮੁ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਵਾਸ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ (ਗੁਰ ਕੈ ਸਬਦਿ ਇਹ ਗੁਫਾ ਵੀਚਾਰੇ ॥ ਨਾਮੁ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਵਸੈ ਮੁਰਾਰੇ ॥ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ੧੨੬)। ਨਾਮ ਨਿਰੰਜਨ ਦੀ ਸੂਝ ਹੀ, ਜੋ ਆਤਮਿਕ ਪਧਰ ਉਤੇ ਹੋਣੀ ਹੈ, ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਦਾ ਮੇਲ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਬਦੁ 'ਗੁਰੂ' ਹੈ, ਇਸ ਸਬਦੁ ਦੇ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਵਜਾਇਆਂ ਵਜਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਅਨਹਦ ਰਾਗ ਦੀ ਧੁਨਿ ਵਿਚ ਲੀਨ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਚੇਲਾ ਹੈ: ਸਬਦੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਜਾਣੀਐ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਹੋਇ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਧੁਨਿ ਚੇਲਾ (੭/੨੦)। ਇਸ ਲਿਵਲੀਨਤਾ ਵਿਚ ਜੀਵਨ ਤਤ ਦੀ ਅੰਦਰਲੀ ਸੋਝੀ ਆ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ : ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਲਿਵਲੀਣ ਹੋਇ ਅਨਹਦ ਧੁਨਿ ਧੀਰਾ (੯/੮); ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਲਿਵਲੀਣ ਹੋਇ ਅੰਤਰਿਗਤਿ ਲੇਖੈ (੯/੧੦)। ਲਿਵਲੀਨਤਾ ਵਿਚ ਸਬਦੁ ਤੇ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਇਕ ਹੀ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ, ਦੋ ਨਹੀਂ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ। ਪਾਣੀ

ਵਿਚ ਪਾਣੀ ਰਲਣ ਵਰਗੀ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ (ਇਕੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਇਕੁ ਸਿਖੁ ਹੈ ਗੁਰੁ ਸਬਦਿ ਸਿਵਾਣੈ ॥ ੧੩/੧)। ਸੁਰਤਿ ਦੀ ਉਡਾਣ ਪੰਛੀ ਦੀ ਖੋਜ ਵਾਂਗ ਵਿਸ਼ਾਲ ਤੇ ਉਚੀ ਅਕਾਸ਼ ਉਡਾਰੀ; ਨਾ ਲਖੀ ਜਾਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਅਲਖ ਖੋਜ (ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਖੋਜ ਅਲਖੁ ਤੈ ਜਿਉ ਪੰਖੀ ਆਗਾਸ ਉਡੰਦਾ ॥ (੧੬/੧੩), ਸਚੁ ਨੂੰ ਸਚੁ ਮਿਲਣ ਵਰਗੀ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਰਿਆ ਹੈ : ਸਚੁ ਸਬਦ ਪਰਗਾਸੁ ਕਰਿ ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਸਚੁ ਸਚਿ ਮਿਲਾਇਆ (੩੯/੧੧)। ਇਹੋ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਹੈ, ਇਹੋ ਸਿਖ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ (Sikh Philosophy) ਹੈ : ਗੁਰ ਦਰਸਣ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦੁ ਹੈ ਨਿਜ ਘਰਿ ਭਾਇ ਭਗਤਿ ਰਹਰਾਸੀ (੩੯/੧੨)। ਇਸ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ/philosophy ਦੀ ਸਮਝ ਲਈ ਵੇਦਾਂ/ਕਤੇਬਾਂ/ਖਟ-ਸ਼ਾਸਤਰਾਂ, ਕਰਮਾਂ-ਧਰਮਾਂ, ਤੀਰਥ-ਵਰਤਾਂ... ਕਿਸੇ ਦੀ ਜਰੂਰਤ ਨਹੀਂ, ਇਹ ਨਿਰੋਲ ਨਿਜਘਰਿ ਦੀ ਅਗਮ ਖੇਡ ਹੈ; ਨਾਹੀ ਕੋਈ ਹੋਰ ਗਿਆਨ-ਵਿਗਿਆਨ, ਮਤਿ-ਮਤਾਂਤਰ ਇਸ ਦੀ ਥਾਹ ਲੈ ਸਕੇ ਹਨ : ਵੇਦ ਕਤੇਬ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ ਨ ਆਖਿ ਸੁਣਾਇਆ। (੨੨/੧); ਵੇਦ ਕਤੇਬ ਕੁਰਾਣੁ ਨ ਅਖਰ ਜਾਣਿਆ (੨/੧੪); ਵੇਦ ਨ ਪਾਇਓ ਭੇਦ... (੨੧/੫)। ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਹੀ ਸਿਖੀ; ਗੁਰਸਿਖੀ; ਸਿਖ ਧਰਮ ਹੈ। ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ, ਗੁਰਸਿਖੀ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ ਹੈ (ਗੁਰਸਿਖੀ ਦਾ ਸਿਖਣਾ ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਸਤਿਸੰਗਤਿ ਸਿਖੈ ॥ ੨੮/੫)।

ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਕੀਤੇ ਇਸ਼ਾਰੇ ਮੁਤਾਬਿਕ, ਇਸ 'ਨਾਮ' ਦੇ ਬਾਝੇ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਵਿਚ ਹੋਰ ਕੋਈ ਕਰਾਮਾਤ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ (ਬਾਝੇ ਸਚੇ ਨਾਮ ਦੇ ਹੋਰੁ ਕਰਾਮਾਤਿ ਅਸਾਂ ਤੇ ਨਾਹੀ ॥ ੧/੪੩; ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਪੰਥੁ ਨਿਰੋਲੁ ਨ ਰਲੇ ਰਲਾਈਐ ॥ ੩/੫)। ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਦੀ ਸਾਧ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਨਿਹਚਲ ਨੀਵ ਧਰਾਈ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿ ਸਚੁਖੰਡ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ ਹੋਵੇ; ਜੀਵਨ ਦਾ ਪਾਰ-ਉਤਾਰਾ ਹੋਵੇ: ਨਿਹਚਲ ਨੀਉ ਧਰਾਈਓਨੁ ਸਾਧਸੰਗਤਿ ਸਚਖੰਡ ਸਮੇਉ। (੨੪/੧); ਗੁਰਸਿਖੀ ਮਿਲਿ ਸਾਧਸੰਗਿ ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਜਗੁ ਦੁਤਰੁ ਤਰਣਾ (੨੮/੧੦)। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦਾ 'ਅਰਥ' ਗੁਰਸਿਖੀ ਹੈ, ਇਹ ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਦਾ ਮੇਲ ਹੈ। ਇਸੇ ਮੇਲ ਵਿਚ ਜੀਵਨ-ਜਗਤ ਦੇ ਗੁਹੜ ਭੇਦ ਅਰਥ ਸਮਝ ਆਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ।

### ਸਾਧਨਾ ਮਾਰਗ

ਵਿਚਾਰਾਧੀਨ ਕੀਤੇ ਗਏ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਸਬਦੁ ਨਾਲ ਤਦਰੂਪ ਹੋਣ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ-ਸੰਯੋਗ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦਾ ਤਤ-ਰੂਪ ਅਰਥ ਪਿਆ ਹੈ। ਇਸ 'ਤਤੁ' ਦੀ ਸੂਝ ਲਈ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਜਿਹੜੇ ਤਰੀਕੇ ਜਾਂ ਢੰਗ ਸੁਝਾਏ ਹਨ, ਉਹ ਇਕ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਜੀਵਨ-ਸ਼ੈਲੀ ਦੇ ਸਹਿਜ ਅੰਗ ਹਨ। ਸੁਰਤਿ ਰੂਪੀ ਮਾਰਗ ਉਤੇ ਚਲ ਕੇ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦਾ ਅਸਲ ਅਰਥ ਗ੍ਰਹਿਣ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਜਿਹੜੇ ਸਾਧਨ-ਤਤ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਵਾਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਦਰਸਾਏ ਹਨ, ਉਹ ਵਿਅਕਤੀਗਤ, ਸਮਾਜਕ ਤੇ ਰੁਹਾਨੀ ਤਿੰਨ ਮੁਖ ਵਰਗਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੰਡੇ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ। ਤਿੰਨ ਭਾਗਾਂ ਦੀ ਇਹ ਵੰਡ ਸਾਡੀ ਅਧਿਐਨ-ਸੁਵਿਧਾ ਹੈ, ਅਭਿਆਸ ਸੁਵਿਧਾ ਨਹੀਂ। ਜੀਵਨ-ਤਤ ਲਈ ਇਹ ਰਲੇ-ਮਿਲੇ ਅਨੁਭਵ ਹਨ। ਅਗਲੇ ਪੰਨਿਆਂ ਉਤੇ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਰਗਾਂ ਅਧੀਨ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਵਿਚਾਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਉਂ ਦਰਸਾਇਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ:

(ੳ) ਵਿਅਕਤੀਗਤ/ਨਿਜੀ: (ਸਬਦੁ) ਸੁਰਤਿ ਮਾਰਗ ਦੀ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਪਉੜੀ ਜਾਂ ਆਰੰਭ ਖੁਦ, ਸਵੈ ਜਾਂ ਆਪਣੇ-ਆਪ ਤੋਂ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਾਮਿਲ ਸਾਧਨਾ-ਤਤ ਹਨ:

(1) ਇਹ ਨਿਮਰ ਭਰੇ ਜੀਵਨ ਆਚਰਨ ਦਾ ਮਾਰਗ/ਰਾਹ ਹੈ। ਹੰਕਾਰੀ ਬਿਰਤੀ ਨਾਲ

ਇਸ ਮਾਰਗ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ ਸੰਭਵ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੀ: ਨਿਵਿ ਚਲਣਾ ਗੁਰਸਿਖ ਵਿਸੇਖੈ... ਤਾ ਕਿਛੁ ਘਾਲਿ ਪਵੈ ਦਰਿ ਲੇਖੈ ॥ (੧/੨੫)। ਸੋ ਗੁਰਸਿਖ (ਗੁਰ-ਸਬਦੁ; ਸਿਖ-ਚੇਲਾ ਸੁਰਤਿ) ਦੀ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ਤਾ (ਵਿਸੇਖੈ) ਨਿਵਿ ਚਲਣਾ 'ਨਿਮਰਤਾ' ਹੈ: ਮਿਠਾ ਬੋਲਣੁ ਨਿਵ ਚਲਣੁ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਭਾਉ ਭਗਤਿ ਅਰਥੇਉ ॥ (੨੪/੨)।

