

ISSN: 2230 – 7729

ABSTRACTS OF SIKH STUDIES

(Guru Tegh Bahadur's Fourth Centenary Birth Anniversary - Commemorative Issue)

(Vol XXIII, Issue 1)

Jan-March 2021 / 551-52 NS

EDITORIAL

ਸੀਸ ਦੀਆ ਪਰ ਸਿਰਤ ਨਾ ਦੀਆ : 2

ARTICLES

GURU TEGH BAHADUR - A BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY: Hari Ram Gupta 9

UNDERSTANDING MARTYRDOM OF GURU TEGH

BAHADUR USING 17TH & 18TH CENTURY SOURCES: Inderjeet Singh 36

GURU TEGH BAHADUR AND HUMAN RIGHTS : Dr Fauja Singh 48

GURU TEGH BAHADUR'S CONTRIBUTION FOR

RESTORATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS : Dr Gurdeep Kaur 65

GURU TEGH BAHADUR – A PROPHET OF PEACE,

COMPASSION, FEARLESSNESS AND FORGIVENESS: Lt Gen R S Sujlana 72

SRI GURU TEGH BAHADUR: THE DEFENDER OF

DEMOCRATIC VALUES : Dr Arvinder Singh 80

THE POETRY OF GURU TEGH BAHADUR : Darshan Singh Maini 87

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ-ਸਰੋਤ: ਗੁਰਤਨਾਵਲੀ : ਡਾ ਗੁਰਮੇਲ ਸਿੰਘ 96

ਕਿਸਾਨ ਸੰਘਰਸ਼ - ਥਾਂ ਥਾਂ ਵੱਸੋ ਐਤੀਆਣੇ : ਡਾ: ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਿੱਧੂ 101

ON THE ISC FRONT : Col Jagtar Singh 107

REVIEWS

THE KHALISTAN CONSPIRACY - A FORMER

R&AW OFFICER UNRAVELS THE

PATH TO 1984 (GBS SIDHU) : Jaspal Singh 112

GURU NANAK: CONTEMPORARY CONCERNS

AND RESPONSE (DHARAM SINGH) : Dr Paramvir Singh 118

NEWS & VIEWS

: 122

ABSTRACTS OF SIKH STUDIES
Jan-March. 2021 / 551-52 NS
(Vol XXIII, Issue 1)

RNI Regd No : 69639/98

Founder Editors

Sardar Daljeet Singh & Dr Kharak Singh

Editor

Prof Kulwant Singh

Associate Editor

Jaspal Singh Sidhu

Editorial Advisory Board

Bhai Ashok Singh

Dr. Birendra Kaur

Col. Amrik Singh

Principal Pal Singh

Views expressed in the articles published herein do not
necessarily reflect the opinion or policy of the
Institute of Sikh Studies

Price: 20/- (postage extra)

Published by

Institute of Sikh Studies
Gurdwara Singh Sabha, Kanthala, Indl Area Phase II
Chandigarh -160 002 (India).

Printed at

Adarsh Publications, 1006, Sector 82, JLPL, Mohali

Registered with the Registrar of Newspapers for India under no : 69639 / 98

To

ABSTRACTS OF SIKH STUDIES

OBJECTIVES

1. To bring the latest advances in Sikh Studies to the notice of scholars and general readers.
2. To project a correct image of Sikhism and the Sikh Community in India as well as abroad.
3. To watch, report and rebut any distortions or mis- representations of Sikh Religion and its History.
4. To serve as a living link, and provide coordination among organisations engaged in promotion of Sikh Studies.
5. To highlight problems of Sikh diaspora, and suggest solutions.
6. To arrange reviews of important publications relating to Sikhism.
7. To assist readers in framing an informed opinion on matters relating to Sikhism and Sikh Studies.
8. To give publicity to activities of various Sikh Societies around the world.
9. To act as a forum for expression of readers' views.
10. To advertise appropriate literature on Sikhism.

If Undelivered please return to:

INSTITUTE OF SIKH STUDIES

Gurdwara Singh Sabha, Kanthala, Indl Area Phase II

Chandigarh - 160 002 (India)

Phone : +91 172 2642580, 2642581

Web address : www.sikhinstitute.org

E-mail : iosschd@gmail.com

Price: Rs 20/-

PUBLICATIONS OF THE INSTITUTE OF SIKH STUDIES

Sikhism – Its Philosophy and History (Rs 500/-)	: Eds Daljeet Singh & Kharak Singh
Sikhism and Civilisation (Rs 150/- & Rs 100/-)	: Daljeet Singh
Thoughts of Bhai Ardaman Singh (Rs 395/-)	: Compiled by Bhai Ashok Singh
Essays on Sikh Philosophy (Rs 100/-)	: N Muthu Mohan
Episodes from Lives of the Gurus* (Rs 150/-)	: Eds Kharak Singh & Gurtej Singh
Current Thoughts on Sikhism (Rs 400/-)	: Ed Kharak Singh
Apostasy Among Sikh Youth* (Rs 150/-)	: Ed Kharak Singh
On Sikh Personal Law (Rs 75/-)	: Ed Kharak Singh
On Gurdwara Legislation (Rs 75/-)	: Ed Kharak Singh
Khalsa and the Twentyfirst Century (Rs 250/-)	: Ed Kharak Singh
Martyrdom in Sikhism (Rs 100/-)	: Ed Kharak Singh
Guru Granth - Guru Panth (Rs 50/-)	: Ed Kharak Singh
Scramble for Punjab Waters (Rs 50/-)	: Gurdev Singh
Punjab Waters – SYL Canal (Rs 50/-)	: Ed Gurdev Singh
Institutional Failure in Punjab With Respect To Sikhism (Rs 40/-)	: Ed Kirpal Singh
Importance of The Teachings of Sri Guru Granth Sahib in Present Era (Rs 150/-)	: Ed Kirpal Singh
Teaching Sikh Heritage to the Youth* (Rs 50/-)	: Gurbakhsh Singh
Gurbani Ka Nagari Lipyantaran : Samasyaen Aur Apekshaen (Hindi) (Rs 25/-)	: Harkirat Singh
Kalaam-e-Goya : Bhai Nand Lal (Rs 250/-)	: Tr Pritpal Singh
Connecting the Dots in Sikh History (Rs 150/-)	: Harbans Singh Noor
Fragments of Half a Century (Rs 500/-)	: Karnail Singh
Maharaja Duleep Singh – King in Exile (Rs 40/-)	: Gurmukh Singh Sandhu
Sri Gur Panth Parkash (Rattan S Bhangoo) (Rs 1050/-)	: Tr Kulwant Singh
Guru Nanak - A Prophet with a Difference (Rs 50/-)	: Kharak Singh
Guru Granth Sahib & The Sikh Society	: Ed Gajindar Singh
Sikhs Living in States Other Than Punjab	: Ed Gajindar Singh
Chappar Chiri di Larai ate Sirhind Fateh (Pbi)	: Dr Sukhdyal Singh
Sardul Singh Caveeshar - Vidvan-Syaistdan (Rs. 20/-)	: Dr Paramvir Singh
Perspectives on Guru Gobind Singh Ji	: Gajindar Singh
Sikhism and Women	: Gajindar Singh
Scramble for Punjab Waters	: Gurdev Singh
Sri Gur Sobha (Rs. 550/-)	: Tr Kulwant Singh
Nereon Dithe Dr Kharak Singh (Rs 200/-)	: Jaswant Rai
Know Your Heritage (Rs 400/-)	: Dr Dharam Singh & Kulwant Singh
Gurdwara: Concept & Institution (Rs. 300/-)	: Dr Gurdev Singh Sangha
Abstracts of Sikh Studies (Rs. 20/-) (bound yearwise : Rs 125/- per year)	

DISCOUNT

50% to life members of the <i>Abstracts of Sikh Studies</i>	
40% to book sellers for bulk supplies	
25% to all buyers	(Postage Extra)

Where Available

1. Institute of Sikh Studies, Gurdwara Singh Sabha, Kanthala, IA Phase II, Chandigarh
2. Singh Brothers, Bazar Mai Sewan, Amritsar, India 143 006
3. Sikh Book Centre, Model Town Extension, Ludhiana, India
4. Sikh Missionary Society, 10, Featherstone Road, Southall, UK

* Out of print

ਰਾਗੁ ਗਉੜੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੯ ॥

ਸਾਧੋ ਇਹੁ ਮਨੁ ਗਹਿਓ ਨ ਜਾਈ ॥
ਚੰਚਲ ਤ੍ਰਿਸਨਾ ਸੰਗਿ ਬਸਤੁ ਹੈ ਯਾ ਤੇ ਬਿਰੁ ਨ ਰਹਾਈ॥੧॥
ਕਠਨ ਕਰੋਧ ਘਟ ਹੀ ਕੇ ਭੀਤਰਿ ਜਿਹ ਸੁਧਿ ਸਭ ਬਿਸਰਾਈ ॥
ਰਤਨੁ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਸਭ ਕੇ ਹਿਰਿ ਲੀਨਾ ਤਾ ਸਿਉ ਕਛੁ ਨ ਬਸਾਈ॥੧॥
ਜੋਗੀ ਜਤਨ ਕਰਤ ਸਭਿ ਹਾਰੇ ਗੁਨੀ ਰਹੇ ਗੁਨ ਗਾਈ ॥
ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕ ਹਰਿ ਭਏ ਦਇਆਲਾ ਤਉ ਸਭ ਬਿਧਿ ਬਨਿ ਆਈ॥

O Seers, the uncurbed mind strides,
Wavering from all self-control;
Stormy passions within it reside,
Lost is the governance of the soul
Wreckless wrath within abides,
And shakes all the mind's repose.
Sense passions steal the jewel of the soul,
Every goodness and virtue they oppose.
In vain have the yogis struggled and strived,
The singers have sung their carols.
When the Lord bestows His grace, says Nanak,
All mysteries and misgivings unfold.

Editorial

ਸੀਸ ਦੀਆ ਪਰ ਸਿਰੜ ਨਾ ਦੀਆ

Suppression of Civil liberties, violation of human rights, and imposition of curbs on freedom of speech and religion by some megalomaniacal religious, communal and racial, fundamentalist autocrats and authoritarian rulers in different countries at different periods of history is a well known fact. Such are some of the idiosyncrasies of human nature which cause an irreparable damage to mankind and human civilization. It is also a well known fact that there have always emerged some great personages at such times who have combated these individual acts of aggression and violence even at the cost of their lives. It is their acts of sacrifice and steadfast endurance of these acts of tyranny, brutality and long spells of incarceration perpetrated on them by ruthless rulers which have immortalized them in the hearts and minds of humanity. While the tyrants and aggressors have been demonized, these champions of liberty and equality of human rights have been valorized and glorified in the annals of history. It would be beneficial to broadly identify some of such human icons in the chronological order in order to seek inspiration from their unique legacy for the welfare of mankind. Such a glorious legacy belongs to Guru Tegh Bahadur (1621-1675); Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865), Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948), Martin Luther King Jr (1929-1988), Nelson Mandella (1918 – 2013) to name a few.

Seen in this perspective, Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Guru of the Sikhs, responding to the prick of his conscience against the forcible conversion of the Indian majority community, the Hindus to Islam by a religiously zealot and bigoted Mughal emperor of India Aurangzeb in the seventeenth century, volunteered first to intercede with the emperor for the freedom of religion and equality of human rights and then to sacrifice his life after the emperor's refusal to see reason. His

steadfast struggle and sacrifice to uphold religious freedom and human rights in the face of ruthless oppression and bigoted tyranny is a landmark act of exceptional human grit and sacrifice, more so when the life and liberty of another religious community than his own was at stake. It is for this supreme sacrifice to offer his head to the executioner's sword which makes him a champion of upholding religious freedom, civil liberties and human rights. It is the universal dimension of his martyrdom/ sacrifice which need to be acknowledged and celebrated at the global level. What distinguishes Guru Tegh Bahadur from rest of the above quoted crusaders of equality and other liberties is not only his being the pioneer among them but also being a volunteer to face execution against religious persecution. It is his spiritual enlightenment earned through twenty six years of contemplative meditation at Baba Bakala in a secluded underground cell, striking a thoroughly mystical synchronization with the Divine Will which provided the requisite moral strength to him to face the executioner's sword with complete equanimity and balance of mind. It was a spiritual voyage consciously chosen, mastering all human weaknesses and temptations. Despite knowing the prophetic revelation of dying Guru Harkrishan intuitively bequeathing the Guruship on him and being confirmed soon after by conferment of a customary spiritual regalia consisting of a coconut, five paisa coins, a copy of Pothi Sahib (Adi Granth) and rosary on him by the than representative Sikhs of Guru Harkrishan's court including Bhai Gurditta (son of Baba Budha) and Diwan Daragha Mal at Baba Bakala, he remained unperturbed and anonymous while his family collaterals tried every trick of the trade to claim Guruship for themselves. It was only after the public declaration of his prime spiritual and religious status by the devout Makhan Shah after the fulfillment of his wish by guru Teg Bahadur that Guru Tegh Bahadur came out of his seclusion. He displayed a similar sense of detachment, earned through his long spiritual, meditative regimen and concomitant Divine grace during his visit to Amritsar where he was denied entrance to Darbar Sahib by the entrenched Masands. Soon after his return from Amritsar, his departure first from Baa Bakala to Kiratpur Sahib and thereafter to Makhawal (Anandpur) and return of the original Sikh scripture to Dhirmal to avoid any kind of bitterness and friction also bear testimony to his

superior spiritual credentials worthy of a Sikh Guru. His preachings of cultivating moral virtues to his devout congregations from Anandpur, through Malwa region of Punjab, Bangar area in Haryana through Uttar Pradesh, Bihar to Bengal till Dacca in Bangladesh and his being held in great esteem by Raja Ram Singh of Delhi and Raja of Assam corroborate his image of a holy soul and a lover of mankind. He seems to have become an epitome of all Indian spiritual and moral virtues and a true embodiment of his predecessor Sikh Gurus by the time he returns to Anandpur, his seat of Sikh pontification. No wonder, he was looked upon as their savior by the persecuted Pandits of Kahsmir bearing the brunt of mass conversion of their community and destruction of their sacred shrines by the bigoted Mughal ruler. It is worth deliberation and reflection that none other holy personage or a spiritual giant other than Guru Tegh Bahadur throughout such a vast country as India was either looked up to to as a savior or volunteered himself to stand up to face this menacing religious persecution. It is a because of his inherent and hard-earned spiritual and moral strength and courage that Guru Tegh Bahadur accepted the challenge and assured the supplicant Brahmins to defend their right to religious freedom even at the cost of his life. His nine year old son's approval of his decision further strengthened his resolve.

Guru Tegh Bahadur's subsequent arrest along with his five companions, his quiet but firm refusal to convert to Islam or to show any miracle, his readiness to face execution, his witnessing the gruesome torture of his three companions and remaining unnerved, his steadfast allegiance to his principle of equality of human rights and bearing no malice or rancor towards his executors and penning his most soulful verses expressing complete detachment from life's joys, sorrows, hopes and fears and total devotion to the Divine power – reveal his spiritually enlightened being. His martyrdom and sacrifice for the vindication of human rights of equality of status, freedom of religious allegiance of one's own choice and peaceful co-existence in an age and society completely bereft of these human values both in concept and practice, where might was right and suppression of religious diversity the rule and tolerance of others' views an exception, was indeed unprecedented and unique. It was a saga of rare sacrifice and lighting the flame of

human liberty which shall never be extinguished, which shall be carried aloft by the passionate votaries of human liberty and equality all across the globe wherever and whenever there is suppression of human liberties. For the Sikhs, Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom has become an integral part of their collective consciousness and religious heritage. It is indeed gratifying to see the Sikh/ Punjab farmers presently protesting against the recently passed unjust farm laws by an authoritarian regime along with their fraternal Kisan brethren from other states on the borders of India's capital with a similar sense of gravitas, non-violence and determination and grit as displayed by Guru Tegh Bahadur at Delhi in the seventeenth century. It is Guru's legacy which is being practiced and demonstrated in equal measure by the Sikh Kisan leadership of this movement.

Since the year 2021 is the fourth birth centenary year of Guru Tegh Bahadur, we dedicate this issue of Abstracts of Sikh Studies to his great legacy and heritage. The different articles in this volume highlight the contours of his physical and mental growth and spiritual voyage, his sacrifice and martyrdom for upholding the human rights of freedom of religion and human equality and his soulful sacred verses. We hope the contents in this commemorative volume will refresh and recharge the well-springs of our glorious heritage in the hearts and minds of our readers.

Since the year 2021 is the fourth centenary year of his birth, it should be celebrated at the global level. It shall be a befitting tribute to this great champion of human rights as well as a message to the some of the strife-ridden societies and nations of the modern world to maintain communal harmony and world peace.

~~~

## II

The year 2021 also being the first centenary year of both the premier Sikh religious and political organizations, the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee and Shiromani Akali Dal, it is an occasion for stock taking and making an evaluative review of these two Sikh organizations. While we leave commenting upon the political

entity to the political analysts, we would like to make a brief appraisal of the religious entity since its inception to the present times and speculate about its role in future. The SGPC, after its establishment through a legislative act and written constitution, has some landmark achievements to its credit. Not only has it consolidated its firm control and management of major Sikh shrines and their moveable and immovable assets located in territorial jurisdiction of erstwhile joint Punjab, but has also renovated and built its magnificent buildings with a distinct Sikh architectural design and accommodation for The pilgrims and spacious community kitchen (langar) and congregational halls. It also deserves credit for standardizing the observance of daily religious congregational prayer regimen or Maryada and its uniform observance in the Sikh shrines. In addition, it has also produced a large body of Sikh and Gurmat literature and raised a significant cadre of Sikh preachers well-versed in Sikh traditions and linguistic skills to communicate with the sikh masses. With the reasonable management of its assets and yearly increase in its income, it has also managed to create a vast network of educational institutions at the school, college and university levels. All this has been possible due to the inbuilt constitutional frame work and dedicated vision of some of the Sikh stalwarts being at the helm of affairs at different periods of its century old history. Despite all the faultiness which develop in all organizations over a passage of time, its basic infrastructure and assets are still intact and functional. It needs to make a fair assessment of the functioning of its fundamental organs and make a necessary course correction.

While evaluating its present functioning and management, it is necessary to identify the major faultlines before taking any remedial measures. As pointed out by late. S Harcharan Singh, Ex-chief Secretary, SGPC (2015 to 2017) on the basis of his personal two years insider's view of the functioning of various organism of SGPC, some of the major maladies afflicting this august Sikh organization are its complete politicization from the fundamental electoral process to the appointment of all its functionaries from the higher managerial posts to the lowest employees, grossly flouting most of the terms and conditions governing these appointments as prescribed in the SGPC constitution, overstaffing at some posts and at some locations, non-

transparent grant of contracts for various projects involving huge payments without following laid down procedures, renewal of leases of SGPC commercial properties and agricultural lands without adequate revision of the lease terms, submission of inflated monthly Gurdwara expenses bills procured from fake or non-existent firms by the managers of some of the bigger Sikh shrines and undue delay in handing over some of the the renovated and newly constructed Gurdwara buildings by some Karsewa wale Sant Babas to name a few. However the biggest malaise afflicting the apex body of the Sikhs at present is its becoming a hand maiden of the earlier ruling and now ousted Shiromani Akali Dal, especially its single family leadership. All the corrupt practices of nepotism and favoritism which afflicted the till recently ruling political party has also percolated and become an integral part of the SGPC management and work culture. The party functionaries who fail at the legislative hustings are adjusted in the SGPC and some of them even become presidents. The latest stage managed election of the present incumbent president and some other appointments to the interim committee do not inspire public confidence. Similarly, the quality of education and deficit financing in some of the SGPC run educational institutions leaves much to be updated. Thus, all these electoral, structural, managerial and financial distortions which have developed mainly over the last few decades and are now harming the image and efficiency of this highest Sikh religious body need to be set right.

While suggesting a roadmap for the improvements in the SGPC functioning in the immediate future, the highest priority needs to be given to the cleaning of the electoral process and proper constitution of the SGPC house. Since no other better and tangible procedure to constitute its house other than the democratic election system chosen, adopted and got legislated upon by the Sikh themselves at the time of its inception is available, it is necessary to plug the loopholes in the present electoral system. The onus for cleaning the electoral process is as much on the eligible Sikh voters for the Gurdwara election as on the Akali leadership controlling the SGPC. If this leadership honestly analyses the reasons for their ignominious defeat in the last assembly elections, it will realize that among the other reasons for their rout

was their messing up with the religious affairs of the Sikhs and their mismanagement of SGPC during the last decade or so. The main reason for their loss of reputation among the Sikh masses has been their complete politicization of SGPC. The only possible way of setting the SGPC house in order is the adoption of responsible behavior by the controlling Akali leadership and the exercise of moral pressure of Sikh masses and Sikh voters to select candidates of impeccable character, devout and God fearing Gursikhs imbued with the spirit of dedication and selfless service to Sikh community. Every system of governance howsoever good and efficacious depends on the quality and character of men who manage that system. Rightly has the famous 8th century English classical poet Alexander Pope said:

"For forms of government, let fools contest  
Whatever is administered best is the best" (Essay on Man)

Clean persons alone can run a clean system. Once this basic fault line is repaired, it will have a cascading effect on every organ of this great institution. Now when we have no dearth of Sikh professionals in the fields of management and financial services, let us adopt the best management practices to manage this sacred Sikh conglomerate based on the humble and voluntary offerings and donations of millions of faithful Sikh devotees and make it the best managed house of God. Efficient management of SGPC and other Gurdwaras and proper utilization of Gurdwara funds will enhance the image of the Sikhs across the globe. Let us take this evolutionary plunge now that the moment for the second Gurdwara reformation has arrived.

□

ਧਰਮ ਹੇਤ ਸਾਕਾ ਜਿਨ ਕੀਆ॥ ਸੀਸ ਦੀਆ ਪਰ ਸਿਰੜ ਨ ਦੀਆ॥  
(ਬਚਿਤ ਨਾਟਕ)

ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਭਏ ਗੁਰ ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ। ਸਗਲ ਸ੍ਰਿਸਟ ਪੈ ਜਾਕੀ ਚਾਦਰ।  
ਕਰਮ ਧਰਮ ਕੀ ਜਿਨ ਪਤਿ ਰਾਖੀ। ਅਟਲ ਕਰੀ ਕਲਜੁਗ ਮੈ ਸਾਖੀ।  
(ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰ ਸੋਭਾ)

# GURU TEGH BAHADUR – A BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY

DR HARI RAM GUPTA

---

## BIRTH AND EARLY YEARS

An event which took place just three hundred years ago like a ripple on the shore, in now rolling and roaring as a strong wave across the seven seas and is echoing throughout the world in hallowed memory of a man, the influence of whose life has never ceased, and who has left a permanent place in the world of religion. The man was Guru Tegh Bahadur, and the event was his martyrdom.

Tegh Bahadur was the youngest and sixth child of the sixth Guru, Hargobind. Gurditta was the eldest son, born in 1613. He was followed by his only daughter named Viro in 1615. Suraj Mal was born in 1617. The remaining three sons were Ani Rai, born in 1619 and Tegh Bahadur on Sunday, April 1, 1621 at Guru Ke Mahal at Amritsar.<sup>1</sup> The last three sons were born of Guru Hargobind's second wife, Nanaki, daughter of Hari Chand Khatri of Bakala, a village situated 40 km east of Amritsar and 4 km north of the modern Beas railway station near the river. The youngest child was named Tyag Mal (The Great Sacrificer), an apt prophecy which came out true.

The child was brought up with great care and attention by his mother. The father made excellent arrangements for his education and training. The best teachers were engaged to give him lessons in reading, writing, arithmetic, religion, music, physical exercises, riding and shooting. Bhai Buddha was given general charge of the child's upbringing in all directions.

Tegh Bahadur was administered *charan pabul*<sup>2</sup> for baptism at the

---

\* Reproduced from the book *Guru Tegh Bahadur - Background and the Supreme Sacrifice*, Edited by Gurbachan Singh Talib, published by Punjabi University, Patiala, 1999.

age of eight. Hargobind's life routine of hunting, meeting the congregations, visiting free masses, praying at the Hari Mandir and holding court at the Akal Takht deeply influenced the growing mind of the lad. On the death of his brothers he became so sad and serious that he avoided worldly pleasures and turned to meditation and prayers.

In 1632 A.D. Guru Hargobind was staying at Kartarpur, 15 km west of Jullundur. The future Guru was then eleven years old. Lal Chand Khatri of this place offered his daughter Gujari in marriage to the blooming lad. Mother Nanaki approved of the match and the nuptial ceremony was performed with the great splendour and solemnity.<sup>3</sup>

Hakim Alim-ud-din, generally known as Wazir Khan, a native of Chiniot in the district of Jhang, now in Pakistan, was appointed Governor of Lahore in 1628 by Emperor Shah Jahan. In 1633 he was transferred to Agra, where he died the next year. According to Dr. Trilochan Singh, "Wazir Khan was respected by the Sikh Gurus for his liberal views, deep scholarship and love of truth," and after Prime Minister Asaf Khan, "he was the most trusted official in Shah Jahan's regime."<sup>4</sup> Besides, the celebrated Sufi saint, Mian Mir, a resident of Lahore, is stated to have been on the best of terms with the Sikh Gurus. He was highly venerated both by Shah Jahan and the Crown Prince Dara Shikoh. The contemporary author, Mohsin Fani states that Hargobind offered his formal allegiance to Shah Jahan and made friends with the local Faujdar, Var Khan.<sup>5</sup>

Thus, in the circumstances no warfare between the Guru and the Government could have taken place during the years from 1628 to 1633, as is alleged by some writers. Dr. Trilochan Singh observes:

"The Emperor was now at Lahore. It was difficult to influence him as long as Wazir Khan was the Viceroy, but now that Wazir Khan had been transferred to Agra, it seemed easier to get military aid from Lahore<sup>6</sup>," by officials who were jealous of the Guru. This writer further states:

"Both Wazir Khan and Mian Mir were the silver and golden bonds bridging the gulf between the aggressive and bigoted forces of Mughal Imperialism and the progressive and resurgent forces of Sikh faith."<sup>7</sup>

Hence a cleavage between the Guru and the Mughal authorities could take place after the transfer of Wazir Khan and death of Mian Mir, both of which took place in 1633 A. D.<sup>8</sup> The battles of Jallo and Sangrana seem to have taken place in 1633; the battle of Amritsar in 1634; the battle of Hargobindpur in 1635, the battles of Lahara and Gurusar in 1637, and the last battle of Kartarpur in 1638. The last expedition was sent from Lahore under the command of Mir Badehra and Paindah Khan. They were joined by the Jullundur troops. The Guru had only 5,000 soldiers with him.<sup>9</sup> In a hard-fought battle at Kartarpur, both the enemy commanders were killed.<sup>10</sup> In this Battle the future Guru Tegh Bahadur displayed such remarkable skill and spiritedness that his father conferred the title of Tegh Bahadur on him by which name he came to be known in history.

Tegh Bahadur means Lord of the Sword or prizefighter. General Sir John J. H. Gordon says that Tegh Bahadur preferred to be called Deg Bahadur, Lord of Hospitality or the support of the poor and cherisher of the hungry.<sup>11</sup> Tegh Bahadur was at this time 17 years old. His remarks led to the following saying:

*Jis ki deg: us ki tegh*

(One who is charitable commands the sword).

#### **AT BAKALA**

From Kartarpur the Guru went to Phagwara. There he stayed for some time. Mohsin Fani says as the place was situated on the highway from Delhi to Lahore, 16 km east of Jullundur, it was not safe to reside there for long. Hence Guru Hargobind decided to settle at Kiratpur.<sup>12</sup> Nanaki had already lost her two elder sons, Ani Rai and Atal Rai. She did not like to go there with her only son and young daughter-in-law owing to family jealousies. She obtained the Guru's permission to go to Bakala, her home town, and there she went and settled with her parents Hari Chand and Hardevi. Tegh Bahadur was present at Kiratpur on the occasion of Guru Hargobind's death in February 1644 together with his mother, wife and brother-in-law Kripal Chand, and after the funeral rites all of them returned to Bakala.

Tegh Bahadur lived at Bakala for nearly 26 years. Some lands of Hargobindpur had been assigned to Tegh Bahadur and the family led a

comfortable life on the share received from the cultivators.<sup>13</sup> To avoid the burning heat of summer every well-to-do family had a basement dug into the floor where the members of the household retired in the afternoon. Tegh Bahadur got such a cell erected for himself to meditate in solitude and peace of soul. Such a cell was generally called Bhora. His wife Gujari also devoted a good deal of her time to prayer, reflection and contemplation.

### **GURU HARI RAI, 1644-1661**

Of Guru Hargobind's five sons, two had survived him. The elder was Suraj Mal and the youngest Tegh Bahadur. The Guru could nominate either of them as his successor, but he preferred the second son of his deceased eldest son Gurditta, named Hari Rai. His elder brother was Dhir Mal. Hari Rai was a lad of fourteen years, born at Kiratpur on January 30, 1630. Shah Jahan's eldest son Dara Shukoh was the crown prince, and Punjab was his fief. He believed in saints, whether Muslim Hindu or Sikh, and he maintained cordial relations with Guru Hari Rai.

Shah Jahan fell ill in September, 1657 and a civil war began among his sons for the throne. Dara was defeated by Aurangzeb in May, 1668. Dara fled towards the Punjab. Guru Hari Rai joined him at Rupar at the head of 2,000 troops. The Prince and the Guru reached Lahore on July 3, 1658. "But Dara was utterly broken down in body and spirit." Finding the Prince in an indecisive mood and Aurangzeb in hot pursuit of him 14, Guru Hari Rai returned to Kiratpur.<sup>15</sup>

After firmly establishing himself on the throne, Aurangzeb summoned Guru Hari Rai to his court. The Guru sent his 14 year old eldest son Ram Rai. He was instructed to concentrate on God and reply to the Emperor carefully and resolutely. He was advised to keep in view Guru Arjan's conduct, when Jahangir ordered him to modify the hymns in the holy Granth. He was warned to avoid flattery and to behave with grace and dignity.

The lad being over-zealous and ambitious, and perhaps out of fear for his life, tried to win over the Emperor and his courtiers. He was asked to explain why the following verse in the holy granth abused the Musalmans:

“Miti Musafman ki perai pai kumiar,  
Ghari bhande itan kia jaldi kare pukar.”

(The dusts of Musalman is kneaded by a potter into a dough and he converts it into pots and bricks, which cry out as they burn.)

The hymn expressed Guru Nanak's vision that cremation and burial differed little. Ram Rai was overawed by the splendour of the court. In order not to offend the Emperor, Ram Rai, just in his early teens, replied that Guru Nanak's actual word was '*Beiman*' or an atheist, and not 'Musalman' which appeared in the text by the mistake of the scribe. His answer naturally pleased the Emperor, but offended the Sikhs of Delhi who reported the matter to the Guru at Kiratpur.

Guru Hari Rai was deeply distressed at his son's behaviour in having insulted Guru Nanak and the Granth Sahib. The Guru declared Ram Rai unfit for Guruship and immediately excommunicated and excluded him from succession. Hari Rai observed:

“The Guruship is like a tiger's milk which can only be contained in a golden cup. Only he who is ready to devote his life there to is worthy of it. Let Ram Rai not look on my face again.”<sup>16</sup>

His decision was conveyed to Ram Rai as well as to the Sikhs at Delhi. Ram Rai could not come to Kiratpur and stayed at the Mughal Court from September, 1661 to 1666 A.D.<sup>17</sup>, where he conducted himself as a faithful courtier. Shortly afterwards Guru Hari Rai passed away at Kiratpur on October 6, 1661 at the young age of 31.

#### **GURU HARI KRISHAN, 1661-1664**

Guru Hari Rai had nominated his younger son Hari Krishan to be his successor. He was born on July 7, 1656. Thus he became Guru at the age of five, and was called the 'Child Saint'. Ram Rai was living at Delhi. He pressed his claim for Guruship. Aurangzeb was fully occupied in settling state affairs and had no time to turn his attention to a matter which had no urgency. Besides, he wanted the family feud to develop into an unbridgeable gulf. In 1662 he fell seriously ill, and next year went to Kashmir to recoup his health. He returned to Delhi on January 18, 1664. Ram Rai complained against his supersession, and sought the Emperor's help in getting him the Guruship.<sup>18</sup> Aurangzeb

was a past master in the art of diplomacy. He wanted to take full advantage of the rift which had grown between the two brothers. He was keen to use Ram Rai for weakening the Sikh movement. He summoned Hari Krishan to Delhi to justify his claim to Guruship. Mirza Raja Jai Singh of Amber (Jaipur) was asked to call the Guru to Delhi. Jai Singh sent his agent Diwan Paras Ram, with suitable presents, requesting the Guru to come to Delhi on the Raja's surety.<sup>19</sup> The Guru's mother was terribly afraid of the machinations of Ram Rai and the stem character of the Emperor, who had destroyed all his male relatives in the most brutal manner. But nobody could dare disobey Aurangzeb.

Hari Krishan came to Delhi and put up in the house of Mirza Raja Jai Singh at the village of Raesina in the Raja estate called Jaisinghpura in the suburbs of the capital, 6 km distant from the Red Fort. Shortly afterwards, the Guru had an attack of smallpox with high fever, and he became delirious. Owing to this infectious disease, the Guru was shifted to a house in village Bhogal near the present Nizam-ud-din railway station.

The Sikhs who were attending on him realized that the Guru might succumb to the fatal disease. They were anxious to secure from him nomination of a successor according to old tradition. They placed a coco-nut<sup>20</sup> and five paise in a golden dish before him and pressed him to name his successor. As a rule a child would never call his ancestors by name out of respect, and would address them as *chacha*, *tau*, *baba* or *dada*. If they were living away from him, their place of residence would also be mentioned. The child placed his right hand on the dish and the articles, and uttered 'Baba Bakale', obviously referring to Tegh Bahadur, his grand-uncle, who had been living at village Bakala for the past 26 years. He closed his eyes, became unconscious, and expired on March 30, 1664, the Baisakhi day, at the age of eight. He was cremated on the bank of the river Jamuna where now stands Gurudwara Bala Sahib.<sup>21</sup> A big Gurudwara was later on constructed at Raesina, called Bangila Sahib, at the site of the bungalow of Mirza Raja Jai Singh in which Guru Hari Krishan had stayed.

#### **TEGH BAHADUR BECOMES GURU - GURU AUGUST, 1664**

Guru Hari Krishan was accompanied by about twenty trusted

followers.<sup>22</sup> They included Diwan Dargaha Mal who was in charge of the Guru's finances, his nephews Mati Das and Sati Das, Gurditta the high priest, a descendant of Bhai Buddha and Dyal Das of Alipur in Multan district. These five men represented the panchayat and cabinet of the Guru's court. They discussed the matter and came to the conclusion that the obvious reference of Baba Bakale implied Tegh Bahadur who was the only Baba (grandfather) of Guru Hari Krishan then living and who was at Bakala. All other sons of Guru Hargobind had died. They first escorted Guru Hari Krishan's mother, Sulakhani, to Kiratpur towards the end of April 1664 A.D. They stayed there for a few months to console the grief stricken lady, and set the Guru's household in order.

Meanwhile Guru Hari Krishan's nomination of 'Baba Bakale' had spread among the Sodhis of Kiratpur, Kartarpur and other places. Twenty-two of them set up their posts in village Bakala to claim Guruship. Eleven of them were Sodhis and the remaining eleven were masands or Sikh bishops. The most rebellious of them was Dhir Mal, the elder son of Gurditta, the eldest son of Guru Hargobind. He had shifted from Kartarpur to Bakala on hearing the news of Guru Hari Krishan's death. He based his claim on the principle of primogeniture or seniority by birth, although this principle was never accepted by the Sikh Gurus, nor even by the Mughal rulers. Further, he possessed the original copy of the holy Granth prepared by Guru Arjan which had been deposited in the Gurudwara of Kartarpur for safety. He also employed many touts to proclaim his succession as the ninth Guru.

Tegh Bahadur remained undisturbed and unruffled by the uproar of impostors. By the divine light, he knew that the call was for him, and he firmly believed that if he deserved it, it would come to him automatically without any effort on his part. So he did not change his way of living and kept busy in meditation and prayer as usual. His mother and wife also knew from intuition that the great hour in their lives had struck. But the violent activities of Dhir Mal greatly alarmed the ladies. Mother Nanaki invited Dwarka Das, a scion of the house of Guru Amar Das, from Goindwal to come to Bakala for the protection of Tegh Bahadur. He called the five members of the Guru's Panchayat from Kiratpur to announce their decision and offer the sacred

articles of nomination to the new Guru on behalf of the deceased Guru. All of them reached Bakala about the month of August, 1664.

They went to Mother Nanaki's house and gave a brief account of Guru Hari Krishan's death and his nomination of Tegh Bahadur as the ninth Guru. A meeting of prominent persons of Bakala was called. Then the high priest Gurditta placed the sacred coconut and five copper coins before Tegh Bahadur, bowed before him and declared him the ninth Guru. Tegh Bahadur accepted the sacred articles in all reverence and humility and declared that he would remain ever loyal to the house of Nanak. It happened in August, 1664.<sup>24</sup>

The impostors were still holding on, carrying on propaganda in their favour. In October, at the end of the rains Makhan Shah,<sup>25</sup> a rich Banjara<sup>26</sup> merchant, accompanied by numerous bullocks, horses, hounds and armed retainers, being a follower of the Sikh Gurus, arrived at Bakala, to pay homage to the true Guru. To avert a calamity befalling him on a previous occasion, he had prayed to the Guru to save him, vowing in his heart to make an offering of 500 gold coins, by way of thanksgiving. It was to fulfil this vow that he had gone there. Finding a multitude of Gurus and visiting all the twenty-two of drums somebody suggested that he should visit a recluse named Tegh Bahadur. Makhan Shah had been deeply disgusted and disappointed with all these pretenders to Guruship, as none demanded the full amount of his dedication. He did not mind calling on Tegh Bahadur and laid two coins before him. Tegh Bahadur closed his eyes for a moment and then said that his vow was for 500 and not for two coins. Makhan Shah prostrated himself before the Guru and told the congregation that he was the true Guru.<sup>27</sup>

Dhir Mal's men deeply resented Makhan Shah's intervention. The sixth, seventh and eighth Gurus had lived at Kiratpur. Dhir Mal was living during this period at Kartarpur. As he possessed the original copy of the holy Granth, he had established his influence in the Amritsar and Jullundur areas. He was afraid that Tegh Bahadur from Bakala might oust him from power. He, therefore, decided to kill Tegh Bahadur. About a hundred of his armed followers attacked the house of the Guru at the time when it was unguarded. A shot was fired at the Guru, and the bullet grazed his shoulder. The Guru's house was

plundered of everything of value. Then Makhan Shah appeared on the scene. His men fell upon Dhir Mal's camp and seized the Guru's property along with some articles belonging to Dhir Mal, including his copy of the holy Granth.<sup>28</sup>

When Tegh Bahadur heard about it, he declared:

To exercise forgiveness is a great act,

To exercise forgiveness is to give alms.

Forgiveness is equal to ablutions at all places of pilgrimage.

Forgiveness ensureth man's salvation.

There is no virtue equal to forgiveness.<sup>29</sup>

He ordered that everything brought from Dhir Mal's house, whether it belonged to the Guru or to the culprit, must be restored at once. The order was partially obeyed, as the copy of the holy Granth was retained without the knowledge of the Guru. This too was returned afterwards.

#### **GURU TEGH BAHADUR AT AMRITSAR**

Guru Tegh Bahadur left for Amritsar on February 30, 1665 and called at Hari Mandir. He was accompanied by his mother Nanaki, wife Gujari, her brother Kripal Chand, Makhan Shah and a few followers. The priests would not admit him and closed the doors of the holy Temple against him. The Temple was under the control of Prithi Chand's descendants, who was the eldest brother of Guru Arjan. Prithi Chand had been passed over from succession by Guru Ram Das. Prithi Chand called himself the sixth Guru, his son Meharban dubbed himself the seventh Guru, and his son Harji took the title of the eighth Guru. Guru Hargobind's houses and property were in his possession. Guru Tegh Bahadur and his party rested under a tree only a few metres to the north of Akal Takht. This place is termed Thara Sahib<sup>31</sup> or the holy platform. A Gurudwara marks that site. Makhan Shah was strictly forbidden to take any action against the culprits. A peasant woman, Hariyan, of village Walla,<sup>32</sup> 7 km from Amritsar, offered her house as shelter for the Guru and his family. Tegh Bahadur retired there in the evening to spend the night. In honour of the Guru's visit a fair is held at Walla called Kothe da Mela on the full moon day of Magh<sup>33</sup> (January-February). In the Guru's absence Makhan Shah

entered the Hari Mandir, and Guru Tegh Bahadur was admitted to the Temple where he worshipped for a while, and then left for Khadur, the place dedicated to Guru Angad and Goindwal, the seat of the third Guru, Amar Das. He then returned to Bakala.

### THE GURU'S RAMBLES

The Guru lived at Bakala again up to the end of the rainy season, October 1665. "Here too he was not allowed to abide in peace, for the old jealousy and enmity of the Sodhis had revived."<sup>34</sup> He later visited Kiratpur. "There again he was plagued with the jealousy of the Sodhis."<sup>35</sup> Guru Tegh Bahadur made up his mind to go on a pilgrimage to the east. The reasons were plain. He did not find the atmosphere in the Punjab congenial for his work. He wished to follow the example of Guru Nanak by visiting holy places. He was desirous of meeting the Sikhs living outside the Punjab at many places in northern India. He was keen to propagate the new religion to give consolation to suffering humanity. He left Punjab in November,<sup>36</sup> 1665, accompanied by his mother, wife, her brother Kripal Chand, Dyal Das, Mati Das, Sati Das and a few other devoted followers. He had his own tents, horses, carriages, bullocks, camels and necessary equipment to meet his requirements on the journey. He usually halted outside a village or town in a garden or on the bank of a river.<sup>37</sup>

Visiting Pehowa and Kurukshetra, Guru Tegh Bahadur reached Delhi. Ram Rai got him arrested, as he still claimed Guruship for himself. George Forster who wrote his book about one hundred years later, says that Guru remained in goal for two years.<sup>38</sup> It seems that he was there only for two months. Mirza Raja Jai Singh was at this time in the Deccan carrying on a campaign against Shivaji. His son Raja Ram Singh represented him at the Mughal Court, and pleaded the Guru's innocence. He said that the Guru was on his way to visit the sacred places of pilgrimage and he stood surety for his conduct.<sup>39</sup> From Delhi the Guru went to Mathura, Brindaban, Agra, Etawah, Kanpur and reached Allahabad about February 1666. At the last place he stayed for six months. Guru Gobind Singh says in the Bachitar Natak:

*Mur pit purab,kiyas payana*

*Bhant bhant ke tirath nana*

*Jab eh Jat tribaini bhaye  
Pun dan din karat bitaye.*<sup>40</sup>

(My father went to the east,  
He visited all sorts of places of pilgrimage;  
When he reached Tribaini (Prayag),  
He spent his time in alms-giving)

It was at this sacred place in the divine atmosphere and celestial environment when Guru Tegh Bahadur was busy in giving away his spiritual and material wealth that Mata Gujari conceived for the first time in thirty-four years of her married life. Passing Mirzapur, Benares and Sasaram Guru reached Gaya where he stayed a little longer. There he was joined by Raja Ram Singh<sup>41</sup> of Amber. He arrived at Patna in November, 1666.

#### **THE GURU ACCOMPANIES RAM SINGH TO DACCA AND ASSAM**

Shortly after the Guru's departure from Delhi, Raja Ram Singh was involved in a serious trouble. On the solemn pledge given by Mirza Raja Jai Singh as a Rajput for his safety and honour, Shivaji with his elder son called on Aurangzeb at Agra on May 12, 1666. He was placed under the custody of Raja Ram Singh. Finding their lives in danger, Shivaji and his son Shambhuji escaped from Agra by a stratagem on August 19, 1666. Sir Jadunath Sarkar writes: "The Emperor suspected that Shivaji had fled with the connivance of Ram Singh. The Rajput prince was punished first by being forbidden the court then by being deprived of his rank and pay."<sup>42</sup> Aurangzeb then ordered the prince to lead an expedition for the conquest of Assam. In reality he was sent there either to die of malaria, which was rampant in those parts and of which Aurangzeb's great general Mir Jumla, had died on March 31, 1663 or to be killed in fighting. In the event of Ram Singh's death, his state of Amber (Jaipur) was to be confiscated.<sup>43</sup> The base of Ram Singh's operations was to be Dacca which was the capital of Bengal, and Shaista Khan, the Emperor's maternal uncle was its governor. A Mughal army formerly under Mir Jumila was already there. Ram Singh was required to take charge of this force along with his own troops. To begin with, he was to make a preliminary survey of the situation, while the formal order of his appointment accompanied

by a *khilat* was issued later.

Ram Singh did not wish to stay at the court in an atmosphere of disgrace, humiliation and suspicion. He wanted to study the situation, and then call his armed force to join him. The young prince thought of one remedy to secure his safety in the unhealthy climate and hostile jungles, hills, wild elephants, and a determined foe aided as reputed, by sorcery. This was to keep Guru Tegh Bahadur with him. He set out in pursuit of Tegh Bahadur and met him at Gaya. He implored the Guru to keep him company during the operations. He said : “It was certain death to command the invading army, and it would be equally fatal for me to disobey the Emperor’s orders. Hence I have come from distant Rajputana to seek the protection of thy holy feet. “44 The Raja did not like to stay at Patna, a stronghold of the Mughals in the east and he wanted to be at his post without any delay. The Guru would not disappoint a true devotee. He could not take his family with him owing to the approaching confinement of his wife. So he left the family at Patna without making suitable arrangements for their residence. He exhorted the local Sikhs to help Kripal Chand and Dyal Das in looking after his family, and himself with Mati Das and Sati Das followed the prince to Dacca. From Monghyr, the Guru wrote a letter to the Sikhs of Patna:

“We are accompanying Raja Ji and have our family at Patna. It is time for the congregation to serve the Guru.”<sup>45</sup> He added:

*“Bhai Dyal Das kahe*

*Sangal Guru ka hukam kar mannana.”*<sup>46</sup>

(Whatever Bhai Dyal Das says, the Sangat should accept it as Guru’s command.)

They reached Dacca in the beginning of 1667. There Tegh Bahadur got the happy news of the birth of his son, Gobind Rai,<sup>47</sup> on December 22, 1666. Ram Singh spent two years in making preparations for the war, conducting negotiations at the same time for the submission of Ahoms of Assam without fighting, if possible. The Mughal troops were already there. His Rajput forces joined him long after his arrival at Dacca. The prince was accompanied on this journey only by a suitable contingent as bodyguard. Guru Tegh Bahadur also stayed here with the Prince, and visited many places in the neighbourhood to meet

his followers.

Ram Singh and Guru Tegh Bahadur left Dacca in December, 1668 and reached Dhubri in Assam, about 306 km distant, in February 1669. Ram Singh's expeditionary force consisted of 4,000 Rajputs, 18,000 Mughals, all horsemen, 30,000 infantry and 15,000 local archers.<sup>48</sup>

The Guru remained busy in meditation and prayers, giving his blessings to the Rajputs and other visitors. His fame spread far and wide. A prince of some state in Assam, named Raja Ram, heard about the Guru. He had no son, and earnestly desired to have a successor. He came with his two wives to pay homage to the Guru and requested for the boon of a son. The Guru blessed him.<sup>49</sup>

#### **GURU TEGH BAHADUR RETURNS TO PUNJAB**

Guru Tegh Bahadur stayed with Raja Ram Singh in Assam for about two years and a half. Meanwhile reports of Aurangzeb's fanaticism and determination to convert the Hindu population to Islam, and to make Hindu India a purely Muslim state began to pour into Ram Singh's camp. Muhammad Said Mustid Khan in *Maasir-e-Alamgiri* says that in April, 1669, "the Director of the Faith issued orders to all the Governors of provinces to destroy with a willing hand the schools and temples of the infidels; and they were strictly enjoined upon to put an entire stop to the teaching and practising of idolatrous forms of worship."<sup>50</sup> Leaving aside what was happening to the Hindu, we refer only to the Emperor's doings with regard to the Sikhs. The contemporary historian, Khafi Khan, writes:

"There is a sect of infidels called Guru, more commonly known as Sikhs. Their chief, who dresses as a fakir, has fixed residence near Lahore. From old times he has built temples in all the towns and populous places and has appointed one of his followers to preside in each temple as his deputy. When anyone of the sect brought presents or offerings for the Guru to the temple, the deputy had to collect them, and after deducting sufficient for his own food and expenses, his duty was to send the balance faithfully to the Guru. This sect consists principally of Jats and Khattris of the Panjab and of the other tribes of infidels. When Aurangzeb got knowledge of these matters,

he ordered these deputy Gurus to be removed and temples to be pulled down.”<sup>51</sup>

Kalimiit-e-Tayyibiit says, its Sikh temple in a village in the Sarhind Division was turned into a mosque.<sup>52</sup> Mirza Inayatullah Khan in his book *Ahkam-e-Alamgiri*, on pages 12-13, states that under Aurangzeb’s orders a gurudwara of the Sikhs (Butkhana-e-Nanak parastan) in the town of Buriya, Parganah Khizarabad, Sarkar Sarhind, was pulled down by the Qazi and a mosque was built in its place. Sayyid zafer Darvesh was appointed to be in charge of that mosque to guide prayers and benedictions. Some Sikhs attacked the mosque and killed the Darvesh. The Emperor suspended the Qazi and the Superintendent of Police (Mohtaib). Alimullah was appointed Qazi and his father head of the Police. Such incidents had become common.

When Guru Tegh Bahadur heard of these things, he decided to return to the Punjab immediately. He took leave of Raja Ram Singh in October 1671 and came to Patna where he stayed for a while. He showed his determination to proceed to the Punjab without delay. His Sikhs and supporters suggested that the Guru should leave his family at Patna for the present and recall them if he found the situation favourable in the Punjab. The Guru agreed. Having travelled for a few days, he changed his mind. He did not like to leave the family a thousand miles away from Kiratpur. He stopped and sent his trusted men to escort th~ family. In a fortnight they left Patna and joined Guru Tegh Bahadur at the place of his halting. Stopping on the way at prominent places like Kashi, Ayodhya, Lucknow, Shahjahanpur, Bareilly, Moradabad, Hardwar, Saharanpur, the party arrived at Lakhnaur, 15 km from Ambala City, about February, 1672. The Guru left his family there under the protection of Bhikhhan Shah, an influential Muslim chief of Ghuram, situated nearby and the Nawab of Saifabad; a town 6 km east of Patiala now called Bahadurgarh.<sup>53</sup> He himself went to Kiratpur to study the attitude of his relatives.

#### **MAKHOWAL, NANAKI CHAK AND ANANDPUR**

Guru Tegh Bahadur did not like to stay at Kiratpur which was still rife with conspiracies and intrigues. But he was fascinated with the panoramic landscape of the region lying in the outer parts of the

Shivalik Hills. At a distance of 8 km to the north below the hill of Naina Devi situated 13 km distant, close to the village of Makhawal, on the left bank of the Satluj, the Guru purchased a piece fallow land from the Raja of Bilaspur for a sum of Rs. 500/- in March, 1672.<sup>54</sup> The site acquired was named Chak Nanaki<sup>55</sup> after his mother. The Guru had been supplied by Raja Ram Singh and his Rajputs with a sum of seven lakhs of rupees<sup>56</sup> on the occasion of his departure from Assam, mostly in the form of Darshni Hundis (bearer cheques) issued by Jagat Seths on the bankers of important town and cities. Their credit existed not only in India, but also all over Asia, especially in Central and Western Asia which were closely connected by trade with India. With this money the Guru started construction of buildings at Nanaki Chak, and called his family from Lakhnaur after seven months on the sacred day of Dusehra, October, 1672.<sup>57</sup>

The Guru felt extremely happy at having a place of his own to reside, like the previous Gurus. Guru Nanak had lived at Kartarpur on the Ravi, Guru Angad at Khadur, Guru Amar Oas at Goindwal, Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjan at Amritsar, Guru Hargobind, Guru Hari Rai and Guru Hari Krishan at Kiratpur. The sight of the Dhaula Dhar Range covered with snow in December, the hill of Naina Devi in front and the river Satluj flowing nearby, fascinated him. The joy of having a loving mother, a happy wife and a gifted son inspired him. He took strolls on the open high ground now marked by a cluster of buildings lying around the Gurudwara Sis Ganj. He named that area Anandpur or the Abode of Bliss. Sir George Campbell who served as deputy commissioner around here in 1844, calls this place “Anandpore-Makhawal.”<sup>58</sup>

### **AURANGZEB CAMPS IN THE PUNJAB**

About this time the sky began to darken. In 1672 the Afridis of the Khyber Pass revolted and inflicted terrible losses on the Mughals. “Ten thousand men fell under the enemy’s sword in the field and above two crores of Rupees in cash and kind was looted by the enemy. They captured twenty thousand men and women and sent them to Central Asia for sale.”<sup>59</sup> The Afridis were then joined by the Khataks. Their chieftain Khushal Khan, a great poet and warrior, inspired the

tribesmen in their defiance of the Mughals both by pen and poniard. The situation grew so serious that Aurangzeb had to take the direction of operations in his own hands. He remained at Hasan Abdal near Rawalpindi, also called Panja Sahib, from June, 1674 to December, 1675.

### THE GURU VISITS HIS SIKHS

During Aurangzeb's stay in the Punjab, local officials persecuted the Hindu population and converted them to Islam in large numbers in order to win the appreciation of the Emperor, in whose mind the spread of Islam was uppermost. Syed Muhammad Latif writes: "The emperor had in those days thrown hundreds of Brahmans in the hope that if they first embraced the religion of the Prophet, the rest of the Hindus would readily follow their example"<sup>60</sup> In Kashmir, thousands of Pandits were forced to embrace Islam. The Hindus were terror-stricken. Guru Tegh Bahadur realized the imperative necessity to encourage the Hindus and Sikhs to face the situation calmly and boldly and not to yield to despair and despondency. He decided to tour from village to village first in Malwa, the land lying between the rivers Ghaggar and Satluj.<sup>61</sup>

In this region the influence of the Gurus had been firmly established since the time of Guru Hargobind. Next he was to travel in the Jullundur and Upper Bari Doabs. He left Anandpur after the Diwali festival, in November, 1674. The main theme of his sermons was:

- (i) *Bhay Kabun ko det nah Nabin bhay manat an*  
(Neither to terrorize others nor to fear anyone.)
- (ii) *Gun Gobind gaiyo nabin Janam akarath kin*  
*Kah Nanak Har" bhaj mana*  
*Jeh bidhal ko min*  
(You did not sing the praise of God,  
And wasted your life in vain;  
Nanak says, remember God,  
As a fish remembers water.)
- (iii) *Dhan dara, sampat sagal*  
*Jin apni kari man*

*In men kachnu sangi nabin*

*Nanak sachi jan.*

(Wealth, family, property, all of which  
you consider your own;

None of these shall abide with you,

Says Nanak, this is the truth).

(iv) *Sab sukh data Ram hai*

*Dusar nabin koi.*

*Keh Nanak, sun re mana*

*Teh simrat gat hai.*

(God is the giver of all happiness, none else.

Says Nanak, hark my mind,

You will succeed by meditating on His name).

As the Guru was meeting his disciples after eight or nine years, many men followed him during Tegh Bahadur's tours to listen to his sermons and to get his benediction. To serve the congregation, the residents of the villages voluntarily collected foodstuffs, milk and clarified butter for the Guru's langar. The area was backward. Rain was scarce. It was almost a desert in the absence of any irrigation facilities. The poor and ignorant but hardy and tough people, were cowed down by Muslim officials, particularly at this time when the Emperor was present in Punjab.

The Guru tried to ameliorate the condition of the inhabitants with the money he had brought from Assam. He sunk wells at places where there was scarcity of drinking water. Tanks were constructed to store rain water which was not to be allowed to go waste. He purchased cows and gave them free to poverty-stricken families. He got trees planted at suitable places. He spent ten months in this tour, and visited numerous places. Attar Singh, chief of Bhadaur, in his book entitled, "The Travels of Guru Tegh Bahadur and Guru Gobind Singh" in 137 pages, mentions some of the important places visited by the Guru.