(2) ਇਹ ਲਗਾਤਾਰ; ਨਿਰੰਤਰ ਖੋਜ ਵਿਚ ਲਗੇ ਰਹਿਣ ਦਾ ਫਲ ਹੈ, ਭਾਵ ਇਸ ਲਈ ਸਖਤ ਅਭਿਆਸ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ: ਰਤਨ ਪਾਰਖੂ ਹੋਇ ਕੈ ਰਤਨਾ ਅਵਲੋਈ। (੯/੭)।

(3) ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਪੜ੍ਹਨੀ, ਗਉਣੀ ਇਸ ਰਾਹ ਦਾ ਜਰੂਰੀ ਸਾਧਨਾ-ਤਤ ਹੈ। ਦੂਜੇ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਜੀਵਨ ਅਰਥਾਂ ਦੀ ਸੋਝੀ (ਜਨਮ ਸਕਾਰਥ) ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ, ਸੁਣਨ ਤੇ ਸਮਝਣ ਵਿਚ ਹੈ: ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਜਨਮੁ ਸਕਾਰਥਾ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਪੜਿ ਸਮਝਿ ਸੁਣੇਹੀ। (੧/੩)। ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਤੋਂ ਇਥੇ ਭਾਵ ਉਸ ਗਿਆਨ-ਪਾਠ ਤੋਂ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਨਾਲ ਜੀਵਨ-ਤਤ ਦੀ ਸੋਝੀ ਪੈਂਦੀ ਹੈ, ਉਂਝ ਤਾਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਦੇ/ਸੁਣਦੇ, ਲਖਾਂ/ਕਰੋੜਾਂ ਹਨ, ਪਰ 'ਸਤਿ' ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਚਲਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ, ਜੋ 'ਸਬਦੁ' (ਬਾਣੀ) ਨੂੰ 'ਸੁਰਤਿ' ਨਾਲ ਪੜ੍ਹਦੇ ਹਨ, ਨਿਰਾ ਰਸਨਾ/ਮੂੰਹ ਨਾਲ ਪੜ੍ਹਿਆਂ 'ਭੇਦੁ' (ਸੁਝ) ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦੀ: ਇਹਿ ਅਚਰਜੁ ਮਨ ਆਵਦੀ ਪੜਤਿ ਸੁਣਤਿ ਕਛੁ ਭੇਦੁ ਨ ਪਾਵੈ...ਗਾਵਨਿ ਪੜਨਿ ਬਿਚਾਰਿ ਬਹੁ ਕੋਟਿ ਮਧੇ ਵਿਰਲਾ ਗਤਿ ਪਾਵੈ ॥ (੧/੮)।

(4) ਵਿਅਕਤੀਗਤ ਜੀਵਨ ਦਾ ਅਗਲਾ ਸਾਧਨਾ-ਤਤ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਜਾਂ ਪਿਆਰ ਹੈ। ਅਰਥ/ਜੀਵਨ-ਤਤ ਦੇ ਅਸਲੇ ਦੀ ਸੋਝੀ, ਸਬਦੁ ਨਾਲ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਕੀਤਿਆਂ ਹੀ ਕੁਝ ਥਹੁ ਪਲੇ ਪੈਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਦੇ ਸਰੂਪ ਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ-ਢੰਗ ਨੂੰ ਦਰਸਾਉਣ ਹਿਤ ਐਨੇ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟਾਂਤ ਦਿਤੇ ਹਨ, ਕਿ ਰੂਪਕਾਂ/ਉਪਮਾਵਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਲੜੀਆਂ ਲਾ ਦਿਤੀਆਂ ਹਨ, ਜਿਵੇਂ: ਦੀਪਕ ਨਾਲ ਪਤੰਗੇ ਦਾ ਹੇਤੁ (ਪਿਆਰ), ਜਲ ਨਾਲ ਮੀਨ, ਮਿਰਗੁ-ਨਾਦ, ਭਵਰ-ਕਵਲ, ਚੰਦ-ਚਕੋਰ, ਚਕਵੀ-ਸੂਰਜ, ਨਾਰਿ-ਭਤਾਰ, ਮਾਂ-ਪੁਤ... (੨/੧੭)। ਇਉਂ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਕੀਤਿਆਂ ਇਸ ਮਾਰਗ ਦਾ ਪਾਂਧੀ ਬਣੀਦਾ ਹੈ।

ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਵਾਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਅਤਿ ਵਿਸਤਾਰ ਨਾਲ ਵਿਅਕਤੀਗਤ ਸੁਚਜੀ ਜੀਵਨ-ਸ਼ੈਲੀ ਦੇ ਸੰਕੇਤ ਮਿਲਦੇ ਹਨ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਾਧਨਾ-ਤਤ ਵਜੋਂ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿਵੇਂ: ਹਉਮੈ ਅਤੇ ਦੁਬਿਧਾ ਨੂੰ ਛੁਡਣਾ /ਜਾਲਣਾ ਇਸ ਰਾਹ ਦਾ ਇਕ ਜਰੂਰੀ ਨੇਮ ਹੈ (ਦਰਗਾਹ ਧੋਈਐ ਪਤਿ ਹਉਮੈ ਜਾਲੀਐ ॥ ੩/੮), ਤਰ ਅਸਲ ਤਤ ਦੀ ਪਛਾਣ ਹਉਮੈ ਜਾਇ ਤਾ ਜਾਇ ਸਿਵਾਣੈ (੪/੧੯)। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੁਰਮਤਿ ਦੁਬਿਧਾ ਦੂਰ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਸਬਦੁ ਵਿਚ ਮਨ ਪਰੋਤਾ ਜਾਵੇਗਾ: ਦੁਰਮਤਿ ਦੁਬਿਧਾ ਦੂਰਿ ਕਰਿ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਸਬਦ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਮਨ ਸਿਤਾ...(੫/੨)। ਆਸਾ ਵਿਚ ਨਿਰਾਸ ਰਹਿਣਾ (5/5); ਉਸਤਤਿ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਵਰਜਿ ਰਹਾਏ (੬/੧੦); ਇੰਦਰੀਆਂ ਦਸ ਵਸਿ ਕਰਿ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਵਰਜਿ ਰਹਾਇਆ (੭/੧੦); ਸਾਧ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਦਾ ਮੇਲ; ਹੁਕਮ ਰਜਾਈ ਚਲਣਾ; ਘਾਲਿ ਖਾਇ; ਨ ਆਪੁ ਜਣਾਇ; ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰ; ਮਿਠਾ ਬੋਲਣੁ ਨਿਵ ਚਲਣੁ; ਹਥਹੁ ਦੇ ਕੇ ਭਲਾ ਮਨਾਉਣਾ; ਇਕ ਮਨਿ ਅਰਾਧਣਾ (੧/੪, ੩੯/੧੭) ਆਦਿ ਅਨੇਕ ਸਾਧਨਾ-ਤਤ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੀਤੇ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ। ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੇ ਗਿਆਰਵੀਂ ਵਾਰ ਦੀ ਚਉਥੀ ਪਉੜੀ ਵਿਚ ਲਗਪਗ ਉਹ ਸਾਰੇ ਤਰੀਕੇ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰ ਦਿਤੇ ਹਨ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਦੀ ਗਮਤਾ ਸਬਦੁ ਤਕ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਜਿਹੜੇ ਸਾਧਨਾ-ਤਤ ਇਸ ਰਾਹ ਵਿਚ ਕੰਮ ਨਹੀਂ ਆਉਂਦੇ,

ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਵੀ ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੇ ਵਿਸਤ੍ਰਿਤ ਵੇਰਵਾ ਦਿਤਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿਵੇਂ: ਗਲਾਂ, ਸਿਆਣਪਾਂ, ਜੋਰ, ਗੀਤ, ਕਬਿਤ, ਧਨ, ਵਿਦਿਆ, ਜਾਤ, ਅਹੁਦਾ, ਜੋਸ਼ਨ... ਆਦਿ ਇਸ ਮਾਰਗ ਵਿਚ ਰਤੀ ਭਰ ਕੰਮ ਨਹੀਂ ਆਉਂਦੇ (੩੬/੧੨-੧੬)।

(ਅ) ਸਮਾਜਿਕ: ਖੁਦ, ਸਵੈ ਜਾਂ ਆਪਣੇ-ਆਪ ਤੋਂ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕਰਕੇ ਫਿਰ ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਜੀਵਨ ਦਾ ਤਾਣਾ-ਬਾਣਾ ਆਰੰਭ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਸੇਧ ਵਿੱਚ ਸੁਝਾਏ ਇਸ ਪਖ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਾਮਿਲ ਸਾਧਨਾ-ਤਤ ਹਨ:

(1) ਵਰਨਾਂ-ਜਾਤਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਫਸਿਆ ਮਨੁਖ ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਦੇ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਨੂੰ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਮਝ ਸਕਦਾ। ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਵਰਨ-ਅਵਰਨ ਦੇ ਕੂੜ ਪਰਪੰਚ ਵਿਚ ਫਸਿਆ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ। ਜਾਤਾਂ-ਕੁਜਾਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਚਿਕੜ ਵਿਚ ਫਸੇ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ, ਸਮਾਜ ਜਾਂ ਮਤਿ-ਮਤਾਂਤਰ ਇਸ ਰਾਹ ਦੇ ਅਧਿਕਾਰੀ ਨਹੀਂ। ਸੋ ਇਸ ਰਾਹ ਦਾ ਪਾਂਧੀ ਬਣਨ ਲਈ ਵਰਨਾਸ਼ਰਮ ਦੇ ਪਰਪੰਚੀ-ਕਰਮਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਤਿਆਗਣਾ ਜਰੂਰੀ ਹੈ: ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਵਰਨੁ ਅਵਰਨੁ ਹੋਇ... (੧/੨੫); ਤੀਰਥਿ ਪੁਰਥਿ ਸੰਜੋਗ... ਚਾਰਿ ਵਰਨ ਛੁਆ ਦਰਸਨਾਂ... ਜਪ ਤਪ ਸੰਜਮ ਹੋਮ ਜਗ ਵਰਤ ਨੇਮ... ਬਗਾ ਬਗੇ ਕਪੜੇ ਕਰਿ ਸਮਾਧਿ ਅਪਰਾਧਿ ਨਿਵੰਦੇ ।...ਕਪਟ ਸਨੇਹੀ ਫਲੁ ਨ ਲਹੰਦੇ॥ 17/3)