The local officials were upset at the Guru's activities, and they submitted alarming reports to the Emperor. They accused him of having a large following, exacting money forcibly, and instigating people in revolt. Sayyid Ghulam Husain who compiled his history of India

under the title of *Siyar-ul-Mutakhirin* one hundred years later, baselessly charged the Guru with plundering people. George Forster who met Ghulam Husain in Calcutta, and who journeyed in the Punjab, about the same time writes:

“No document for the elucidation of this passage appearing in any of the memoirs of Hindostan that have reached my knowledge, I am prevented from discovering the quality of the crime which subjected Tegh Bahadur to capital punishment.”<sup>62</sup>

Malcolm and Cunningham followed Ghulam Husain. Thus writes Cunningham:

“And the ordinary Sikh accounts represent him, a pious and innocent instructor of men, as once Lahore arraigned at Delhi in the character of a criminal; but the truth seems to be that Tegh Bahadur followed the example of his father with unequal footsteps, and that, choosing for his haunts that wastes between Hansi and the Sutlej he subsisted himself and his disciples by plunder, in a way, indeed that rendered him not unpopular with the peasantry.”<sup>63</sup>

Syed Muhammad Latif, a Muslim, goes a step further in his condemnation of the Guru, he writes:

“Tegh Bahadur resolved upon the extirpation of the Sodhis, by whom he was looked upon as a usurper; but Makhan Shah persuaded him to put his sword in the sheath. He lived with splendour and kept in his employ one thousand armed horsemen. With the immense offerings of his disciples he commenced building a strong fort at Kartarpur, where he established his ecclesiastical court.”<sup>64</sup>

The exaggerated reports by Government officials alarmed the Emperor who had already gone through a bitter experience of a revolt on the frontier. He was not prepared to find the border province of Panjab in a disturbed condition, and he decided to punish Guru Tegh Bahadur.

### **THE GURU BROUGHT TO DELHI**

The Guru had hardly settled down again at Anandpur when another catastrophe took place. Some of the Kashmiri Brahmins who

were not prepared to embrace Islam under persecution called on Guru Tegh Bahadur to seek his guidance. They had heard about Guru Hargobind's visit to Kashmir in company with the Emperor Jahangir, and had knowledge of his warlike activities. The Guru's heart melted at their tale of woe. He became uneasy and restless at the sad plight of innocent people. At this time the child Gobind, not even nine yet, appeared there. He innocently asked about the cause of sadness of the Guru and the visitors. The Guru replied that the nation required a holy man to sacrifice his life. The child remarked that there could be no holier person than the Guru himself. This was enough. The Guru took the child's observation as God's own oracle. His resolve was made. He informed the Brahmins that they should tell the rulers to convert Tegh Bahadur first and then they would follow his example.

The Pandits went back and told this to the Governor, who conveyed it to Aurangzeb at Hasan Abdal, situated close to the borders of Kashmir. The Emperor's mind was already prejudiced against Guru Tegh Bahadur. He hated the word Sachcha Patishah used by the Sikhs for the Guru. It implied that the Guru was a true king while the ruler of India was a false king. He also detested the word Bahadur in the Guru's name, as this was reserved for the nobility of the Mughal court only. He ordered his deputies to summon him to the capital and force him to accept Islam or to lose his life.

The Guru realized that his end had come. He composed four stanzas marked as Dohiras Nos. 53, 54, 55, 56. In Nos 53 and 55 he describes his difficulties and trials, and in Nos. 54 and 56 he expresses hope and faith in God's succour.

## DOHIRA NO. 53

*Bal Chhutyo bandhan pare Kachu na hot upae.*

*Kah Nanak ab ot Hari Gaj Jiyon hot sabae*

(My strength is exhausted, I am in bondage,

I have no resource :

Saith Nanak., God is now my refuge;

May he succour me as He did the Elephant).

Guru Tegh Bahadur then gave the reply himself:

## Dohira No 54

*Bal boa bandhan chhute*

*Sab kichh boi upae*  
*Nanak sab kichh tumre hiith main*  
*Tum hi hot sabiae*<sup>55</sup>  
 (Strength has come, the bondage is broken,  
 All the resources are there;  
 Saith Nanak, Lord! everything is in your power,  
 You are my refuge).

“The Emperor divided his residence between Delhi and Agra, but Delhi was the chief capital, where most of the state ceremonies took place.”<sup>66</sup> Tegh Bahadur was accompanied by five Sikhs. His life-long companions Bhai Mati Das, a Mohyal Brahmin of Kariala in Jehlam District, 10 km from Chakwal on the road leading to Katas Raj and his brother Sati Das were among them. Gurditta, a lineal descendant of Bhai Buddha was also there. Dyal Das, the eldest brother of Bhai Mani Singh Shahid, was the fourth. Jaita of the sweeper caste who attended to the menial work of the Guru and his companions, completed the group.<sup>67</sup>

They were first taken to Agra where the Wazir of the Empire was staying; but later on they were brought to Delhi.’ The Wazir under orders of “Emperor Aurangzeb,” writes Syed Muhammad Latif, “whose efforts were directed to converting the whole world to the Mahomedan faith urged the Sikh Guru to embrace Mahomedanism.”<sup>68</sup> Tegh Bahadur turned down the proposal with contempt. He was then asked to show miracles. The Guru rejected the idea by saying that he could not interfere in the work of God.

### **THE GURU IN AN IRON CAGE**

Guru Tegh Bahadur was thrown into prison and was shut up in an iron cage in chains. He was subjected to severe tortures, both physical and mental. His companions were imprisoned elsewhere and the Guru was falsely told that they had fled away. The darogha of the gaol was Sayyid Hasan Abdullah of Mani Majra near Chandigarh. He treated the Guru with consideration as far as circumstances permitted.<sup>69</sup> In this situation the Guru composed two more chants:

Dohira No. 55  
*Sang sakha sab taj gae*

*Kou na nibhyo sath*

*Kabo Nanaky eb bipt men*

*Tek ek Ragb Nath*

(My associates and companions have all abandoned me;

No one has remained with me to the last.

Saith Nanak, in this calamity

God alone is my refuge).

He gives a reply in Dohra No. 56:

*Nam rahyo sadhu rahyo*

*Rahyo Gur Gobind*

*Kaub Nanak eb jagat men*

*Kin japyo Gur mant.*<sup>70</sup>

(The Name remaineth, saints remain,

The Lord remaineth;

Saith Nanak in this world,

Few are God's devotees).

The Guru took five paise and a coconut<sup>71</sup> prayed and bowed before them. He sent these articles to his son Gobind Rai as a token of his nomination to Guruship, through Gurditta.

### THE MARTYRDOM

The authorities now decided to finish this matter. Of the five companions of the Guru, Jaita remained free, as he had taken to sweeping the road in front of the Kotwali. Gurditta had escaped and gone to Anandpur disguised as a rustic. Dyal Das, Mati Das and Sati Das were brought into the presence of the Guru. Then the most diabolical drama was staged at the place where now stands the Fountain in front of the Kotwali. Bhai Mati Das was asked to become a Musalman. He refused, saying that his own faith was true and he had no desire to change it. He was tied between two posts, and while standing erect, was sawn across from head to the joints. He faced the savage operation with such composure, tranquility and fortitude that the Sikh theologians included his feat in the daily prayer (*ardas*) of the community. Dyal Das was tied up like a bundle and thrown into a huge cauldron of boiling oil. He was roasted alive into a block of

charcoal. Sati Das condemned to similar brutalities. He was hacked to pieces limb by limb. Jaita was also present, disguised as a sweeper with a broom and a basket in his hands. He collected the remains of these martyrs at night and consigned them to the river Jamuna flowing at a stone's throw.

All this happened before the very eyes of Guru Tegh Bahadur. He was all the time repeating "Wahe Guru". He knew his turn was coming next. He remained composed, unruffled and undismayed. His energy, thoughts, ideas, feelings and emotions had concentrated on God, and the dazzling divine light was beating upon his face. He realized that such immortal sacrifices could not go in vain. Their name would live for ever. In this holocaust, he saw a new nation of heroes. It was not the English nation as misinterpreted by some apologists for the British Raj but the Khalsa, the Sikh warriors. whose daring exploits and heroic deeds were to fill the pages of history later on. His followers were done to death on November 10, 1675.

At the end of this devil's dance, the Guru was asked either to embrace Islam or show a miracle, or face death. The Guru refused to apostatize himself. About the performance of miracles, he turned down the demand with contempt. In the words of Bachittar Natak an autobiographical fragment composed by Guru Gobind Singh, he is stated to have replied:

'The performance of theatrical acts is low.

At which the devotees of God should feel ashamed'

The Guru, contemplating the sufferings of the Indian people and the Kashmiri Brahmins who had sought his succor, was determined to offer the supreme sacrifice. The famous words of a poet express his resolve:

*Baben jinahn di pakariye.*

*Sir dije baben na chboriye*

*Guru Tegh Bahadur boliya*

*Dhar paiyai dharam na chboriye*

(Give up your head, but forsake not those  
whom you have undertaken to protect.

Says Guru Tegh Bahadur,

Sacrifice your life, but relinquish not your faith).

On the morning fixed for the martyrdom, the Guru got up early. He bathed and sat in meditation, recited the Japuji and Sukhmani. He reflected upon the supreme sacrifice of his grandfather, Guru Arjan, on the duties of the office of Guruship, and on his own responsibilities at this crisis. His resolve was already made.

The nobles and courtiers had gathered near the Kotwali in the open space. Thousands of spectators had flocked there. At 11 O'clock the Guru was produced before the multitude. "The Guru said before the assembly of the Omerahs that the duty of man was to pray to the Lord, but since he had been commanded by His Majesty to show a miracle, he had resolved upon complying with the King's orders. He wrote on a piece of paper, which he said was charmed, and then, having tied it round his neck declared that the sword would fall harmless on it by the effect of the charm which was written upon it. The executioner was now summoned to test the miraculous charm. The blow was given and the head of the Guru rolled on to the floor to the amazement of the court.<sup>72</sup>

A grand Gurudwara, called Sis Ganj (The Holy Head), stands at the place where the Guru was executed. Its adjacent building, the Kotwali Prison where the Guru was kept confined, was acquired by the Sikhs from the Delhi administration of October 11, 1968.

### **DARLING DEEDS OF JAITA AND LAKHI SHAH LABANA**

The people of Delhi were so terror-stricken that none came forward to cremate the body of the Guru for fear of the authorities. Jaita, the sweeper, managed to steal the Guru's head, and carried it to Anandpur, 340 kms distant, a prodigious performance, and presented it to Guru Gobind Rai, the nine-year old child. The new Guru bestowed all affection and love on this hero and remarked, "Ranghrete Guru ke bete", meaning "the untouchables are the Guru's own sons." The Gurudwara Sis-Ganj at Anandpur Sahib marks the site where the head was reverently received and cremated.

A Labana Sikh, Lakhi Shah, a trader by profession, stole the decapitated body in a cart laden with cotton and cremated it in his village later named Rakab Ganj, 8 km distant from the Kotwali, by setting his own hut with all its belongings on fire to avoid detection.

The ashes of the body were collected placed in a brass vessel (gagar) and buried. A magnificent Gurudwara has been erected recently at this site.

This was the great turning point in Sikh history. The execution of the Guru and his companions in the most barbarous manner set ablaze the hearts of Hindus no less than of the Sikhs. They were convinced that any attempt at reconciliation with the Mughal authorities was impossible. It was realized that the people themselves must find their own salvation against a cruel and corrupt government. This task was taken up by Guru Tegh Bahadur's son and successor, Guru Gobind Singh.

As is well-known, Guru Gobind Singh transformed the Sikhs from a quietist sect of God-fearing people into a martial people, a church militant that urged endless war against Aurangzeb and his successors. After untold sacrifices for nearly three quarters of a century, the Khalsa (militant Sikh Order) of Guru Gobind Singh liberated the Punjab and its neighbouring areas. Guru Tegh Bahadur's sacrifice was only the starting point for a mighty revolution. In the words, of Bachittar Natak, already referred to:

The Lord protected the paste-mark and the sacred thread.  
 And in Kali-yuga performed a mighty heroic deed.  
 This deed he performed for the protection of Dharma,  
 Gave up his head, but not his passion.  
 For men of God he spared himself no suffering.  
 Gave up his head, but uttered not a groan,  
 Breaking the vessel of his life on the head of the monarch of  
 Delhi.  
 He departed for the Celestial Realms-  
 None has performed a mighty deed like Tegh Bahadur's.  
 At Tegh Bahadur's departure the whole world was plunged in  
 grief  
 The world wailed, but the Celestial Realms echoed with his glory.

~ ~ ~

#### REFERENCES

- I. There is a controversy over the date of birth of Guru Tegh Bahadur.

Gulab Singh in Gurparanali. and Gian Singh in Twarikh Guru Khalsa give 19 Maghar Shudi 2. Bikrami Samvat 1678 (November. 1921).

Sohan Singh in Gur Bilas Patshahr Chhevin Santokh Singh in Suraj Prakash Kahan Singh in Mahan Kosh. Amritsar Bansavali, Kesar Singh Multani in Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji Ka Jiwan Britant. McAuliffe in Sikh Religion, Teja Singh and Ganda Singh in A short History of Sikhs and Trilochan Singh in Guru Tegh Bahadur accept Baisakh Vadi 5.1678 B.S. (April I. 1621 A.D.)

2. The practice of Charanpahul was started by Guru Nanak and it was followed by all the Gurus up to 1698 A.D., when the Khalsa was created by Guru Gobind Singh. At initiation, a Sikh drank water in which the Guru had dipped his head finger of the toe (Nar angusht-e-pa) Its object was to develop the spirit of humility and meekness as this was the only way of survival for common down-trodden non-Muslims.
3. J. S. Grewal and S. S. Bal. Guru Gobind Singh. fin. p. 11.
4. Trilochan Singh. Guru Tegh Bahadur. p. 42
5. Dabistan-e-Mazahib, p. 234.
6. Guru Tegh Bahadur, p. 75.
7. Ibid., p. 83,
8. Latif. Lahore, pp. 51, 61, 214-21.
9. M'Gregor, History of the Sikhs. I, p. 59.
10. The Dabistan, p. 235.
11. The Sikhs. William Blackwood & Sons. London, MCM IV. 35: Syed Muhammad Latif, History of the Punjab. p. 252.
12. The Dabistan, p. 235.
13. Gain Singh, Twarikh Guru Khalsa. i. (Gurmukhi). p. 264.
14. Jadunath Sarkar, A Short History of Aurangzeb, p. 68.
15. Sujan Rae Bhandari, Khulasat-ut-Twarikh, p. 513.
16. Macauliffe, iv, p. 310.
17. Trilochan Singh places it in October, 1661, which is October 6. 1661: vide Guru Tegh Bahadur, p. 109, f.n. 40.
18. Kesar Singh Multani, 9.
19. Kanhiyalal, Tarikh-e-Panjab. 38: Trilochan Singh Guru Tegh Bahadur, 112.
20. Kanhiyalal calls it Sripal perhaps a sharifa. Tarikh-e-Panjab, 39.41.
21. Guru Gobind Singh's two wives, Mata Sundari and Mata Sahib Devi, were also cremated close to Bala Sahib.
22. Gian Singh, Twarikh Guru Khalsa. 262.
23. Gian Singh, Panth Prakash, 110: Trilochan Singh Guru Tegh Bahadur. 139, f. n. 5.

24. Khazan Singh in his *History and Philosophy of the Sikh Religion*. i. 150 puts it on April 16. 1664 A. D., which is obviously wrong.
25. Makhan Shah belonged to village Tanda in Jehlam district. Gian Singh. *Twarikh Guru Khalsa* i. p. 265: Khazan Singh *History and Philosophy of the Sikh Religion*, i. 1914. p. 149.
26. "Banjaras acknowledge one God and look on Guru Nanak as the Supreme Teacher". W. Crook. *Tribes and Castes of NW. India*. i. 1542.
27. Santokh Singh, Suraj Prakash, Ras 11 Ansu 2 and 5: Gian Singh, *Panth Prakash*. 110: *Twarikh Guru Khalsa*. i. 265.
28. Santokh Singh. Suraj Prakash. Ras 11. Ansu 13.
29. Macauliffe. i. 335
30. Khazan Singh, *History and Philosophy of the Sikh Religion*. i. 1914. p. 151.
31. Gian Singh, *Twarikh Guru Khalsa*. i. 266: Jagjit Singh *Temple of Spirituality*, The Sikh Religious Tract Society. Tarn Taran. 1935. p. 24.
32. Two shrines were later on erected in this village to commemorate Guru Tegh Bahadur's visit: one is outside the village and the other inside.
33. Macauliffe. iv. 337.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid.. 338.
36. Ibid.. 339.
37. Santokh Singh, Suraj Prakash. Ras 11. Ansu 33.
38. *A Journey from Bengal to England*. i. Languages Department. Punjab, 1970. p.300.
39. Cunningham, *A History of the Sikhs*. 1966. p. 57.
40. Bachittar Natak, 7/1.
41. Khazan Singh. *History of the Sikhs*. 1966. p. 57.
42. *A short History of Aurangzeb*. 1954. p. 204.
43. Macauliffe. iv. 350.
44. Kirpal Singh, Patna Collection of Hukam Namaha quoted in S. S. Uppal's *Guru Gobind Singh- The Saviour*. 1969. p. 89.
45. Kirpal Singh. Patna Collection of Hukam .Namahas.
46. Trilochan Singh. 219, 222, 223.
47. The name, Gobind Rae, was given by Tegh Bahadur at his departure from Patna to the expected birth of a male child. Macauliffe, iv, 358.
48. Jadunath Sarkar, *History of Aurangzeb*. iii, 213.
49. Macauliffe, iv, 357.
50. Eliot and Dowson, vii, 1964 edition, pp. 183-4.
51. *Muntakib-ul-Lubab*. ii, 651, Eliot and Dowson; *Later Mughols*. Susil Gupta. Calcutta, 1955, p. 26.

52. Sri Ram Sharma, Religious Policy of the Mughols. 115.
53. Macauliffe. iv, 366, Kartar Singh, Lift of Guru Gobind Singh. 1968, p. 25.
54. Chait Samvat 1729 Bikrami; Sewa Singh, Shahid Bilas. 59: Cunningham writes: "After a time Tegh Bahadur returned to the Punjab and bought a piece of ground now known as Makhawal, on the banks of the Sutlej and close to Kiratpur the chosen residence of his father." A History of the Sikhs. 1955, p.57.
55. Trilochan Singh, Guru Tegh Bahadur. p. 177.
56. Gian Singh. Twarikh Guru Khalsa. i, p. 270.
57. Surinder Singh Johar, Guru Gobind Singh. 1967, p. 37.
58. Memoirs of My Indian Career. i, p. 77.
59. Jadunath Sarkar, A Short History of Aurangzeb. 133.
60. History of the Panjab. 260.
61. Kartar Singh. Life of Guru Gobind Singh, 1969, p. 34.
62. A Journey from Bengal to England. i, Languages Department. Punjab. 1970, p.300.
63. A History of the Sikhs. 1955. p. 57.
64. History of the Punjab, 1964, p. 259.
65. Macauliffe, iv, 385 wrongly attributes this Dohira to Guru Tegh Bahadur's son Gobind Rai.
66. Stanley Lanepool, Aurangzeb. S. Chand & Co., 1964, p. 89.
67. Bhagat Lakshman Singh, Guru Gobind Singh. Languages Department Punjab, 1970, p. 14.
68. History of the Panjab, p 259.
69. Kanhiyalal, Tarikh-e-Panjab (Urdu), 45.
70. Bani Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur ji. SGPC. Arnritsar. (Gurmukhi). October 1963. 5th edition, 69-70.
71. Kanhiyalal calls it Sripthal. Tarikh-e-Punjab, (Urdu). 75.
72. Syed Muhammad Latif, History o/the Panjab, 260.

□

ਭੈ ਕਾਹੂ ਕਉ ਦੇਤ ਨਹਿ ਨਹਿ ਭੈ ਮਾਨਤ ਆਨ ॥  
ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਸੁਨਿ ਰੇ ਮਨਾ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਤਾਹਿ ਬਖਾਨਿ॥  
(ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੨੮)

## UNDERSTANDING MARTYRDOM OF GURU TEGH BAHADAR USING 17<sup>TH</sup>& 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY SOURCES

INDERJEET SINGH\*

---

### INTRODUCTION

Unlike his predecessors, Aurangzeb neither wrote his memoirs nor officially authorised anyone to do so, but few contemporary records are still available. Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb's intolerance found reasons to meddle in Sikh affairs. He had summoned the seventh Guru, Har Rai to attend his court at Delhi and give clarification about some verses in Adi Granth (later Guru Granth Sahib). The Guru did not go himself but sent his elder son Ram Rai to Delhi. Later on, Aurangzeb also asked eighth Guru, Guru Harkrishan to come to Delhi. At that time, an epidemic of cholera and smallpox broke out in Delhi. The child Guru began to attend to the sufferers irrespective of their caste and creed. He came to be known as *Bala Peer* (child saint). During this period, the Guru contracted small-pox himself and he passed away on 30<sup>th</sup> March 1664. He was cremated on the banks of river Yamuna where now stands Gurdwara Bala Sahib.<sup>1</sup> Then it was the turn of Guru Tegh Bahadar who was arrested in 1665. Ultimately the Guru was martyred ten years later in 1675. In this short article, the martyrdom of the Guru Tegh Bahadar is discussed using various contemporary sources belonging to 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century.

### PADSHAH (BADSHAH) BURANJI

*Buranji* are the historical chronicles written by Assam state officials and nobles, initially in Ahom and Assamese language, a tradition which dates back to early 13<sup>th</sup> century. One such contemporary manuscript

---

\* The writer is the author of the book, *Afghan Hindus & Sikhs History of a Thousand Years*. Email: <inderjeet08@hotmail.com>

is *Padshah-Buranji*. The scribe may not have personally known Guru Tegh Bahadar or Raja Ram Singh but wrote what he had heard from the official circles. This is one of the first sources which alleges that the Guru ‘was roaming and plundering the country’. However, this reason was given for Guru’s arrest in 1665 like in *Siyar-ul-Mutakbirin* (written in 1782) which cites almost the same allegation for the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadar in 1675. It further states that the Guru had 30,000 Nanakpanthi soldiers. It seems a sinister imagination of a fertile mind that a congregation of simple devotees was put forth as soldiers. One can conclude that the Mughals had to give some official justification and they came up with this accusation which is not backed by contemporary Persian sources.

In *Padshah Buranji*, Guru Tegh Bahadar is described as a saint of the faith of Guru Nanak and Guru of a large number of Brahmans and Kshatriyas. Remarkably, it adds that the Brahman Bhattacharyas (or priests) and the Qazis reported to Aurangzeb that the Guru does not belong to any particular school or faith and goes about ravaging the country. The Mughal Emperor asked the Guru to appear before him, but the Guru did not come. The chronicle adds the Guru defied the authority of the Emperor and ‘roamed about plundering and destroying the country, attended by thirty thousand Nanakpanthi sepoys.’

Aurangzeb became angry for this defiance and deputed Alo Khan Pathan who captured the Guru and ordered him to be executed. The Guru sought protection of Raja Ram Singh of Amber, who became his surety but later the Guru escaped. The Mughal ruler accused Ram Singh of allowing the Guru to flee despite standing for him. The manuscript adds that Ram Singh replied that only a Raja or a Nawab is worthy of Emperor’s vengeance. The Guru was only a mendicant faqir. Ram Singh denied the allegation and said, “To accuse me for his escape will cause people to laugh when they hear of it.”

Aurangzeb decided against taking any action against Ram Singh lest it upset other Rajas. He asked Ram Singh to invade Assam which was notorious as none of the Nawabs deputed in past Assam wars had returned safely. They had either died or were killed in the battle.

The waters of Assam were said to be poisonous, its air unhealthy and its hills are covered with dense forests. The Emperor wanted that Ram Singh should die in Assam.<sup>2</sup>

Early in the book it states that the Raja Ram Singh of Amber was directed to invade Assam by Aurangzeb as a punishment for connivance at the escape of Shivaji Maratha and Guru Tegh Bahadar.<sup>3</sup> Interestingly the manuscript goes on to state that Ram Singh took the Guru and five Muslim Pirs to withstand the 'formidable sorcery and witchcraft' with which Assam was said to be associated.<sup>4</sup>

### **BACHITTAR NATAK**

*Bachittar Natak*, a composition and memoir of Guru Gobind Singh, son of Guru Tegh Bahadar is an important contemporary source. Within the Sikh circles, the authorship of *Bachittar Natak* is sometimes disputed but its historical value cannot be denied. The *Bachittar Natak* composition is now part of the *Dasam Granth*. The internal evidence corresponds with the dates given in other *Dasam Granth* compositions like *Krishnavataar* and *Ramavtaar* which ranges from 1687 to 1698. The stanzas 13 to 15 of Chapter 5 of *Bachittar Natak* mentions the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadar.

*'He protected the right of bearing a forehead mark and sacred thread (by the Hindus) which marked a great event in the Iron age.*

*For the sake of saints, he laid down his head without even a sign.*

*For the sake of Dharma, he sacrificed himself. He laid down his head but not his conviction.*

*The saints of the Lord abhor the performance of miracles and malpractices.*

*Breaking the potsberd of his body on the head the king of Delhi (Aurangzeb), He left for the abode of the Lord.*

*None could perform such a feat as that of Tegh Bahadar.<sup>5</sup>*

### **BHATT VAHIS**

The *Bhatt Vahis* are the scrolls or records maintained by Bhattas, hereditary bards and genealogists. The *Encyclopaedia of Sikhism* notes that it was customary for the Bhattas to visit their hereditary patrons usually twice a year at harvest time to sing their praises and receive rewards or customary donations as well as to collect information (births, marriages, deaths and other important events) for record in their *vahis*

(ledgers). Even today there are over 300 Pandas or hereditary priests in Haridwar who keep genealogy registers, of families.<sup>6</sup> Although the records in many cases have been noted down after the events (after a few months), nevertheless they are contemporary sources.

*Bhat Vahi Jodobansian Khata Barbtian*, a contemporary scroll records that Guru Tegh Bahadar was at Dhamdhan (Dhamthan<sup>7</sup>) of Pargana Bangar. Alam Khan Rohilla (*Padshah Buranji* states Alo) came with imperial order from Delhi and arrested the Guru on 8<sup>th</sup> November 1665 along with Bhai Sati Das & Bhai Mati Das, Gawal Das, Gurdas, Sangat, Jetha & Bhai Dayal Das among other pious Sikhs.<sup>8</sup>

The Guru and his followers were brought to Delhi. The Guru was kept in the custody of Prince Ram Singh, son of Raja Mirza Jai Singh of Jaipur. Aurangzeb issued the orders for Guru's execution, but Ram Singh desisted and later released Guru Tegh Bahadar on 16<sup>th</sup> December 1665.<sup>9</sup>

#### **PERSECUTION OF SIKHS**

HR Gupta mentions that the book *Kalimat-e- Tayibat* states that a Sikh place of worship in a village in the Sirhind division was turned into a mosque. He adds that Mirza Inayatullah Khan in his book *Abkam-e-Alamgiri* on pages 12-13 states that under Aurangzeb's orders a Gurdwara of the Sikhs (*Butkhana-e-Nanakprastan*) in the town of Buriya, Parganah Khizarabad, Sirhind province, was pulled down by the Qazi and a mosque was built in its place. Sayyid Zafar Darvesh was appointed in charge of that mosque to guide prayers. Some Sikhs attacked the mosque and killed the Sayyid. These incidents were not uncommon.<sup>10</sup>

Khafi Khan in his book *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab* (1722) writes: "There is a sect of infidels called Guru, more commonly known as Sikhs. Their chief, who dresses as a fakir, has a fixed residence near Lahore. From old times he has built temples in all the towns and populous places and has appointed one of his followers to preside in each temple as his deputy. When anyone of the sect brought presents or offerings for the Guru to the temple, the deputy had to collect them, and after deducting sufficient for his own food and expenses, his duty was to send the balance faithfully to the Guru. This sect consists principally

of Jats and Khattris of the Panjab and of other tribes of infidels. When Aurangzeb got knowledge of those matters, he ordered these deputy Gurus to be removed and the temples to be pulled down.”<sup>11</sup>

### **BRAHMINS FROM KASHMIR**

Contemporary sources *Bhat Vahi Talanda Pargana Jind* quoted first by Fauja Singh is corroborated by Bhai Swaroop Singh's *Guru Kian Saakbian* which state that a deputation of Brahmins mainly from Kashmir under Kirpa Ram came to Anandpur on 25<sup>th</sup> May 1675 pleading Guru Tegh Bahadar to save their religion from the Mughal regime.

Syad Muhammad Latif writes “the emperor (Aurangzeb) had in those days thrown hundreds of Brahmans into jails, in the hope that, if they first embraced the religion of the prophet, the rest of the Hindus would readily follow their example.”<sup>12</sup>

According to *Bhat Vahis* and Kesar Singh Chibber's *Bansavalinama*, Kirpa Ram later accepted *Khande di Pahul* and became full-fledged Khalsa and died while fighting in the battle of Chamkaur (1705 AD).

### **ARREST**

*Guru Kian Saakbian* states that on 8<sup>th</sup> July 1675, Guru Tegh Bahadar before leaving for Delhi appointed his son, Gobind Das as the next Guru. The Guru along with his three companions left for Delhi taking with him the plea of Brahmins of Kashmir. They were arrested at Malikpur Rangran on 12<sup>th</sup> July and produced before the governor of Sirhind the next day. Why were they arrested? *Guru Kian Saakbian* simply states that when the governor of Sirhind came to know that Guru Tegh Bahadar was proceeding towards Delhi taking with him the plea of Brahmins of Kashmir, the governor deemed it right to arrest them. Latif mentions that the Emperor Aurangzeb efforts were directed to converting the whole world to the Mahomedan faith.<sup>13</sup>

HR Gupta quotes William Irvine and writes that the order for arrest was kept secret for some time. Obviously the Kotwal (senior police officer or magistrate) was waiting for a suitable opportunity. He did not like to carry out the orders at Anandpur, where a large number of Sikhs were always present. But he had employed spies to inform him of the Guru's daily activities and programme. It was reported to

him that the Guru had decided to go on a tour about the middle of July, 1675.<sup>14</sup>

The stature of the Guru among non-Muslims and state efforts to bring everyone to the Islamic faith was good enough reason to arrest them. The governor would have thought that it would be a feather in his cap if his efforts lead to the conversion of the Guru.

The Guru was kept in lock -up at Bassi Pathana for 3 months and sent to Delhi on 4<sup>th</sup> November 1675. The Suba, commander of Delhi gave three options to the Guru, to display some miracle to accept Islam or to get ready to accept death. The Guru said, "Miracle is the epitome of calamity. Holy men don't revel in miracles." And accepted the third condition. On 11<sup>th</sup> November the three companions of the Guru were put to death, one by one, in front of Guru Tegh Bahadar in the hope that this may break his resolve. Later in the afternoon, the Guru was martyred.<sup>15</sup>

Few Mughal accounts suggest that Aurangzeb was at Hasan Abdal (Attock district, West Punjab) and the above account substantiates it.

### **PREJUDICE OF THE REGIME**

The Emperor's mind was already prejudiced against Guru Tegh Bahadar. He hated the word *Sacha Patshah* used by the Sikhs for the Guru. According to Aurangzeb, it implied that the Guru was a true king and the Emperor was a false king. He also detested the word *Bahadar* in the Guru's name as this term was reserved for nobility of the Mughal court only.<sup>16</sup>

### **MARTYRDOM AND SIYAR-UL-MUTAKHIRIN**

Most non-Sikh historians have relied on *Siyar-ul-Mutakhirin*, written by Sayyid Ghulam Husain in 1782, almost 107 years after the martyrdom. Sayyid Ghulam Husain was a native of Lucknow and wrote that Guru Tegh Bahadar and Hafiz Adam, a disciple of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi (contemporary of Jahangir, in one of his letters he had expressed great delight at the execution of *Kafir* of Goindwal (Guru Arjan Dev) had collected a large body of men. They moved about in countryside and seized money and material by force. It was feared they might revolt against the government!

HR Gupta has given an apt explanation. About this time the Sikhs had become supreme in Northern India. In June 1781, Najaf Khan, the prime minister of the Mughal Empire, had confirmed the Sikh's right to *Rakbi* at 12.5 per cent of the standard land revenue in Haryana and the upper Ganga Doab (western Uttar Pradesh). The Sikhs often extracted *Rakbi* tax from the territory of the Nawab of Oudh across the Ganga (Central Uttar Pradesh). Needless to say, Ghulam Husain did not have, a good word to say for the Sikhs and their Guru.<sup>17</sup>

In addition to baseless allegations, Ghulam Husain made a grave error here by bracketing Guru Tegh Bahadar with Hafiz Adam. Hafiz Adam was banished by Shah Jahan in 1642, thirty-three years earlier. Hafiz went on a pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina where he died in 1643. Dr Fauja Singh in 1975 had quoted several works (with page numbers) to prove the discrepancy of the year by Ghulam Husain and fallacy of his allegations.

According to Nazeer Ahmad Deobandi's *Tazkerat-ul-Abdin* p 124-125; Maulvi Ghulam Nabi's *Mirat-ul-Qaunain* p 417; Mirza Muhammad Akhtar's *Tazkara-i-Auliya-i-Hind-wa-Pakistan*, p 401; Saiyad Abdul Hayee Hasani Rai-Bareilvi's *Nazrat-ul-Khwatir vol 5* p 1-2, Hafiz Adam was a disciple of Mujadid Alf Sani, there was no possibility of his joining the Guru.<sup>18</sup>

Hafiz Ahmed was no way associated with Guru Tegh Bahadar. Sayyid Ghulam Husain had charged the Guru with plundering people. This allegation was stated in *Padshah Buranji* when the Guru was arrested in 1665. It could be that Ghulam Husain was quoting the official allegations (however no contemporary Mughal records have been found as yet). It seems bit odd that the two arrests which span over 10 years were based on same allegation.

### **SIKHS UNHAPPY WITH THE EMPEROR**

HR Gupta quotes Saqi Must-id-Khan, a contemporary writer who wrote *Masir-e-Alamgiri* and mentions an interesting incident "When he (Aurangzeb) alighted the boat and was about to get on to the movable throne (Takhte-Rawan), an ill-fated disciple of Guru Tegh Bahadar threw two bricks on the Emperor, one of which hit the

throne.” Obviously, people were unhappy with the execution of Guru Tegh Bahadar and he was seen as a martyr by many.<sup>19</sup>

#### **MARTYRDOM & PERSIAN ACCOUNTS**

There are few contemporary Persian accounts which mention the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadar Sahib. The tone of the account is surprisingly neutral. Readers must bear in mind that any slightest critique of the Mughal Emperor would have resulted in death penalty for the author. Consequently, some of them try to give justification for the execution. They were initially translated by Ganda Singh during his illustrious career but a more recent translation from the book *Sikh History from Persian Sources* has been used here.

#### **KHULASAT-UT-TAWARIKH (1695)**

Sujan Rai Bhandari’s *Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh*, completed in 1695, is a history of India. The main account of the Sikhs and their history is given in the chapter on the province of Lahore. He mentions the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadar without going into much detail lest he would have incurred the wrath of the Mughal ruler. Bhandari gets the year of martyrdom wrong by a year. He writes:

“Then Tegh Bahadar, the younger son of Guru Hargobind, occupied the seat for fifteen years. In the end, he was imprisoned under Imperial officers, and in 1081 A. H. (1670- 71AD), corresponding to Alamgir’s 1673-74 AD, he was executed at Shahjahanabad (Delhi) in accordance with Alamgir’s orders. At the time of writing this book, Guru Gobind Rai, the son of Guru Tegh Bahadar, has been in occupation of the sacred seat for twenty-two years.”<sup>20</sup>

#### **NUSKHA-I-DILKUSHA (1709)**

Another Persian account, Bhimsen’s *Nuskha-i-Dilkusha*, is a history of Aurangzeb’s reign, written largely in the form of memoirs. Bhimsen was an officer of Dalpat Rao Bundela (A Rajput & trusted military commander of Aurangzeb), who died at the battle of Jajau in June 1707. Bhimsen gives an account of that battle, at which he was present. He also refers to Guru Gobind Singh’s meeting with Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah, successor of Aurangzeb in 1708. In relation to Guru Tegh Bahadar, he seems to suggest that the Guru was martyred

as he was called *Padshah*, a sign of sovereignty. His account notes

“Some of his descendants (of Guru Nanak) have been masters of mystic attainments and have adopted the way of poverty and humility. Many took to the path of rebellion, such as Tegh Bahadar, by name, who lived in the mountains near Sirhind, he got himself called King (*Padshah*), and a large body of people gathered around him. When the news was conveyed to His Majesty Emperor Alamgir (Aurangzeb), it was ordered that he should be brought to the Court. When he came to the Court, he was executed.”<sup>21</sup>

### **IBRATNAMA (1719)**

Muhammad Qasim in *his Ibratnama* mentions that Guru Tegh Bahadar came under the wrath of Aurangzeb and were condemned to death. Interestingly he calls Sarmad (an Armenian saint executed by Aurangzeb) a martyr and says Guru Tegh Bahadar belonged to the same group. He writes:

“After him Guru Tegh Bahadar, his son, rose further in status in comparison with his father. He spent much time in sport and game, but because of the effect of the attention and pleasing ways of acceptance of that accepted one, the inclinations of the people and the flow of worldly things [towards him], such as petty items and valuables, money and goods, elephants and horses, did not decrease, so that instead of himself [doing so], his followers from time to time claimed sovereignty for him. A long time he spent in this way in the mountainous country in the proximity of Sahrind [Sirhind] and Bajwara. At last, the seat of sovereignty received lustre by being occupied by His Majesty Muhammad Aurangzeb Alamgir, who, owing to his own passionate nature and regard for royal power, did not like such meaningless tumult. In the beginning of his reign he secluded himself in the company of many recluses and held discussions on spiritual and mystic truths with this set of men, free of all [worldly] constraints. Some, like His Holiness Shah Daula of Gujarat [Punjab], Shah Sadruddin of Qasur, and His Holiness Shah Hasan Durr, who has his elevated seat [shrine] near Shah Dara on the opposite bank of the Ravi, at Lahore, sat [in the Emperor’s company], of their own accord, possessing hearts that are free from cares. Others, like Sarmad, the

mendicant (qalandar), entrusted their lives to Fate and tasted martyrdom from the sharp sword. To this latter group belonged Guru Tegh Bahadar, who obtained the honour of saluting [His Majesty] upon being summoned to the Court. Owing to what has been written above, he came under [the Emperor's] wrath and saw himself condemned to death."<sup>22</sup>

#### CHAHAR GULSHAN

Rai Chaturman Saksena completed in 1759-60 a work entitled *Chabar Gulshan*, which is fairly well known among historians for the geographical information it provides. Less well known is the information given in its fourth part or gulshan about religious sects. The Sikhs or 'Nanak Panthis' have the last section of this portion devoted to them. His couple of lines on Guru Tegh Bahadar are same as those of *Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh*.<sup>23</sup>

#### EUROPEAN ACCOUNT

Francois Xavier Wendel's *Les memoires de Wendel sur les fat, les Pathan, et les Sikh*, written in French in 1768 had been lying in British Library archives till it was edited and printed by Jean Deloche in 1979. Wendel account on Guru Tegh Bahadar's is sympathetic and respectful of the martyrdom.

"When he (Guru Nanak) passed away, his post and *pire's* chair remained with someone of his family who, by descent, delivered it in the end to one Deg-bahadr, under Aurangzeb, and once more a number of devotees incorporated themselves into this sect and made so much of this gourou, at that time president, that this king, being besides a great enemy of things having a connection with gentilism, asked him to explain himself. Having made Deg-bahadr come to his presence and, having questioned him a great deal on his conduct and way of living, this prince, it is said, asked of him a miracle in confirmation of the doctrine that he was claiming as divine, most of it in opposition to mahometisme [Mohammadanism]. Excusing himself due to inadequacy and because miracles are the work of the all powerful, Deg-bahadr had in the end to choose either to renounce the doctrine and become a musulman or confirm it by the death to which he had been condemned; he did not hesitate to refuse, graciously giving his head

and arousing by his example his disciples to do as much at their turn, when the occasion would present itself which they did not fail to do follow"<sup>24</sup>

### CONCLUSION

Important events in history should be based on contemporary and varied sources. And they need to be evaluated for their human bias. None of the near contemporary Persian and French accounts accuses Guru Tegh Bahadar as a renegade or criminal unlike *Siyar-ul-Mutakbirin*. In 1975, the Sikh world commemorated the tri-centennial martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadar. A great work was done by Dr Fauja Singh, Dr HR Gupta, Dr Ganda Singh, Garja Singh, Dr Pyara Singh Padam and others. Their work has been in the public domain for past 45 years and despite this, modern non-Sikh historians continue to quote *Siyar-ul-Mutakbirin*, as a gospel truth. This account was written 107 years after the martyrdom and mentions Hafiz Adam as the Guru's accomplice when he had been banished by Shah Jahan more than three decades earlier in 1642 and died the next year. Last year in UK, Lord Indrajit Singh resigned from BBC Radio 4 after delivering "Thought of the Day' programme for 35 years as BBC anchor and tried to censure his script on martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadar lest it may offend Muslims. The script said nothing against the faith, Islam. It is important to take this discourse outside the Sikh circles and make non-Sikhs aware of this martyrdom for human rights.

The arrest of Guru Tegh Bahadar following his support to the cause of Kashmiri Brahmins in July 1675 which later led to his martyrdom in November 1675 should not be seen in isolation. Aurangzeb had previously arrested the Guru in 1665 and even ordered his execution. The martyrdom in 1675 was continuation of events which happened 10 years earlier, in 1665.

~ ~ ~

### REFERENCES

1. Harbans Singh (1999) Sikh relations with Mughal Emperor in *Encyclopaedia of Sikhism*. Patiala: Punjabi University.
2. S.K. Bhuyan (1947) *Annals of the Delhi Badshahate*. Gauhati: Government of Assam p 162-64

3. Ibid., p. 7
4. Ibid p. 10
5. Sri Dasam Granth Sahib translation by Dr Surinder Singh Kohli, 2010
6. Accessed on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2020, Rooting out a Hindu family history the traditional way <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-18442924>)
7. Dhamthan situated between Narwana and Tohana, 170 kms from Delhi in HR Gupta (1984) *History of the Sikhs Vol 1*. Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal p. 193. It is now in Jind district.
8. Fauja Singh & G.S. Talib (1975) *Guru Tegh Bahadur, Martyr & Teacher*. Patiala: Punjabi University p. 34
9. Pritpal Singh Bindra (2005) *Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish's Guru Kian Saakbian*. Amritsar: Singh Brothers p. 81
10. HR Gupta (1984) *History of the Sikhs Vol 1*. Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal p. 199
11. Ibid p. 199
12. SM Latif (1891) *History of the Panjab*. Calcutta: Calcutta Central Press p. 260
13. Ibid p. 259
14. HR Gupta (1984) *History of the Sikhs, Vol 1*. Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal p. 211
15. Pritpal Singh Bindra (2005) *Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish's Guru Kian Saakbian*. Amritsar: Singh Brothers p. 86-91
16. HR Gupta (1984) *History of the Sikhs Vol 1*. Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal p. 210
17. Ibid p. 205
18. Fauja Singh & G.S. Talib (1975) *Guru Tegh Bahadur, Martyr & Teacher*. Patiala: Punjabi University p. 82-83
19. HR Gupta (1984) *History of the Sikhs Vol 1*. Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal p 218
20. JS Grewal & Irfan Habib (2001) *Sikh History from Persian Sources*. New Delhi: Tulika p92
21. Ibid p105
22. Ibid p112
23. Ibid p163
24. Amandeep Madra & Parmjit Singh (2004) *Sicques, Tigers or Thieves Eyewitness Accounts of the Sikhs (1606-1809)*. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan p 14-15.

## GURU TEGH BAHADUR AND HUMAN RIGHTS

DR FAUJA SINGH

---

In order to understand the outlook that Guru Tegh Bahadur brought to bear upon the challenging problems of his contemporary social situation, it may be both useful and necessary briefly to refer back to the ideological base of the Sikh society, established by his illustrious predecessors. Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh faith, had propounded the fundamental principles which became the basis for subsequent developments under his successors. The ideology thus crystallized had at its rock bottom the belief that the world, in its essence, is a spiritual and moral order (*dharamsal-the abode of dharma*), all-embracing and all-pervading. The Lord of the Universe the Truth Absolute (*satinam*) permeates His entire creation. The world is “the True One’s dwelling place” (Guru Angad Dev); it is “the ocean in which all beings move” (Guru Ram Das), or “the thread on which the whole creation is strung” (Guru Arjan Dev). The mythical bull supposed to be supporting the Universe, is made out to be the self-same *dharma*, the Moral Law, born of *daya* (compassion) that holds the world in equilibrium. “God by His Will made the world; God at His Will controlleth it: He beholdeth all things set under His Will,” said Guru Angad Dev. It is this Divine Will or *hukam* which constitutes the sanction behind the Moral Law or *dharma*.

Mr. D. M. Brown in his book, *Indian Political Thought from Manu to Gandhi* (p. 15), thus writes with regard to the connotation of *dharma* in ancient India: “The conception of Dharma was a far reaching one embracing the whole life of man. The writers of Dharmshastars in the ancient period meant by Dharma not a creed or religion, but a

---

\* Reproduced from the book *Guru Tegh Bahadur - Background and the Supreme Sacrifice*, Edited by Gurbachan Singh Talib, published by Punjabi University, Patiala, 1999.

mode of life or code of conduct which regulated a man's work and activities as a member of the society. and as an individual it was intended to bring about gradual development of man and to enable him to reach what was deemed to be the goal of human existence." Guru Nanak's conception of *dharma* was even more comprehensive in scope, as he disapproved of the conduct of all such people as renounced worldly life and chose to reside in recesses of mountains and forests. Mr. C. H. Payne has rightly remarked: "In the doctrines of Nanak, morality has a higher place than in those of any other Hindu reformers. Few, even of the world's greatest philosophers, have laid down a more exalted moral code than is to be found in the pages of *Granth Sahib*. Purity of life is set forth as the highest object of human endeavour. Loyalty, chastity, honesty, justice, mercy and temperance are among the virtues on which vital stress is laid."

In the moral order of the conception of the Sikh Gurus, the individual (not caste as was the case in the earlier periods) had the pivotal position. He was regarded as one endowed with a unique personality worthy of all respect. The soul within him is a spark of Divine Light –  *jyoti sarup*. "If thou wouldest seek God, demolish not the heart of anyone, for God lives in every heart". (Guru Arjan, *Adi Granth*, p. 1384). A two-fold objective to merge his little self with the Infinite; to uphold the cause of *dharma* in the world. In his efforts to achieve his goals, he is supposed to act in a spirit of full responsibility always realizing that all his actions are subject to the supreme Moral Law. "Truth is higher than other things but higher still is the life lived in truth" (Guru Nanak, *Adi Granth*, p. 62). The world being a divine revelation, is to be shunned in no case. On the other hand, the individual must live in it, work in it, participate in its affairs, grapple with its difficulties and challenges and endeavour to make it into an ideal place to live in. The world or society is valuable and must be valued as such, it being at once the theatre of our activities, the testing ground of our faith and principles as well as the measuring yardstick of our personal attainments. Guru Nanak had roundly condemned *the jogi* and *sidh* recluses who had equated religious life with a life of renunciation. He had categorically said that a truly religious man is one who practises religion in his everyday life. "Abide pure amid the impurities of the

world; thus shalt thou find the way of religion-true *jog jugat*. “(Guru Nanak, *Subi Rag, Adi Granth*, p. 730). Such a religion cannot be separated from morality. The person who is not a useful ‘member of the society contributing his might towards its welfare, is worthless and good for nothing. In fact an individual’s very salvation depends upon how sincerely and zealously he tries to serve his fellow human beings. Guru Nanak’s clear injunction in this regard was: “Only he finds the true path of life, who earns his bread by the sweat of his brow and shares the fruit there of with his fellow-beings” (*Var Sarang, Adi Granth*. p. 1245).

Society which is a complex of social relations rather than a mere aggregate of individuals, if properly organised, can facilitate for the individual his task of self-fulfillment. The Gurus had made it clear that all social institutions and associations are intended to help the individual to achieve this main object of his life. Therefore, society must be organised on the healthy basis of justice, tolerance and equality and should be free from oppression of any kind. Subjection had been dubbed a curse, for it was said that under it happiness is not possible even in a dream. Likewise, encroachment upon what rightfully belongs to others was denounced. Exploitation, whatever its brand, was also condemned. All these evils, according to the Gurus, had their roots in the narrow self-interests of the people themselves. The problem could, however, be largely solved by inculcating in the minds of people a consciousness of the underlying unity of mankind. Lack of faith in the brotherhood of man blunts our vision and we easily fall into the habit of lending greater weight to dissimilarities than to similarities. To the Sikh Gurus the principle of equality was a natural corollary from their faith in the unity of Godhead. If the Creator of all human beings, God, is one, then all his creatures, irrespective of their caste, creed, colour and sex, are equal.

Equality implies tolerance of differences existing in dress, food, faith, custom etc. It is difficult for one to endure for long without the other. Equality, if it does not promote tolerance, is a sham and tolerance if it is not based on a sense of equality, is a mirage. Guru Amar Das made it amply clear when invoking God he said, “Save them, O Lord: through whatever entrance they approach.”

The state as the most powerful organ of the organized society has a vital role to play in the creation of an ideal society. Monarchy which was the established form of government then, was accepted by the Sikh Gurus as a legitimate and God-ordained institutions. Kingship was regarded as a gift from God, a reward of good deeds done in previous life or lives. Not only that the king was believed to derive all his authority from God. However, this belief in the divine origin of kingly power was different from the Western doctrine of divine right of kings in one important respect. Unlike the West, the Gurus gave no countenance to the idea that kings can act as they like, owing no responsibility to the people placed under their rule. On the contrary, it was stressed that they should always be dispensers of justice and equality and must never wield their authority arbitrarily or despotically. They are responsible to God, “King of kings”, the Supreme Sovereign, for all their actions. They are only His agents commissioned to govern, in the manner of Platos’ philosopher king, with justice, kindness and sympathy and to promote the welfare of their people. They are to conduct their functions, so to say, as a mandate from God. Thus viewed, the monarchy or the state was held by the Gurus to be an inseparable part of the over-all moral order, intended to subserve its primary ends.

It is essential that the ruler must possess a high moral character if he is to carry out his mission successfully. As an individual, he must try to realise the same moral and spiritual aims as are necessary for other individuals. As a ruler, his responsibilities are even greater, for he is required to create, by means of benign-government, such conditions of life as are most needed to enable the individuals to develop their personalities to the full. The state is in fact meant for the betterment of the individual and not vice versa. If a king neglects his duties, oppresses the weak, indulges in activities prejudicial to the general welfare of his subjects and sets the fulfilment of his material pleasures as the primary goal of his life, he incurs the wrath of God and forfeits his mandate. God then, in His displeasure, snatches always the exalted office from him by way of chastisement and bestows it on somebody else more suitable. Guru Nanak called Babar for his invasion of India a *Yama* sent by the Almighty as a chastiser of the “dogs” and “Butchers” that the Lodi Sultans ruling over North India then were.

To the above views of the origin and functions of the state not wholly unknown here or elsewhere, the Sikh Gurus gave a revolutionary turn by emphasising that kings are not responsible to God alone, but to the people as well, for whose good they are set up by God. The people with the divine spark enshrined in them, are capable of knowing and interpreting the Divine Will. In fact, the people's will is also God's will. Therefore, if a ruler deviates from the path of justice and duty, it is just, the Gurus believed, to offer resistance to his wrong and unjust policies. "Both are fools-he who confers authority on those that deserve not and shameless are those who accept it" (*Adi Granth*, p. 1286). Herein lies the sanction for the people's right of resistance in the case of an unjust and tyrannical ruler who is beyond correction by any other means. The exercise of such a right is a sort of religious duty, as injustice and oppression are contrary to the Moral and Spiritual Order of God, as ordained in the world.

Granting the right of resistance inevitably led to sanctioning the use of force (*shakti*). The need for the use of force was realized immediately after the execution of Guru Arjan Dev in Lahore in 1606 A.D. and the martyred Guru's son and successor, Guru Hargobind laid aside *saili* and *topi*, previous symbols of Guruship, and put on two swords, respectively standing for the concepts of *miri* (temporality) and *piri* (spirituality). Soon after, he started militarising his community so as to be able to meet tyranny with force, if necessary. The implied theory behind this way of thinking, was that force by itself is not evil, that it is its misuse which makes it so, just as we say today that it is not science as such but its misuse which is reprehensible. On the use of arms for a noble cause, Guru Hargobind's statement is unambiguous and authoritative: "*Shaster garib ki rakhya jarvane ki bhakhya*" – arms are protection to the poor and destruction to the tyrant. As a result of the new policy adopted by Guru Hargobind, the relations between the Sikhs and the Mughals became strained and a number of open armed clashes occurred between them. Guru Tegh Bahadur who was the youngest son of Guru Hargobind, was an eyewitness to most of them -and is even said to have personally participated in the battle of Kartarpur and shown rare feats of bravery.

## II

Sikhism and Mughal rule came into being almost simultaneously early in the 16th century. The founders of the two organisations, Guru Nanak and Babar, were contemporaries and by a popular but not yet confirmed Sikh tradition, they even had a meeting and exchanged ideas with each other. The remainder of that century passed off practically without any clash or disharmony between them. Rather, the long reign of the Emperor Akbar proved a great boon for the spread of Sikhism and the number of its votaries multiplied at a very fast rate.

Akbar held a high ideal of sovereignty. Unlike his predecessors, he abandoned the idea that he was primarily the king of his own Muslim co-religionists. Like a true liberal he raised himself above communal prejudices of the age and removed all discrimination between Muslims and non-Muslims in matters of public employment, taxation, religion and culture. *Jizya* and pilgrimage taxes which had all along been a great eyesore to the non-Muslims were abolished and in respect of the taxes which were retained, uniform rates for all, irrespective of creed or caste were prescribed. In the sphere of administrative and military service, an open-door policy was adopted and although the predominance of Muslim employees remained as before, opportunities of recruitment for others were greatly augmented and now it even became possible for non-Muslims to rise to the highest rung in the State ladder. Similar liberalism and equality of treatment marked the fields of religious and cultural fields.

Under the next two emperors, Jahangir and Shah Jahan, the liberal policy of Akbar was maintained to a large extent. But already certain forces had been generated by way of reaction to Akbar's policy, whose avowed purpose was to counter the new trends of liberalism in the name of safety of Islam. The leadership of these reactionary elements came from the Naqshbandis of Sirhind headed by Shaikh Ahmed and his successors. Assuming the title of *Mujaddid-Alilf-i-Thani* (Reformer of the Second Millennium), Shaikh Ahmed Sirhindi took it upon himself to bring political, social and religious affairs of the Muslims in line with the *orthodox sunni* line. His conclusions were based on his personal prejudices, upon the conditions prevalent in and around Sirhind and

in the reports which the distinguished Muslim officials conveyed to him from time to time. He thought that Akbar's policies had succumbed to the unwholesome influence of Shaikh Abul Fazl, Faizi and certain other nobles who had diverted him from the line of orthodox Islam. Akbar's appointment of Hindus to high positions, marriage with Rajput ladies, and introduction of *Din-i-Ilahi* and *Sijda* and celebration of Hindu fairs and festivals were all viewed by the *Mujaddid* as posing a serious danger to Islam. He cherished the apprehension that a liberal policy, such as Akbar's, would strengthen and embolden non-Muslims to weaken and ultimately liquidate the Muslim rule. This kind of propaganda by the Naqshbandis had an adverse effect, albeit limited, on the policies of Jahangir and Shah Jahan, so that each one was less liberal than his predecessor. Thus, a departure from Akbar's wide outlook began. Though it was quite slight in the beginning, the rupture grew larger and larger with the passage of time until under Aurangzeb, it assumed the dimensions of a total reversal of Akbar's tolerant policy.

Aurangzeb was the most characteristic product of this Sirhindi School of thought. He held Akbar's eclecticism to be wrong and as ill-conceived, grave danger to Islam, both as religion and as state organisation. The vast majority of Indians being non-Muslims, the best guarantee for the safety of Islam, he thought, was that they should be kept perennially in a state of abject subjection. Any attempt, in his view, to treat them liberally would in fact be tantamount to endeavouring to undermine the very basis of the Muslim society in India. And to reinforce him in his convictions there were already certain signs of stirrings noticeable among the non-Muslims, the most striking examples of which were provided by the Sikhs in the Punjab and the Marathas in the Deccan. His heart, therefore, from the very beginning, was set on the total reversal of Akbar's policy.

"The accession of Aurangzeb to the throne in 1658 heralded the triumph of Muslim theologians. He invited their intercession in the affairs of the state when after the capture of Dara he had him tried and condemned as an apostate". (Sri Ram Sharma, *Religious Policy of Mughals*. 1972, p. 127). This was bound to be so, as the object dearest to his heart was to establish a purely Islamic state on the soil of India. The failure of the liberal-minded Dara Shikoh and later his execution

spelt a great disaster to all trends to catholicity in the land just as it also marked the triumph of orthodoxy.

Aurangzeb began with puritanical measures. In the second year of his reign he discontinued the celebrating of *Nauroz* (first day of the Solar Year). A few years later, music and dancing were prohibited. *Jharokha Darshan* was discontinued on the ground that it seemed too much like human worship; *tuladan* (weighing of the Emperor's body against gold, silver and various other valuables) was given up; royal astronomers and astrologers were dismissed; drinking was stopped and public censors were appointed to enforce prohibition strictly. Severe punishments were awarded for anything that was construed by the theological as violating at four fingers and offenders against this order were penalized. Garments of golden weave were forbidden. Clay figures of birds, animals, men and women produced for children were disallowed and violations, if any, were punished. Lighting of lamps on the tombs of the saints and other persons was declared an offence. Shia Musalmans were prohibited from celebrating their festival of Muharram. Any talk on anybody's part creating the slightest suspicion of disrespect or want of respect towards Islam, the prophet, and his companions were Severely punished, often with death.

But most of those restrictions were of a general nature and covered all communities. Non-muslims were singled out for discriminatory treatment in four specific fields, namely public services, construction and repair of temples, conversions and taxation. The Emperor's deep-rooted suspicion about the Hindus' bonafides seriously affected their position in the services, particularly in the higher echelons. Sri Ram Sharma, (*op.cit.*, pp. 155-56) after careful comparison of relevant figures for Hindu *Mansabdars* in the reigns of Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb has this to say on the matter: "This means that towards the end of Aurangzeb's reign there was a smaller number of Hindus occupying the *mansabs* of 1000 and above, than' the number of similar *mansabdars* towards the end of Shah Jahan's reign. But the decrease in number becomes still more significant when we take into account the increase in the total number of the *mansabdars* which rose enormously in the reign of Aurangzeb. In 1657 under Shah Jahan's, there were 8,000

*mansabdars* in all, whereas in 1690 number of *mansabdars* had' risen to 14,556 The percentage of the Hindus in the higher ranks of the State could not have been than 50 per cent of what it was towards the end of Shah Jahan's reign."

Even before Aurangzeb, in the reigns of Jahangir and Shah Jahan, there were several instances of destruction of temples, but then these occurrences were generally part of military operations. It was only under Aurangzeb that religious consideration dominated the formulation of state policies and a carefully planned attack was launched forbidding the construction and repair of temples. The provinces of Gujarat and Orissa were among the first targets of Aurangzeb's fanaticism. Both of them witnessed wanton destruction of numerous sacred shrines. In 1666 the stone railing of the famous Keshav Rai Temple of Mathura was removed by imperial orders. Three years later in 1669 a general order was issued for the destruction of all schools and temples of Hindus. "Orders were now sent to the governors of all the provinces that- they should destroy the schools and temples of the infidels" and put an end to their educational activities as well as the practices of the religion of the Kafirs." (Sri Ram Sharma, *op. cit.*, p. 171).

Soon after the issuance of the order, reports of the destruction of temples began to pour in from all parts of the Empire. A royal messenger was sent to demolish the temple of Malarina in May 1669. In August, 1669 the temple of Vishvanath at Benares was demolished and later a mosque was raised on the site of the demolished building. The temple of Gopinath in Benares too was destroyed at about the same time. An attempt was also made to destroy the Shaiva temple of Jangamwari in Benares, but the idea was somehow given up for the time being. Then came the turn of the temple Keshav Rai at Mathura built at a cost of 33 lacs of rupees by Rai Bir Singh Bundela in the reign of Jahangir. The temple was levelled to the ground and a mosque was ordered to be built on the site.

Similar destructions were ordered in the various Rajput States and Ajmer, Ujjain, Bengal and other provinces of the Empire. The temples of the Deccan, however, escaped the wrath of the Emperor

because of his delicate position in the south on account of the Maratha rising. In this hour of crisis, the Sikhs suffered equally with the Hindus for” Aurangzeb ordered the temples of the Sikhs to be destroyed and the Guru’s agents (*masands*) for collecting the tithes and presents of the faithful to be expelled from the cities” (Khafi Khan, *Muntkhab-ut-Tawarikh*. p. 652).

In the sphere of taxation, discrimination against the non-Muslims was reintroduced. Although *Jizya* was not re-imposed till 1679, the pilgrimage tax was relieved. In 1665 it was ordered that the customs duties on the Muslims be fixed at 2.5 per cent and on the Hindus at 5 per cent. For gardens Hindus were required to pay the rate of 20 per cent, whereas for the Muslims the rate was 16.6 per cent. In 1669-70 it was ordered that in a lunar year, the Muslims should pay 2.5.% and the Hindus 5% on the price of their cattle.

Equally critical was the position of the non-Muslims in the matter of conversions. This had occurred in earlier periods as well. Islam being a missionary religion and the ruling Muslim community being in minority, great importance had always been attached to conversion work and many ingenious devices had been employed to attain this much-desired goal. However, the tempo was greatly intensified during the reign of Aurangzeb. There is certainly a lot of exaggeration in the Hindu and Sikh traditions that the Emperor made it a habit of collecting a maund and a quarter of sacred Hindu *janeus* (sacred threads) every day, but that he took considerable personal interest in the matter is well borne out. The fact that a deputation of Pandits appeared in the *darbar* of Guru Tegh Bahadur in May, 1675 and complained of the Government conducting a wholesale campaign of conversion is a historical testimony too strong to be ignored.

### III

Having seen the Sikh spiritual thought that had been emerging before Guru Tegh Bahadur appeared on the scene, which he also inherited in all its richness, and the grave challenges posed by the triumph of Muslim orthodoxy under Aurangzeb, we now proceed to a brief study of Aurangzeb’s attitude towards the Sikhs.

In the very first year of his reign, sometime in July or August 1658, an incident occurred which prejudiced his mind against the Sikhs greatly. Dara who was in flight, posted a large force under Daud Khan on the Beas river to stock the passage of the river by the pursuing troops of Aurangzeb. A similar but much weaker attempt had been made by him a little earlier to block the passage of Aurangzeb's troops across the Sutlej river. On one of these occasions, Guru Hari Rai, at the request of Dara no doubt, sent his small contingent of 2,200 troops for his help. But Dara faltered and the Guru withdrew his men immediately. It is difficult to say whether it was out of any bonds of personal friendship, or in view of the vital issues at stake that the Guru took this step, but perhaps both of these considerations might have been present in his mind.

Getting the necessary handle for interference in Sikh affairs the Emperor sent for the Guru, asking him to present himself at the Court and answer the complaints made to him against the Sikh teaching. The Guru sent his elder son, Ram Rai, for this purpose. Ram Rai answered all the points raised successfully, and apparently satisfied the Emperor. However, Guru Hari Rai was not happy about his manner of replying to the Emperor's inquiries and disowned him. In October, 1661 Guru Hari Rai breathed his last and his younger son, Harkrishan, succeeded him. Aurangzeb took advantage of the change in Sikh Guruship and summoned the child Guru to Delhi. The Guru accepted the invitation and proceeded to Delhi where he had a meeting with the Emperor. While staying in Delhi, Guru Harkrishan was attacked by small-pox and passed away in March, 1664. The Emperor's prejudices, however, continued as before and in 1665 when Guru Tegh Bahadur who had succeeded Guru Harkrishan, was staying at Dhamdhan (Bangar, now Haryana), he was suddenly arrested and brought to Delhi. After a month or so, the Guru was released on the intercession of Raja Ram Singh of Amber, who had developed deep devotion to the Guru. As if this was not enough, when Guru Tegh Bahadur was returning in 1670 from Assam, he was again taken into custody and kept in confinement for about two months and a half. Again he was released and he returned to the Punjab *via* Lakhnaur.

At this time the country, particularly North India, was in the grip

of the terrific wave of consternation resulting from the general orders issued by Aurangzeb in 1669 for the demolition of old Hindu temples and schools and the ban on new constructions for their religious and educational institutions. In the course of his homeward journey from East India he had acquired ample personal experience of the feelings of awe and dismay assailing the minds of non-Muslims. As mentioned earlier in Section II, Sikhs too were made targets of official wrath and their local missionaries called *masands* were expelled from several towns and their temples were demolished. Seeing all these dark happenings, the heart of Guru Tegh Bahadur went out in sympathy to the suffering humanity. He toured extensively in the Malwa and Bangar areas and moved among the people to brace up their crestfallen spirits. Thousands of them came to have his holy *darshan* and to receive his message of courage and hope embodied in the dictum, "Fear not, nor give fear to others." After nearly a year and half of travelling about in this region, the Guru finally repaired to his head quarters, Chak Nanaki, presently called Anandpur Sahib.

Here at Chak Nanaki on 25 May 1675 a band of sixteen chief Brahmins of Kashmir sought the audience of the great Guru and narrated their tale of woe in a manner which went straight to the heart. Deeply moved by the Brahmins' appeal for help, Guru Tegh Bahadur pondered awhile and then announced his decision that he would even sacrifice his life for the sake of the afflicted humanity. The Brahmins' appeal was indeed the immediate cause of his decision. Otherwise, the Guru had long been aware of the grave situation that had been developing in the country for the last so many years.

One month and fourteen days after the visit of the Kashmiri Pandits, on 8th July, Guru Tegh Bahadur nominated his son, Gobind Das, as his successor and two days after departed in the direction of Delhi in company with three of his eminent Sikhs, Diwan Mati Das, Bhai Sati Das and Bhai Dyal Das. The Government was already aware of the Guru's views and sympathies and had even issued orders for his apprehension. Only two days after his departure from Chak Nanaki, on 12 July, 1675 he was arrested along with his three Sikhs at a village called Malikpur Ranghran, near Ropar. The arrests were made by Mirza Nur Muhammad Khan, Thanedar of the Ropar Kotwali. From Ropar

the prisoners were carried under heavy guard to Sirhind where they were confined till the arrival of definite instructions from the Empror Aurangzeb, then encamped at Hasan Abdal on the north-west frontier. On the receipt of these instructions, the Guru and his followers were removed to Delhi. The Subahdar of Delhi who was deputizing for the Emperor made three conditions to Guru Tegh Bahadur, namely: (i) to show a miracle, (ii) to embrace Islam, or (iii) to suffer death. He rejected the first two conditions and accepted the third. After five days of relentless tortures, on the fateful day of 11th November 1675 all the Sikh prisoners were executed. Dewan Mati Das was tied between two wooden planks and sawn alive from the top. Bhai Dyal Das was boiled, alive in a cauldron of steaming hot water. The third, Bhai Sati Das was wrapped with cotton and then set on fire. The Guru's turn came last but on the same afternoon. The old conditions were repeated by the Qazi. They were again rejected outrightly and the Guru was beheaded in full gaze of a large public gathering.

#### IV

What was the noble cause for which Guru Tegh Bahadur made the supreme sacrifice? What motivated him to do so? These questions may best be answered in the light of the following factors:

- (a) The ideology he had inherited from his distinguished predecessors;
  - (b) the circumstances which lead to the sacrifice;
  - (c) the evidence recorded by his son Guru Gobind Singh in *Bichittar Natak*; and
  - (d) the stage of historical development in which the society was found at the time.
- (a) The ideology inherited by Guru Tegh Bahadur from his predecessor Gurus had been noticed earlier in Section I. It will be seen from there that this ideology was based on a clearly recongnized sense of social commitment. Spiritual development founded on renunciation of worldly life and social responsibilities which go with it, accordingly, was considered of little merit and life lived away from society was not commended. In this system of thought, there was no room for *banbas* (living in jungles) and

*sanyas* (hermitage) which were rated so highly prior to the origin of Sikhism. Living in the midst of society and facing all its challenges bravely was a hallmark of this mode of thinking of Guru Nanak and his successors. So, the basis of all social life was to be *dharmā*, morality. Whatever activities one may indulge in, always the governing principle of one's conduct should be the moral values of truth, social justice, compassion, love, contentment and other such elements which may be categorized under this head. These moral values, the Gurus emphasised, are not meant for any particular segment of life but are to constitute the very bed rock of total social living embracing all aspects of society. Therefore, anything which is in accordance with *dharmā* was considered right and anything which is not, was held wrong. Similarly, anybody who helps the cause of *dharmā* by regulating his life according to it and by defending it when necessary was rated a good man (*sant*, *sadb* or *bhagat*) and anybody who acts contrary to it was reckoned as a wicked man (*dushta* or *sakta*). From this, it naturally followed that wickedness or tyranny, whatever its form, is to be resisted, as after the execution of Guru Arjan Dev, his son and successor, Guru Hargobind held the use of arms for the noble fight against tyranny as valid and embarked upon a well-thought out programme of militarisation of his community. An important implication of the moral basis of social life, as stressed by the Gurus, was respect for other people's modes of living and thinking. All these modes contain a degree of merit, more or less and as such are to be tolerated, if not accepted. The concept of plural society in which different approaches used by people are recognised as legitimate was an essential characteristic of the emerging Sikh ideology and any attempt to impose unity upon the people unmindful of their varying beliefs and practices was considered a violation of *dharmā* and an act of tyranny. Such an act of tyranny or breach of morality ought to be resisted as a moral obligation. To sum up, acceptance of social responsibility, recognition of *dharmā* as the basis of society, compassion for the suffering humanity, concern for the good of mankind, resistance to evil, if necessary with force, and acceptance of a plural society

with respect for other people's modes of living and thinking were the leading highlights of the Sikh ideology which the Ninth Guru inherited from the previous Gurus. Since it is firmly accepted among the Sikhs that the all ten Gurus thought the same way, this ideology was no mere inheritance for the Ninth Guru, but was fully shared by him.

- (b) Defeat of Dara and the triumph of Aurangzeb ushered in a new era in India. Dara's defeat marked the end of Akbar's liberalism and Aurangzeb's victory portended the ascendancy of Muslim orthodoxy and of the Sirhindi school of thought. True to his convictions, Aurangzeb was determined to convert India into a *Darul-Islam* which meant rejection of tolerance of other people's modes of life and thought, whatever their merit. Along with other non Muslims, Sikhs too had their share of troubles and difficulties on account of the new regime. Aurangzeb's interference in Sikh affairs started from the time of Guru Hari Rai, and although all his doubts and queries were satisfied authoritatively, he did not refrain from his policy of harassment. Guru Tegh Bahadur himself was arrested and kept in confinement at Delhi first in 1665 and then in 1670. Even more important than these acts of harassment was the all-out campaign of religious intolerance on the part of the Emperor started in 1669. The woes of the suffering humanity had a deep impact upon the sensitive mind of Guru Tegh Bahadur and both at his headquarters, Chak Nanaki, and in course of his travels through the country, he endeavoured to brace up the dispirited minds of the distressed people with his brave message about shedding all fear. The appeal of the Kashmiri Pandits for help, coming towards the end played a decisive role in so far as it helped the Guru in making his final resolve on the issue. However, from the manner in which the circumstances shaped themselves and finally led to the crucial point, it may be clear that the issues involved were wider and deeper than the compassion for a few woe-stricken Brahmins of a distant area.
- (c) Guru Gobind Singh's statement in his famous composition, *Bachittar Natak*, on the martyrdom of his father, Guru Tegh Bahadur, is the most authentic of all references to the event. The

opening lines of the Tenth Guru's account read as follows:

ਤਿਲਕ ਜੰ ਰਾਖਾ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਤਾਕਾ . ਕੀਨੋ ਬਡੋ ਕਲੂ ਮਹਿ ਸਾਕਾ.  
ਸਾਧਨਿ ਹੇਤਿ ਇਤੀ ਜਿਨਿ ਕਰੀ. ਸੀਸੁ ਦੀਆ ਪਰ ਸੀ ਨ ਉਚਰੀ.  
ਧਰਮ ਹੇਤ ਸਾਕਾ ਜਿਨਿ ਕੀਆ. ਸੀਸੁ ਦੀਆ ਪਰ ਸਿਰਰ ਨ ਦੀਆ.

*The Lord (Guru Tegh Bahadur) protected their paste-mark and sacred thread,*

*And performed a mighty deed in the Kali Age.*

*To protect the holy he spared no pains;*

*Gave his head but uttered not groan.*

*For the protection of dharma*

*He did this noble deed;*

*gave up his head but not his ideal).*

The reference in these lines to the protection of “their paste mark and sacred thread” bears an obvious connection with the appeal of the Kashmiri Pandits to the Ninth Guru for succour. But what motivated the Guru to make the supreme sacrifice of his life was a higher ideal. This has been indicated by the Tenth Guru by saying that the *saka* (great event) was for the sake of *dharmā* (*dharmā betu*).

What Guru Gobind Singh meant by the word *dharmā*, comes out very clearly from what the Guru says about his own mission, a few pages later, in the same work:

ਹਮ ਇਹ ਕਾਜ ਜਗਤ ਮੈ ਆਏ ਧਰਮ ਹੇਤ ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ਪਠਾਏ.  
ਜਹਾਂ ਤਹਾਂ ਤੁਮ ਧਰਮ ਬਿਥਾਰੋ. ਦੁਸਟ ਦੋਖਾਨਿ ਪਕਰਿ ਪਛਾਰੋ.

*(For this purpose was I born into the world;*

*For dharma's sake I am sent here by the Lord:*

*Ordained to promote dharma here and there.*

*And to demolish the wicked and the evil-minded,*

*Let all good people understand that I am born for this purpose:*

*To promote dharma, to protect the good, to extirpate the evil).*

Here the connotation of the term *dharmā* is so clear that there can be no mistake about its meaning. It stands for the Moral Law which indicates truth, justice, righteousness and other moral values. Now coming back to Guru Gobind Singh's account of his father's martyrdom, referred to earlier, it would be absolutely erroneous to understand his words *dharmā betu* in any narrow sectarian sense. Such a restricted usage of the term would be not only unfair to the high

human ideals of the great Guru, but also foreign to the longstanding valuable Sikh tradition based on the social philosophy of *dharmā* previously noticed in this essay.

(d) Whether we consider the long-standing Sikh ideology preached and practised since the time of Guru Nanak, or we take into account the circumstances that led to the martyrdom of the Ninth Guru, or the evidence of *Bachittar Natak*. It becomes clear that Guru Tegh Bahadur performed the mighty deed under the inspiration of high human ideals and values. Some of these may be mentioned as:

- (i) Compassion (*karuna*) for suffering humanity, for oppressed and exploited people;
- (ii) protection of *dharmā* (Moral Law) recognised in Sikh tradition as the basis of human society;
- (iii) Resistance to tyranny resulting from a breach of the norms of *dharmā*;
- (iv) respect and tolerance for modes living and thinking other than one's own, what is today termed as the ideal of plural society. At the then stage of historical development of Indian society, there was very little consciousness of human rights as such. Only the right of private property, not however in its absolute sense, was definitely known and also to a large extent recognized by the State. The consciousness about the human rights of speech, movement, association, worship etc. is of comparatively recent origin and has appeared everywhere as part of the struggle for democratization of the springs of political power. So far as our own country is concerned, such a consciousness first made its appearance in the 19th century and ever since then it has been growing in strength. Before our 'people began to grow influences, the fort in India was held by the concept of duty tracing down its roots in the remote past of India. However, duties and rights are closely interlinked and are the two sides of the same coin. Which were regarded as duties then, are in the modern period, in the presence of a strong consciousness of human rights, looked upon as correlates of rights. It is in this sense that it may be and is valid to speak of the right of freedom of conscience or worship or some other human right in connection with the motivation with which Guru Tegh Bahadur elected to sacrifice his life. □

## **GURU TEGH BAHADUR'S CONTRIBUTION FOR RESTORATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS**

**DR GURDEEP KAUR\***

---

The Modern Nations states of the present times claim themselves to be liberal and democratic but the bloodshed, hate crimes and violence in all its manifestations which is observed, reported and documented from across the globe bring a different picture to light. The twenty-first century is a knowledge driven society that values rationality, logical reasoning, progressive and constructive ideas but the inhuman approach is still largely visible and pervasive as people are still marginalised, exploited and ill treated on irrational grounds of class, caste, religion, ethnicity, language. The denial of civil liberties and basic freedoms sometimes in very explicit and sometimes in implicit ways is visible. It is really bothersome and disturbing for at least those who value human rights and the worth of every individual. Against this background it becomes imperative for us all to revisit the life, philosophy and approach of the ninth Sikh Guru, whose contribution to the safeguarding of human rights stays unmatched and unparalleled till this day of human civilisation. The courage and selfless service of Guru Tegh Bahadur in defense of the human rights is exemplary and we, the common people in no way can muster that amount of courage and match upto the selfless sacrifice that he performed so that justice can prevail and people are liberated of fear and anxiety. Nevertheless on the occasion of his 400th birth anniversary, all celebrations, webinars, seminars and samagams are of value only if his core teachings are understood in all its depth and attempts are made to bring those principles and teachings into practice at individual, community, state

---

\* Assistant Professor ( Political Science), Sri Guru Gobind Singh College of Commerce (University of Delhi) Email: <[gurdeep005@hotmail.com](mailto:gurdeep005@hotmail.com)>

and international level if we wish to establish a conducive and congenial environment for everyone's good and well-being.

Neither should the remembering of the Great guru be a once in a year effort nor should the academic and political discourse on human rights take place only on important days or when incidents of violence come into public domain. The present write up aims to emphasize on some of the fundamental teachings and precepts of Guru Tegh Bahadur that are instrumentally important for the sustenance of human rights for all. But prior to that, it is imperative to give a brief overview of human rights and its significance in Sikhism, the youngest religion of the world.

The idea of conceptualising human rights is of recent origin but the denial of human rights to a wide range of people across the globe has its roots in antiquity. For the restoration of peace and for establishing a fair order especially for the war torn nations, post the second world war, the efforts of the international community culminated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. The Declaration of Human Rights was the first constitution in the history of international organization. The declaration was a sort of statement of rights considered essential for human development all over the world. It is a useful instrument in providing a ready made statement of Human Rights, acceptable to the majority of the states. Post the endorsement of human rights, most nation states began the process of establishing numerous institutions and bodies to safeguard the rights of all especially the vulnerable and the marginalised. The international and national level measures and initiatives are enhanced, subject to both the common and specific needs and aspirations of people across the globe. However, human rights are violated and still millions of people across the globe are forced to live a life without the basic needs and by compromising their self respect and dignity. And sadly, innumerable cases of physical and mental torture, sexual abuse, humiliation and disrespect in various forms go unreported globally. Thus disciplining the society and encouraging people to imbibe the right practices is important to address both the reported and unreported cases of human rights violations. And in this regard, Sikh religion with its