(2) ਇਸ ਰਾਹ/ਪੰਥ ਦਾ ਪਾਂਧੀ ਅਜੇਹਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਦੇ ਜੀਵਨ ਦਾ ਕੁਲ ਜੋੜ ਇਸ ਤਤ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਰਪਿਤ ਹੈ, ਭਾਵ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਸਰੀਰ ਇੰਦਰੇ ਤੇ ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਜੀਵਨ ਦੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਅੰਗ/ਪਖ ਇਧਰ ਹੀ ਰੁਚਿਤ ਹਨ। ਅਖਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਉਸ ਦਾ ਵੇਖਣਾ, ਜੀਭ ਨਾਲ ਬੋਲਣਾ, ਹਥਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਕਿਰਤ ਕਮਾਉਣਾ, ਕੰਨਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਸੁਣਨਾ, ਪੈਰਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਚਲਣਾ.... (੨/੧੮) ਜੀਵਨ ਦਾ ਸਾਰਾ ਕਾਰ-ਵਿਹਾਰ ਇਕੋ ਸਬਦੁ ਕੇਂਦਰਤ; ਇਕੋ ਲਗਨ ਵਿਚ ਸਮਰਪਿਤ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੋਣਾ ਜਰੂਰੀ ਹੈ। ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਇਉਂ ਵੀ ਕਿਹਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਬਦੁ, ਅਜੇਹੇ ਪਾਂਧੀ ਲਈ ਜੀਵਨ ਦਾ ਇਕ ਪਖੀ ਵਰਤਾਰਾ ਨਹੀਂ, ਸਮੁਚ ਹੈ।

(3) ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਜੀਵਨ ਦਾ ਤੀਜਾ ਨੇਮ, ਅਜੇਹੀ ਸੰਗਤ ਹੈ, ਜਿਥੋਂ ਗੁਣ ਗ੍ਰਹਿਣ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਸਤਿਸੰਗਤ ਦੀ ਮਹਿਮਾ ਬਾਰੇ ਵਾਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਐਨੇ ਹਵਾਲੇ ਹਨ, ਕਿ ਇਸ ਦੀ ਮਹਾਨਤਾ ਬਾਰੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਕਿਸਮ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਕ ਦੀ ਕੋਈ ਗੁੰਜਾਇਸ਼ ਬਾਕੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਰਹਿੰਦੀ। ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਸਪਸ਼ਟ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜਿਥੇ ਗੁਣਾਂ ਦੇ ਗਿਆਨ ਦੀ ਵੀਚਾਰ ਹੋਵੇ, ਉਥੇ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦੁ ਵਿਚ ਲਿਵ ਲਗਦੀ ਹੈ: ਸਾਧਸੰਗਤਿ ਗੁਰਸਬਦਿ ਲਿਵ ਭਾਇ ਭਗਤਿ ਗੁਰਗਿਆਨ ਵੀਚਾਰੇ (੪/੨)। ਇਹ ਉਹ ਥਾਂ ਹੈ ਜਿਥੇ ਹੋਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਵੇਖਕੇ ਉਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ।

(4) ਇਸ ਮਾਰਗ ਦਾ ਚੌਥਾ ਥੰਭ ਸੇਵਾ, ਭਾਵ ਸੇਵਾ ਇਸ ਰਾਹ ਦਾ ਇਕ ਜਰੂਰੀ ਸਾਧਨਾ-ਤਤ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਜੀਵਨ ਕਰਮ ਭੂਮੀ ਹੈ, ਇਥੇ ਕਿਰਤ; ਇਥੇ ਕਿਰਤ; ਸੇਵਾ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਜੇ ਬੀਜਿਆ ਜਾਵੇਗਾ, ਤਾਂ ਚੰਗਾ ਫਲ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋ ਜਾਵੇਗਾ, ਜੇ ਕਿਰਤ; ਸੇਵਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤੀ ਤਾਂ ਮਾੜਾ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ: ਜੇਹਾ ਬੀਜੈ ਸੋ ਲੁਣੈ ਫਲੁ ਕਰਮ ਸਮਾਲਾ... ਸੇਵਕੁ ਦਰਗਹ ਸੁਰਖਰੂ... ਵਿਣ ਸੇਵਾ ਨਹੀ... (੩੪/੧)।

(ੲ) ਰੁਹਾਨੀ: ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਵਿਚ ਰੁਹਾਨੀਅਤ ਇਸ ਦੀ ਮੰਜਿਲ ਵੀ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਮਾਰਗ ਵੀ। ਇਕ ਮਾਰਗ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਵਜੋਂ ਇਸ ਦੇ ਸਾਧਨਾ-ਤਤ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਹਵਾਲੇ ਨਾਲ ਇਉਂ ਤਲਾਸ਼ੇ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ:

(1) ਸੁਰਤਿ ਮਾਰਗ ਦੇ ਪਾਂਧੀ ਲਈ ਪਹਿਲਾ ਕਦਮ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਕੀਰਤਨ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰਸਬਦ ਰੂਪੀ ਰਤਨ ਪਦਾਰਥ ਨੂੰ ਕੀਰਤਨ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ: ਰਤਨ ਪਦਾਰਥ ਗੁਰਸਬਦ ਕਰਿ ਕੀਰਤਨ ਖਾਹੁ॥ (੯/੧੪)।

(2) ਸਬਦ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਦੀ ਲਿਵਲੀਨਤਾ, ਨਿਰਾ ਮਨੁਖੀ ਜਤਨ ਨਹੀਂ, ਇਸ ਲਈ ਗੁਰੂ (ਸਬਦ) ਸ਼ਰਨ ਜਰੂਰੀ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਬਾਕੀ ਸਭ ਅੰਧੇਰ ਹੈ: ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਬਾਝ ਨ ਬੁਝੀਐ; ਬਾਝਹੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਬਾਰਿ ਹੈ; ਬਾਝੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਅੰਧੇਰੁ ਹੈ... (੧/੧; ੨੫; ੨੭)।

(3) ਇਹ ਅਰਥ (ਸਾਰਥਕ) ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ 'ਇਕੋ ਦਰਿ ਦੀਬਾਣੁ' ਤੋਂ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ, ਉਹ ਦਰਿ ਸਬਦੁ; ਬਾਣੀ ਹੈ। ਰੂਹਾਨੀਅਤ, ਕੋਈ ਸੌਦਾ ਨਹੀਂ, ਜਿਹੜਾ ਖਰੀਦਿਆ ਜਾਂ ਵੇਚਿਆ ਜਾਵੇ ਜਾਂ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਹਰੇਕ ਥਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਲਭਿਆ/ਭਾਲਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕੇ। ਇਹ ਇਕੋ ਇਕ ਅੰਤਿਮ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ 'ਸਬਦੁ' ਨਾਮ ਹੈ, 'ਸਚੁ ਸਬਦੁ' ਵਿਚ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਦੀ ਕਮਾਈ ਹੈ, ਸਬਦੁ ਨੂੰ ਕਮਾਉਣਾ ਹੈ, (ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਸਬਦੁ ਕਮਾਵਣਾ... ੫/੧) ਤਾਂ ਤਾਤਪਰਜ ਲਭਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ, ਗੁਰਖਮੁਖ ਹੋ ਕੇ, ਗੁਰ oriented ਹੋ ਕੇ... ਹੀ ਸੰਭਵ ਹੈ: ਸਬਦੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰ ਵਾਹੁ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਪਾਇਆ... (੩/੪); ਸਚੁ ਸਬਦੁ ਨੀਸਾਣੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਸਮਾਈਐ। ਇਕੋ ਦਰਿ ਦੀਬਾਣੁ ਸਿਵਾਣੀਐ (੨/੩); ਸਉਦਾ ਇਕਤੁ ਹਟਿ ਸਬਦਿ ਨਿਬਾਹੀਐ (੩/੫)।

### ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਦਾ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਸਕੂਲ

ਕੁਝ ਵਿਦਵਾਨ ਇਹ ਸਵਾਲ ਉਠਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਦੀ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਸਮਾਪਿਤ ਹੋ ਗਈ। ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਦਾ ਐਨਾ ਤੇਜਸਵੀ ਤੇ ਤਾਜਗੀ ਭਰਪੂਰ ਸਕੂਲ ਅਗਾਂਹ ਕਿਉਂ ਨਾ ਚਲ ਸਕਿਆ? ਇਸ ਦੇ ਕਾਰਨ, ਉਹ ਸਮਕਾਲੀ ਪ੍ਰਸਥਿਤੀਆਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਲਭਦੇ ਹਨ (No Gurdasian School; Only Experiments', *Bhai Gurdas*, Pritam Singh, Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, 1992, p. 59), ਪਰ ਵਸਤੂ-ਸਚਾਈ ਅਜੇਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ। ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਸਕੂਲ, ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਦੇਹਾਂਤ ਨਾਲ ਸਮਾਪਿਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਇਆ, ਅਗਾਂਹ ਵੀ ਚਲਿਆ ਤੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਨਾ ਕਿਸੇ ਰੂਪ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਵਰਤਮਾਨ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਕਾਇਮ ਹੈ, ਭਾਵੇਂ ਉਹ ਕਈ ਸ਼ਾਖਾਵਾਂ, ਭੇਦਾਂ, ਉਪਭੇਦਾਂ ਤੇ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵਧ; ਫੈਲ ਚੁਕਿਆ ਹੈ। ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਬਾਅਦ ਇਸ ਸਕੂਲ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਨਿਧਤਾ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਵਿਆਖਿਆਕਾਰ ਭਾਈ ਮਨੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਹਨ। ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ (1551-1636) ਤੇ ਭਾਈ ਮਨੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਅੰਤਰਾਲ (1644-1734) ਵਿਚ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਕੋਈ ਬਹੁਤਾ ਅੰਤਰ ਨਹੀਂ, ਪਰ ਸੰਭਵ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਹੋਰ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਵੀ ਹੋਣਗੇ, ਜੋ ਬਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਉਸੇ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਕਰਦੇ ਰਹੇ ਹੋਣਗੇ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਕਰਦੇ ਰਹੇ, ਪਰ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਦਾ ਰੂਪ ਮੌਖਿਕ ਹੋਣ ਕਾਰਨ ਤੇ ਜੁਗ-ਗਰਦੀਆਂ/ਪ੍ਰਸਥਿਤੀਆਂ ਅਨੁਕੂਲ ਨਾ ਹੋਣ ਕਾਰਨ ਸਾਡੇ ਤਕ ਸਾਰਾ ਕੁਝ ਪਹੁੰਚ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਕਿਆ।

ਇਥੇ ਜ਼ਿਕਰਯੋਗ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਡਾ. ਤਾਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਇਸ ਖੇਤਰ ਦੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਪ੍ਰਸਿਧ ਪੁਸਤਕ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਪ੍ਰਣਾਲੀਆਂ (1988) ਵਿਚ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਨੂੰ 'ਭਾਈ ਪ੍ਰਣਾਲੀ' ਨਾਮਕਰਨ ਹੇਠ ਪ੍ਰਸਤੁਤ ਕੀਤਾ ਤੇ ਭਾਈ ਮਨੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਨੂੰ ਸੰਪ੍ਰਦਾਇ ਪ੍ਰਣਾਲੀ ਦੇ ਮੋਢੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਰਖਿਆ ਹੈ। ਡਾ. ਤਾਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਦਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਇਹ ਨਾਮਕਰਨ ਤੇ ਸਥਾਨ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਸੂਝ, ਸੀਮਾ ਤੇ ਸਮਰਥਾ ਮੁਤਾਬਿਕ ਦਰੁਸਤ ਹੈ, ਪਰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਨਾ ਜਰੂਰੀ ਹੈ

ਕਿ 'ਸੰਪ੍ਰਦਾਇ' ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਈ ਪ੍ਰਣਾਲੀ (ਤਫੀਰਰ;) ਨਹੀਂ, ਸਗੋਂ ਸਕੂਲ ਜਾਂ ਪ੍ਰਣਾਲੀ ਦਾ ਪਰਿਆਇਵਾਚੀ ਪਦ ਹੈ। ਡਾ. ਤਾਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਖੁਦ ਇਸ 'ਪ੍ਰਣਾਲੀ' ਨੂੰ 'ਗਿਆਨੀ ਟਕਸਾਲ' (ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਪ੍ਰਣਾਲੀਆਂ, ਪੰਨਾ 9) ਵੀ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ, ਜੋ ਉਪਰਲੇ ਕਥਨ ਦੇ ਹਵਾਲੇ ਨਾਲ ਵਧੇਰੇ ਢੁਕਵਾਂ ਹੈ।

ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਦੇ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਸਕੂਲ ਨਾਲ ਭਾਈ ਮਨੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਾ ਸੰਬੰਧ ਜੁੜਨ ਵਿਚ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕ ਤੇ ਸਿਧਾਂਤਕ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਣ ਸਾਡੀ ਮਦਦ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਤੋਂ ਸ਼ਖਸੀਅਤ ਪਧਰ ਉਤੇ ਦੋਨੋਂ ਮਹਾਨ ਵਿਦਵਾਨ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਦੀ ਹਾਜ਼ਰੀ-ਹਜ਼ੂਰੀ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਜ਼ਰਦੇ ਤੇ ਵਰੋਸਾਇ ਹੋਏ ਹਨ (ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਤੀਜੇ ਤੋਂ ਛੇਵੇਂ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਤਕ ਸਮਕਾਲੀ ਹਨ; ਭਾਈ ਮਨੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਗੁਰੂ ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਰਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ)। ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਹਵਾਲੇ ਨਾਲ ਵੀ ਦੋਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਰੁਤਬਾ ਲਗਪਗ ਇਕੋ ਜਿਹਾ ਹੈ: ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਪੰਜਵੇਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਅਗਵਾਈ ਵਿਚ ਆਦਿ ਬੀੜ ਦੇ ਲਿਖਾਰੀ ਹਨ; ਭਾਈ ਮਨੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਸਵੇਂ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਦੀ ਅਗਵਾਈ ਵਿਚ ਦਮਦਮੀ ਬੀੜ ਵਿਚ ਨੌਵੇਂ ਮਹਲੂ ਦੇ 'ਸਬਦ' ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ, ਭਾਵ ਦੋਨੋਂ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੇ ਮੋਢੀ ਲਿਖਾਰੀ ਹਨ। ਦੋਹੋਂ ਵਿਦਵਾਨ ਪੁਰਸ਼, ਮਹਾਨ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਕਾਰ ਤੇ ਕਥਾ-ਵਾਚਕ ਹਨ। ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਵਿਚ ਅਜੇਹੀਆਂ ਕਈ ਘਟਨਾਵਾਂ ਹਨ, ਜਿਥੋਂ ਇਸ ਤਥ ਦੀ ਪੁਸ਼ਟੀ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਨੂੰ ਖੁਦ ਕਾਸ਼ੀ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਗੁਰੂਸਿਖੀ ਦੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਜਗਾਉਣ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੇ ਆਪ ਸੌਂਪੀ ਸੀ। ਭਾਈ ਮਨੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਨਨਕਾਣਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਫਿਰ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਜੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਿਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਸਥਾਪਿਤ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲਤਖਤ ਦੀ ਜਿੰਮੇਵਾਰੀ, ਸੇਵਾ-ਸੰਭਾਲ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਤਾਂ ਭਾਈ ਮਨੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਵਿਚ ਅਜੇਹੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਨਿਭਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ।

ਸਿਧਾਂਤਕ ਜਾਂ ਵਿਚਾਰਧਾਰਕ ਪਧਰ ਉਤੇ ਕਈ ਪਧਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਸਾਂਝ, ਸਾਨੂੰ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਰਚਨਾਵਾਂ ਤੇ ਭਾਈ ਮਨੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਮੌਖਿਕ ਬਚਨਾਂ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਹੋਂਦ ਵਿਚ ਆਈਆਂ ਰਚਨਾਵਾਂ ਜਾਂ ਬਾਣੀ/ਜਪੁ ਟੀਕੇ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਦਿਸ ਪੈਂਦੀ ਹੈ, ਜਿਵੇਂ: ਭਾਈ ਮਨੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਦਾ ਜੋ ਜਪੁ ਟੀਕਾ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਪਰੰਪਰਕ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਉਹ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਸਬਦਿ ਜਿਤੀ ਸਿਧ ਮੰਡਲੀ ਕੀ ਤੋਸੁ ਆਪਣਾ ਪੰਥੁ ਨਿਰਾਲਾ (੧/੩੧) ਤੁਕ ਦੇ ਅਧਾਰ ਉਤੇ ਹੀ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਜ਼ਿਕਰਯੋਗ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਭਾਈ ਮਨੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਜਪੁ ਟੀਕੇ ਦਾ ਪਾਠ (text), ਜਿਸ ਗਿਆਨ ਰਤਨਾਵਲੀ ਵਿਚ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਉਹ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਵਾਰ ਦੇ ਅਧਾਰ ਉਤੇ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਭਾਈ ਮਨੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਾ ਮੌਖਿਕ ਵਿਖਿਆਨ ਹੀ ਹੈ, ਜੋ ਪਰੰਪਰਾ ਤੇ ਜੁਗ-ਗਰਦੀਆਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਅਨੇਕ ਘਾਟੀਆਂ ਵਿਚਦੀ ਲੰਘ ਕੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਤਕ ਜਿਵੇਂ-ਕਿਵੇਂ ਪਹੁੰਚਿਆ ਹੈ। ਇਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਦਾ ਜਪੁ ਟੀਕਾ ਵੀ ਅੰਸ-ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ (ਅਥ ਜਪੁ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਸੂਰਯੋਦਯ, ਉਤਾਰਾ ਬਾਵਾ ਸੁਮੇਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਪਟਨਾ, ਸੰਪਾ./ਪ੍ਰਕਾ., ਗਿ. ਈਸ਼ਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਾਰਾ, ਨਵੀਂ ਦਿੱਲੀ, 1987)।

ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜਾਂ ਭਾਈ ਮਨੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਪੁ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਦੇ ਸਟੀਕ ਰੂਪ, ਜੋ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਜਿਸ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਹੁਣ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹਨ, ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਕੁਝ ਤਥ ਸਪਸ਼ਟ ਹੋਣੇ ਜਰੂਰੀ ਹਨ। ਪਹਿਲਾ ਇਹ ਕਿ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਸਟੀਕ ਰਚਨਾਵਾਂ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਸੰਕੇਤ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ, ਵਕਤ ਤੇ ਜੁਗ-ਗਰਦੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਝਖੜਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਦੀ ਲੰਘ ਕੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਕੋਲ ਪਰੰਪਰਾ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ

ਵਿਚ ਪਹੁੰਚੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਨਿਰਸੰਦੇਹ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਅਨੇਕ ਰਲੇ ਤੇ ਵਾਧੇ-ਘਾਟੇ ਹੋ ਚੁਕੇ ਹਨ; ਪਰ ਐਨਾ ਕੁਝ ਹੋਣ ਦੇ ਬਾਵਜੂਦ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ ਦੀ ਤਹਿ ਵਿਚ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੋਹਾਂ ਮਹਾਂਪੁਰਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਰਮਜ਼ੀ-ਧੁਨਿ ਸੁਣਾਈ ਦੇ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਜੇਕਰ ਅਸੀਂ ਸਾਵਧਾਨੀ ਤੇ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਨਾਲ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਗਹਿਰੀ ਆਵਾਜ਼ ਸੁਣੀਏ ਤਾਂ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ/ਮਨੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਬੋਲ ਸੁਣ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਾਂ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਡਾ. ਤਾਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਭਾਈ ਮਨੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਜਪੁ ਟੀਕੇ ਦੇ ਪਾਠ ਤੋਂ ਅਨੁਮਾਨਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਇਹ “ਅਜੁ 1979 ॥ ਤਕ ਹੋਏ ਅਨੇਕ ਟੀਕਿਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਉਤਮ ਤੇ ਸ਼੍ਰੇਸ਼ਟ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਟੀਕੇ ਦੇ ਪਾਠ ਤੋਂ ਵਿਸ਼ਵਾਸ ਬਝਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਟੀਕਾਕਾਰ ਸਚਮੁਚ ਅਧਿਆਤਮਕ ਅਨੁਭਵ ਵਾਲਾ ਭਗਤ ਹੈ। ਕੇਵਲ ਉਹ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਹੀ ਐਸਾ ਟੀਕਾ ਕਰ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਆਪ ਅਗਮ ਤੇ ਅਗੋਚਰ ਨੂੰ ਦੇਖਿਆ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਨੂੰ ਸਬਦ ਤੀਕ ਗਮਤਾ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੈ...” (ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਪ੍ਰਣਾਲੀਆਂ, ਪੰਨਾ 194)।