insistence on moral values and ethical principles undoubtedly, can play a pivotal role in disciplining people across all societies.

The very foundation of the Sikh religion rested on the opposition to rudimentary practices and to raise voice against the then tyrannical political order. Guru Nanak emphasised that the purpose of religion was to promote ethical values and principles that can liberate people from suffering, both inner and outer and religion in no way should be a cause of suffering. He categorically condemned discrimination, hatred, animosity, greed, ego, avarice and slandering. He professed and propagated the ideas of equality, justice, fairness, love, brotherhood, coexistence and harmony across different sections of people during his udasis. To establish human rights in the then society he denounced the terror and ruthless rule of Babar as much as he opposed class -caste hierarchy; Hindu Muslim divide; gender inequality; undemocratic and immoral practices. For Guru Nanak peace, harmony and happiness should be everywhere and for everyone. Guru Tegh Bahadur ji lived upto the teachings of Guru Nanak both in words and deeds.

The successors of Guru Nanak upheld his values and ideals, taking forward the mission of establishing an egalitarian socio political order and a society where the dignity and respect of all -high or low; poor or rich; strong or weak; men or women; vocal or voiceless is restored, each of the Guru contributed in his own unique way. All his successors made immense contributions both by composing hymns and shabads to bind people together and also took measures in practice so that everyone is able to enjoy their basic freedom. Since Sikhism is a revelatory religion that aims at social emancipation besides spiritual rejuvenation, innumerable constructive and developmental activities were undertaken like digging wells, arranging for the education of the less privileged; abolishing sati system, waging a war to combat aggression of the invaders; condemnation and denouncing of purdah system and alike.

Besides these contributions, as a mark of reinforcing his commitment to religious tolerance and peace, Guru Tegh Bahadur ji 's martyrdom for the preservation and safeguarding of the rights of the community other than his own has indeed lent a distinctive

recognition to the youngest religion of the world. Following his martyrdom a new chapter of the Sikh history began, the testimony to it is the supreme sacrifices of the Sikhs in the 18th century that they made for the protection of the non-sikhs. Indeed Guru Tegh Bahadur's novel and a non violent response to express his firm commitment to secular and democratic principles is exemplary and will be remembered till eternity. As mentioned earlier, we mortal beings lack such courage and selfless approach and to us only our vested interest matters that is the reason perhaps the world is in such crisis. Despite the intensified and fast communication facilities we are disconnected by heart and soul; despite wealth we aren't happy; despite strong institutions and commitment to principles of equality and justice there is chaos all over, violence is rampant; social order is disrupted. Therefore it becomes pertinent that we re-visit the poetic compositions and life of Guru Tegh Bahadur which are a reflection of his ennobling spirit, transcendental vision, and humanistic outlook. His divine message can indeed enlighten us all and help us do our bit for establishing a congenial environment wherein all can enjoy their human rights.

To fight injustice and tyranny and for safeguarding human rights it is important that all people stand upright for the cause for which fearlessness is important. In context of this Guru Tegh Bahadur ji says that as long as there is attachment for material things a war cannot be waged fearlessly. Detachment from materialism gives both inner and outer courage. When not attached with your personal possessions including your family and loved ones, there is no fear of losing anything. And when there is no fear, one is physically, emotionally and mentally prepared to fight evil and is ready to face all consequences. Today we observe farmers across India protesting on the borders of Delhi, they are doing it fearlessly, and that fearlessness is derived from their legitimate and ethically cause. Many people would argue that they are also after materialistic things but that is there just demand. Moreover, a fearless person himself also does not engage in any malpractices.

It is the fear that keeps us at a backfoot whenever there are human rights violations at large. Our fear justifies the act of the wrong doers and it emboldens the strength of the tyrant and perpetrators of violence

and misdeeds.

Further, through the poetic composition of Guru Tegh Bahadur one finds the instruction and moral teaching that one should abstain from falsehood, deception and cheating others because with this we only fill our own bellies and devoid many from their legitimate claims. And when everyone is engaged in such deals and exercises repeatedly, no way can there be a congenial environment of equality, parity and empathy. Hence no rights especially for the poor, meek, peripheralized and powerless people.

Diversity is the hallmark of human civilization and without diversity there is no richness and vibrancy. God has created all beings and no two people are alike then how can one be inclined or be made to affiliate with one set of culture, religion, traditions and values. It would not be incorrect to mention that Diversity is natural and inalterable. If people are forced to abandon their religion then it is a sheer abrogation of human rights. Diversity is valued and respected in Sikhism. In affirmation to the multicultural social order, Sikh Gurus initiated the tradition of interfaith dialogue, martyrdom and establishment of Khalsa at different periods of Sikh history. Sikh Gurus played an extraordinary role in protection and promotion of multicultural society.

Guru Tegh Bahadur valuing the moral precept of Sikhism and as path shown by Guru Nanak and all predecessors, voluntarily accepted martyrdom for the preservation of diversity and multicultural practices. Ninth Nanak showed no sign of anger, hatred and malice to the Aurangzeb who had ordered for his execution. This is exemplary and sends across the message that one must remain within the Divine command and Will. Contrary to the Emperor's expectation and provocation, Guru sahib did not show any miracle. Other than his unique contribution for saving plurality and humanity, his Universal message that diversity be embraced with open arms must be internalised by us all for securing a fair world order.

Guru Tegh Bahadur's message of universal peace and brotherhood; tolerance and compassion; understanding and empathy; secularism; multiculturalism ; detachment from materialistic pursuits;

focussing on inner and outer peace are of relevance in all time and in all ages. Today, we all are entrapped in this fast moving world, so much are we engrossed in worldly pursuits that hardly do we think about the repercussions of our acts - on us and on others around us; we don't introspect and look for follies within us but always are we prepared to find faults in others. In this globalised era millions die from poverty and malnourishment; people lose their land and livelihood due to the expansion of the capitalistic tendencies; people are hired at exceptionally low wages and forced to work in poor conditions of work; some die without work and some die due to hazardous conditions of work; some are forced to migrate and some are denied the right to migrate. All in all the human rights violations in various manifestations like domestic violence, religious fundamentalism, fanaticism, sexual abuse, denial of civil liberties, lynching, genocide, holocaust and similar other kind by different agencies is observable at different levels. To address such challenges of contemporary times, Guru Tegh Bahadur's bani and philosophy can help us greatly in overcoming the vices inside us and eventually we can focus ourselves to right actions, his divine wisdom can guide us to act and react in a way that is morally right and socially acceptable. There is no better way to conclude this write up other than quoting the words of Wisdom of **His Holiness the Dalai Lama** "Guru Tegh Bahadur's entire life, pure and pious like Ganges was devoted towards Tap, Tyag, Bhakti, Aradhana, religious freedom, tolerance and utmost courage. His humanitarian aesthetic values aimed to foster brotherhood, tolerance, understanding, and goodwill among all sections of society. His Bani shows universal truth, righteous path in every sphere, every aspect, every walk of life and guides us how to be in tune with the Infinite."

~ ~ ~

#### REFERENCES

- Ahluwalia, J. S. 2000. Sikhism and the 21st Century Society. The Sikh Review, Vo. 48. No. 560. p. 73

- Singh, Dharam. 2003. Sikh Spirit and the Global Society. *The Sikh Review*, Vol. 51. No. 598
- Singh, Kapur. 2011. Essentials of Sikhism. In Baldev. Singh (Ed.), *Sikhism and the Sikhs*. Kapurthala: Baldev Singh. p. 85.
- His Holiness the Dalai Lama, “Guru Tegh Bahadur: Prophet and Martyr” in *Hymns of Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib*. translated in English by Pujya Dada Chellaram Professor Mohanlal Narwani. (New Delhi: Nij Thanw [11/ 11 Pusa Road, New Delhi – 110005], 1995.

□

ਨਰ ਅਚੇਤ ਪਾਪ ਤੇ ਡਰੁ ਰੇ ॥  
ਦੀਨ ਦਇਆਲ ਸਗਲ ਭੈ ਭੰਜਨ ਸਰਨਿ ਤਾਹਿ ਤੁਮ ਪਰੁ ਰੇ ॥ ੧ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥  
ਬੇਦ ਪੁਰਾਨ ਜਾਸ ਗੁਨ ਗਾਵਤ ਤਾ ਕੇ ਨਾਮੁ ਹੀਐ ਮੋ ਧਰੁ ਰੇ ॥  
ਪਾਵਨ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਗਤਿ ਮੈ ਹਰਿ ਕੋ ਸਿਮਰਿ ਸਿਮਰਿ ਕਸਮਲ ਸਭ ਹਰੁ ਰੇ ॥ ੧ ॥  
ਮਾਨਸ ਦੇਹ ਬਹੁਰਿ ਨਹ ਪਾਵੈ ਕਛੁ ਉਪਾਉ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਕਾ ਕਰੁ ਰੇ ॥  
ਨਾਨਕ ਕਹਤ ਗਾਇ ਕਰੁਨਾ ਮੈ ਭਵਸਾਗਰ ਕੈ ਪਾਰਿ ਉਤਰੁ ਰੇ ॥

(ਗਉੜੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੯, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਪੰਨਾ ੨੨੦)

## **GURU TEGH BAHADUR – A PROPHET OF PEACE, COMPASSION, FEARLESSNESS AND FORGIVENESS**

**LT GEN R S SUJALANA\***

---

On the birth of Guru Tegh Bahadur on 01 Apr 1621, Bhai Buddha, the head priest of Har Mandir Sahib blessed him with these words, "Thy mighty Spirit and Sacrifices will shake them (the Mughals) from the foundation. May you be Brave and Heroic enough to be the bearer of the cross of humanity and live and die like a True Saviour!"<sup>1</sup> Thus, Guru Tegh Bahadur grew in an atmosphere of religious discipline, besides imbibing the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib. He was also made conversant with other religious scriptures and learnt the importance of religion in life and spiritual communion with God. He was trained as a scholar in various languages and history, a poet and musician, a mystic and also in the art of soldiering. From his mother, Nanki he imbibed tenderness, humbleness, compassion and the joy of charity and care of the less privileged. From his Father, Guru Har Gobind, he gained the qualities of self-control, tranquility, coupled with fortitude, physical courage and to fight for *Dharma* (righteousness). Over long periods of introspection and contemplative meditation, the will of God was enlivened deep into his heart and soul to seek strength to fulfill his destiny. He assimilated and imbibed the spirit of freedom from fear, rare moral and spiritual courage. He realised, as Sir Daljit Singh writes, 'the real nature of the world- the abode of *Dukh* (Pain), nothing could be achieved without suffering,'<sup>2</sup> as also the impermanence of mortal life and true meaning of life and death.

As a soldier he was well trained in the martial skills of wielding

---

\* ret'd., Email: <[sujlanaraj51@gmail.com](mailto:sujlanaraj51@gmail.com)>

weapons like *shamsbir* (sword), (a straight sword with a broad blade), Khanda, Sirohi (a Damascus sword) mace (*gurz or gada*), horsemanship and often took part in hunts. At the age of 13 years, he fought valiantly in the Battle of Kartarpur in 1636 and his conduct was acclaimed as ‘sharper than the edge of a double-edged sword.’ However, he decided not to unsheathe the sword of his father but went forth to give peace, love and care for all people a chance to make the world a place worth staying in. After the spirit of the Sixth Guru passed on to the seventh Guru, Guru Har Rai, Tegh Bahadur with his Mother, Nanki as per his father’s desire, moved to Baba Bakala. Here for the next two decades or so he spent his time in study, spiritual discourses and silent communion with the all pervading spirit of the Almighty to be aware of the Divine omnipresence and truth. Pursuit of spiritual freedom apart, he attended to his family commitments and was conscious of the growing oppression and fear due to the social and political changes underway. His advocacy of righteous living with honesty and truthfulness, forgiveness and mercy were be a way of life. Life had to be worth living by love without vanity, hating fellow humans is as good as hating God himself, ‘why this pride? Know this world too be no more than a dream, Saith Nanak explicitly: none of thy possessions shall last with thee.’<sup>3</sup>

### **HUMBLENESS AND COMPASSION**

Guru Tegh Bahadur like Guru Nanak personified humbleness. For a living, he worked with His hands. His earnings first went to charity and feed the needy and only then did he partake anything, it was ‘sharing and caring’ in the real sense. When the time came for him to be the Ninth Guru, he kept to himself at Baba Bakala despite being aware of his rightful place. He was discovered by Makhan Shah. Historical records show that this rich merchant had promised 500 gold mohars to the Guru if his ship sailed through sea safely during a violent storm. After landing safely, Makhan Shah made his way to Bakala to fulfill his promise. There he tested out the many claimants to the Guru-Gadi, offering only one gold mohar to each claimant till he reached Guru Tegh Bahadur engrossed in meditation. Here too he offered one gold mohar but the Guru asked him to keep his promise. Makhan Shah fell at his feet and offered the balance 499 coins and went out to

announce, 'I have found the Guru!' Guru Tegh Bahadur was still reluctant to be acclaimed so, but he accepted this only because he had a moral duty to perform. Jealousies erupted; an attempt was even made on his life but he showed no enmity, patience prevailed.

### **FORGIVENESS**

Guru Tegh Bahadur was an ocean of mercy and compassion as when some of his followers looted Dhir Mal a rival, and his nephew, he reminded them of what Guru Nanak had said, 'Forgiveness is a great virtue it is better than gifts or bathing at sacred places and performing other acts of merit.' He asked them to return the loot, saying that forgiveness is divine, it generates love and makes one contented in life. Moreover, 'Anger led to loss of senses and one is incapable of being rational and loses one's *budhi* or understanding.' Revenge and hate make one miserable and one burns within. Compassion came to him naturally, he identified himself completely with the sorrow and agony of the people. Hatred of each other or of another religion was unworthy. No religion had the right to convert by force, coercion, threats or material gains.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Mankind is one and He was determined to improve the lot of poor by ensuring their economic upliftment. His thrust to improve the lot of people was continuous, during his lifetime he got hundreds of wells with Persian wheels dug in Punjab, Haryana, UP, Bihar and Bengal. Water scarcity was overcome, in parched lands irrigation and agriculture developed. Cattle breeding was another pursuit, cattle were distributed free of cost, milk production generated a source of livelihood. Later with time, trade developed between Punjab, Bengal and Assam. This enabled Guru Gobind Singh to procure military equipment like horses, swords and other weapons from these areas. As well-being came about, individuals were humanized, got a fresh lease of life, and it stopped the chaotic decay of society.

### **A SAGE OF PEACE**

His travels to the East to spread the word of *Wabe Guru* and took him to Dacca and further to Kamrup (land of the cupid, the present

Assam (Ahom) which in ancient times was also known as Pragjyotisha (the land of Astrology). There the Guru met Raja Ram Singh who was leading an expeditionary force against the Raja of Kamrup, Chakradhwaj Singha. The Assamese were unnerved by the large Imperial Army, but were confident that the supernatural powers of their women magicians with their tantric mantras and sorcery would keep the enemy away. The Guru who was encamped at Rangamati on the right bank of the Brahmaputra<sup>4</sup> was given a taste of the renowned skill of sorcery of Assam, but faced by the light of reality and truth which radiated from the mind of the Guru all this had no effect. The Raja of Kamrup learnt about the presence of Guru Tegh Bahadur and Raja Ram Singh and realised the invincible power that he faced.

The Guru as a man of peace convinced both the Rajas not to go to a senseless war. He told Raja Ram Singh that he had come here only at the behest of Aurangzeb, as such, this war was neither for a Righteous Cause nor was it in sync with his Dharma. Raja Ram Singh took heed of this and accompanied the Guru to Dhubri to meet the Raja of Assam and peace was established, 'as a mark of friendship (both the Rajas) exchanged their turbans.'<sup>5</sup> To mark this event a 'mount of peace was erected at Dhubri with red earth brought by the soldiers of both the armies on their shields,'<sup>6</sup> where today stands the famous Gurudwara Damdama. The Sikhs of Dhubri are known as Damdamya and their help was sought in all freedom fights of the Assamese against aggressors. Even during the Anglo- Assamese War the Damdamya Sikhs of Dhubri played a significant role by fighting for the Assamese.<sup>7</sup> A part of a document (much of which was destroyed in a fire) is still preserved in the Kamakhya Temple, speaks of the qualities of the Guru, 'inscrutable are the ways of the merciful Guru... He is God in human flesh...with a calm courage and a sun-like splendour, his heart ever rests in sunya, the silence of self-realization on seeing him the strength of his enemy and opponents failed...at heart he is detached, exalted in spirit, firm in his concentration of mind, he performs all worldly duties like a worldly man. He travelled into the most difficult regions, suffered the hardship of strenuous journey in far-flung regions of the east just to meet the humble and patient seeker of truth.'<sup>8</sup>

### FEARLESSNESS

With belief in the power of God and by giving up attachment to wealth, body and other earthly possessions, to be indifferent to pleasure and pain, Fearlessness is achieved, ‘Truly happy is one who chants God’s praises; The whole world is enmeshed by Maya and gripped by fear...take shelter with him who is full of grace to the humble and annuls all fear.’<sup>9</sup> Moreover, when the mind is free of desire and fear, it becomes calm and serves no evil passions. This is the reflection of the Lord, ‘he who discards greed and desires and gives up lust for wealth, He who is free from joy and sorrow, and serves not evil passions, know him verily to be a God in Flesh.’<sup>10</sup> The gift of fearlessness is granted by God’s Blessings, ‘Nanak, all resources exhausted, to the Lord’s shelter has come; Lord Grant him the boon of fearlessness.’<sup>11</sup> Guru Tegh Bahadur advocated that as a rule, ‘he who fears no one, nor strikes fear in anyone, consider his mind says Nanak, such a man to be a sage.’<sup>12</sup> Guru Tegh Bahadur declared that the object of life is to carry out God’s Will (*Hukam*) and if necessary be prepared to sacrifice his life for the sake of the cause.

### SACRIFICE AND MARTYRDOM

Aurangzeb was determined to snuff out all who did not agree to his socio- religion and political policies. Fanaticism had overtaken his thoughts, he felt that the land where he ruled was Dar-ul-Harb (Land of Infidelity) and he had to turn the country into Dar-ul-Islam (Land of Faith). The Guru was a man of peace, the Emperor was falsely informed that with the growing power of the Guru he will sally forth to hostilities, whereas the truth was contrary, ‘the companions of Tegh Bahadur moved about like mendicants; the bearing of swords and arms was not customary among them.’<sup>13</sup> On the orders of Aurangzeb, Iftikhar Khan, Governor of Kashmir, ‘tyrannized over the Brahmans of Kashmir to such an extent that they approached Guru Tegh Bahadur and solicited his personal intervention.’<sup>14</sup> Why did the Brahmans solicit the intervention of the Guru when they knew that his beliefs were different? The reason was straight forward, the Guru was a known champion of Human rights, a man of peace, fearless and of such moral courage that he would abide by Dharma (Righteousness) to

help them. The Brahmans had no faith in any other religious head. Expectedly, the Guru was so moved by the plight of the Brahmans that his compassion over took him, their sorrow became his, and He decided on his course of action. The Brahmans were asked to convey to Aurangzeb that they would all convert to Islam provided Guru Tegh Bahadur adopted Islam!

The emperor initially summoned the Guru then ordered his arrest. Despite the pleading of his followers, the Guru proceeded on his final journey only with five followers. Enroute he continued to preach, no one wanted to give up the Guru or be associated with such an act. However, when he reached the Malikpur Rangharan Village, near Ropar close to the Sutlej River he was arrested by Kotwal Nur Muhammad Khan Mirza with the help of the local Ranghars and sent to Sirhind.<sup>15</sup> At Sirhind the Guru spent over three months in jail and then was sent to Delhi. Trilochan Singh, however writes that the Guru was arrested from the outskirts of Agra.<sup>16</sup> The Subedar of Delhi and the royal Qazi, tried their best to convert the Guru to Islam, assured him of a high Honourable and exalted position and riches but the Guru did not yield and responded, ‘when one has undertaken to protect anyone, let life be given up rather than forsake the vow of protection and support faith and to uphold *Dharma* (Righteousness) and morally support the cause of humanity.’ Failing in their endeavor, the Guru was inflicted upon the cruelest and most inhuman ‘bodily tortures’<sup>17</sup> physical and mental torture. Some locals even approached him that they would buy his freedom but the Guru asked them not to do so as espousing the cause of the downtrodden was closer to his heart. The mental torture severely tested the Guru’s resilience and determination as he was made to watch the terrible death of his close associates; Bhai Mati das was sawn alive, Bhai Dayal Das was tied and thrown in to a cauldron of boiling oil and Bhai Sati Das was torn to pieces. Guru remained steadfast in his conviction and declared that his mission to uphold freedom of religion was supreme, the threat of death posed no terror; he was prepared for death and would cheerfully accept it.

When his end was near, Guru Tegh Bahadur intuitively sent Gobind Rai this message, ‘All human power has failed, Humanity groans in chains; moral efforts are of no avail; Lord save them ‘O’ save!’<sup>18</sup> To

this Gobind Rai replied in a similar mystical mode 'Lord! Strength has arrived; the bonds are snapped as under; For liberty and truth everything is possible. Saith Nanak Lord everything is in thy hands.'<sup>19</sup> This is the only couplet of Guru Gobind Singh in the Sri Guru Granth Sahib. The Guru was convinced that Gobind Rai was ready to take on his responsibility and set aside the fears of his followers who were worried that Gobind Rai was too young to take on the mantle of Guruship. Guru Tegh Bahadur achieved martyrdom on 11 Nov 1675. Dynamism marked his life, he uplifted the condition of the people and awakened the people to their social, economic, spiritual and political rights. He gave the people moral courage to challenge threats to freedom, integrity and religion. Showed them the path of moral and spiritual effort to meet any challenge to freedom, integrity, religion fearlessly.

The light of this holy personage merged with the Almighty by a heroic deed for the sake of Dharma (Righteousness), his supreme sacrifice is unique in history of mankind, it was just for love of suffering of humanity. Guru Tegh Bahadur, like all his predecessors since Guru Nanak, was neither a Brahman nor did he believe in putting on their rituals or symbols, but to save their religion, 'For the sake of Righteousness (*dharmā*); He did this heroic deed, He readily gave his head but did not give up his conviction. He refused to 'show miracles or to embrace Islamism'<sup>20</sup>, a cheap way of fooling people.<sup>21</sup> Instead He readily gave his head rather than give up his conviction, '*Pran Diya Par Wachan Na Diya*' ! His memory lives on in Delhi, the Sisganj Gurudwara where he was executed for abiding in his faith, for his refusal to convert to Islam and for his courage of conviction Rakabganj Gurudwara is where a devotee burnt his own house to cremate his beloved and humane Guru.

Thus, Tegh Bahadur whose fourth birth centenary is being celebrated in April 1921, was a crusader and champion of equality, fraternity, freedom of religion human rights and civil liberties. The torch of liberty and human rights that he lit has been kept bright and burning since then all over the globe, by those who were imbued with the same spirit. This flame of liberty lit by him is still burning bright.

~ ~ ~

## REFERENCES

1. Trilochan Singh, Guru Tegh Bahadur - Prophet and Martyr (A Biography), Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Delhi, 1967, p.5
2. Raja Sir Daljit Singh, Guru Tegh Bahadur, p.8
3. Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS), Sloka 41, p.1428)
4. Raja Sir Daljit Singh, Guru Tegh Bahadur, p.61
5. Trilochan Singh, Guru Tegh Bahadur, p.253 Note 29
6. www.easternpanorama.in;Trilochan Singh, Guru Tegh Bahadur, p.249
7. Trilochan Singh, Guru Tegh Bahadur, p.251
8. Trilochan Singh, Guru Tegh Bahadur, p.250. note 30 and p.254
9. SGGS, p.220
10. SGGC, Sloka 13, p.1426
11. SGGS, p.703
12. SGGS, Sloka 16, p.1427
13. Ganda Singh, The Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur, p.9, quoting Siyar-ul-Mutakhhirin of Ghulam Husain Khan
14. Ganda Singh, p.11, quoting History of Kashmir, p.371, by PNK Bamzai
15. Ganda Singh, p.15 quoting various sources
16. Trilochan Singh, Guru Tegh Bahadur, p.308
17. Latif, History of The Panjab, p.260
18. SGGS, Sloka 53, p.1429
19. SGGS, Sloka 54, p.1429
20. Latif, History of The Panjab, p.260
21. Guru Gobind Singh, Bachittar Natak, Apni Katha

□

ਸੁਖੁ ਦੁਖੁ ਦੋਨੋ ਸਮ ਕਰਿ ਜਾਨੈ ਅਉਰੁ ਮਾਨੁ ਅਪਮਾਨਾ ॥  
ਹਰਖ ਸੋਗ ਤੇ ਰਹੈ ਅਤੀਤਾ ਤਿਨਿ ਜਗਿ ਤਤੁ ਪਛਾਨਾ ॥

(ਗਉੜੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੯, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਪੰਨਾ ੨੧੯)

## SRI GURU TEGH BAHADUR: THE DEFENDER OF DEMOCRATIC VALUES

DR ARVINDER SINGH\*

---

Sri Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji was born to the sixth Sikh Guru, Guru Hargobind, and his wife, Mata Nanaki on Vaisakh Vadi 5, (5 Vaisakh), Bikrami Samvat 1678, (1st April, 1621) in the holy city of Amritsar (Punjab). He was trained as a warrior by his father and he participated in most of the battles fought by Guru Hargobind Sahib. He composed 116 *shabads* (Divine hymns) in 15 *ragas*, and his Divine compositions have been included in the *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*. From the life, divine hymns and teachings of Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur, we come to realize his great passion, his enduring efforts and hope for the creation of free, fair, pluralistic, secular and harmonious society. After Guru Nanak, it was Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur who undertook extensive preaching tours of India. Along with his prominent Sikhs, he covered Majha, Doaba and Malwa regions of Punjab and some areas of present day Haryana, known as *Bangar*. He also undertook a long tour of North-Eastern India and preached Sikhism in far-flung areas of present day Bangladesh and Assam state to create awareness among the masses about the significance and indispensable need of human rights, individual liberties, respect for human dignity, social justice, secularism, national unity and peaceful coexistence.

At a time, when modern concepts like, democracy, human rights, liberty, equality, fraternity, secularism and right to religious freedom etc. were not yet in vogue in the West, similarly, in an authoritarian and bigoted regime of Mughal Emperor in India (31 July 1658 – 3 March 1707) Aurangzeb where speaking out for one's rights was

---

\* Principal, Gujranwala Guru Nanak Khalsa College, Ludhiana; Email: <arvindersinghbhalla@gmail.com>

considered an invitation to death and at a time when the oppressed and innocent masses had no say, Sri Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur had come forward to defend the righteousness, and showed an unparalleled and exemplary courage to speak out against oppression and injustice and vociferously expressed his democratic concerns. The life, teachings and philosophy of Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur not only reflects his democratic aspirations but also conveys the message to the masses to make the basic tenets of the democratic way of life a part of their practical life. He travelled extensively to awaken the fear-stricken conscience of the people, to make them aware of their rights, to encourage them to raise their voice against socio-economic injustice and political tyranny, and to uphold moral and democratic values in their practical life. By sacrificing his life, Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur urged Indians to live with dignity, to fight for their rights, not to tolerate oppression under any circumstances and to live fearlessly without intimidating anyone. He was indeed a great liberator and saviour of mankind. He was also champion of the right to religious freedom in era of religious fanaticism. He laid down his life in the defence of human dignity, justice, socio-religious harmony, religious freedom, socio-religious and cultural pluralism, secularism, humanism, freedom of choice, freedom of expression and right to resist. He taught his disciples to protect the ones who needed protection, even if it comes at the cost of one's own life. He taught liberation from worldly attachments, fear and dependence. He believed that strength should be gained through cultivation of truth, worship, sacrifice and knowledge.

Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur was also a multifaceted genius, great visionary and an embodiment of enlightenment, tolerance, love, courage, compassion and justice. He was much ahead of his times. When human civilization was ignorant of the concept of human rights, when human life depended on the will and mercy of autocratic kings, when people were not even allowed to worship according to their own religion, when social structures were based on discrimination, when superstitions and ignorance were rampant, Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur was practically teaching people to adopt a democratic way of life for the betterment of mankind and a brighter future.

Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur through his teachings and divine message in the 17<sup>th</sup> century tried to inculcate the democratic values among masses and encouraged people not only to adopt democratic values but also to strive for democratic way of life. He worked tirelessly to remove the obstacles that stood in the way of creation of just and democratic social order as well as defended the democratic values by sacrificing his life. He taught the masses to raise their strong voice against political oppression, to make any sacrifice to live with dignity, to fight for their rights and to do good to humanity by forgetting personal interests. He had professed, practiced and propagated the democratic values. He was a true protagonist of national integration and secularism. He was a strong critic of political oppression, religious chauvinism and socio-religious discriminations. He had preached the idea of equality, freedom, fraternity, justice, harmony, unity, peace, secularism through his divine compositions to the entire world.

Following the teachings of his predecessors, Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur not only carried forward their mission but also set a new benchmark in the Sikh way of life in tune with democratic values by putting them into practice. Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur performed the mighty deed under the inspiration of high human ideals and values. Some of these may be mentioned as: (i) Compassion (*karuna*) for suffering humanity, for oppressed and exploited people; (ii) protection of *dharmā* (Moral Law) recognized in Sikh tradition as the basis of human society; (iii) resistance to tyranny resulting from a breach of the norms of *dharmā*; (iv) respect and tolerance for modes of living and thinking other than one's own, what is today termed as the ideal of pluralistic society.<sup>1</sup> He raised a strong voice against a theocratic state, racial arrogance, sectarian communal divisions, religious extremism and despotic rule of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb. He had a firm faith in the idea of common Fatherhood of God and Universal Brotherhood of mankind. When he learnt about Aurangzeb's intentions of building India into an Islamic state, he decided to vouch for the simultaneous existence of other existing religions of Sikhism, Islam and Hinduism. Sikhism believes in a plural and fair society. Therefore, diversity is an obvious and natural phenomenon. God has created his kingdom of living beings in multiple names, forms and colours. This

multiplicity is the beauty and grandeur of nature and is created by God himself. Therefore, it must be maintained. No individual, however high he may be on earth, has the right to dictate anyone else to follow his way of life. Freedom and equality for all, is the fundamental principle of Sikhism.<sup>2</sup>

With the passage of time, Emperor Aurangzeb intensified his policy of persecution of Hindus and the use of force for conversion of people to Islam particularly in Panjab and Kashmir. He asked the local Governor of Kashmir to put pressure on the Hindu Pandits to embrace Islam. Overcome by panic, they came in a delegation to Anandpur to seek the protection of Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur. He patiently listened to their tales of repression and consoled them. He felt that the sacrifice of a holy man only could restrain the idea of forcible conversion of the masses to Islam. At this moment his nine-year-old son, Gobind Rai, told his father that he was the fittest man to uphold the freedom of faith and conscience. So Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur decided to stand up for the right of freedom of worship and told the delegation that he was ready to sacrifice his life to protect the Hindus from mass conversion.<sup>3</sup>

When a delegation of Kashmiri Pandits came to Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur for help, Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur helped them unconditionally without considering their caste, religion, race, region, language, etc. He had just focused only on the fact that those who were seeking his help were victims of political oppression, no one was ready to help them and they did not have the sufficient strength to fight against the tyrannical ruler. Recognizing the Kashmiri Pandits as an integral part of the entire human race, Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur carried forward the Guru Nanak's mission to help the needy, helpless victims of oppression. In order to defend the centuries-old knowledge traditions of Brahmins and to counter Aurangzeb's policy of religious fanaticism, Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur set an unparalleled and ultimate example when he laid down his supreme sacrifice to defend the righteousness, right to religious freedom and human dignity of every section of society. He resisted strongly the forcible religious conversion and stated that if Aurangzeb was able to convert him successfully then all the Hindus would follow suit. Soon, Guru Ji was arrested along with his followers and was

subjected to physical torture for many days. He was publicly beheaded in the year 1675 on the orders of the emperor as he had refused to embrace Islam. He made the supreme sacrifice for the sake of religious freedom so as to ensure the establishment of a world order based on harmony, peace and unity. He was of the view that the goal of social solidarity and religious harmony can only be established when nobody would be forced to change religion under pressure tactics.

Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur had a firm belief that state had no right to coerce people into changing their religion. He advocated an idea that rulers should not impose their whims or unjustified will over the masses and should give due regard to the universal moral values. He thus defended *dharmā*, which is righteousness, under a regime which had taken to the path of oppression and tyranny. He stood for those values and traditions which the soul of India has evolved and cherished over millennia, and which are some of the noblest ideals held by humanity. His sacrifice, therefore, was for a cause which was of the highest order. It is a fact that Guru Nanak had raised his voice against the Hindu ritualism and symbolism. He did not appreciate the externalia (like the frontal mark and the sacred thread) of Hinduism, but still when the freedom of religion had been thwarted by a despot, Guru Nanak would have also gone to its rescue. In 1675, it was his successor Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur who did, what none else could do.<sup>4</sup>

Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom was unique and unparalleled in the annals of human history. He laid down his life in defence of religious tolerance, of freedom of worship, and freedom of conscience. In practical parlance, this meant defence of the ritual sacred thread and frontal mark signifying the Brahminical way of life, which Sikhism had discarded now for two centuries. Here was a martyrdom, which was self sought for the defence of basic human values, which centuries later were incorporated by the U. N. General Assembly in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in December 1948.<sup>5</sup> After the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur, the history of the Sikhs assumed a new dimension. The Sikhs waged open struggle against the organized oppression of the Mughals. The masses thought that in order to face the various challenges, they would have to be more resolute and determined to fight for their freedom in all spheres of life. The people

from all sections of the society thought Sikh religion alone was the only way to get liberation from the suppression. So more and more people were attracted towards Sikhism. Thus Sikhism came to the forefront with its own distinctive character. And years later, on Baisakhi Day of 1699, when Guru Gobind Singh created the Khalsa institution with the call for a “head,” he must have been unconsciously remembering his father’s gift to humanity. The demand that stunned the Baisakhi congregation of 1699 was but what Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur had already set forth in his lifetime. The pluralistic motivations of his father must have resonated deep within the son and eventually led to his ideal of the Khalsa, which would valorously defy all sorts of religious and social exclusions.<sup>6</sup>

In the current scenario, there is an immense need to uphold and emulate high ideals of democracy, secularism and humanitarianism embodied by Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur. His divine compositions, which are included in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, preach the message of unity of mankind, universal brotherhood, righteousness, courage and compassion, which need to be followed by one and all. He died not while protecting any particular religion but while protecting the right of everyone to religious freedom, right to resistance and human dignity. He was perhaps the first martyr of mankind for human rights, who attained the martyrdom for defending the right to religious freedom. This event happened long before the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) guaranteed every one’s right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. It was also much before the establishment of Western democracies. He lived at a time when even personal laws were oppressive and the right to worship as per one’s choice was denied, culminating in an atmosphere of fear and severe backlash. His supreme sacrifice as defender of the ‘dharma’ is unparalleled in the history of mankind and stands out as a landmark for humanity. In today’s world, scarred by religious fanaticism and intolerance, he is truly a hero to be revered and emulated. Our real homage to the great Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur would be to follow his teachings in true spirit and dedicate ourselves to serve society, especially the poor and downtrodden, with dedication and missionary zeal by rising above the parochial considerations of caste, colour, creed

and religion. There is also an immense need to spread his socio-religious philosophy and message of respect for human rights, individual liberties, social harmony, national integration and religious tolerance for the entire world.

~ ~ ~

### REFERNCES

1. Fauja Singh. “*Guru Tegh Bahadur and Human Rights.*” In *Guru Tegh Bahadur Background and Supreme Scarifice*, edited by Gurhachan Singh Talih. Patiala: Punjabi University, 1999. p. 59
2. Darshan Singh. “*Dr Oberoi’s Journey into Obscurity?*” In *Invasion of Religious Boundaries*, edited by Surinder Singh Sodhi and Gurbakhsh Singh Gill Jasbir Singh Mann. Chandigarh: Institute of Sikh Studies, 1995, pp. 139-140
3. Ramesh Chander Dogra and Gobind Singh Mansukhani. *Encyclopaedia of Sikh Religion and Culture*, Missouri: South Asia Books, 1995.
4. Surinder Singh Kohli. “*Guru Tegh Bahadur-The Ninth Nanak (1621-1675).*” In *Fundamental Issues in Sikh Studies*, edited by Jasbir Singh Mann and Gobind Singh Mansukhani Kharak Singh. Chandigarh: Institute of Sikh Studies, 1992. p. 167.
5. Sangat Singh. *The Sikhs in History: A Millenium Study with New Afterwords.* New Delhi: Oscar publications, 2001, p. 46.
6. Nikky-Guninder Kaur Singh, *The Birth of the Khalsa*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005. p. 25.

## THE POETRY OF GURU TEGH BAHADUR

DARSHAN SINGH MAINI

---

If poetry is in an important sense, a continual exercise in asceticism and self-sacrifice, then that brief body of verse which Guru Tegh Bahadur has bequeathed to us, and which we find enshrined in the Guru Granth is surely unique in purity and purpose even in the annals of religious poetry. For, outside of the poetry of his grandfather, Guru Arjan Dev, and of his son, Guru Gobind Singh, we know of few compositions that authenticate so soulfully and magnificently the paradox of poetry and life, or of poetry in life. Surely the meaning of his martyrdom is as much to be found in the events of the day that propelled his agonised psyche, brimful of compassion. as in those hymns and couplets which become one long lament over the creature folly of man lost in dreams of self. Power and pride. Undoubtedly, we have here a rare example of the coalescence of verse. vision and life. One is. indeed. tempted to suggest a poetics of sacrifice.