ਉਕਤ ਹਵਾਲੇ ਨਾਲ ਜੇਕਰ ਵਿਆਖਿਆਕਾਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਅਨੁਭਵੀ ਸੁਰ ਨੂੰ ਰਚਨਾਵਾਂ (ਵਾਰਾਂ/ਜਪੁ ਟੀਕਿਆਂ) ਵਿਚੋਂ ਸੁਣਿਆ ਜਾਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਸਾਂਝ ਦੀਆਂ ਤੰਦਾਂ ਦੂਰ ਤਕ ਸੁਣਾਈ ਦੇਣਗੀਆਂ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਜਿਸ ‘ਸਬਦੁ’ (ਬਾਣੀ) ਨੂੰ ਜਿਹਨ ਵਿਚ ਰਖ ਕੇ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਉਸਦੇ ਵਿਸਤਾਰ (ਵਾਰਾਂ) ਵਿਚ ਪੈਂਦੇ ਹਨ, ਉਹੀ ‘ਸਬਦੁ’ ਦੀ ‘ਸਿਧੀ’ ਭਾਈ ਮਨੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਕਰਨਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ: “ਸਿਧਾ ਪੁਛਿਆ ਸਬਦ ਦਾ ਸਾਰ ਕਿਉ ਕਰਿ ਘੜੀਐ ॥ ...ਸਚੀ ਟਕਸਾਲ ਸਾਧ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਹੈ ਤਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰਾ ਦਾ ਸਬਦ ਘੜੀਦਾ ਹੈ ॥ ...ਗੁਰਾ ਦਾ ਸਬਦੁ ਮਨਿ ਵਿਚ ਧਾਰੇ ਤਾ ਇਸਦਾ ਮਨ ਭੀ ਘੜੀਏ ॥ ” (‘ਜਪੁ ਟੀਕਾ’, ਗਿਆਨ ਰਤਨਾਵਲੀ, ਪੰਨਾ 507)।

ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਵਾਰਾਂ ਦੀ 11ਵੀਂ ਪਉੜੀ ਵਿਚ ਆਈ ਸਿਖ ਨਾਮਾਵਲੀ ਉਤੇ ਅਧਾਰਿਤ, ਭਾਈ ਮਨੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਮੌਖਿਕ ਬਚਨਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਨਿਰਮਤ ਹੋਈ ਰਚਨਾ ਸਿਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਭਗਤਮਾਲਾ (ਭਗਤ ਰਤਨਾਵਲੀ) ਵਿਚ ਭਾਈ ਮਨੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ (ਬਚਨ ਕਰਦੇ) ਹਨ: “ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਤਾਂ ਮਾਨੋ ਸਬਦ ਦਾ ਟੀਕਾ ਹੈ। ਉਸ ਤੇ ਸਿਖੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ” ਫਰਕ ਸਿਰਫ ਐਨਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਕਾਵਿ ਵਿਚ ਹੈ, ਭਾਈ ਮਨੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੀ ਵਾਰਤਕ ਵਿਚ।

ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਦੇ ਅਧਾਰ ਉਤੇ ਇਹ ਸਪਸ਼ਟ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਪ੍ਰਣਾਲੀ (school) ਦੇ ਅਗਲੀ ਵਾਰਿਸ ਭਾਈ ਮਨੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਹਨ । ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਣਾਲੀ ਦੇ ਤਤ-ਰੂਪ ਬੀਜ ਇਕ ਹੋਰ ਬੋਹੜ ਮਹਾਂ ਕਵੀ ਭਾਈ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਿਚ ਉਗਮਦੇ ਹਨ, ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ‘ਨਿਰਮਲ’ ਅੰਸ ਵੀ ਸ਼ਾਮਿਲ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਭਾਈ ਮਨੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਤੋਂ ਅਗਾਂਹ ਜਿੰਨੇ ਵੀ ਗੁਰਸਿਖ/ਵਿਆਖਿਆਕਾਰ ਵਰੋਸਾਏ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ, ਉਹ ਇਸ ਸਕੂਲ ਦੀਆਂ ਸ਼ਾਖਾਵਾਂ/ਉਪ-ਸ਼ਾਖਾਵਾਂ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਵਧਦੇ-ਵਿਗਸਦੇ ਹਨ। ਅਗਾਂਹ ਇਸ ਸਕੂਲ ਵਿਚ ਭਾਈ ਵੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ਪ੍ਰੋ. ਪੂਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਜਿਹੇ ਮਹਾਨ ਵਿਦਵਾਨ ਆਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਭਾਈ ਤਤ ਵੀ ਸ਼ਾਮਿਲ ਹਨ। ਅੰਸ-ਮਾਤਰ ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਣਾਲੀ ਦੀ ਧੁਨੀ ਸਿ. ਕਪੂਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ਭਾਈ ਰਣਧੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ਡਾ. ਜਸਵੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇਕੀ, ਹਰਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਮਹਿਬੂਬ, ਗੁਰਭਗਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਆਦਿ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਕੀਤੀ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਵਿਚ ਵੀਸੁਣੀ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਥੇ ਸਾਡਾ ਇਹ ਭਾਵ ਕਦਾਚਿਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਿ ਪਰਵਰਤੀ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਦਵਾਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਜਾਂ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਕਾਰਜਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜਾਂ ਭਾਈ ਮਨੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਹਾਣ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਿਧ ਕਰਨਾ ਹੈ, ਅਜਿਹੀ ‘ਗੁਸਤਾਖੀ’

ਕਦਾਚਿਤ ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੀ। ਇਥੇ ਸਿਰਫ ਇਹ ਭਾਵ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸੰਬੰਧਿਤ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਦੀ ਸੇਧ ਵਿਚ ਤੁਰਨ ਦਾ ਜਤਨ ਕਰਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ ਤੇ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਤੋਂ ਮਿਲਦੀ ਰੋਸ਼ਨੀ ਦੀ ਅੰਸ਼ ਤਲਾਸ਼ੀ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ।

ਉਕਤ ਬਿਨਾ ਹੋਰ ਵਰਤਮਾਨ ਵੀ ਕਈ ਟੀਕੇ, ਸਿਧਾਂਤਕ ਰਚਨਾਵਾਂ ਜਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ ਹਨ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਸਕੂਲ ਨੂੰ ਵਧਦਾ, ਮੌਲਦਾ, ਵਿਗਸਦਾ, ਰੂਪ ਬਦਲਦਾ ਦੇਖਿਆ/ਵਾਚਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਭਵਿਖ ਵਿਚ ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਣਾਲੀ/ਸਕੂਲ ਦੇ ਹੋਰ ਵਧੇਰੇ ਤੇ ਨਵੇਂ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਗਸਣ ਦੀਆਂ ਸੰਭਾਵਨਾਵਾਂ ਹਨ, ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਵਰਤਮਾਨ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੂੰ ‘ਸਮੀਖਿਆ’ ਦੀ ਨਹੀਂ, ਸਿਰਜਣਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ; ਸਮੀਖਿਆਤਮਕ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ/ਵਿਆਖਿਆਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਨਹੀਂ, ਸਿਰਜਣਾਤਮਕ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ/ਵਿਆਖਿਆਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਵਧੇਰੇ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ।

### ਸਾਰ

ਉਕਤ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਦੇ ਸਾਰ ਵਜੋਂ ਇਹ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਫਿਰ ਦੁਹਰਾਏ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਦਾ ਸਿਰਜਣਾਤਮਕ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ‘ਸਬਦ ਸੁਰਤਿ’ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਇਕ:

- (1) ਅਵਸਥਾ ਦਾ ਸੂਚਕ ਹੈ
- (2) ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਵਜੋਂ ਸਥਾਪਿਤ ਹੈ
- (3) ਇਕ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਦੀ ਜੀਵਨ-ਸ਼ੈਲੀ ਦਾ ਲਖਾਇਕ ਹੈ
- (4) ਇਕ ਸਾਧਨਾ ਮਾਰਗ ਵਜੋਂ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਪਾਦਕ ਹੈ

ਇਸ ਦਾ ਸਰੂਪਨਾ ਕਹਿਆ ਜਾਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਇਹ ਜੀਵਨ ਤਤ ਦੀ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਸਿਖਰਲੀ ਸੂਝ ਹੈ। ਡਾ. ਬਲਬੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਇਹ “ਸਰਗੁਣ ਤੇ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਦੀ ਸਾਵੀਂ ਏਕਤਾ ਦੀ ਸਮਝ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ ...ਇੰਦ੍ਰੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਸੂਝ ਤੋਂ ਉਪਰ ਛੇਵੀਂ ਸੂਝ (sixth sense) ਹੈ। ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦੀ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਦਾ ਭੇਦ ਇਸ ਦੀ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਵਿਚ ਰਖਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ।” (ਨਿਰੁਕਤ, ਭਾਗ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਪੰਨਾ 15)।

ਇਹ ਦੋ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ ਦਾ ਜੋੜ ਨਹੀਂ, ਭਾਵ ਸਬਦ ਤੇ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਨਹੀਂ, ਸਬਦੁਖਸੁਰਤਿ ਹੈ। ਇਥੇ ਸਬਦ, ਗੁਰੂ ਹੈ, ਸੁਰਤਿ ਚੇਲਾ ਜਾਂ ਸਿਖ ਹੈ, ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਇਹ ‘ਗੁਰਸਿਖ’ ਦਾ ਸਮਾਨਾਰਥੀ ਹੈ। ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਸਾਰੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਗੁਰਸਿਖੀ ਦੀ ਹੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ ਦਾ ਮਾਰਗ ਹੈ। ਭਾਈ ਮਨੀ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ ਵਿਚ “ਉਸ ਤੇ ਸਿਖੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤਿ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ” (ਸਿਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਭਗਤਮਾਲਾ, 1912, ਪੰਨਾ 134)। ਭਾਈ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ “ਪਛਤਿ ਸੁਨਤਿ ਗੁਰਸਿਖੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤਿ ਸਰਧਾ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਵਧਹਿ ਮੁਕੰਦ (ਰਸਿ 2, ਅੰਸੂ 47)।” ਭਾਈ ਵੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਜਦੋਂ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਰਚਨਾਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ “ਗੁਰਸਿਖੀ ਦੇ ਅਸੂਲਾਂ ਤੇ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੇ ਭਾਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣ ਲਈ ਕੁੰਜੀ” (ਕਬਿਤ ਭਾ. ਗੁ., 1980, 42), ਭਾਈ ਕਾਨ੍ਹ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਾਭਾ “ਸਿਖ ਧਰਮ ਦੇ ਨਿਯਮਾਂ ਦਾ ਭੰਡਾਰ” (ਗੁਰਮਤ ਸੁਧਾਕਰ, 1970, 86, ਫੁ.ਨੋ) ਜਾਂ ਡਾ. ਗੰਡਾ ਸਿੰਘ “fundamental principals of Sikhism” (*The Khalsa*, Lahore, may 25, 1930) ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ, ਤਾਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ ਵੀ ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਵਾਲਾ ਹੀ ਹੈ। ਪ੍ਰੋ. ਪੂਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਤਾਂ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ “ਨਾਮ ਤੇ ਸਿਮਰਨ ਦੇ ਨਵੇਂ ਸਿਖ ਸਭਿਆਚਾਰ ਦਾ ਵਿਆਖਿਆਕਾਰ” ਕਹਿ ਕੇ ਕੋਈ ਭੁਲੇਖਾ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਰਹਿਣ ਦਿੰਦੇ (Spirit of the Sikhs, Vol II, p. 13)।

# ON THE ISC FRONT

COL JAGTAR SINGH\*

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## INTRODUCTION

As the year 2020 drew to a close and the restrictions imposed by the administration due to the pandemic were gradually relaxed, ISC started the year 2021 by working for the education of the poor and proactively revived the homework tuition centers for the villagers and coaching centers for the Sikligars. As our activity grew, children and institutions from near and far approached us for assistance. During the period we have also been constantly interacting with other Sikh Welfare organisations for giving an impetus to our projects and working on new ventures.

**Executive Committee Meeting:** Executive Committee Meeting of ISC was held on **29 Dec 20**. It was chaired by **Dr. Sardara Singh Johl, Padma Bhushan, Convener ISC** and was attended by 32 distinguished and eminent members. Various issues related to the projects undertaken by the organisation and pertinent concerns of our society such as importance of education and the need for more persons to qualify and join Central / State services and Defence forces, Community Count and Dwelling Units for Sikligars, Assistance to Needy and Deserving Students were discussed in addition to the regular appraisal on working and finances of ISC. An update was also given on the actions taken by ISC on Current Socio- Religious Matters. During the open house session, a number of speakers spoke on the current social and religious affairs and gave valuable inputs and suggestions.

**Changes in the HQ:** Change is an inevitable part of life and is essential for the growth of any organisation. To usher in a new era and

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to make our organisation more vibrant and dynamic we have new faces in the HQ. Mrs Tajinder Kaur Sonia who is an UT Awardee and is actively working as Social Activist for Women Empowerment and Children Rights joined us as Media Publications and Public Relation Incharge. Mr Joginder Singh Gogia who had joined ISC a year back and was working as General Secretary had to unfortunately leave us due to his ill health and family reasons. On his departure Col AS Kandhari was appointed as the General Secretary on 05 March 21.

### **EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES/ HOMEWORK TUITION CENTRES**

**Village Alampur & Nepran.** Homework Tuitions Centre at Village Alampur and Nepran has been operating since 01 Jan 2019 with the objective of picking up intelligent, poor and hardworking Sikh students for quality education. Team ISC comprising of Col JS Multani Secretary General, Col AS Kandhari & Tajinder Kaur Sonia visited the Homework Tuition Centres at village Alampur & Nepran on 07 Jan 2021. Over 100 children of the two villages are attending the Centres. Regular visits by a team from ISC is carried out to ensure smooth functioning of the Centres and obtain first hand feedback from the teachers, villagers and the students.

**Village Saneta.** Saneta is a large village located in SAS Nagar (Mohali) Tehsil of Mohali district, Punjab with total **407 families** residing. The village has population of **2258** of which **1222** are males while **1036** are females as per **Population Census 2011**. The team met the Sarpanch **Shri Bhagat Ram** with the aim of establishing a **Homework Tuition Centre** in the village on 27 Feb 21. The aim and benefits of establishing such a centre in the village were explained to the Sarpanch by Col JS Multani. The Sarpanch was appreciative of the efforts and assured ISC of all possible assistance. It was decided to start the Centre at the start of new session after their exams. In the meanwhile, the Sarpanch was requested to **identify a suitable girl / lady** from the village who would take on the responsibility of the tutor for the children.

**Jalandhar.** A Homework Tuition Centre has been established in Jalandhar by S Jatinder Singh, Special Organiser of Amritsar Chapter of ISC, for Siklighar children on 01 Mar 21. The centre presently has

one teacher and 35 students.

**Update on Moga Govt ITI.** To empower the youth of rural Punjab, ISC with associate organisation S. Jugraj Singh Gill Charitable Trust, is providing assistance to Govt ITI in Moga in training on Plumbing, Carpentry, Electrician, Turner and Computers. State level skill certificate (SVET) was so far being awarded to the students on successful completion of the course. To be eligible for National level certificate (NCVT) additional tools and infrastructure was required. Rs 2.5 Lakhs was given for upgrading the Lab/Wksp. The application for grant of NCVT certificate has now been accepted and approved from this session onwards.

#### **HAPPY LEARNING PLAY SCHOOL AT HYDERABAD**

Happy Learning Play School for children of Siklighars which is from Lower KG to Class V, remained closed since Mar 20 due to COVID. So that the students do not miss out on studies, Homework Tuition Centre is now run at three Deras ie Bal Nagar, Rora Mistry, Subhash Nagar for the children.

#### **ENCOURAGEMENT TO SIKH STUDENTS / SPORTSPERSON.**

S. Talwinder Singh Lalh S/o Tarlochan Singh a National player of Badminton from Panjab University Team visited Our HQ on 23 Dec 20 and was honoured by Secretary General ISC Col JS Multani in presence of Shri S S Dhindsa Administrator ASSM College & School Mukandpur. S Tarlochan Singh, Col A S Kandhari and Mrs. Tajinder Kaur Sonia.

Financial assistance to the following students has been provided by ISC during the period:

| Date     | Name                        | Address        | Amt(Rs) |
|----------|-----------------------------|----------------|---------|
| 21-01-21 | Gurpreet Kaur, MBBS student | Patiala        | 38400   |
| 17-02-21 | Navjit Singh, Engg student  | Bilaspur, Moga | 9600    |
| 19-02-21 | Santok Singh, Engg Student  | Hyderabad      | 13000   |

#### **BOOKS & PUBLICATIONS**

**Launch of Book - Homage to Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji.** The book, Homage to Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji was launched on **23 Jan**

21. The event was organised by ISC. In his opening remarks Col JS Multani expressed his gratitude to the Chief Guest Ex MLA Jugraj Singh Gill for gracing the occasion despite his age and frail health. He gave a brief introduction of the book and the efforts put in to bring it to the present form. S Ashok Singh Bagrian introduced the Editor of the book S. Sadhu Singh Deol and described how it was compiled with the contribution by various members of IOSS and ISC. Ex-MLA Jugraj Singh ji praised the efforts of S. Sadhu Singh Deol and all others who helped for the success of this project. A cheque of Rs 5000/- was presented to Mr Jaswant Rai of IOSS as a token of appreciation of the efforts put in by him In printing of the book.

#### **CELEBRATIONS :400 YEARS BIRTH CENTENARY OF GURU TEGH BAHADUR SAHIB**

400 years of Birth Centenary of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji is being celebrated on 18 April 2021. To commemorate the occasion, it has been decided to conduct a '**Student Programme**' for students of Tricity. Various Events / Competitions have been planned for the students of schools in the Tricity. Some schools have already given their willingness and confirmed their participation. A Documentary prepared by ISC on the Life and Teachings of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji is also planned to be released on the day. A Coordinating Meeting was held in the office of the Secretary General on 19 Feb 21 at 1130 hrs to discuss the conduct, budget and responsibilities. Date of the function will be finalized in consultation with the participating schools.

**Women Empowerment Programme.** A meeting was held in Village Alampur on 27 Feb 21 at around 1700 hrs. The village panchayat members and few ladies had who had been informed earlier had come for the meeting. ISC was represented by Col JS Multani, Secy Gen and Col AS Kandhari. Col JS Multani briefly explained the purpose of the workshop, the programme including its conduct and duration. He highlighted the requirement of regular attendance by the participants. The village heads unanimously supported the conduct of the event and the ladies were also enthusiastic to join. The workshop on fruit and vegetable processing and preservation is now planned to be conducted from 24 – 28 Mar 2021.

**VISITS OF EMINENT PERSONS AND SOCIAL ACTIVISTS TO ISC DURING THE PERIOD:**

Dr. Punpreet Singh (Director Helping Hand Charitable Trust Delhi) and Principal S. Harbhajan Singh (Shaheed Bhagat Singh Memorial College, Banga) with his staff and Mrs Sartaj Lamba, who is member ISC visited ISC HQ. She has recently been felicitated for her noble work by the Army HQ as well as by the HRD Ministry. A brief introduction about the projects undertaken was given to her by Col JS Multani, Secy Gen and the projects planned were also discussed with her.

**Visit to Kapurthala (Punjab)** ISC Team comprising Col Jagtar Singh Multani (Secretary General) and Manmeet Saini visited Harkrishan Public School, Pandori Khajoor, Hoshiarpur and Kapurthala. At Pandori Khajoor, Mrs.Kiran Kaur Dhama(Principal and Director) of Guru Harkrishan Public School informed about the progress of Coaching Center and allied activities. As a Member of ISC, she has made arrangements for conduct of examination to be held on 14th Mar 2021, for Bhai Jaitajee Foundation, Chandigarh. She promised help and accommodation for Invigilation Staff and for seating arrangement for the students. The Team then moved to Kapurthala Rail Coach Factory where our Ex-Student and now **Dr.Harmanpreet Singh** is serving with Railways as **Medical Officer (ADMO)**, RCF. Another successful Student of ISC Ms.Jaswinder Kaur(Msc-Biotech) is now working as Inspector, Cooperative Society at Chandigarh. Her marriage was fixed on 25th Feb, 2021 at Kapurthala. The ISC Team attended the marriage and blessed the newly wedded couple. ISC wishes our old students a great success in life.

## **GURBANI TRANSLATIONS: THE ART AND CHALLENGES EXPLICIT IN BOOKS FROM KARMINDER SINGH DHILLON**

**A REVIEW BY BHAI (DR) HARBANS LAL\***

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Any review of new books that translate the verses of Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS) must first describe the vacuum they fill.