It may again be pertinent to point out that the manner in which the apostolate came to Guru Tegh Bahadur reveals a pondered and studied life-style. Not till he had been located and proclaimed Guru did he elect to walk out of that willed obscurity which provided the key to his vision of life. No wonder, his verse is but an effortless testimony to the energies that lit up that vision. When the moment of assumption arrived. he was ready for the great ministry. The song became celestial as it reached out after the essences earned in silence and prayer. That's, why, there is a certain unmistakable quality of pathos and rigour about it. It's as though Guru Tegh Bahadur has been vouchsafed an epiphany that warranted heights of visionary heroism.

---

\* Reproduced from the book *Guru Tegh Bahadur - Background and the Supreme Sacrifice*, Edited by Gurbachan Singh Talib, published by Punjabi University, Patiala, 1999.

This poetry-59 hymns and 57 slokas or couplets – then, is a sustained elegy of a kind, mourning in different musical measures, the state or condition of man bound on ‘the wheel of fire’. A moving lyric and elegiac tone is superbly maintained in song after song with equal felicity of image and metaphor. Indeed, a relentless dialectic of life and death is set up so that even the common listener or reader is forced to face the chaos and horror of existence divorced from God. Within this dialectic, the themes of the transience of life and the ineluctability of death on the one hand, and of the uniqueness of man’s estate in the order of creation and the Grace of God on the other, are worked out without respite. It is marvellous indeed how the divine maestro plays upon these motifs in endless variations. The incremental strain in the end becomes a symphony of suffering.

Guru Tegh Bahadur’s preoccupation with the theme of impermanence and mortality in his verse shows no sorrow over the short sojourn of man in this world. The keen edge of grief and the abiding nostalgia which we generally find in lyrics of this nature do not form part of his vision. On the contrary, the anguish here stems from the thought of separation from the Lord. The annulment of this state is sought with a view to achieving the desired consummation. No wonder, the world is seen as an insubstantial pageant, and life as an ebbing dream. This idea is so deeply ingrained as to suggest a settled disregard for the beauties and allurements of life. The metaphors of shadow, cloud, smoke, sand, spume, bubble and mirage etc. continually present human existence as something unreal, illusory and deceptive. The irony of man’s existence or fate is never lost sight of.

*My devotee friends.*

*Be hold’ such is this creation of God.’*

*Amidst the universal play of death*

*Man considers himself immortal.*

*Strange is this beyond words*

*Man gripped by lust, violence, attachment*

*Has put away from his mind the Divine Image.*

*And holds eternal this mortal frame.*

*Insubstantial as dream at night-time.*

*All that is visible is mortal as passing cloud-shadows,*

*Nanak, Servant of God has known this world to be insubstantial,  
And for Divine protection prays.*

(Hymn II in Gauri, Guru Granth Sahib, p. 219)

In another hymn in *Telang raag* man's ignorance of his true state is stated thus:

*"Each moment thy life flows off as out of broken pitcher. Ignorant fool!  
Why neglect devotion to the Lord?"*

(Tilang Mahalla 9, Guru Granth Sahib, p. 726)

Inevitably, where life is regarded as *maya* or illusion, death assumes a central position in the scheme of things. However, it's not seen as a 'ravisher' or as a 'bridegroom', but as an awesome 'hangman' waiting to cast his 'noose' round your neck. The dire and horrendous nature of that reality, calculated to jolt the sinful and slothful man into an awareness of his precarious purchase on life, is also brought home to us through terrifying animal imagery.

*Behold Death, prowling around  
Like a terrible beast of prey with fangs showing;  
One day it must clutch at thee-have no doubt of it.*

(Hymn I in Sorath, Guru Granth Sahib, p. 631)

The death motif in the Ninth Guru's verse is pervasive to the extent, we begin to see life's cease as the only reality in a world of shifting shadows and dreams. Obviously, this relentless and heavy accent on death reveals, at the same time a sense of equanimity in the contemplation of that frightful event. A settled serenity characterises Guru Tegh Bahadur's attitude in this regard. He has conquered the fear of death, and later his martyrdom in the cause of dharma and truth may thus be seen as fore-shadowed in his verse. **In other words, the deed vindicates the vision. "Ripeness is all", to use Shakespeare's memorable line. "The Nirvana principal"** of Freud—"the effort to reduce, to keep constant or to remove internal tension due to stimuli" – may be extended to include the primal essence of nirvana as *mukti* or *moksha* or deliverance from the cycle of birth and death. Death, viewed thus, holds no terrors; it becomes the medium of that ultimate peace which all saints crave.

It will be misleading, of course, to conclude from what has been said above that Guru Tegh Bahadur viewed life as such with complete disregard or disdain. True, life's blandishments do not attract him, and he is indifferent to its material satisfactions, but this is merely to say, he has again and again emphasized in his verse the power of sensual pleasures, wealth, position and authority etc., and he knows that the common man is destined to seek his salvation within such confines. What, therefore, matters is the cultivation of a sensibility which learns to view these "blessings" in the context of moral order and spiritual advancement. Indeed, life is even regarded as a "precious jewel", a unique opportunity earned by us after aeons of dumb agony and darkness. To be born human amidst countless creatures that constitute the lower orders of life is to have already achieved distinction.

*After wandering through various births for aeons,  
At last hast thou attained the human incarnation.  
Saith Nanak : This is thy occasion to find union with the Lord  
Neglect devotion nowise!*

(Hymn II in Sorath)

Thus, all life's beauties are to be turned into a beautiful vision, whereby the glories of heaven become the measure of our reach and grasp. To remain pitifully attached to them is, on the contrary, to invite perpetual dukha or suffering.

Such a view of life obviously subsumed the ubiquity of evil. In Guru Tegh Bahadur's verse, there are few purely metaphysical assumptions in regard to this problem. That's to say, evil in its primeval, atavistic form (as in Christian theology, for instance) does not quite appear here, though perhaps evil in man's unconscious is by implication countenanced here and there. For the Guru, evil exists in all types of attachments whose purpose is animal pleasure. Even the wariest of ascetics is seldom free of taint.

*In the sinful heart is lodged lust.  
There from the mind irrepressible cannot be snatched back.  
Yogi, wandering ascetic and recluse –  
All are caught in its noose.*

(Hymn II in Basant)

Evil, then, subtly invades all minds, for it's lodged in unappeased desires and appetites. Its progeny include avarice, envy, passion, pride, violence egoism, slander etc. One in a million, says the Guru, is able to survive "the worldly poison", and achieve transcendence.

The source of all suffering in Guru Tegh Bahadur's view is the maverick mind of man, Restive and ungovernable, it is continually foraging for fresh fields of desire. Visions of lust and power and greed possess it, and thus, the sense of value and judgement is clouded. Its intractable nature is the subject of so many hymns and couplets that the style itself reflects the pre-occupation of the Guru with this theme. *Mana re or Re mana* i.e. "O my mind". thus become the signature phrase that launches one poem after another.

*My mind, what evil thoughts hast thou grasped?  
Keeping absorbed in the pleasures of lust and slanders,  
And neglected of devotion.*

(Hymn III in Sorath, Guru Granth Sahib, p. 631)

Or

*Mother mine, this mind is nowise in my power;  
Running day and night after evil courses, how I restrain it?  
Impervious to holy teaching,  
Seeking other's wealth,  
Coveting their womenfolk.  
Making waste of all this life.'  
Madilened by heady liquor of world pelf  
Blind to words of Divine wisdom –  
Ignorant of the Immaculate Lord's mystery,  
Whose dwelling is in the heart.*

(Hymn VII in Sorath, Guru Granth Sahib, p. 632)

Thus, the disciplining of the mind is considered. as in the poetry of Guru Nanak. something supreme and godlike. A person who is able to cultivate poise and stillness. and can hold "dust and gold", or "joy and sorrow" or "friend and foe" alike merges into the Lord as "water into water". However, in the end, deliverance comes as an act of Grace. No amount of knowledge. wisdom, wit or cunning is of any avail without it. This basic concept of Sikhism is given utterance in varying metaphors. In one of these, God is referred to as "the Ocean

of Grace”.

Again, Guru Tegh Bahadur comes down heavily upon those who seek salvation through empty and ritualistic fasting and bathing, pilgrimage and prayer. These worldly ‘pieties’ in no way ensure a passage to eternity. So long as one’s heart is entangled in worldly pursuits and pleasures, there can be no complete annulment of pain and suffering. Only a realisation of the inner reality can lead one into realms of truth. But such a state is vouchsafed to only the elect few. Millions of householders pitifully cling to their worldly belonging even when age and decay have overtaken them. In a number of hymns and couplets, the Guru draws the erring mortal’s pointed attention to senescence and approaching death, and to the need for resipiscence or the recognition of one’s error.

When we turn from the theme and thought of Guru Tegh Bahadur’s verse to his language and idiom, imagery and metaphors, allusions and analogues, we are obliged to view his poetics in the context of the literary tradition of the times. The 17th century neoclassical style, which was the prevailing or dominant mode of expression in Northern India when Guru Tegh Bahadur assumed his apostolate in 1664 is appropriated with skill and ease. Unlike Guru Nanak and the other earlier Gurus who composed their verses in Punjabi and used Braji Hindi sparingly, the Ninth Guru employed chaste Braji throughout. However, it may be pointed out that his language which in the eastern districts of the Punjab assumed the form of neighbouring Punjabi dialects. Thus the bani of the earlier Gurus provides not merely thematic or doctrinal, but also, linguistic continuity, in a manner.

To begin with, his hymns are composed in various classical Indian ragas, and, as such, are musical in essence and structure. Not only that, they also reflect the meaning and spirit of these measures which between themselves cover almost the entire gamut of human emotions. Again, the rigour which characterises the Guru’s thought in certain hymns is aptly mirrored in striking and strong ropes, just as his humility and sweetness are seen in images of tenderness and compassion. For instance, the unregenerate sinner or the heedless hedonist immersed

in sensuality is shown as “incorrigible as cur’s tail”, and as “a stone lying in water unsoaked.” Besides the canine image, almost always used in a pejorative sense, there are other animal images suggesting sloth, rankness, appetite, filth and grime etc in human nature when it is untouched by light. One such image is that of the hog (Sloka 44) ‘One whose heart is denuded of devotion to God-Saith Nanak: Little difference is he from the filthy hog or hound’. Similarly, images of death range from “Yama’s noose” and “a beast of prey with fangs” to one’s dear and near one shunning his ghost after life is departed. Guru Tegh Bahadur’s eschatology is obviously severe and unsparing.

Each hymn has a characteristic invocation style, and generally begins with Sadho or “Devotee friends”, Mai or “Mother, mine”, and Mana Re/Re Mana or “O my mind”. Such a form of invocation, though traditional in Bhakti poetry, gives the hymns nostalgic reverberations. Since these are all lyric outpourings of a soul in bliss, even the severest of them show a deep and abiding compassion. This is not a poetry born of tension and tumult, but of peace and poise. The element of longing for the Lord does give it a passionate intensity, but this intensity bespeaks ardour and devotion rather than conflict or torment.

Guru Tegh Bahadur’s use of classical myths, allusions and symbols in the established literary tradition of medieval poetry is calculated to aid understanding. The myth of the rescue of the Elephant from the Crocodile when it prayed to the Preserver, Lord Vishnu, and the stories of the redemption of the courtesan, Ganika, and of the sinner, Ajamal, were so common in Hindu religious lore that the common reader or listener toward whom these hymns were chiefly directed felt the full force of these moving hymns. Not only did these allusions ensure continuity and universality, the style also gained in compactness and density. However, there is no crowding or hurrying of images. The words and figures fall in their places as of right. To be sure, there are also common images of beauty and fulness as in the following hymn in Dhansari, though their appeal stems from the unusual and refreshing union of the rose and mirror images.

*Why seekest Him thou in waste places?  
The Lord all-pervading, eternally immaculate,  
fills all thy being,*

*As does the fragrance the rose.  
 The reflection the mirror.  
 The Lord ever abides in us :  
 Seek Him inside the self  
 Know, inside ourselves and outside is He alone .  
 This truth the Preceptor has revealed.  
 Saith Nanak, Servant of God;  
 Without contemplating ourselves the filth  
 of illusion disappears not*

(Dhanasri, M. 9, Guru Granth Sahib, p. 684)

It will be seen that the hymn characteristically ends with the name of Nanak, the First Sikh Guru, in whose name all the Gurus composed their poetry in succession. The hymns of Guru Tegh Bahadur thus appear in the Guru Granth as verses of “the Ninth Bride of God.” Besides being a mystical mode of expression, it’s clearly an exercise in humility and self-effacement. The successive apostles were no poets in the ordinary sense of the word; they were inebriated saints who in denying their own identity reached supreme heights of poetic expression through the lyric ardour of their possessed imaginations.

Guru Tegh Bahadur’s poetry is restricted to a few dominant leitmotifs, and though slender in volume, burns fiercely like a flame. Its purity comes from a disciplined mind. The great sociological and political concerns of Guru Nanak’s poetry-poverty, injustice, exploitation, iniquity, war and plunder etc.-are apparently not encountered here in any overt form. Since the dominant note in his verse is Vairag or dispassion, it’s understandable that the affairs of the world left him somewhat untouched and uninvolved. Since his whole vision is other-worldly, and since life here is viewed more as dream, and man, as a handful of dust, the immediate problems of polity and society do not engage his attention. Which is, however, not to suggest that he distanced himself in the manner of a recluse. As one deeply agonized over the state of man, his humanist concern is seen time and again in a unique marriage of compassion and dispassion. The imagination of pity has also become the imagination of indignation.

Our last view of Guru Tegh Bahadur composing verses during

his imprisonment in Delhi prior to his martyrdom in 1675 is something so sublime as to make us ponder the problem in awe. A noble and consecrated saint at utter peace with himself is contemplating his approaching death with a fortitude rare in human history. The 57 slokas or couplets, some of which were presumably composed in Aurangzeb's prison-the concluding section of the Guru Granth – constitute a unique paean of exultation and transcendence. Nearly all the themes of his earlier hymns are repeated, but now the immediacy of death-a major theme in itself-gives these couplets a compelling urgency. The receding tableau of life flits past the Guru's vision to disappear in the effulgence of the promised shores. From the bank of time on his side of eternity, a great soul is poised for the joyous leap. The concluding couplet affirms his triumphant and abiding faith in the immanence of God and in the imminence of his union with Him.

*In this hour have I lodged the Name of God in my heart God's  
Name that is supreme over all.  
Whose meditation annuls all suffering  
And favours the devotee with sight of the Divine Face.*

(Sloka 57)

□

ਸਾਧੋ ਇਹੁ ਜਗੁ ਭਰਮ ਭੁਲਾਨਾ ॥  
ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮ ਕਾ ਸਿਮਰਨੁ ਛੋਡਿਆ ਮਾਇਆ ਹਾਥਿ ਬਿਕਾਨਾ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥  
ਮਾਤ ਪਿਤਾ ਭਾਈ ਸੁਤ ਬਨਿਤਾ ਤਾ ਕੈ ਰਸਿ ਲਪਟਾਨਾ ॥  
ਜੋਬਨੁ ਧਨੁ ਪ੍ਰਭਤਾ ਕੈ ਮਦ ਮੈ ਅਹਿਨਿਸਿ ਰਹੈ ਦਿਵਾਨਾ ॥

(ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਪੰਨਾ ੬੮੪)

## ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ-ਸਰੋਤ: ਗੁਰਰਤਨਾਵਲੀ

### ਡਾਕਟਰ ਗੁਰਮੇਲ ਸਿੰਘ\*

ਗੁਰਰਤਨਾਵਲੀ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ ਦੇ ਸੁਮੇਲ ਤੋਂ ਹੈ ਗੁਰ+ਰਤਨਾਵਲੀ; ਗੁਰ ਤੋਂ ਭਾਵ ਹੈ 'ਗੁਰੂ' ਅਤੇ ਰਤਨਾਵਲੀ ਤੋਂ ਭਾਵ ਹੈ 'ਰਤਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਲੜੀ' ਅਰਥਾਤ ਗੁਰੂ ਰੂਪੀ ਰਤਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਲੜੀ। ਗੁਰਰਤਨਾਵਲੀ ਵਿਚ ਦਸ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਦੀ ਮਹਿਮਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਨਾਲ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਦਾ ਆਚਰਣ, ਸ਼ਕਤੀ, ਗੁਣ, ਸ਼ਖਸੀਅਤ, ਅਧਿਆਤਮਕ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀਆਂ, ਵੰਸ਼, ਗੁਰਿਆਈ ਸਮਾਂ, ਜੋਤੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਮਾਉਣ ਦੀਆਂ ਤਾਰੀਖਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਵਖ-ਵਖ ਨਗਰਾਂ ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਕੁਝ ਮਹਤਵਪੂਰਨ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਮਿਲਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਗੁਰਰਤਨਾਵਲੀ ਇਕ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਗੁਰ ਬੰਸਾਵਲੀ ਹੋ ਨਿਬੜਦੀ ਹੈ।

ਗੁਰਰਤਨਾਵਲੀ ਦਾ ਰਚਨਾਕਾਰ ਬਾਬਾ ਤੋਲਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਰਚਨਾ ਵਿਚ ਦਰਜ ਸਾਖੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ 10 ਹੈ। ਬਾਬਾ ਤੋਲਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਾ ਸੰਬੰਧ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਮਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਬਿੰਦੀ ਬੰਸ ਨਾਲ ਹੈ। ਬਾਬਾ ਤੋਲਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਮਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਬਿੰਦੀ ਵੰਸ਼ ਦੀ ਨੌਵੀਂ ਪੀੜ੍ਹੀ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਸਨ, ਜਿਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਕੋਲ ਗੁਰੂ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਤੱਖ ਗਿਆਨ ਸੀ। ਆਪ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਪਿਤਾ ਦਾ ਨਾਂ ਬਾਹੜ ਮਲ ਅਤੇ ਆਪ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਤਿੰਨ ਭਰਾ ਬਾਬਾ ਸਰੂਪ ਦਾਸ (ਲੇਖਕ ਮਹਿਮਾ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼), ਬਾਬਾ ਬੰਸੀਧਰ ਅਤੇ ਆਤਮਾ ਰਾਮ ਸਨ। ਗੁਰੂ ਅਮਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਕੁਲ ਦੇ ਪੁਰਸ਼ਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਮ ਨਾਲ ਸਤਿਕਾਰ ਵਜੋਂ 'ਬਾਬਾ' ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦੀ ਵਰਤੋਂ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਗੁਰਰਤਨਾਵਲੀ ਦੇ ਕਰਤਾ ਨੂੰ ਕੇਵਲ ਤੋਲਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਕਹਿਣ ਦੀ ਜਗ੍ਹਾ 'ਬਾਬਾ ਤੋਲਾ ਸਿੰਘ' ਕਹਿਣਾ ਵਧੇਰੇ ਠੀਕ ਬਣਦਾ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰਰਤਨਾਵਲੀ ਦੇ ਕਰਤਾ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਇਸ ਰਚਨਾ ਦੇ ਰਚੇ ਜਾਣ ਦੇ ਬਾਰੇ ਕੋਈ ਸੰਨ-ਸੰਮਤ ਦਰਜ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤੀ, ਪਰ ਇਹ ਰਚਨਾ ਬਹੁਤੀਆਂ ਥਾਵਾਂ ਤੇ ਮਹਿਮਾ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਇਕੋ ਜਿਲਦ ਵਿਚ ਬੰਨ੍ਹੀ ਹੋਈ ਮਿਲੀ ਹੈ। ਅਨੁਮਾਨ ਤਹਿਤ ਇਸ ਰਚਨਾ ਦਾ ਰਚਨਾਕਾਲ 1776 ਈ. ਦੇ ਆਸ ਪਾਸ ਬਣਦਾ ਹੈ। ਪੁਰਾਤਨ ਜਨਮਸਾਖੀ, ਬਾਲੇ ਵਾਲੀ ਜਨਮਸਾਖੀ, ਗਿਆਨਰਤਨਾਵਲੀ, ਮਿਹਰਬਾਨ ਵਾਲੀ ਜਨਮਸਾਖੀ, ਗੁਰਬਿਲਾਸ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਛੇਵੀਂ, ਗੁਰਬਿਲਾਸ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਦਸਵੀਂ ਆਦਿ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕ ਰਚਨਾਵਾਂ ਇਸ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਦੇ ਰਚੇ ਜਾਣ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਲਿਖੀਆਂ ਗਈਆਂ ਹਨ, ਪਰ ਮਹਿਮਾ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਨੂੰ ਛੱਡ ਕੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਾਰੀਆਂ

\* Email <[gurmails1976@gmail.com](mailto:gurmails1976@gmail.com)>

ਰਚਨਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਸਾਰੇ ਦਸਾਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਦਾ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲਦਾ, ਕੇਵਲ ਗੁਰਰਤਨਾਵਲੀ ਵਿਚ ਦਸਾਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਬਾਰੇ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਵਾਰ ਸੰਖਿਪਤ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ। ਲੇਖਕ ਨੇ ਇਸ ਰਚਨਾ ਦਾ ਮੁਖ ਮਨੋਰਥ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਦੀਆਂ ਸੀਨਾ-ਬ-ਸੀਨਾ ਚਲੀਆਂ ਆ ਰਹੀਆਂ ਯਾਦਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕਲਮਬਧ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਿਖੀ ਦੇ ਅਸੂਲਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਦ੍ਰਿੜ੍ਹ ਕਰਵਾਇਆ ਹੈ। ਲੇਖਕ ਨੂੰ ਵਖ-ਵਖ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਦਾ ਚੋਖਾ ਗਿਆਨ ਹੈ, ਇਸ ਦਾ ਪਤਾ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਲਿਖਤ ਵਿਚ ਵਰਤੇ ਗਏ ਫ਼ਾਰਸੀ, ਬ੍ਰਜ, ਪ੍ਰਾਕ੍ਰਿਤ ਆਦਿ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਨੂੰ ਲੇਖਕ ਨੇ ਕਾਵਿ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ। 1

ਇਉਂ ਗੁਰਰਤਨਾਵਲੀ, ਸਿਖ ਸਰੋਤ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਪਰੰਪਰਾ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਬੰਸਾਵਲੀ ਪਰੰਪਰਾ ਦਾ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਹੈ, ਭਾਵੇਂ ਇਹ ਕਾਵਿ-ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਆਪਣੀ ਵਿਧਾ (ਗਣਨਏਸ) ਸਾਖੀ ਪਰੰਪਰਾ ਨਾਲ ਜੋੜਦਾ ਹੈ। 2 ਇਹ ਸਰੋਤ ਬੁਨਿਆਦੀ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਮਹਿਮਾ ਲੜੀ ਦੀ ਨਿਧੀ ਹੈ। 3 ਇਸ ਦਾ ਵਿਚਾਰਾਧੀਨ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਪਾਠ, ਅਧਾਰ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਦੇ ਪੰਨਾ 122 ਤੋਂ 131 ਤਕ ਚਲਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਦੇ ੬੬ ਬੰਦ/ਛੰਦ ਹਨ। ਦੋਹਰਾ, ਚੌਪਈ ਤੇ ਕਬਿਤ ਵਿਚ ਰਚੇ ਵਿਚਾਰਾਧੀਨ ਪਾਠ ਦੀ ਅਧਾਰ ਧੁਨੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਬਾਣੀ, ਖਾਸਕਰ ਸਲੋਕ ਹਨ। ਕਰਤੇ ਬਾਬਾ ਤੋਲਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ 'ਕਿਰਤ' (ਬਾਣੀ/ਸਲੋਕਾਂ) ਨੂੰ 'ਕਵੀ' (ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਜੀ) ਦੇ ਹਵਾਲੇ ਨਾਲ ਸਮਝਣ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ, ਉਦਾਹਰਨ ਹਿਤ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਸਿਧ ਸਲੋਕ:

ਭੈ ਕਾਹੂ ਕਉ ਦੇਤ ਨਹਿ ਨਹਿ ਭੈ ਮਾਨਤ ਆਨ ॥ (੧੪੨੨)

ਦੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ/ਅਰਥ ਧੁਨਿ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੇ ਦੋਹਰੇ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਸਪਸ਼ਟ ਸੁਣਾਈ ਦਿੰਦੀ ਹੈ:

ਸਮ ਦੁਖ ਸੁਖ ਨਿਰਭੈ ਸਦਾ ਭੈ ਨਹਿ ਦੇਵੈ ਆਨ ॥ (ਬੰਦ ੮)

ਰਚਨਾ ਉਤੇ ਵੇਦਾਂਤ ਦਾ ਕੁਝ-ਕ ਅਸਰ ਹੈ; ਵਿਚਾਰਾਧੀਨ (੬੬) ਪਦਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ੩੧ ਤੋਂ ੪੬ ਤਕ 'ਅਥਿ ਗਿਆਨ ਵਿਗਿਆਨ ਭਗਤਿ ਵਰਨਨੰ' (ਪੰਨਾ 125) ਹੀ ਹਨ। ਤਤਕਾਲੀ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਗ ਵਿਚ ਅਜਿਹੇ 'ਵਰਣਨੰ' ਸੁਭਾਵਿਕ ਹਨ, ਪਰ ਕਿਤੇ ਵੀ ਉਸ ਨੇ ਵੇਦਾਂਤ ਪਰੰਪਰਾ ਵਿਚ ਆਪਣਾ ਯਕੀਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਤਾਇਆ, ਸਿਵਾਏ ਵਰਣਨ ਦੇ, ਬਲਕਿ ਉਹ ਤਾਂ ਸਪਸ਼ਟ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਅਜਿਹੇ ਭੇਖਾਂ, ਭਰਮਾਂ ਦੀ 'ਮਿਥਿਆ' ਤੋਂ ਦੂਰ ਹਨ (ਬੰਦ ੫੩; ੫੪)। ਕਰਤਾ ਬਾਬਾ ਤੋਲਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਗੁਰੂ ਪਰੰਪਰਾ ਨੂੰ 'ਮਹਲਾ' ਪਰੰਪਰਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਲਖਦਾ/ਲਿਖਿਆਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ; ਇਸੇ ਕਰਕੇ ਤਾਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ ਹਰ ਸਾਖੀ ਦਾ ਸਿਰਲੇਖ ਮਹਲਾ ੧,੨,੩... ਕਰਕੇ ਰਖਿਆ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਸਰੋਤ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਦੈਵੀ ਸ਼ਖਸੀਅਤ ਨੂੰ ਸਾਡੇ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਕਈ ਥਾਂ ਪ੍ਰਤਥ ਤੇ ਕਈ ਥਾਂ ਪਰੋਖ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕ ਤੇ ਸਿਧਾਂਤਕ ਵੇਰਵੇ/ਸੰਕੇਤ ਵੀ ਦੇ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ।

ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕ ਤਿਥਾਵਲੀ ਤਥਾ ਬੰਸਾਵਲੀ ਵਿਚ ਉਹ ਸਪਸ਼ਟ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਪਿਤਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਿਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਜੀ ਹਨ, ਜੋ ਗੁਰੂ ਵੀ ਹਨ: ਮਾਤਾ ਦਾ ਨਾਂ ਨਾਨਕੀ ਜੀ ਹੈ। ਆਪ ਦੀ ਸੁਪਤਨੀ (ਮਾਤਾ) ਗੁਜਰੀ ਤੇ ਪੁਤਰ (ਗੁਰੂ) ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਹਨ :

ਸੋਢੀ ਹਰਿਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਗੁਰ ਪਿਤਾ ਨਾਨਕੀ ਮਾਤ ॥

ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਗੁਜਰੀ ਪਤਿ ਗੁਰ ਗੁਬਿਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਤਾਤ ॥ (੬੪)

ਕਰਤਾ ਦੇ ਕਥਨ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ 10 ਸਾਲ, 5 ਮਹੀਨੇ ਅਤੇ 21 ਦਿਨ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਨੇ ‘ਭਗਤਿ ਰਾਜ ਕੀਆ’; ਭਾਵ ਗੁਰਿਆਈ ਵਿਚ ਸਰੀਰ ਰਖਿਆ:

ਪਾਚ ਮਾਸ ਅਰੁ ਵਰਿਖ ਦਸਿ ਇਕੀ ਦਿਨ ਸੁਭ ਜੋਇ ॥

ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਰਾਜ ਗੁਰ ਕੀਆ ਭਗਤਿ ਯੁਤਿ ਹੋਇ ॥ (੬੫)

ਸੰਮਤ 1732 ਬਿ., ਮਘਰਿ ਸੁਦੀ 5 ਵੀਰਵਾਰ ਆਪ ਜੋਤੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਮਾਅ ਗਏ:

ਸਤਾਰਾ ਸੈ ਬਤੀ ਸਮਤੁ ਵੀਰਵਾਰ ਕੇ ਨਾਇ ॥

ਮਘਰਿ ਸੁਦੀ ਥਿਤ ਪੰਚਮੀ ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਸਮਾਇ ॥ (੬੬)

ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਕੀਤੇ ਸੰਕੇਤ ਮੁਤਾਬਿਕ ਇਸ ਰਚਨਾ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਬਾਰੇ ਜੋ ਵੇਰਵਾ ਹੈ, ਉਹ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਨਾਲ ਸਿਧਾਂਤਕ ਵੀ ਹੈ; ਤੇ ਬਹੁਤਾ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਦੈਵੀ ਤੇ ਮਹਾਨ ਸ਼ਖਸੀਅਤ ਬਾਰੇ ਚਾਨਣਾ ਪਾਇਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਕਰਤਾ ਵਾਰ ਵਾਰ ਸਪਸ਼ਟ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਸਮਾਨ ਅਵਸਥਾ; ਸਮਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਵਾਲੇ ਹਨ, ਉਹ ਕਿਸੇ ਇਕ ‘ਫਿਰਕੇ’ ਲਈ ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਏ, ਉਹ ਤਾਂ ਸਭ ਦੇ ਸਾਂਝੇ ਹਨ (੧੨)। ਕਰਤਾ ਦੀ ਨਜ਼ਰ ਵਿਚ ਉਹ ਨਿਰੇ ਤਲਵਾਰ ਦੇ ਧਨੀ ਹੋਣ ਕਾਰਨ ਹੀ ‘ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ’ ਨਹੀਂ, ਸਗੋਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਕਾਮ, ਕ੍ਰੋਧ, ਲੋਭ ਆਦਿ ਜਿਹੇ ਹੰਕਾਰੀਆਂ/ਵੈਰੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਰ ਲਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ, ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ‘ਬਹਾਦਰ’ ਹਨ (੧)।

ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਦੀ ‘ਵੈਰਾਗ’ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਨੂੰ ‘ਉਦਾਸ’ ਪਦ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਬੋਧਨ ਕਰਕੇ, ਉਹ ਸੰਕੇਤ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਲੋਕ ਪਰਲੋਕ ਦੀਆਂ ਇਛਾਵਾਂ ਤਜ/ਤਿਆਗ ਦਿਤੀਆਂ ਹਨ (੨)। ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਭਰਮ ਲਾਹ ਦਿਤੇ ਹਨ, ਇਕ ਆਤਮਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਵਿਚ ਲਿਵਲੀਨਤਾ ਲਾਈ ਹੈ (੩), ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਭ ਵਿਚ ਆਤਮਾ ਦਾ ਸਰੂਪ ਵੇਖਿਆ ਹੈ, ਕਿਸੇ ਵਿਚ (ਹਿੰਦੂ/ਮੁਸਲਿਮ ਦਾ) ਭੇਦ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤਾ (੪), ਸਗੋਂ ਅਜਿਹੀ ਮਾਇਆ ਤੋਂ ਨਿਰਲੇਪ ਰਹਿੰਦਿਆਂ ਇਕ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਵਿਚ ਸੁਰਤੀ ਲਾਈ ਹੈ (੫)।

ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਬੁਧਿ ਹਮੇਸ਼ਾ ਸਥਿਰ ਰਹਿਣ ਵਾਲੇ (ਬਿਵੇਕ) ਗਿਆਨ ਵਿਚ ਲਗੀ ਰਹਿੰਦੀ ਹੈ (੫); ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਥਾਇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਕਾਮ, ਕ੍ਰੋਧ, ਮਮਤਾ, ਦੰਭ ਆਦਿ ਸਭ ਤਿਆਗ ਦਿਤੇ ਹਨ (੬)। ਉਹ ਪਾਵਨ ਬਿਰਤੀ ਵਾਲੇ ਸਾਰੀਆਂ ਚਾਹਤਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਮੁਕਤ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਤੇ ਲੋਹੇ-ਕੰਚਨ (ਸੋਨੇ) ਨੂੰ ਇਕ ਸਮਾਨ ਸਮਝਦੇ ਹਨ (੭)। ਵੈਰੀ ਮਿਤ੍ਰ ਨੂੰ ਇਕ ਸਮਾਨ ਸਮਝਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ਨਾ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਭੈ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਨਾ ਕਿਸੇ ਦਾ ਭੈ ਮੰਨਦੇ ਹਨ (੮)। ਉਸਤਤਿ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਤੋਂ ਪਰ੍ਹੇ, ਚੁਪ ਰਹਿ ਕੇ ਭਗਤੀ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਮੁਕਤੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ (੯)। ਜਿਵੇਂ ਬੱਦਲਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਸੂਰਜ ਛਿਪਦਾ ਨਹੀਂ, ਉਸ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਸਦਾ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਇਉਂ

ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ਨੇ ਭੋਗ ਵਿਚ ਜੋਗ ਧਾਰਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ (੧੦); ਉਹ ਜੋਗ ਭੋਗ ਨੂੰ ਇਕ ਸਮਾਨ ਹੀ ਸਮਝਦੇ ਹਨ। ਗੁਰੂ ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਜੀ ਪੂਰਨ ਮੁਕਤ ਆਤਮਾ ਹਨ, ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਸਮਾਨ ਹੀ ਜਾਣੇ (੧੧)।

ਕਰਤਾ ਲਿਖਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਦਾ ਅਧਾਰ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਹੈ, ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਸਾਰਿਆਂ ਲਈ ਸਾਂਝਾ ਹੈ, ਉਹ ਤਾਂ ਹਰੇਕ ਵਿਚ ਹਰਿ ਨੂੰ ਵੇਖਦੇ ਹਨ, ‘ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਜੋ ਕੁਝ ਵੀ ਕੀਤਾ ਹਰਿ ਹੇਤ ਹੀ ਕੀਤਾ (੧੩)। 4 ਸੰਤ ਲੋਕ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਬਹੁ-ਵਿਧੀਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਚਿਤਵਦੇ ਹੋਏ, ਤਨ-ਮਨ-ਧਨ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਉਤੋਂ ਵਾਰਦੇ ਹਨ (੧੨)। ਸੰਸਾਰ ਜਪਾਂ, ਤਪਾਂ, ਦਾਨ-ਪੁੰਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਮਿਥਿਆ ਕਰਮ ਵਿਚ ਲਗਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ, ਪਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਇਹ ਸਭ ਤਿਆਗ ਚੁਕੇ ਹਨ (੧੪); ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਜਸ ਤਾਂ ਵੇਦ ਵੀ ਗਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ (15), ਉਹ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਨੂੰ ਨੇਤਿ ਨੇਤਿ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ (੨੦)। ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਸਾਧਨਾ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਹੈ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਲੋਹਾ ਅੱਗ ਵਿਚ ਤਪਦਾ ਹੈ, ਉਹ ਜਨਮ ਮਰਨ ਤੋਂ ਰਹਿਤ ਹੋ ਗਏ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਮਨ, ਬੁਧੀ, ਇੰਦ੍ਰੀ ਨੂੰ ਜਿਤ ਲਿਆ ਹੈ (੬-੧੯)।

ਕਰਤਾ ਲਿਖਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਦਾ ਵਰਣਾਸ਼ਰਨ ਦੀਆਂ ਚੀੜੀਆਂ ਧਾਰਨਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਈ ਵਿਸ਼ਵਾਸ ਨਹੀਂ (੨੨), ਪੰਜੇ ਗਿਆਨ ਇੰਦਰੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਪੰਜ ਗੁਣ (ਸਬਦ, ਸਪਰਸ਼, ਰੂਪ, ਰਸ, ਗੰਧ-੨੪) ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਵਸ ਵਿਚ ਹਨ, ਉਹ ਪਰਮ-ਆਤਮਾ ਹਨ (੨੩,੨੪); ਸਾਰੀ ਸ੍ਰਿਸਟੀ ਦਾ ਕਰਤਾ; ਚਾਰੇ ਖਾਣੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਮਾਲਕ, ਨਿਰੰਜਨ ਪੁਰਖ ਗੁਰੂ ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਆਤਮਾ ਵਿਚ ਵਸਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ (੩੦)।

ਕਰਤਾ ਨੇ ਬੰਦ ੩੧ ਤੋਂ ੪੬ ਤਕ ‘ਗਿਆਨ ਵਿਗਿਆਨ ਭਗਤਿ’ ਦਾ ਵਰਣਨ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ, ਜੋ ਵੇਦਾਂਤ ਅਨੁਸਾਰੀ ਹੈ, ਅਤੇ ਖੁਦ ਵੀ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ‘ਇਉਂ ਬੇਦਾਂਤ ਤਥਾ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟਾਂਤ’ ਪੇਸ਼ ਹਨ (੪੫)। ਇਸ ਵਿਚ ਮਿਥ, ਚੇਤਨਾ, ਦੇਹ, ਪੰਚ ਭੂਤ, ਬ੍ਰਹਮ, ਜੀਵ ਜੰਤੂਆਂ, ਅਠਾਈ ਤਤਾਂ ਆਦਿ ਦਾ ਵਰਣਨ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਿਟਾ ਇਹ ਕਢਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ “ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰਿ ਸਭੇ ਤਿਆਗਿਓ ॥ ਚੇਤਨਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਸਦਾ ਅਨੁਰਾਗਿਓ (੪੬), ਫਿਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਦੈਵੀ ਉਸਤਤਿ ਵਿਚ ਕਬਿਤ ਉਚਾਰੇ ਹਨ (੪੭-੬੦) ਅਤੇ ਦਸਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਚੰਦ ਦੀਆਂ ਕਿਰਨਾਂ ਧਰਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਉਪਜਾਊ ਬਣਾਉਂਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ, ਇਉਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸ਼ਕਤੀ ਦੇ ਆਸਰੇ ‘ਸੁਧ ਵਸਤੂ’ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ (੫੦)। ਛੇ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ (ਪ੍ਰਕਿਰਤੀ ਦੇ) ਇਕ ਇਕ ਅੰਗ ਨੂੰ ਦੇਖਦੇ ਹਨ, ਪਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਸਾਰੇ ਅੰਗਾਂ (ਸਰਵੰਗ) ਨੂੰ ਦੇਖਦੀ ਹੈ (੫੧)।

ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਅੰਦਰਲੀ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਵੇਖਦੇ ਹਨ, ਭੁਲੜ ਮਿਥਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਫਸੇ ਹੋਏ ਹਨ (੫੨)। ਆਮ ਜੀਵ ਜੋ ‘ਸੁਧ ਵਸਤੂ’ ਦੀ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਕਰੇਗਾ ਤਾਂ ਭੋਗਾਂ ਵਿਚ ‘ਉਦਾਸ’ (ਜੋਗੀ) ਰਹਿ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ, ਪਰ ਜੋ ਭੋਗਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਮਘਨ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਗਿਆਨ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਗ ਨਹੀਂ ਆਉਂਦੀ, ਪਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਭੋਗਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਮੁਕਤ ਹਨ (੫੩)। ਸੂਤਿ ਗਿਆਨ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਨੂੰ ਸਾਧਿਆ ਹੈ (੫੫) ਅਤੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਭਰਮਾਂ ਦੀ ਮੈਲ ਲਾਹ

ਕੇ ਗਿਆਨ ਨੂੰ ਅਪਣਾਇਆ ਹੈ। ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਇਹ ਭੇਦ ਜਾਣ ਲਿਆ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਨਿਜ ਰੂਪ ਵਚ ਆਤਮਾ ਨੂੰ ਲਖ ਚੁਕੇ ਹਨ, ਉਹ ਅਸਲ ਵਸਤੂ ਪਛਾਣ ਚੁਕੇ ਹਨ (੧੩)। ਸਾਖੀ ਮ: ੧੦ ਕੀ (੬, ਪੰਨਾ 101) ਵਿਚ ਕਰਤਾ ਦਸਾਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਨੂੰ ਨਮੋ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਗੁਰੂ ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਜੀ ਨੂੰ ਨਮਸਕਾਰ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ: ਓਅੰ ਨਮੋ ਗੁਰੂ ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ॥ ਸਿਮਰੈ ਸਭ ਸੁਖ ਹੋਵੈ ਹਾਦਰ ॥ (੬)।

ਇਉਂ ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਤੋਂ ਸਪਸ਼ਟ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਵਿਚਾਰਾਧੀਨ ਰਚਨਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਸ਼ਖਸੀਅਤ ਦਾ ਸਰੋਤ ਵਧੇਰੇ ਹੈ, ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਦਾ ਘਟ, ਭਾਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਪਰੋਖ ਗਵਾਹੀਆਂ ਮਹਤਾਯੋਗ ਹਨ।

~ ~ ~

#### ਹਵਾਲੇ

- 1 ਇਸ ਸਰੋਤ ਨੂੰ ਡਾ. ਮਨਵਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ 1995 ਵਿਚ ਸੰਪਿਦਤ ਕਰਕੇ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਤੋਂ ਖੁਦ ਹੀ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਤ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ। ਇਥੇ ਇਸੇ ਪਾਠ (ਟਾਈਟਲ) ਨੂੰ ਅਧਾਰ ਬਣਾਇਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ।
- 2 ਦਸ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਦੀ ਬੰਸ ਪਰੰਪਰਾ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਹਰੇਕ ਅਧਿਆਇ ਅਗੇ 'ਅਥ ਗੁਰਰਤਨਾਵਲੀ ਸਾਖੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੧(67);... ਸਾਖੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੨ (73)... ਸਾਖੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੯ (122)' ਆਦਿ ਉਕਤੀ ਸ਼ਾਮਿਲ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ।
- 3 ਅੰਤ ਉਤੇ ਦਿਤੀ ਉਕਤੀ 'ਇਤ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰਰਤਨਾਵਲੀ ਦਸ ਗੁਰ ਉਸਤਤਿ ਸੰਪੂਰਨ ਸੁਭਮਤੁ' (ਪੰਨਾ 151), ਉਕਤ ਤਥ ਦੀ ਗਵਾਹੀ ਹੈ।
- 4 ਇਥੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਸੋਭਾ (1711 ਈ.) ਦੀ ਸ਼ਹਾਦਤ ਧੁਨਿ 'ਪ੍ਰਗਟ ਭਏ ਗੁਰ ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ॥ ਸਗਲ ਸ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਪੈ ਢਾਈ ਚਾਦਰ' ਸੁਣਾਈ ਦੇ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ।

□

ਹਰਿ ਕੀ ਗਤਿ ਨਹਿ ਕੋਉ ਜਾਨੈ ॥

ਜੋਗੀ ਜਤੀ ਤਪੀ ਪਚਿ ਹਾਰੇ ਅਰੁ ਬਹੁ ਲੋਗ ਸਿਆਨੈ ॥

(ਰਾਗੁ ਬਿਹਾਗੜਾ ਮਹਲਾ ੯, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਪੰਨਾ ੫੩੭)

## ਕਿਸਾਨ ਸੰਘਰਸ਼ ਥਾਂ ਥਾਂ ਵੱਸੇ ਐਤੀਆਣੇ

ਡਾਕਟਰ ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਿੱਧੂ

ਐਤੀਆਣਾ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਪੜ੍ਹਦਿਆਂ ਹੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿਚ 1950ਵਿਆਂ ਦੌਰਾਨ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਕਿਸਾਨਾਂ ਉੱਤੇ ਥੋਪੇ ਖੁਸ਼ਹੈਸੀਅਤੀ ਟੈਕਸ ਵਿਰੁੱਧ ਲੱਗੇ ਮੋਰਚੇ ਦੀ ਯਾਦ ਆ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਅਜੇ ਦੇਸ਼ ਨੂੰ ਆਜ਼ਾਦੀ ਮਿਲਣ ਦਾ ਪਹਿਲਾ ਦਹਾਕਾ ਮਸਾਂ ਪੂਰਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਸੀ। ਮਨਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਆਜ਼ਾਦ ਹਿੰਦੋਸਤਾਨ ਦੇ ਦੇਸ਼ਵਾਸੀਆਂ ਲਈ ਸੁਨਿਹਰੀ ਜੀਵਨ ਦੇ ਸੁਪਨੇ ਸੰਜੋਅ ਕੇ ਸਾਮਰਾਜੀ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਵਿਰੁੱਧ ਦਹਾਕਿਆਂ ਤੱਕ ਜੂਝਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਦੇਸ਼ ਭਗਤ ਅਜੇ ਜਿਉਂਦੇ ਸਨ। ਜਨਤਾ ਵੀ ਆਗੂਆਂ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਭਾਸ਼ਨਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਖਾਈ ਸੁਨਿਹਰੀ ਭਵਿੱਖ ਦੀ ਤਸਵੀਰ ਵੇਖਣ ਲਈ ਲਲਚਾਈ ਹੋਈ ਸੀ। ਪਰ ਦੇਸੀ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨੇ ਜੋ ਰੰਗ ਵਿਖਾਉਣਾ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕੀਤਾ, ਉਸ ਨੇ ਲੋਕਾਈ ਦੇ ਸੁਪਿਨਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਭੰਗ ਕਰਨ ਵਿਚ ਬਹੁਤੀ ਦੇਰ ਨਾ ਲਾਈ। ਇਸ ਮਾਰ ਤੋਂ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵੀ ਬਚਿਆ ਨਾ ਰਹਿ ਸਕਿਆ।

ਦੇਸ਼ ਨੂੰ ਸੁਤੰਤਰਤਾ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋਣ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਹੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਮਾਰੂ ਇਲਾਕਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਸਿੰਚਾਈ ਲਈ ਪਾਣੀ ਉਪਲੱਬਧ ਕਰਵਾਉਣ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਭਾਖੜਾ ਡੈਮ ਦੀ ਯੋਜਨਾ ਉਲੀਕੀ ਗਈ ਸੀ, ਪਰ ਕਿਸੇ ਨਾ ਕਿਸੇ ਕਾਰਨ ਇਹ ਕੰਮ ਪੱਛੜਦਾ ਗਿਆ। ਅੰਤ 17 ਨਵੰਬਰ 1955 ਨੂੰ ਦੇਸ਼ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਪੰਡਤ ਜਵਾਹਰ ਲਾਲ ਨਹਿਰੂ ਨੇ ਇਸ ਦਾ ਰਸਮੀ ਅਰੰਭ ਕੀਤਾ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਡਤ ਨਹਿਰੂ ਨੇ ਹੀ ਅਕਤੂਬਰ 1963 ਵਿਚ ਇਹ ਕੰਮ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਰਪਿਤ ਕੀਤਾ। ਭਾਖੜਾ ਡੈਮ ਵਿਚ ਬਰਸਾਤੀ ਪਾਣੀ ਰੋਕ ਕੇ ਖੇਤੀ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਸਾਰਾ ਸਾਲ ਪਾਣੀ ਦੇਣਾ ਸੰਭਵ ਹੋਣਾ ਸੀ। ਜਿਵੇਂ 1907 ਵਿਚ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੀ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨੇ ਬਾਰ ਦੇ ਇਲਾਕੇ ਵਿਚ ਨਵੀਆਂ ਆਬਾਦ ਹੋਈਆਂ ਜ਼ਮੀਨਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਮਾਝੇ ਵਿਚ ਬਾਰੀ ਦੁਆਬ ਨਹਿਰ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਖੇਤੀ ਲਈ ਵੱਧ ਪਾਣੀ ਮੁਹੱਈਆ ਕਰਵਾਏ ਜਾਣ ਦੇ ਨਤੀਜੇ ਵਜੋਂ ਕਿਸਾਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲੇ ਆਰਿਥਕ ਹੁਲਾਰੇ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਵੰਡਾਉਣ ਦਾ ਲਾਲਚ ਕੀਤਾ ਸੀ, ਇਉਂ ਹੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨੇ ਭਾਖੜਾ ਡੈਮ ਦੇ ਹਵਾਲੇ ਨਾਲ ਕੀਤਾ। ਅਜੇ ਭਾਖੜਾ ਡੈਮ ਪ੍ਰਾਜੈਕਟ ਪੂਰੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਮੁਕੰਮਲ ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਹੋਇਆ ਕਿ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨੇ ਕਿਸਾਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਹੋਣ

\* Reproduced from 'Punjabi Tribune', "Dastak", Dec 27, 2020; Email <gssidhu03@gmail.com>

ਵਾਲੀ ਖੁਸ਼ਹਾਲੀ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਵੰਡਾਉਣ ਲਈ 'ਖੁਸ਼ਹੈਸੀਅਤੀ ਟੈਕਸ' ਲਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਕਾਨੂੰਨ ਬਣਾ ਲਿਆ ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਇਸ ਟੈਕਸ ਦਾ ਮਨੋਰਥ ਡੈਮ ਉੱਤੇ ਹੋ ਰਹੇ ਖਰਚੇ ਵਿਚੋਂ 123 ਕਰੋੜ ਰੁਪਏ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਪੂਰਤੀ ਕਿਸਾਨਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਕਰਨਾ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਗਿਆ। ਕੁਝ ਸਾਲ ਚੁੱਪ ਵੱਟੀ ਰੱਖਣ ਪਿੱਛੋਂ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨੇ ਚੜ੍ਹਦੇ 1958 ਵਿਚ ਭਾਖੜੇ ਤੋਂ ਪਾਣੀ ਦਾ ਲਾਭ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੀ 49 ਲੱਖ ਏਕੜ ਭੂਮੀ ਦੇ ਮਾਲਕ ਕਿਸਾਨਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਉਗਰਾਹੇ ਜਾਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਅਨੁਮਾਨਤ ਮਾਲੀਏ ਦੇ ਨੋਟਿਸ ਭੇਜਣੇ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕੀਤੇ। ਸਰਕਾਰ ਦੀ ਇਸ ਕਾਰਵਾਈ ਕਾਰਨ ਇਸ ਟੈਕਸ ਦੀ ਮਾਰ ਹੇਠ ਆਏ ਕਿਸਾਨਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਆਪਕ ਰੋਸ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੋਇਆ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਿਨੀਂ ਕਿਸਾਨ ਵਰਗ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਨਿਧਤਾ ਕਰ ਰਹੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਕਿਸਾਨ ਸਭਾ ਕਿਸਾਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਅਗਵਾਈ ਲਈ ਅੱਗੇ ਆਈ। ਜਗਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਲਾਇਲਪੁਰੀ, ਹਰਿਕਸ਼ਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੁਰਜੀਤ, ਸੋਹਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੋਸ਼, ਬਾਬਾ ਕਰਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਚੀਮਾ, ਬਾਬਾ ਭਗਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਿਲਗਾ, ਬਾਬਾ ਗੁਰਮੁਖ ਸਿੰਘ, ਹਰਨਾਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਚਮਕ, ਹਰਿਦੱਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਭੱਠਲ, ਭਾਗ ਸਿੰਘ ਕਨੇਡੀਅਨ, ਦਲੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਟਪਿਆਲਾ, ਦੇਸ ਰਾਜ ਚੱਢਾ, ਵੀ.ਡੀ. ਚੋਪੜਾ, ਪਰਤਾਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਧਨੌਲਾ ਆਦਿ ਇਸ ਤਹਿਰੀਕ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਮੁੱਖ ਆਗੂ ਸਨ। ਕਿਸਾਨ ਸਭਾ ਦਾ ਕਹਿਣਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਖਰਚਾ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਹੀ ਉਗਰਾਹੇ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਨਹਿਰੀ ਮਾਮਲੇ ਅਤੇ ਸਰਚਾਰਜ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਪੂਰਾ ਹੋ ਜਾਵੇਗਾ। ਜਦ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨੇ ਕਿਸਾਨ ਸਭਾ ਦੀ ਇਸ ਦਲੀਲ 'ਤੇ ਕੰਨ ਨਾ ਧਰਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਸਭਾ ਨੇ ਇਸ ਮਾਮਲੇ ਉੱਤੇ ਕਿਸਾਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਜਥੇਬੰਦ ਕਰਨਾ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕੀਤਾ। ਕਿਸਾਨ ਸਭਾ ਦੀ ਅਗਵਾਈ ਵਿਚ ਆਜ਼ਾਦੀ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਨੀਲੀਬਾਰ ਦੇ ਮੁਜ਼ਾਰਾ ਘੋਲ, ਹਰਸ਼ਾ ਛੀਨਾ ਦੇ ਮੋਰਚੇ, ਲਾਹੌਰ ਦੇ ਇਲਾਕੇ ਵਿਚ ਮਾਮਲਾ ਵਧਾਏ ਜਾਣ ਦੇ ਮੋਰਚੇ, ਰਿਆਸਤ ਕਲਸੀਆ ਵਿਚ ਚੜ੍ਹਕ ਦੇ ਮੋਰਚੇ ਵਿਚ ਜਿੱਤਾਂ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕਰਨ ਸਦਕਾ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੀ ਕਿਸਾਨੀ ਇਸ ਜਥੇਬੰਦੀ ਉੱਤੇ ਭਰੋਸਾ ਕਰਦੀ ਸੀ ਜਿਸ ਕਾਰਨ ਕਿਸਾਨ ਸਭਾ ਵੱਲੋਂ 'ਖੁਸ਼ਹੈਸੀਅਤੀ ਟੈਕਸ' ਦੇ ਵਿਰੋਧ ਵਿਚ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਸੱਚੇ ਦਾ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਕਿਸਾਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਉਤਸ਼ਾਹਪੂਰਨ ਹੁੰਗਾਰਾ ਭਰਿਆ।

1960ਵਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਰਾਜ ਭਰ ਵਿਚ ਥਾਂ ਥਾਂ ਕਨਵੈਨਸ਼ਨਾਂ ਕੀਤੀਆਂ ਗਈਆਂ, ਕਾਨਫਰੰਸਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਮੁਜ਼ਾਹਰੇ ਹੋਏ, ਜਨਤਕ ਵਫ਼ਦਾਂ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਮਿਲ ਕੇ ਅਤੇ ਦਸਤਖਤੀ ਮੁਹਿੰਮਾਂ ਚਲਾ ਕੇ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਕਿਸਾਨੀ ਦੇ ਰੋਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਜਾਣੂੰ ਕਰਵਾਇਆ ਗਿਆ। 11,000 ਤੋਂ ਵੱਧ ਕਿਸਾਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲੇ ਟੈਕਸ ਨੋਟਿਸਾਂ ਵਿਰੁੱਧ ਜ਼ਾਤੀ ਤੌਰ ਉੱਤੇ ਇਤਰਾਜ਼ ਦਾਖਲ ਕਰਵਾਏ। ਸਰਬ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਕਨਵੈਨਸ਼ਨ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਹ ਟੈਕਸ ਰੱਦ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਰਾਜ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਅਤੇ ਕੇਂਦਰ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਯਾਦ ਪੱਤਰ ਭੇਜੇ ਗਏ, ਪਰ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਟੱਸ ਤੋਂ ਮੱਸ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਈ। ਜਿਵੇਂ ਅੱਜ ਦੀ ਕੇਂਦਰੀ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਖੇਤੀ ਕਾਨੂੰਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਲਾਭਕਾਰੀ ਦੱਸਣ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਹਰ ਹੀਲਾ ਵਰਤ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ, ਇਉਂ ਹੀ ਉਦੋਂ ਮੁੱਖ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਸ. ਪ੍ਰਤਾਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੈਰੋਂ ਟੈਕਸ ਦੀ ਵਾਜਬਤਾ ਦੱਸ ਕੇ ਇਸ ਦੀ ਉਗਰਾਹੀ ਯਕੀਨੀ ਬਣਾਉਣ

ਲਈ ਦਮਗਜੇ ਮਾਰ ਰਿਹਾ ਸੀ।

ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨੇ 4 ਜਨਵਰੀ 1959 ਨੂੰ 'ਖੁਸ਼ ਹੈਸੀਅਤੀ ਟੈਕਸ' ਪੇਸ਼ਗੀ ਉਗਰਾਹੁਣ ਲਈ ਆਰਡੀਨੈਂਸ ਜਾਰੀ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਬਲਦੀ ਉੱਤੇ ਤੇਲ ਪਾਉਣ ਦਾ ਕੰਮ ਕੀਤਾ। ਕਿਸਾਨ ਸਭਾ ਨੇ 21 ਜਨਵਰੀ ਤੋਂ ਅੰਦੋਲਨ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਐਲਾਨ ਕੀਤਾ ਤਾਂ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਆਗੂਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਗ੍ਰਿਫ਼ਤਾਰ ਕਰਨ ਲੱਗੀ ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਲੋਕ ਰੋਹ ਨੂੰ ਹੋਰ ਪ੍ਰਚੰਡ ਕੀਤਾ। ਇਕ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਦੂਰ ਦੁਰਾਡੇ ਇਲਾਕਿਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਲੋਕ ਅੰਦੋਲਨ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹੋਣ ਲੱਗੇ। ਜਥੇਬੰਦੀ ਦੀ ਨੀਤੀ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਪਿੰਡ ਪਿੰਡ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਜਥੇ ਗ੍ਰਿਫ਼ਤਾਰੀ ਦੇਣ ਲਈ ਜ਼ਿਲ੍ਹਾ ਕਚਿਹਰੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਪੁੱਜਣ ਲੱਗੇ। ਪੁਲੀਸ ਨੇ ਇਸ ਰੁਝਾਨ ਨੂੰ ਠੱਲ ਪਾਉਣ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਸਖ਼ਤੀ ਵਰਤੀ, ਪਰ ਇਸ ਦਾ ਵੀ ਕੋਈ ਅਸਰ ਨਾ ਹੋਇਆ।

ਜ਼ਿਲ੍ਹਾ ਲੁਧਿਆਣਾ ਵਿਚ ਰਾਏਕੋਟ ਨੇੜਲੇ ਪਿੰਡ ਐਤੀਆਣੇ ਦੇ ਵਸਨੀਕ ਵੀ ਇਸ ਮੋਰਚੇ ਵਿਚ ਡਟੇ ਹੋਏ ਸਨ। ਸਮੂਹਿਕ ਤੌਰ ਉੱਤੇ ਫ਼ੈਸਲਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਕਿ ਪਿੰਡ ਤੋਂ ਜਥਾ ਲੁਧਿਆਣੇ ਡਿਪਟੀ ਕਮਿਸ਼ਨਰ ਦੀ ਕਚਿਹਰੀ ਅੱਗੇ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਮੁਜ਼ਾਹਰਾ ਕਰੇ ਅਤੇ ਗ੍ਰਿਫ਼ਤਾਰੀ ਦੇਵੇ। ਨੌਂ ਪਿੰਡ ਵਾਸੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਸਵੈ-ਇੱਛਾ ਨਾਲ ਇਸ ਜਥੇ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹੋਣ ਲਈ ਨਾਂ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੀਤੇ। ਪਿੰਡ ਵਾਸੀਆਂ ਨੇ 25 ਫਰਵਰੀ 1959 ਨੂੰ ਹਾਰ ਪਹਿਨਾ ਕੇ ਅਤੇ ਨਾਅਰਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਗੂੰਜ ਵਿਚ ਇਸ ਜਥੇ ਨੂੰ ਰਵਾਨਾ ਕੀਤਾ। ਪਿੰਡ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਨੇ ਸਤਿਆਗ੍ਰਹੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਭਰੋਸਾ ਦੇ ਕੇ ਤੌਰਿਆ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਆਪਣੇ ਘਰ ਘਾਟ ਦੀ ਚਿੰਤਾ ਛੱਡ ਦੇਣ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਇਸ ਦੀ ਜ਼ਿੰਮੇਵਾਰੀ ਹੁਣ ਪਿੰਡ ਦੇ ਸਿਰ ਹੈ। ਨੌਂ ਮੈਂਬਰੀ ਇਸ ਜਥੇ ਨੇ ਦੁਪਿਹਰ ਸਮੇਂ ਲੁਧਿਆਣੇ ਡਿਪਟੀ ਕਮਿਸ਼ਨਰ ਦੇ ਦਫ਼ਤਰ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਨਾਅਰੇਬਾਜ਼ੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਤਾਂ ਪੁਲੀਸ ਨੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਗ੍ਰਿਫ਼ਤਾਰ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਮੈਜਿਸਟ੍ਰੇਟ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੀਤਾ। ਅਦਾਲਤ ਨੇ ਸਾਰਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਕ ਇਕ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਦੀ ਕੈਦ ਅਤੇ ਦੋ ਦੋ ਸੌ ਰੁਪਏ ਜੁਰਮਾਨੇ ਦੀ ਸਜ਼ਾ ਸੁਣਾਈ, ਜੁਰਮਾਨਾ ਨਾ ਭਰੇ ਜਾਣ ਦੀ ਸੂਰਤ ਵਿਚ ਹੋਰ 15 ਦਿਨ ਜੇਲ੍ਹ ਵਿਚ ਰਹਿਣਾ ਪੈਣਾ ਸੀ। ਇਸ ਜਥੇ ਨੂੰ ਕੈਦ ਦੀ ਸਜ਼ਾ ਭੋਗਣ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਨਾਭੇ ਦੀ ਜੇਲ੍ਹ ਵਿਚ ਭੇਜਿਆ ਗਿਆ।

2 ਮਾਰਚ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਲ ਮਹਿਕਮੇ ਦੇ ਕਰਮਚਾਰੀ ਪੁਲੀਸ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਪਿੰਡ ਵਿਚ ਆਏ ਅਤੇ ਜੁਰਮਾਨੇ ਦੀ ਅਦਾਇਗੀ ਲਈ ਕਹਿਣ ਲੱਗੇ। ਪਿੰਡ ਵਾਸੀਆਂ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਵਿਰੋਧ ਕੀਤੇ ਜਾਣ ਉੱਤੇ ਉਹ ਵਾਪਸ ਮੁੜ ਗਏ। 4 ਮਾਰਚ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਲ ਮਹਿਕਮੇ ਦੇ ਕਰਮਚਾਰੀ ਮੁੜ ਪਿੰਡ ਆਏ। ਇਸ ਦਿਨ ਪੁਲੀਸ ਕਰਮੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਅਗਵਾਈ ਖੁਦ ਥਾਣੇਦਾਰ ਕਰ ਰਿਹਾ ਸੀ। ਪੁਲੀਸ ਦਾ ਆਉਣਾ ਸੁਣ ਕੇ ਪਿੰਡ ਦੇ ਲੋਕ ਇਕੱਠੇ ਹੋ ਗਏ। ਪੁਲੀਸ ਦਲ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਜੁਰਮਾਨਾ ਅਦਾ ਕਰਨ ਉੱਤੇ ਜ਼ੋਰ ਪਾਏ ਜਾਣ ਦੇ ਉੱਤਰ ਵਿਚ ਪਿੰਡ ਵਾਸੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਕੁਝ ਦਿਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਮੋਹਲਤ ਮੰਗੀ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਕਹਿਣਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਨਾਭਾ ਜੇਲ੍ਹ ਵਿਚ ਬੰਦ ਸਤਿਆਗ੍ਰਹੀਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਸਲਾਹ ਕਰਨਗੇ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਵਾਧੂ ਦਿਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਜੇਲ੍ਹ ਭੁਗਤਣਗੇ ਜਾਂ

ਜੁਰਮਾਨਾ ਦੇ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਜਾਵੇ ਅਤੇ ਫਿਰ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਸਲਾਹ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਕਾਰਵਾਈ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾਵੇਗੀ। ਪਰ ਥਾਣੇਦਾਰ ਇਹ ਗੱਲ ਮੰਨਣ ਲਈ ਤਿਆਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ, ਉਹ ਤੁਰੰਤ ਜੁਰਮਾਨਾ ਉਗਰਾਹਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦਾ ਸੀ। ਨਤੀਜਨ ਤਕਰਾਰ ਹੋਣ ਲੱਗੀ। ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੇ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਅਤੇ ਪੁਲੀਸ ਧੱਕੇ ਵਿਰੁੱਧ ਨਾਅਰਬਾਜ਼ੀ ਕਰਨੀ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਜਿਸ ਦੇ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਬੇਵੱਸ ਪੁਲੀਸ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਨੂੰ ਵਾਪਸ ਜਾਣ ਲਈ ਮਜਬੂਰ ਹੋਣਾ ਪਿਆ। ਅਧਿਕਾਰੀਆਂ ਇਸ ਸਾਰੀ ਘਟਨਾਵਲੀ ਤੋਂ ਡਿਪਟੀ ਕਮਿਸ਼ਨਰ ਲੁਧਿਆਣਾ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਜਾਣੂੰ ਕਰਵਾ ਰਹੇ



ਸਨ ਅਤੇ ਉਹ ਇਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਚੰਡੀਗੜ੍ਹ ਬੈਠੇ ਵੱਡੇ ਅਧਿਕਾਰੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਜ਼ਰੂਰ ਸੂਚਿਤ ਕਰ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ। ਪ੍ਰਤੀਤ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨੇ ਇਕ ਪਿੰਡ ਦੇ ਮਾਮਲੇ ਨੂੰ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਰੂਪ ਮੰਨ ਕੇ ਇਹ ਫ਼ੈਸਲਾ ਕਰ ਲਿਆ ਹੋਵੇ ਕਿ ਐਤੀਆਣੇ ਨੂੰ ਝੁਕਾ ਲੈਣ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਮੋਰਚੇ ਨੂੰ ਅਸਫਲ ਕਰਨਾ ਛੁਪਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਇਹ ਨਿਸ਼ਾਨਾ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਰੱਖ ਕੇ ਹੀ ਅਗਲੀ ਕਾਰਵਾਈ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ।

ਪੰਜ ਮਾਰਚ ਨੂੰ ਪਿੰਡ ਵਾਸੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਮਿਲੀ ਕਿ ਮਹਿਕਮਾ ਮਾਲ ਦੇ ਕਰਮਚਾਰੀ ਪੁਲੀਸ ਦੀ ਵੱਡੀ ਧਾੜ ਨਾਲ ਪਿੰਡ ਐਤੀਆਣੇ ਵੱਲ ਆ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਇਹ ਵੀ ਪਤਾ ਲੱਗਾ ਕਿ ਪੁਲੀਸ ਦੀ ਅਗਵਾਈ ਇਲਾਕੇ ਦੇ ਇੰਚਾਰਜ ਡੀ.ਐੱਸ.ਪੀ. ਦੇ ਹੱਥ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਮੈਜਿਸਟ੍ਰੇਟ ਵੀ ਨਾਲ ਹੈ। ਜਿਉਂ ਜਿਉਂ ਇਹ ਸੂਚਨਾ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਕੰਨੀਂ ਪਈ ਉਹ ਸੱਥ ਵਿਚ ਜੁੜਨੇ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਹੋ ਗਏ, ਇਕੱਠ ਵਿਚ ਔਰਤਾਂ ਵੀ ਵੱਡੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਵਿਚ ਹਾਜ਼ਰ ਸਨ। ਵੱਡੀ ਪੁਲੀਸ ਫੋਰਸ ਹੋਣ ਦੇ ਬਾਵਜੂਦ ਇਸ ਦਲ ਨੂੰ ਪਿੰਡ ਵਿਚ ਵੜਨ ਦਾ ਹੌਸਲਾ

ਨਾ ਪਿਆ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਪਿੰਡ ਦੇ ਬਾਹਰ ਰੁਕ ਕੇ ਪਿੰਡ ਦੇ ਮੋਹਤਬਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸੱਦਿਆ ਅਤੇ ਜੁਰਮਾਨੇ ਦੀ ਅਦਾਇਗੀ ਲਈ ਜ਼ੋਰ ਪਾਇਆ, ਕਈ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਦੇ ਡਰਾਵੇ ਵੀ ਦਿੱਤੇ। ਪਿੰਡ ਵਾਸੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਇਕੋ ਦਲੀਲ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਜੇਲ੍ਹ ਵਿਚ ਬੰਦ ਸਾਥੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਸਲਾਹ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਜੁਰਮਾਨਾ ਦੇਣ ਜਾਂ ਨਾ ਦੇਣ ਬਾਰੇ ਫ਼ੈਸਲਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ। ਅਧਿਕਾਰੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਜ਼ਬਰਦਸਤੀ ਕੁਰਕੀ ਕਰਨ ਦੇ ਅੜੀਅਲ ਵਤੀਰੇ ਨੂੰ ਵੇਖਦਿਆਂ ਮੋਹਤਬਰ ਵਾਪਸ ਆ ਗਏ। ਉਹ ਅਜੇ ਸੱਥ ਵਿਚ ਜੁੜੇ ਪਿੰਡ ਵਾਸੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਪੁਲੀਸ ਦੇ ਅੜੀਅਲ ਵਤੀਰੇ ਬਾਰੇ ਦੱਸ ਹੀ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ ਕਿ ਪਿੱਛੇ ਹੀ ਪੁਲੀਸ ਦਲ ਆ ਧਮਿਕਿਆ। ਲਾਠੀਆਂ ਤਾਂ ਸਾਰੇ ਪੁਲੀਸ ਕਰਮੀਆਂ ਕੋਲ ਸਨ, ਕੁਝ ਕੋਲ ਬੰਦੂਕਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਅੱਥਰੂ ਗੈਸ ਦੇ ਗੋਲੇ ਵੀ ਸਨ। ਮੈਜਿਸਟ੍ਰੇਟ ਨੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸੱਥ ਖਾਲੀ ਕਰ ਕੇ ਘਰੇ ਘਰੀ ਜਾਣ ਦਾ ਹੁਕਮ ਦੇ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਪਿੰਡ ਦੇ ਆਗੂਆਂ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਪਿੰਡ ਦੀ ਸੱਥ ਵਿਚ ਅਮਨ ਅਮਾਨ ਨਾਲ ਬੈਠੇ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਇੱਥੋਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਉੱਠਣਗੇ। ਜਦ ਮੈਜਿਸਟ੍ਰੇਟ ਸੱਥ ਖਾਲੀ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਤਾਕਤ ਦੀ ਵਰਤੋਂ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਡਰਾਵਾ ਦੇਣ ਲੱਗਾ ਤਾਂ ਲੋਕ ਵੀ ਜੋਸ਼ ਵਿਚ ਆ ਕੇ “ਧੱਕੋਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਮੁਰਦਾਬਾਦ”, “ਪੰਜਾਬ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਮੁਰਦਾਬਾਦ”, “ਕੈਰੋਂ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਮੁਰਦਾਬਾਦ” ਨਾਅਰੇ ਲਾਉਣ ਲੱਗੇ। ਔਰਤਾਂ ਨੇ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਦਾ ਸਿਆਪਾ ਕਰਨਾ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਘਬਰਾਏ ਹੋਏ ਮੈਡਿਸਟ੍ਰੇਟ ਦੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਉੱਤੇ ਪੁਲੀਸ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਨੇ ਅੱਥਰੂ ਗੈਸ ਦੇ ਗੋਲੇ ਸੁੱਟੇ, ਪਿੰਡ ਦੇ ਗੱਭਰੂਆਂ ਨੇ ਇਹੋ ਗੋਲੇ ਚੁੱਕ ਕੇ ਪੁਲੀਸ ਵੱਲ ਵਗਾਹ ਮਾਰੇ। ਸਾਰੇ ਪਾਸੇ ਧੂੰਆਧਾਰ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ। ਇਹ ਵੇਖ ਕੇ ਪੁਲੀਸ ਨੇ ਡਾਂਗਾਂ ਵਰ੍ਹਾਉਣੀਆਂ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤੀਆਂ। ਨਾਅਰਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਗੂੰਜ ਸੁਣ ਕੇ ਘਰੀਂ ਬੈਠੇ ਲੋਕ ਵੀ ਸੱਥ ਵੱਲ ਆ ਗਏ ਅਤੇ ਪੁਲੀਸ ਨੂੰ ਘੇਰਾ ਪਾਉਣ ਲੱਗੇ। ਮੈਜਿਸਟ੍ਰੇਟ ਦੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਨਾਲ ਪੁਲੀਸ ਗੋਲੀਆਂ ਚਲਾਉਣ ਲੱਗੀ। ਗੋਲੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਸਾਹਮਣਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਮਰਦ ਔਰਤਾਂ ਅੱਗੇ ਵਧਦੇ ਗਏ ਅਤੇ ਪੁਲੀਸ ਨੂੰ ਪਿੰਡ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਨਿਕਲਣ ਲਈ ਮਜਬੂਰ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਗੋਲੀਬਾਰੀ ਵਿਚ ਮਾਤਾ ਚੰਦ ਕੌਰ ਦੀ ਪੁੜਪੁੜੀ ਵਿਚ ਗੋਲੀ ਲੱਗੀ ਅਤੇ ਉਹ ਥਾਣੇਂ ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਹੋ ਗਈ। ਮਾਈ ਬਚਨ ਕੌਰ ਨੇ ਜ਼ਖ਼ਮਾਂ ਦੀ ਤਾਬ ਨਾ ਝੱਲਦਿਆਂ ਕੁਝ ਦੇਰ ਪਿੱਛੋਂ ਸ਼ਹੀਦੀ ਜਾਮ ਪੀਤਾ। 12 ਜਣੇ ਜ਼ਖ਼ਮੀ ਹੋਏ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਪੰਜ ਔਰਤਾਂ ਸਨ। ਐਤੀਆਣੇ ਦੇ ਇਸ ਸਾਕੇ ਤੋਂ ਇਕ ਹਫ਼ਤਾ ਪਿੱਛੋਂ ਪਿੰਡ ਨਰੜੂ ਵਿਚ ਪੁਲੀਸ ਗੋਲੀ ਨਾਲ ਇਕ ਔਰਤ ਅਤੇ ਚਾਰ ਮਰਦ ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਹੋਏ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸ਼ਹੀਦੀ ਸਾਕਿਆਂ ਨੇ ਅੰਦੋਲਨ ਨੂੰ ਇਕਦਮ ਸਿਖਰ ਉੱਤੇ ਪੁਚਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਫਲਸਰੂਪ ਗ੍ਰਿਫ਼ਤਾਰੀਆਂ ਜ਼ਿਲ੍ਹਾ ਸਦਰ ਮੁਕਾਮਾਂ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ ਤਹਿਸੀਲ ਪੱਧਰ ਉੱਤੇ ਦਿੱਤੀਆਂ ਜਾਣ ਲੱਗੀਆਂ, ਜੇਲਾਂ ਅੰਦੋਲਨਕਾਰੀਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਭਰ ਗਈਆਂ ਤਾਂ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਹੋਸ਼ ਆਈ ਅਤੇ ਕਿਸਾਨ ਸਭਾ ਦੀ ਮੰਗ ਪ੍ਰਵਾਨ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ “ਖੁਸ਼ਹੈਸੀਅਤੀ ਟੈਕਸ” ਦੀ ਉਗਰਾਹੀ ਲਈ ਜਾਰੀ ਕੀਤੇ ਅਨੁਮਾਨਤ ਟੈਕਸ ਦੇ ਨੋਟਿਸ ਵਾਪਸ ਲੈਣ ਅਤੇ ਟੈਕਸ ਕਟੌਤੀ ਲਈ ਮਜਬੂਰ ਹੋਣਾ ਪਿਆ।

ਅੱਜ ਵੀ ਕਿਸਾਨ ਕੁਝ ਮੰਗਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਨੂੰ ਘੇਰਾ ਪਾਈ ਬੈਠੇ ਹਨ। ਦਿੱਲੀ ਤੋਂ ਦੇਸ਼ ਦੇ ਵੱਖ ਵੱਖ ਸੂਬਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਜਾਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਸ਼ਾਹਰਾਹਾਂ ਉੱਤੇ ਕਈ 'ਐਤੀਆਣੇ' ਵਸ ਗਏ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਅੰਦੋਲਨ ਦੀਆਂ ਕੁਝ ਗੱਲਾਂ ਉਸ ਅੰਦੋਲਨ ਨਾਲ ਸਾਂਝੀਆਂ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਕੁਝ ਨਿਵੇਕਲੀਆਂ ਵੀ। ਵੱਡੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਵਿਚ ਜਨਤਕ ਭਾਗੀਦਾਰੀ ਦੇ ਬਾਵਜੂਦ ਸ਼ਾਂਤਮਈ ਹੋਣਾ ਦੋਵਾਂ ਅੰਦੋਲਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਖਾਸਾ ਹੈ। ਬੀਬੀਆਂ ਭੈਣਾਂ ਉਦੋਂ ਵੀ ਵੀਰਾਂਗਣਾਂ ਵਾਲਾ ਰੂਪ ਧਾਰ ਕੇ ਅੱਗੇ ਆਈਆਂ ਸਨ ਅਤੇ ਹੁਣ ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਵੀ ਵੱਡੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਵਿਚ ਮੋਰਚਾ ਸੰਭਾਲਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ। ਪਿਛਲਾ ਅੰਦੋਲਨ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਪੱਧਰ ਉੱਤੇ ਸੀ, ਪਰ ਵਰਤਮਾਨ ਅੰਦੋਲਨ ਵਿਸ਼ਾਲ ਕੈਨਵਸ ਵਾਲਾ ਹੈ। ਉਦੋਂ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਹਰ ਧਰਮ, ਹਰ ਵਰਗ ਦੇ ਲੋਕ ਇਸ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹੋਏ ਸਨ, ਅੱਜ ਸਾਰਾ ਮੁਲਕ ਭਾਈਵਾਲ ਬਣ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਮੋਰਚੇ ਦਾ ਹਰ ਕੇਂਦਰ 'ਅਨੇਕਤਾ ਵਿਚ ਏਕਤਾ' ਦਾ ਸਜੀਵ ਚਿਤਰ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਉਸ ਮੋਰਚੇ ਨੇ ਸੂਬਾਈ ਪੱਧਰ ਉੱਤੇ ਫਿਰਕੂ ਤਾਕਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸੱਟ ਮਾਰੀ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਜਮਹੂਰੀ ਸ਼ਕਤੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਬਲ ਬਖਿਸ਼ਿਆ ਸੀ। ਵਰਤਮਾਨ ਅੰਦੋਲਨ ਇਹ ਕਾਰਜ ਕੌਮੀ ਪੱਧਰ ਉੱਤੇ ਕਰ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਉਹ ਅੰਦੋਲਨ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਿਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਕੁਰਬਾਨੀ ਦੇ ਪੁੰਜ ਆਗੂਆਂ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਰਗਾ ਕੋਈ ਆਗੂ ਹੁਣ ਨਦਾਰਦ ਹੈ, ਦੀ ਅਗਵਾਈ ਵਿਚ ਲੜਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ। ਵਰਤਮਾਨ ਸੰਘਰਸ਼ ਜਦੋਂ ਜਹਿਦ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਉੱਭਰੇ ਲੋਕ ਵਿਸ਼ਵਾਸ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਆਗੂਆਂ ਦੇ ਹੱਥ ਹੈ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਲਈ ਗੱਦੀ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ ਲੋਕ ਹਿਤ ਜਾਨ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਧ ਪਿਆਰਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਕਹਿਣਾ ਗਲਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਪਵਿੱਤਰ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਨ, ਨਾਮ ਜਪਣ ਅਤੇ ਵੰਡ ਛਕਣ' ਬਾਰੇ ਵਿਸ਼ਵ ਭਰ ਨੂੰ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦੇਣ ਦਾ ਜਿੰਨਾ ਵੱਡਾ ਕਾਰਜ ਇਸ ਅੰਦੋਲਨ ਨੇ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ, ਉਹ ਸਾਡੀਆਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਸਥਾਵਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਨ ਕਰ ਸਕੀਆਂ।

ਨਿਰਸੰਦੇਹ ਭਾਰਤ ਦੀ ਭਵਿੱਖੀ ਰਾਜਨੀਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਪ੍ਰਭਾਵਿਤ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਇਹ ਅੰਦੋਲਨ ਅੰਦੋਲਨਕਾਰੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ; ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਲਿੰਗ, ਉਮਰ, ਧਰਮ, ਇਲਾਕੇ, ਬੋਲੀ, ਸਭਿਆਚਾਰ ਆਦਿ ਦੇ ਵਖਰੇਵੇਂ, ਸੰਘਰਸ਼ ਦੀ ਅਵਧੀ ਅਤੇ ਸ਼ਾਂਤਮਈ ਸਹਿਜ ਵਤੀਰੇ ਆਦਿ ਜਿਹੇ ਨਿਵੇਕਲੇ ਲੱਛਣਾਂ ਕਾਰਨ ਫਰਾਂਸ ਦੇ ਕਿਸਾਨ ਵਿਦਰੋਹ (1358 ਈ.) ਅਤੇ ਇੰਗਲੈਂਡ ਦੇ ਕਿਸਾਨ ਵਿਦਰੋਹ (1381 ਈ.) ਵਾਂਗ ਵਿਸ਼ਵ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਵਿਚ ਆਪਣਾ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਸਥਾਨ ਬਣਾ ਚੁੱਕਾ ਹੈ। ਦੁਨੀਆ ਵਿਚ ਜਿੱਥੇ ਕਿਧਰੇ ਵੀ ਦੱਬੇ ਕੁਚਲੇ ਲੋਕ ਆਪਣੇ ਹੱਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਰਾਖੀ ਲਈ ਉੱਠਣਗੇ, ਉੱਥੇ ਪ੍ਰੇਰਨਾ ਲੈਣ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਯਕੀਨਨ ਇਸ ਅੰਦੋਲਨ ਦੀ ਚਰਚਾ ਛਿੜੇਗੀ।

## ON THE ISC FRONT

COL JAGTAR SINGH\*

---

COVID-19, pandemic had slowed down the functioning of ISC which was obvious due to National/International lockdowns and constraints of movements of projects like Running of Happy Learning School, Home Work Tution Centers and various Coaching Centers. We did continue virtual programs wherever it was possible. It also affected holding of periodical meetings of ISC Committee.

Due to prolonged sickness Lt.Gen Kartar Singh Gill, PVSM (Retd.) Secretary General showed his inability to attend the office. On 4th May 2020, Executive Committee approved the name of Col Jagtar Singh Multani to occupy the position of Secretary General ISC, for which prior approval was sought from Dr.SS Johl. Our Convenor. Shri JS Gogia took over as General Secretary in place of Col Jagtar Singh Multani, Brig. G.J. Singh, VSM (Retd.) continued as Secretary. In addition, Col Arvind Singh(Retd.) has also joined us to work voluntarily with ISC.

Lt. General Kartar Singh Gill (PVSM), an illustrious and brilliant officer, well known for his community service and involvement, passed away on the 3rd of November 2020. He was a rider and a philanthropist with a brave, kind heart who believed deeply in the power of education for all. After retirement, he ran a foundation providing education and skills to underprivileged children. Till date, his foundation has empowered 480,000 children to follow their dreams.

We also lost a very Senior, Founder Executive Member of International Sikh Confederation, Vice President of IOSS and Executive Member of Kendri Sri Guru Singh Sabha Shri Jagdev Singh Sodhi, Chief Enginee (Retd.) who passed away on 29th May 2020.

---

\* Secretary General, International Sikh Confederation, Plot No 1, Madhya Marg, Sector 28, Chandigarh. Email: <[iscba2006@gmail.com](mailto:iscba2006@gmail.com)>

His dedication towards Sikhism, Rural Education and uplift of the underprivileged Sikh Societies was remarkable. He was a true Sikh to take out “Daswandh” out of his pension and donate every Year. His sound Engineering professionalism and Nishkam Sewa in planning and execution of Singh Sabha and Institute of Sikh Studies will always be remembered

### MINORITY SCHOLARSHIP SCHEMES

Central Govt. allots quota for Pre-Matric, Post Matric and Merit-cum-means in proportion to the population of Minorities in a particular State. We have taken stock of the Minority Scholarships awarded to Panjab Minorities Students. The following figures shows the number of Students benefited in the Year 2019-2020.

| Category        | Applied (No.s) |          |          | Sanctioned |          | Total Amount Distribution (Rs.) |  |
|-----------------|----------------|----------|----------|------------|----------|---------------------------------|--|
|                 | Fresh          | Renewal  | Total    | Fresh      | Renewal  |                                 |  |
| Pre matric      | 3,96,484       | 2,61,166 | 6,57,650 | 2,60,592   | 2,08,030 | 4,68,622 76.64 Lacs             |  |
| Post matric     | 84,978         | 17,089   | 1,02,067 | 41,959     | 14,687   | 56,646 30.18 Lacs               |  |
| Merit cum means | 1,512          | 1,544    | 3,055    | 1,326      | 2,404    | 3,730 6.45 Lac                  |  |

In spite of the COVID-19, we carried on our mission to spread awareness and the time schedule information to the students for submission of Applications and requested the Minority Commission for extension of time limit upto December 31,2020 to which it consented. Hopefully, we shall perform well in the Year 2020-21 Academic Session as well.

### PROGRESS IN HYDERABAD AREA

Firstly, we must admit that COVID-19 hit hard our work of Education, Construction of School building and uplift of Sikligar masses in and around Hyderabad. In spite of the severe set back under lockdown conditions, our team worked day in and day out to collect and distribute rations to 179 various Sikligar deras by joining Telengana Sikh Society. Our representatives approached donors and collected funds and clothes for the Sikligars, Vanjaras and other poor societies, who lost their jobs or were not paid their salaries.

Our Happy Learning Play School having classes from lower KG to class V had been badly affected belonging to lower classes and students from under privileged societies who could not manage to attend the online classes due to shortage of resources and technical

knowhow. Our teachers remained unutilized but required the emoluments which we have been paying so far out of our reserve funds and few donor contributions. Every month we have a liability of Rs 50,000/- approximately and we are sure Sikh Sangat will contribution to meet this deficit.

### **CENSUS 2021**

Govt.of India is conducting census survey 2021 for the population of India. It is always said that certain Minorities are not counted properly as per Religious terms hence, the number of Sikh's (Nanak Naam Leva Communities) in different States is a big approximation. We want to figure out the exact number of Sikligars, Vanjaras, Lobanas, Satnaamis, Nirmalas, Udaasis, Agarrahis, Johris, Ramrieye Sikhs, Daakhni Sikhs, Sindhi Sikhs. Many more NGO's and Panth Dardi societies got together and formed a group under the Name and Style of Community Count for this Project. The main personalities on a International Level worth mentioning are Sh. SPS Oberoi (Dubai), Sh. JS Uppal (Australia), S. Amanjeet Singh (Dubai), S. Charanjit Singh (Delhi), Sh. Hardev Singh (Hyderabad), Sh. Kulwant Singh (Bombay), Sh. Pahwa (Bangalore), Secretary General Col. Jagtar Singh Multani (Chandigarh) had an online meeting and decided to hire a professional agency to take up a pilot project in and around Hyderabad covering an area of approx. 40 Kms, top-down type survey by Navyug Infrastructure. Pvt.Ltd G-203, Sector 63, Noida. The data required by the agency was provided by ISC and hopefully the project will take off soon.

### **PROMINENT VISITS AND LOCAL ACTIVITIES**

Col. J S Multani along with Mr. J S Gogia visited ASSM College & School **Mukandpur** to ascertain the progress of coaching centre. Our interaction with staff members and students was very fruitful. We decided to continue this centre for the uplift of students.

**Col. J S Multani visited Akaal University** Talwandi Saboo Bhatinda with an inspiring candidate Miss Gurluvleen Kaur to help her out if she can be admitted in the second year of Geology/ Botany and also get the coaching of IAS examination. We met Vice-Chancellor, and head of departments to have fruitful discussion. They assured all

help to her if she intends to join.

Another **underprivileged girl student got admitted in Khalsa College Patiala** for study in computer science. Mr. Gogia helped her financially to buy the books for her.

**Miss Parwinklejit Kaur a meritorious student who stood first in Punjab in 10+2 examination from Gurdaspur** along with her parents visited our office on 8<sup>th</sup> August 2020. She was honoured and ISC assured all help for her studies.

**Miss Gagandeep Kaur** from Gholia Kalan village was offered free **boarding & lodging** to carry on her studies at Chandigarh.

**Dr. Barendra Kaur** has invited our attention towards letter written by Prof Harpal Singh wherein it is felt the need for including some more activities in our work as - Socio- political agenda; Recent Farmer Agitation; Treatment to Dalits and role of Satkaar Committees; Anganwadi workers; Environmental issues; Role of IOSS to high light such issues.

It is not out of the way to mention that **we have widened our sphere of activates by raising our voice against such current social issues** by writing letters and highlighting in the press/media:

- We took up the issue of **printing Saroop of Guru Granth Saheb abroad with President SGPC**, Jathedar sahib Akaal Takhat and also with all Jathedars. We requested them that there is a need of the times to allow the printing the text of Sri Guru Granth Sahib abroad because SGPC is not in position to meet the demand in foreign countries.
- We also highlighted the **case of taking away the Saroop of GGS by Satkaar Committee** from the residence of Dr. Jaswant Singh and another Saroop from Jalandhar. Both of the Saroop were returned to the owners now. We also used the media and press for these issues to raise our voice.

#### **INTERNATIONAL SIKH CONFEDERATION CENTER AT HYDERABAD**

The additional accommodation of the School and Renovation of Gurudwara Sahib is almost complete and needs final touching. The delay in completion was affected due to COVID-19. Being a primary School, the school is closed since March and so far Govt is not sure to

give clearance in opening of School However, the Sikligar students on roll with us & living in Bal Nagar, Roda Misri and Subhash Nagar are being provided Homework Tutition in small groups. The arrangement of Teachers and accommodation is arranged through local help. Sh.Jatinder Singh and Sh.Hardev Singh are working hard to make this Project successful.

During this period, we helped the Teachers financially by paying them 50% of Salary. We also provided Rs. 50,000/- for sation distributions to Sikligars in Hyderabad and Rs. 60,000/- donated by Sewa Sewa Society, Dubai to Sikligars in Madhya Pradesh.

### 1. FINANCIAL HELP TO NEEDY SIKH STUDENTS

| Date       | Student & Class                          | Amount                                    |
|------------|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| 19-6-2020  | Ms.Gurpreet Kaur (MBBS Rajindra College) | Rs. 37,500/- (Towards Boarding & Lodging) |
| 19-8-2020  | Paramjit Kaur BCA50% Fee Concession      | Rs. 10,000/- (Cheque 64225 dt 19-8-2020)  |
| 24-8-2020  | Jasleen Kaur (B.Com50% Fee Concession)   | Rs. 5,000/- (Cheque 64229 dt 24-8-2020)   |
| 24-8-2020  | Ramanpreet Kaur (BCA-II Year)            | Rs. 5,000/- (Cheque 64230 dt 24-8-2020)   |
| 26-8-2020  | Sukhpal Kaur (Msc Math Final Year)       | Rs. 17326/- (Cheque 61232 dt 26-8-2020)   |
| 27-10-2020 | Meherpreet Kaur (Indoswiss(CSIO))        | Rs.15000/- (Cheque 64245 dt 27-10-2020)   |

### 2. FINANCIAL HELP TO INSTITUTIONS

| S.No. | Date/Duration      | Amount Sent    | Remarks                                                                                                 |
|-------|--------------------|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.    | April 20 to Oct 20 | Rs. 2,03,000/- | Additional Accommodation & Salary for Staff. Financial Help to Sikligar families during COVID-19,Ration |
| 2.    | May, 2020          | Rs. 25000/-    | For Sikh Literature Publication                                                                         |
| 3.    | April, 2020        | Rs.5800/-      | For purchase of sewing machine to Harbhajan Singh wife r/o Sector 55, Mohali                            |

## THE KHALISTAN CONSPIRACY- A FORMER R&AW OFFICER UNRAVELS THE PATH TO 1984

A REVIEW BY JASPAL SINGH\*

---

*Author: GBS Sidhu*

*Publisher: Harper Collins Publishers, India*

*Pages: 269; Price: Rs. 559*

*Edition: 2020*

Happenings of the 1980s continue to perturb the Sikhs. Most of them want to know what actually took place behind the smokescreen erected by the power of the day. In this context, the new arrival 'The Khalistan Conspiracy' authored by GBS Sidhu, who retired as Special Secretary of India's Intelligence agency, the Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW) fits the bill. It reveals concretely, hitherto vaguely talked about that 'Indira Gandhi had created a "Third Agency" to devise dubious plans to target Sikhs and to twist the Punjab politics as per her political requirements. The book exposes 'dirty vote-bank politics', the Congress and other political parties' practice in modern Indian nation-state in their bid to reach the corridors of power. In their pursuit of power, the politicians least bother about causing communal disturbances, upsetting peaceful societies, and triggering loss of innocent lives.

In the beginning, Mr. Sidhu himself was a member of a high-powered group set up by Indira Gandhi at the prime ministerial residence mentioned as '1 Akbar Road Group'. Originally created by Sanjay Gandhi, a driving force behind his mother Indira Gandhi, the Group was aimed at 'weakening' of the moderate Akali leadership by

---

\* Independent Journalist; Email: <[jaspal.sdb@gmail.com](mailto:jaspal.sdb@gmail.com)>

propping up a hardliner 'Sant' against them. Also to raise a bogey of Khalistan to instill fear among Hindus on the premise that when Hindus felt 'insecure' they would be left with no other option but to consolidate as a 'vote-bank' behind the Congress to be projected as their savior.

The author does not touch pre-Partition developments and their continuation till Indira Gandhi came on the scene in the 1970s. Earlier, the Hindu-dominated Congress being adamant about representing all Indians, agreed to Partition in 1947 instead of accommodating the explicitly insecure Muslim minority. After Independence, Congress pursued the same policies and instead of accommodating a tiny Sikh minority, it sought to suppress them and their separate identity. This resulted in a disturbing political ground in Punjab which Congress/Indira Gandhi played up. Since 1947 the Hindu-Sikh polarisation was pursued by the ruling Congress as revealed by Indira Gandhi in her autobiography, *My Story*, when her party had instigated Punjabi Hindus to oppose Akali Dal's demand for creation of a language-based Punjabi Suba. Similarly, cultivating of a hardliner "Sant" against the Akalis was earlier practiced by Punjab Chief Minister Partap Singh Kairon by surreptitiously helping the installation of Sant Fateh Singh to ease out Master Tara Singh as a head of Shiromani Akali Dal.

The author says Indira Gandhi returned to power in early 1980 with a vengeance after suffering humiliation over her use of the Emergency to remain in power. She was nursing a grudge against the Akalis who had challenged her authoritarian step and ran a morcha (long protest) against her. "Indira Gandhi had taken a decision to win the next general elections (in 1985) by using the services of Bhindranwale to create a serious Hindu-Sikh divide and to plant fear in the mind of the majority community", the author says. That Punjab-centric secret project named Op-1 and Op -2 operations were time-framed to last up to the final blow, 'Operation of Blue Star' in June 1984 when Indira Gandhi was to emerge as a "stronger leader" to save the country from "a monster she herself created".

Some senior R&AW officers were also involved in the Group. After the death of Sanjay Gandhi his elder brother Rajiv Gandhi was introduced into the Group which also included Makhan Lal Fotedar, Arun Nehru, Arun Singh, and Kamal Nath.

Before associating with the Group, Mr. Sidhu had officially headed a secret and sophisticated operation in 1975 intended to further intensify the ongoing anti-Chogyal disturbances in Sikkim for removing the former ruling dynast thereby paving a way for the merger of the hill state into the Indian union. He has written in detail about that operation in his book, *Sikkim: Dawn of Democracy—The Truth Behind the Merger with India* (Penguin Random House India, 2018).

With such a deep knowledge of the running of a secret operation, he had immediately realized that ‘1 Akbar Road Group’ would target and demonize the Sikhs as a community by manufacturing disturbances and violence in Punjab. It was an alarm for him. **“I was being used to further the interest of one political party, one family one person in a manner totally at variance with larger interests of the nation”.** **He took a conscientious decision to come out of that Group. Even his quitting was risky to the extent of his dismissal from the service and suspecting him as an ISI agent.**

Anyway, being a senior R&AW officer and holder of a position of Indian High Commissioner in Canada, Mr. Sidhu was aware that under that project seven new R &AW offices were opened in Canada to inculcate the ‘concept of Khalistan’ amongst the Sikh diaspora which was totally alien to them. And an oversea network was also established to propagate that the Sikh extremism was being sponsored and financed by ISI of Pakistan. Some other hardliner Sikhs in the USA and European countries were also taken into the loop.

During the early 1980s, a high-level official survey conducted in Punjab revealed that there was no taker of Khalistan and theatrical moves of Jagjit Singh, an early Khalistani were being mocked at. Mr. Sidhu himself handed over a confidential note on that survey to Indira Gandhi’s principal information officer H Y Sharda Prasad. As a sharp commentary on the newspapers, toeing the official line, Mr. Sidhu writes that thereafter Khalistan became a currency in the media. Instead of officially asking the media to exercise restraint, it rather “gradually became even more virulent in coverage of communal divide in Punjab (giving) prominent and front-page coverage to activities of Bhindranwale and extremists and in blaming the Sikhs in lead articles and editorials for nursing ambitions of re-establishing the ‘Khalsa Raj’.

During that period unverified stories (fake news) of Bhindranwale's 'hit-list' began circulating".

The author gives one-side of the story, which, of course, is quite important to understand the intricacies of the State apparatus. But he was not aware that former journalist of the Tribune, Dalbir Singh Patarkar whom the author has written as "political advisor" of the Sant had made the Bhindranwale camp much critical of the state embedded media and it kept the media at bay. And Bhindranwale took an open stand against mechanizations of Congress, which Akalis bound by power-politics niceties were hesitant to pursue. That is why the Sant's following swelled leaving the Akalis high and dry during the Dharm Yudh Morcha. The author ignores the fact that Bhindranwale had become politically mature not to support Khalistan despite prodding by media and by some highly placed Sikhs and he stuck to the Anandpur Sahib Resolution seeking more powers for provinces.

In a chapter, "A State of Controlled Chaos", the author counts that besides the anti-Hindu speeches of the All India Sikh Students Federation (AISSF) leaders, violence started erupting in Punjab. There were firings on morning Hindu walkers, RSS sakhās besides killings of Hindu bus passengers, and symbolic sacrilege of Hindu temples. The President's rule was imposed in Punjab... all that was the controlled violence under the direction of the 1 Akbar Road Group.

Similarly, in the chapter "Negotiated Solution: A Prolonged Charade?" he gives details how former union minister Swaran Singh, who was the author's father-in-law, had brokered a negotiated settlement between Indira Gandhi and the Akalis at the latter instance in November 1982. And Akalis were ready to withdraw 'Dharam Yudh Morcha'. But it was sabotaged at the eleventh hour obviously at the instance of the Group. Indira Gandhi continued to stage a charade of 26 high-level meetings with top Akali leadership till May 1984, a month before Operation Blue Star to propagate that the Akali 'intransigence' was obstructing the peaceful settlement. "Operation Bhindranwale-Khalistan (Op-2) had a predetermined goal, a fixed time-frame, and an operation plan" which needed the prolonging of the Punjab trouble.

The book also highlights that Indira Gandhi did not agree to a

“Heliborne Commando Operation” which could involve minimum casualties. The plan was to airlift Bhindranwale from the roof of Guru Ram Dass Langar building where he was holding his “durbar” towards the 1983-end. She also ignored the advice of an officer from the United Kingdom’s elite commando, SAS who after visiting the Golden Temple had prepared a plan for the “expulsion” of Sikh militants. Indira Gandhi, however, agreed to General Vaidya’s plan of a quick “siege-and-flushing out operations” in the Golden Temple and other identified gurdwaras. The operation was a disaster as tanks rolled in the Golden Temple. He quotes intelligence sources to say that at least 2000 people were killed including 300 army personnel and 800-900 army personnel were injured and many of them crippled for life. He doubted the accuracy of the timing of cremation and post-mortem report of Sant Bhindranwale as his death was described as caused by gunfire wounds. But his body was found badly battered.

Referring to the assassination of Indira Gandhi, the author says he had suspected that she might be killed as Sikh policemen were redeployed at the prime minister’s residence after they were withdrawn from her security ring after Operation Blue Star. But he chooses to keep quiet. Despite his being a highly placed officer, Mr. Sidhu had to take the protection from official guards during the anti-Sikh pogrom in Delhi. Mr. Sidhu has irrefutable information on 1-Akbar Road Group monitoring the Sikh massacre and functioning of the Delhi police since as an intelligence officer he had intercepted and recorded the police’s secret wireless messages. Interestingly, the author says, the then home minister PV Narasimha Rao had no power over the Delhi police. He could not protect his own friend- a Hyderabad-based rich businessman Manmohan Singh in Delhi. Rao requested President Giani Zail Singh to send the Rashtrapati Bhawan security personnel who saved his Sikh friend.

The book exposes how Indira Gandhi had created a web of falsehoods about the Sikhs, demonized them as anti-national and terrorists, and heaped untold miseries on them in the process. But he does not seem to be aware of the Western nation-state model that builds a majority-based nation targeting a minority as Jews were targeted by Hitler. That was the reason, Indira Gandhi took a pro-majority

position whipped up communal passions against the Sikh minority invoking the name of Pakistan too. Therefore, Indira Gandhi's political positioning earned RSS and Hindutva's unquestioned support and she emerged as 'Durga' of the 'Hindu Nation' after sending the army to the Golden Temple. And the Congress secured a thumping majority in general elections to parliament in 1984-end soon after the massacre of the Sikhs which amounted to, in a way, justification for the pogrom of the Sikhs.

Mr. Sidhu suggests that for creating a healthy Indian democracy 'a truth and reconciliation commission' needs to be constituted by an act of parliament to unearth what happened in Punjab and who organized anti-Sikh pogrom. And to lay the past at rest, he suggests that "an all-party apology needs to be tendered at a joint session of Indian parliament on the lines of apology tendered in Canadian Houses of Commons by prime minister Justin Trudeau and Opposition parties on 18 May 2026 for a comparatively minor incident like Komagata Maru." His suggestions are too good to be acted upon particularly when a majoritarian rule has come to stay in India with "Hindu Rashtra" prowling around.

On the whole, the book reveals only a slice of the calculatedly manufactured conspiracy designed at the highest governmental level against the Sikhs, though whatever has been revealed is authentic and reliable and more investigative study is awaited. The author deserves credit for being honest and communicative with most of the facts which he had gathered as an insider.

## **GURU NANAK: CONTEMPORARY CONCERNS AND RESPONSE**

**A REVIEW BY DR PARAMVIR SINGH\***

---

*Author: Dr Dharam Singh*

*Publisher: Singh Brothers, Amritsar*

*Pages: 256, Price: Rs 450/-*

*Edition: 2019*

Guru Nanak, the new light on this earth, welded the entire mankind divided in the name of race, caste, colour, religion and geographical areas into one human fraternity and brought them to one God-centered common platform where everybody was deemed equal without any distinction. He preached the message of Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of mankind to eradicate the socio-religious differences among the masses. He endeavoured to create an egalitarian human society where everybody had respect and love for all others. The divine message of Guru Nanak attracted people belonging to different strata of society who joined him in search of Truth. The new way of life enunciated by Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikh faith, was preached by his nine successors. The word of God, revealed to Guru Nanak, along with that of five of his descendants, 15 Bhagats, 11 Bhatts and 4 Gursikhs was compiled in a holy volume, now known as Guru Granth Sahib. The life, Bani and his divine personality is always the focus of interest and interpretation of laymen as well as the scholars. So far a number of tracts, research articles, books, thesis etc. have been produced by his devotees and scholars. The work is

---

\* Professor and Head, Dept of Encyclopaedia of Sikhism. Punjabi University, Patiala;  
Email: <paramvirsingh68@gmail.com>

still continuing to delve deep into his ideology and to understand and relate his message to the contemporary social problems.

Professor Dharam Singh, a Sikh scholar and former Editor-in-Chief of *The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism*, has produced the book under review as his tribute to the 550<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of the Guru. In this book, he has tried to understand the Guru's message and its response to some of the challenges which humanity facing these days. He has already produced a single-volume abridged version of *The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism* (4 vols) edited by Professor Harbans Singh and written several other books on different aspects of Sikhism such as *Sikh Theology of Liberation*, *Dynamics of the Social Thought of Guru Gobind Singh*, *Guru Granth Sahib: Guru-Eternal for the Sikhs*, *Guru Arjan Dev*, *Sikhism and Religious Pluralism*, *Understanding Sikhism*, *The Khalsa*, etc.

The present work, divided in five chapters, reflects the history, contemporary society, ideology and the Guru Nanak's response to the problems of present society. Bhai Gurdas, a contemporary of Guru Amardas to Guru Hargobind, has described the society at the time of Guru Nanak as divided into different sections marked by the absence of mutual love, compassion and justice. God revealed the divine message to Guru Nanak and he took extensive tours to disseminate it at far-off places. The author stresses that the purpose of *udasis* (i.e. preaching odysseys) of the Guru was to redeem the degraded society, to efface the misery of the people, to liberate human beings divided into different castes and creeds and sects and classes and to instil into them a spirit of humanity and brotherhood.

Guru Nanak was an enlightened personality who realized the reason of miseries of the masses and wanted to undo them. He observed that the religion is at the centre of human life and it was being exploited by the priestly class for their personal motives. The role of priestly class was to lead humanity on the path of Truth and truthfulness but they tried to mislead the masses by entangling them in a set of rituals and superstitions, thus obstructing spiritual and moral progression of man. Instead of purity of mind, they focused on the ritualistic purity. They did their best to divorce religion from its social praxis so as to retain their elitist status in society assuring the innocent masses a better next life if they performed certain rituals and followed

some superstitious beliefs. Guru Nanak observed the state of humanity and condemned the priestly class for not performing their duty honestly. The author highlights Guru Nanak's role in restoring social praxis of religion and holds that Sikhism, if followed in its true spirit, can play a vital role today as well. He refers to the Singh Sabha Movement's significant role when some well-meaning individuals in the community felt that many followers of the Guru were losing their distinct identity, and holds that the present situation demands another renaissance movement led by persons known for their personal piety rather than their political status.

The book contains a chapter on Guru Nanak's views on religious plurality. According to the author, the Guru accepts and appreciates the plurality of religions, but his acceptance is critical because he is a strong critic of certain practices in religions which violate the fundamental values of religious freedom, to lead a life of self-respect, etc. He wants us to accept the others with their 'otherness' without putting our own faith in parenthesis. Discussing the tripolar typology of religions, he puts Guru Nanak's religion in the pluralist category. Different religions of the world are taken as different manifestations of the Divine in different historical and cultural contexts. Since dialogue among different religions is at the base of religious pluralism, he calls Guru Nanak as the first spiritual leader to hold interfaith dialogue – dialogue with various holy persons at different places during his *udasis* and his 'Sidh Gost' is the best example of how interfaith dialogue should be held. He also makes a reference to the Guru Granth Sahib as a testimony of what a modern-day theologian says – 'God's voice speaks in many languages, communicating itself in a diversity of intuitions. The word of God never comes to an end. No word is God's last word.'

The chapter 'Concern for Eco-Human Welfare' makes a comment on the Guru's concern for the preservation of environment as well as for the well-being of the entire humanity. God of Guru Nanak's perception is all-pervasive: He is present in all beings and all objects of nature as well. Loving His creation (including the beings and Nature) is the best way to express love for the Lord. No doubt, Sikhism calls human beings the supreme creation, but 'this supremacy does not give

him unrestricted freedom to exploit nature and animals. Man is obliged to work for their preservation and well-being as he is obliged to work philanthropically for the welfare of fellow human beings,' he says. In regard to Guru Nanak's response to human welfare, the author tries to look at Sikhism from the perspective of Liberation Theology and also discusses the Sikh concern of life which is reflected in the Sikh opposition to female infanticide, sati, etc.; he has tried to briefly discuss the issue in relation to euthanasia as well, etc. The triple formula of Guru Nanak - *Nam Japna* (reciting the name of God), *Kirat Karni* (honest means of earning) and *Vand Chhakna* (sharing of earning) inculcates in human heart several values, e.g. the followers imbibe awe of God, to do honest labour for earning becomes religious obligation and sharing with the needy is a two-dimensional value as it produces sense of detachment in the giver and relieves the suffering of the recipient. Orienting his life to the Guru's Word, the devotee lives in tune with Nature, a vital force for a healthy and fruitful life.

Written in easy and comprehensible language, the book gives a fairly readable account of the milieu in which Guru Nanak was born, his life-story in brief, his concern to restore religion's social praxis, his views on other religions and interfaith dialogue and his concern for a couple of bio-ethical issues including environmental preservation. The book should be a valuable addition to literature in the field of Sikh studies and will be of benefit to scholars and students and laymen interested in Sikh studies, especially the relevance of Sikh teachings in modern-day context.

## NEWS & VIEWS

---

---

### CONDOLENCE - LT GEN KARTAR SINGH PASSED AWAY

The President and the members of the Institute of Sikh Studies place on record our deep sense of grief and loss at the sad demise of Lt Gen Kartar Singh on November 3, 2020. During his long association with the Institute of Sikh Studies, Chandigarh, he contributed to the IOSS immensely through his qualities of leadership, dedicated services and valuable suggestions. He has been a source of great inspiration and motivation for all the members of the Institute. The Institute of Sikh Studies owes a debt of gratitude to Lt Gen Kartar Singh for his selfless services. His unique contribution will be particularly remembered for building the International Sikh Confederation, since its inception in 2006 upto the year 2020 and making it a distinguished International Sikh organization. He has recorded its achievements in the *Abstracts of Sikh Studies* for last 13 years. We pray to Akal Purkh Waheguru to grant peace to his departed soul and courage to his family to bear this irreparable loss.