An in-depth look at the most recent Gurbani translations gives rise to several concerns, issues, and approaches. Most render Guru Nanak's messages as regurgitations of the missives already in vogue in India's religious traditions and teachings. Most old concepts mentioned in Gurbani remained intact in most translations to date. The examples are: mantras, heavens, hell, lives after death, transmigration of the soul, angels of death, dharma raj, place of ancestors, dasam duar, and dozens of other concepts, stories, and rituals concocted by clerics or priests.

However, a few scholars did realize that if Gurbani merely meant to regurgitate what was already in the existing religious texts, then what was the real need of Guru's spending years of work to compose Gurbani? Or what was the absolute necessity for Gurus to take birth or their promoting the path of Sikhi?

Some recent scholars started looking for the answers to the above questions. They believed in Sikhi and Guru Nanak's uniqueness and that of his successors and thus the message of the Gurbani hymns or Sabd. They realized that there are definite approaches, methods, and manners in which Guru's teachings must be unique and so understood. Their research, then, discovered the newness in Gurbani.

The purpose of this book review is to write a tribute to one of today's true Gurbani translation luminaries, Dr. Karminder Singh

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Dhillon. Dr. Dhillon writes and regularly speaks on Gurbani matters. He is currently the Joint Editor of The Sikh Bulletin and a Board member of Sikhi Vichar Forum. This review of mine is a composite review; the book titles are explicit about what is specified in each book.

Dr. Dhillon took the challenge of Gurbani translation with several highly desired and revolutionary tributes. He recently published five books that translate certain sections of SGGS. They are Understanding Nitnem: Jup, Sodar, and Sohela; understanding Sidh Goshat; Understanding Anand; Understanding Asa Di Vaar; and The Hijacking of Sikhi.

Gurbani translations by Karminder will open your eyes to the principles, the methods, the processes, and the intricacies of translating the Gurbani into language that communicates clearly, accurately, and powerfully to readers of many countries and many cultures. It will deepen your understanding of and appreciation for the priceless gift of Guru's written Word. The books are in English – a language of the great majority of the current world population and indeed the educated Sikhs.

#### **GURBANI GRAMMAR**

I remember my student days when I used to listen to Bhai Jodh Singh's lectures and Prof. Sahib Singh in Khalsa College Amritsar that harped on the use of Gurbani grammar while translating Gurbani. It is their motivation that I took college courses in Sanskrit Grammar, which is extensively used in Gurbani.

Even when Prof Sahib Singh published his ten volumes of Gurbani translation, the English translations were not yet based on the same guidelines. The proof on hand is Dr. Sant Singh's translation, which most diligently derived his translation from the then existing non-grammar based English translations of SGGS. Not knowing Gurbani Grammar himself, he could not take advantage of the newer approaches.

#### **FROM LITERAL TO SPIRITUAL**

Dr. Dhillon successfully crossed over from the literal translation to the spiritual translation in his recent books. He argues that the spirituality of Gurbani does not have a language intrinsic and inherent

to it. The objective and focus of the messages of Gurbani are to bring about a realization of the Creator within the human conscience. The language of our daily usage may not have the required vocabulary for the core Gurmat concepts, for its process, outcome, and objectives. This objective, then, is the challenge that Dr. Dhillon accepted.

Since, he crossed over from the literal and to the domain of spiritual messages, it necessitated a substantial intellectual leap from the little pond's banks to the other side where the vibrant and intended spiritual messages lied. Such is a task that is arduous and challenging, but the composers of Gurbani were aware of those difficulties. Thus, they provided necessary milestones and signboards along our spiritual journeys within Gurbani to ensure we get to the envisioned messages' intended destinations. Our task is to look for them to assist us in our understanding. Dr. Dhillon successfully took that into account.

#### **THE RAHAO PRINCIPLE**

The second principle that Karminder used in his translations of Gurbani is the Rahao Principle. The basic premise here is that the Rahao verse or its equivalent is critical in interpreting or attempting to understand Gurbani.

Translated literally, Rahao means pause. But such a translation begs the question: Pause for what purpose? The attempted answer is to pause to allow contemplation and research to get to the central message of the Sabd and transform the literal message into the spiritual message. Rahao also may serve as the title of the subject of the SABD.

#### **FIRST PERSON INTERPRETATION**

Most Gurbani is composed in first-person terms and is thus, in essence, a narrative of the experiences, processes, choices, consequences, and outcomes for the writers themselves. Guru Nanak walked the journey of realization and gave us the path of Sikhi. Thus, Gurbani translations must be interpreted in the terms, the messages referring to me as the reader, for me as a Sikh of Gurbani, and not for someone out there. Our failure to grasp this principle has led to defective translations.

The SGGS is a voluminous text. Its subject matter is devoted to revolutionizing humankind's spiritual quest. Such a volume will require

the extensive use of spiritual concepts, beliefs, idioms, metaphors, etc., that were already within the use and within the psyche of spiritual seekers of the time. They had to be used but explicitly with new meanings and understanding to fit the new spiritual paradigms of Sikhi and Gurmat. Thus, the redefining of the existing concept must be made available within the voluminous text that is the SGGS, not outside. Our gurus so did it. Thus, the spirituality of the SGGS was not permitted to revert to the old meanings of the concepts and beliefs. Dr. Dhillon strictly adhered to translating Gurbani with the definitions and concepts as detailed and expounded within SGGS.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

These remarkable volumes under review marshal the understanding of the Gurus' teachings. These books shed so much light on Gurbani translation in such an accessible a fashion. This compendium gives scholars, students, and interested readers an unprecedented grasp for a new respect for the diligence, knowledge, and care required to produce a meaningful, beneficial and accurate translation. Gurbani and the Gurbani researchers' readers will find a rich and hitherto unavailable treasure of knowledge about their interests.

## WALKING WITH THE SIKHS OF TODAY

A REVIEW BY DR HARDEV SINGH VIRK\*

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*Author: Sukhmandar Singh Ph.D., Dean University of Santa Clara, California, USA.*

*Publisher: SANBUN Publishers, New Delhi;*

*Price Rs.195.00, US\$9.95, pages 104, 2021*

Sukhmandar Singh is a well known personality among the Sikh Diaspora. He has got his Doctorate in Civil Engineering from UC Berkeley and presently occupying the Chair of Dean, Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, California. In the Preface, author introduces his book as follows: “These articles are from an engineer’s analytical point of view. Different issues related to Sikhs, Sikhi and Punjab have been dealt with head on. Lack of theological and historical depth is there, but the attempt was to get to the point and call a spade a spade”.

This hundred page book is divided into 18 Chapters covering different themes concerning Sikh issues and Punjab state. In Chapter 1, “*Betrayal of Guru Granth Sahib by Sikhs*”, the author regrets the Sikh failure to recognize that Guru Granth Sahib being the unique scripture of the world capable of providing peace and harmony to the entire humanity. He blames the Sikhs for this failure: “But Sikhs who are the custodian of Guru Granth Sahib have no peace or harmony among themselves. Why? Paper tries to examine the causes”. Thus the author concludes: “The Sikhs have focused more on worshipping Guru Granth Sahib than following its message. The Sikhs are fundamentally flawed, in certain aspects, in understanding the Sikh philosophy/doctrine as enshrined in Guru Granth Sahib and thus have betrayed their own Guru”. The author has used Gurbani quotes to bring home the essence of message to be delivered.

Chapter 3 is focused on the Sikh failure on achieving Excellence

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in Education by the Sikhs. Author has narrated success stories and cited examples from Jewish and Hindu communities for sake of comparison. The Sikh community is spending Crores of Rupees for religious celebrations but ignoring field of Education & Technology. He suggests a creation of “Education Fund” for promotion of Education and Research among the Sikh community. He laments that Sikh institutions run by SGPC & DSGPC are no match with the Hindu DAV, Thapar or DMC run institutions in India.

Chapter 4 is the longest and most comprehensive in its description of life and work by Sant Teja Singh during his six years (1906-12) of stay in North America. According to the author, “Sant Teja Singh made outstanding contributions for the cause of spreading the glorious teachings of Guru Nanak across the world throughout his life. A young, brilliant but a dedicated Sikh, he did pioneering work in educating Americans and Canadians about Sikhism and establishing Gurdwaras in Victoria (Canada) and Stockton (California)”. Recently, I reviewed the 800 pages book “*Life of a Gurmukh: Sant Teja Singh*” authored by Khem Singh Gill and published by Khalsa Diwan Society, New Westminster, BC, Canada. Sukhmandar Singh has done full justice to the contributions of Sant Teja Singh in his essay covering all aspects of Sant Teja Singh’s life and work done in UK, USA and Canada. I think the author has researched all available archival sources to prepare this essay. For example, a quote from Vancouver newspaper illustrates the “Mystery and Power of Teja Singh”: “*The professor showed himself to be a man of profound erudition with a marvellous grasp of the principles of European civilization and intimate knowledge of oriental philosophy. He expounded the principles of true political economy.... White men and white women are remembered among his warmest admirers*”. I consider this essay as the BEST TRIBUTE to Sant Teja Singh. It sums up the history of early Sikh migrants, *Gadar* movement and establishment of early Sikh Gurdwaras in North America.

In Chapter 5, a critical analysis is made of contribution of Sikh Chairs and Anne Murphy’s Thesis. In the last paragraph of this Chapter, the author sums up his views as follows: “Insensitivity shown by works of Sikh Studies Chairs and more recently by Anne Murphy’s thesis towards the treasured traditions and doctrine, message of Sikhism

and Sikh identity are deeply regrettable and are beyond what the principle of Academic Freedom allows”.

There are thirteen more essays covering the remaining half volume of the book. It seems the author wants to cover all the topics under the sky concerning Sikhi, Punjab, Sikh Identity and related issues. The author is highly critical of election process in vogue for membership of SGPC and other Gurdwaras in India and abroad leading to unsavoury situations. The element of elections in Sikh religious bodies was a British game plan to keep the Sikhs entangled in local politics. The author is in favour of collective leadership in the Panth: “The Khalsa Raj during Maharaja Ranjit Singh had its foundations on the collective wisdom provided by Hari Singh Nalwa, Akali Phoola Singh, and Sham Singh Attariwala; they were always consulted and their advice followed. And hence a Great Kingdom with Sikh principles was established”.

There are three Chapters (9, 12 & 14) devoted to crisis situation in Punjab. Author suggests some remedies to cure the situation. The issues under discussion are lack of employment for the Punjabi youth; consumption of liquor and other drugs; growth of vulgarity in the entertainment industry; falling levels of underground water table and the impending desertification of Punjab; and inability of Punjab Agricultural University (PAU) to find solution to Punjab agriculture crisis. To dislodge the “Corrupt Power System in Punjab”, the author has suggested to implement an eight point programme: “Economy; Youth and Voters; Entrepreneurship; Farmers; Education; and Police; Health; and Awareness among the masses”. I wonder if the bureaucrats and politicians of Punjab will care to read these suggestions of the learned author; the chances of implementation are very fine in my view.

There are three more Chapters (10, 11 & 15) related to problems of Sikh Identity in diaspora. Last year, Rajwant Singh (SCORE: Sikh Council on Religion & Education) and Bicky Singh (Sikh Lens) were actively involved in creating awareness about Sikhi through Films and Seminars during 550th Guru Nanak anniversary celebrations. The author has referred to challenges faced by the Sikhs due to head gear (Turban) and by the Sikh youth due to keeping *Joora* in high schools.

In the last Chapter, the author writes about “Turbans and Beards & The Sikhs”. It represents his contribution as President of Sikh Council of North America in the service of Sikh community. This document was prepared as an introduction to Sikhs and their religion and a brief history of their migration to North America.

I appreciate the concern of Sukhmandar Singh regarding the welfare of Punjab and its people. This shows his commitment to the cause of Sikhi. His views may look somewhat radical but they are in keeping with the Sikhi spirit. I wish a Punjabi version of the book is published for wider circulation of his views among the rural population of Punjab.

It is my duty as a Reviewer to pinpoint the discrepancies in this write up. I blame both the publisher and the author for not editing this volume properly at the printing stage. The text has many howlers, spelling mistakes and other jarring notes of composition. Hope, the author will revise the text for the forthcoming edition.

## NEWS & VIEWS

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### **COL AMRIK SINGH, VETERAN MEMBER IOSS PASSES AWAY**

Institute of Sikh Studies is losing its old trustees one by one on whose commitment, dedication and service its foundations were laid. The latest in this series was Col Amrik Singh Khaira. Soon after his retirement from the army service, he joined the team of dedicated veterans. Being humble, unassuming, self-effacing and man of faith, he never aspired for any office but never shirked from any responsibility. Being honest to the core, he remained first the finance secretary and then the secretary of the Institute continuously for 5 years from 2009 to 2013. He also contributed to every project which the Institute launched. He had the potential of being a leader of the team but he preferred to a member of the team. He assisted in proof-reading our periodical's manuscripts, participated in Institute's publication Committee meetings and gracefully conducted the executive and General Body's meetings. As it is said: A leader knows the way, goes the way, shows the way, Col Amrik Singh did everything with grace. May his soul rest in peace.

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### **PAK DELEGATION VISITS GOLDEN TEMPLE**

Members of the Permanent Indus Commission delegation from Pakistan, who held talks with their Indian counterparts at New Delhi, visited Golden Temple today, before returning to their country.

The two-day meeting of the commission was led on the Indian side by Indus Water Commissioner Pradeep Kumar Saxena. Led by Pakistan's Indus water commissioner Syed Muhammad Mehar Ali Shah, the Pakistan delegation had arrived through the Wagah-Attari border on March 22 for the first talks in over two-and-a-half years.

Talking to mediapersons, Shah said: "Golden Temple is a sacred

place. This is my first visit to this shrine and am overwhelmed by its ambience. This place signifies peace and mutual brotherhood. The issues pertaining to waters and others could be resolved through dialogue in a peaceful manner.” (*Courtesy: The Tribune, March 26, 2021*)

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### **CHATTISINGHPURA MASSACRE: ON 21ST ANNIVERSARY, SIKH BODY RENEWS DEMAND FOR PROBE**

On the 21st anniversary of the Chattisinghpura massacre, Sikhs in Jammu and Kashmir today renewed the call for a fresh probe into the horrific incident with the All Parties Sikh Coordination Committee, Kashmir, issuing a formal statement in this regard.

“After 21 years, the people of J&K especially the Sikhs of the Valley, are waiting for justice and urge the state and the Centre to nab the culprits of the Chattisinghpura massacre,” president of the committee Jagmohan Singh Raina said today.

The committee said in 2000, unidentified gunmen had entered a quiet south Kashmiri village and massacred 36 men. “The murders shocked the entire region. Questions about who perpetrated the horrific killings still look and await answers. The police said nearly 20 militants carried out the massacre but out of them only five were caught and later killed. Those killed were residents of Brackpura and a judicial enquiry by the Justice Pandan Commission had looked into the matter, but answers still evade us,” Raina said urging for closure to the families of slain Sikhs. Raina appealed to LG Manoj Sinha and the Centre to order a fresh probe into the killings of Sikhs in Chattisinghpura.

“If this is not done, we will consider it as a grave injustice to the Sikhs of Kashmir,” he said. The massacre took place hours before the arrival of then US President Bill Clinton to India, the first visit by a US President to India in 22 years. Raina recalled how after the killings, then CM of the state Farooq Abdullah publicly assured that the culprits would be arrested. “So far the promises made by the former CM have not been fulfilled,” said Raina. (*Courtesy: The Tribune, March 21, 2021*)

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### **AFTER UP, ARMY HAS MOST MEN FROM PUNJAB**

Piping its neighbours, Punjab, often referred to as the sword army

of the nation, has the second highest number of soldiers, other than officers, serving in the Army amongst all states and Union Territories in the country.

The strength of Army personnel from Punjab is 89,088 according to information placed by the Ministry of Defence in Parliament today. This accounts for 7.7 per cent of the Army's rank and file, even though its share of the national population is 2.3 per cent.

With 1,67,557 soldiers, Uttar Pradesh tops the list of states contributing manpower to the Army. While Uttar Pradesh, the nation's most populous state, makes up 16.5 per cent of the country's population, its share in the rank and file is 14.5 per cent. Maharashtra, with 87,835 soldiers occupies the third slot, followed by Rajasthan with 79,481.

Among other states in the region, Haryana is sixth in the national tally while Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh 11th and 12th position respectively. The contribution of these states to the Army, however, is significantly more than their share of the national population.

The Ministry's data shows that with 65,987 soldiers, Haryana accounts for 5.7 per cent of the rank and file whereas its share of the national population is 2.09 per cent. Jammu and Kashmir, along with Ladakh, and Himachal Pradesh have 47,457 and 46,960 active duty soldiers, respectively. While they account for 1.01 per cent and 0.57 per cent of the national population, respectively, they make up 4.1 and 4 per cent of the Army's strength, respectively.

The Army currently has 11,51,726 soldiers on its rolls against the authorised strength of 12,29,559, facing a deficiency of 77,833 men in the ranks. As far as officers, other than those in the medical stream, are concerned, the present holding is 42,959 against the authorised 50,806. As far as the Air Force is concerned, Haryana has the second highest number of officers after Uttar Pradesh and the third highest number of airmen.

The region has a strong martial heritage and a rich military history that dates back thousands of years, and is a witness to many wars and battles. Joining the armed forces is a tradition in many families and several generations have donned the uniform.

In the infantry, the largest component of the Army, the Punjab Regiment, Dogra Regiment, Sikh Regiment, Sikh Light Infantry, Jammu and Kashmir Regiment, Jammu and Kashmir Rifles and Ladakh Scouts

draw their manpower from this region. Soldiers from these states also make up a sizable chunk of other arms and services.

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1ST TURBAN-CLAD SIKH ENTERS PAK SENATE

Gurdeep Singh from the ruling Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party took oath on Friday as a Senator, becoming the first turban-clad Sikh representative in the upper house of Pakistan's Parliament.

Singh, from the party of Prime Minister Imran Khan became the first turban-clad Sikh representative from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in Pakistan's Senate on March 3. He defeated rival candidates on a minority seat by a huge margin in the election to the upper chamber of Parliament.

He secured 103 votes in the House of 145 whereas Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (Fazlur) candidate Ranjeet Singh secured just 25 votes and Asif Bhatti of the Awami National Party received 12.

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### **SGPC RESOLUTION CONDEMNS 'RSS ATTEMPT TO MAKE INDIA A HINDU RASHTRA'**

The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) Tuesday passed a resolution condemning the alleged "attempts of the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh to make India a Hindu Rashtra" and asked Centre to "work for the protection of the rights and freedom of all religions instead of being ready to implement the efforts initiated by the RSS".

The elected apex body of Sikhs, during its budget session, took up and passed several resolutions pertaining to the interests of the community. The resolutions were moved by SGPC president Bibi Jagir Kaur and approved by the members.

The resolutions on the RSS read: "India is a multi-religious, multilingual and multi-ethnic country. Every religion has made a great contribution to its freedom, especially the Sikh community, which has made more than 80 per cent sacrifices. But sadly, for a long time now, religious freedom of other religions has been suppressed in the wake of the RSS's move to make the country a Hindu Rashtra. Minorities are being targeted through direct and indirect intervention."

The resolution also called on the Centre “to work for the protection of the rights and freedom of religion of all religions instead of being ready to implement the efforts initiated by the RSS. All those elements who try to suppress the minorities should be punished”.

In another resolution, the SGPC condemned the decision of the central government to restrict the jatha (group of pilgrims) from going to Pakistan to mark the 100th anniversary of Saka Nankana Sahib in February. The resolution termed the move by the government as an “action taken on the lines of the British and the Mughals” and asked it to apologize to the Sikh community.

A resolution was also passed urging the United Nations Organization (UNO) to declare 2021 as the “International Human Rights Year” with regard to the 400th birth anniversary of Guru Tegh Bahadur being celebrated on May 1. At the same time, it also demanded from the Centre to establish a unique monument of the ninth Guru on the lines of ‘Virasat-e-Khalsa’ at Sri Anandpur Sahib.

“The day of martyrdom of the ninth Guru should be celebrated as ‘Religious Tolerance Day’ and the Government of India should make the holy baani (Gurbani writings) of the ninth Guru available in libraries all over the world by translating them into major languages. All these works should be done under the supervision of the SGPC. The GOI and the state governments should declare SGPC as the nodal body for the fourth birth centenary celebrations of the ninth Guru, to be held at home and abroad. Apart from this, the road from Agra, the place of arrest of the ninth Guru, to his martyrdom site at Delhi, should be declared as ‘Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Marg’ and from Delhi to Sri Anandpur Sahib as ‘Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Sis Marg’, as his holy ‘Sis’ was carried on this route after the martyrdom,” reads the resolution.

In another resolution, it has been demanded to hand over Gurdwara Gyan Godri, Haridwar (Uttaranchal), Gurdwara Dangmar and Chungthang (Sikkim), Gurdwara Bauli Matth, Mangu Matth and Punjabi Matth (Orissa), to the SGPC. It reads that these are the most sacred places of the Sikhs, but their issues have been pending for a long time. (*Courtesy: The Indian Express, March 31, 2021*)