~~~

WHY SHOULD WE ALSO CALL IT “OPERATION BLUE STAR”? – GURDEV SINGH, IAS (RETD)

Designed assault on Darbar Sahib (Golden Temple), Amritsar was code-named ‘Operation Blue Star’ by the attacking Government of the day. This invasion was intended to crush Sikh sentiments, extinguish any voice raising protest against government’s discriminatory actions and to humiliate the entire Sikh people by military action on Darbar Sahib and by shredding into debris their most sacred religio-political seat Shri Akal Takhat Sahib.

To rub more caustic salt to Sikh wounds, the invasion was termed ‘Operation Blue Star’. To celebrate a happy occasion people light candles, to enjoy it with greater delight they flourish fireworks and to display their unbounded joy they proclaim to have turned the sky blue with the incandescence of their rejoicings. (Blue Ribbon is an award as an honour as to the first place winner).

The attack on Darbar Sahib was not only executed with fiercest military action but was proclaimed Blue Star Operation providing a rare celebratory opportunity for sky high rejoicings.

It was upto the invaders to declare their invasion as Blue Star Operation, but why should Sikhs use this contemptuous and slighting term in their discourse! I feel Sikhs, in their narrative, should call this dastardly assault as ‘Attack on Darbar Sahib’ instead of Operation Bluestar.

~ ~ ~

SIKH COP’S LEGACY WILL INSPIRE GENERATIONS, SAYS US SENATOR

Slain Sikh police officer Sandeep Singh Dhaliwal, who was gunned down in the line of duty during a routine traffic stop in Houston a year ago, was a hero and a trailblazer, whose commitment to his faith would inspire generations of Sikhs and other religious minorities to serve in law enforcement, US Senator Ted Cruz said.

Cruz’s remarks came after the US Senate unanimously passed a legislation to name a post office in Houston after him.

Cruz, the US Senator for Texas, said Dhaliwal had left a profound legacy on the law-enforcement community. “Deputy Dhaliwal was a hero. He was deeply committed to his faith, family, and to serving others with compassion,” Cruz said on the Senate floor on Tuesday.

“When he was first recruited by the sheriff’s office, Deputy Dhaliwal petitioned the office to allow him to wear his turban and beard while in uniform, becoming the first to be allowed to do so,” he said. “Dhaliwal’s commitment to his faith will inspire generations of Sikhs and other religious minorities to serve in law enforcement and protect our communities,” he said.

On September 27, 2019, Deputy Dhaliwal (42) was killed in the line of duty in service of his community. In his remarks, Cruz also remembered Dhaliwal's commitment to love and peace.

The US House of Representatives and Senate have passed the bipartisan legislation to rename the post office at 315 Addicks Howell Road in Houston as Deputy Sandeep Singh Dhaliwal Post Office Building. The Bill is now headed to the White House for it to sign into a law by outgoing President Donald Trump.

The post office named after Dhaliwal in Houston is the second US post office to be named after an Indian American. The first one was named after the first Indian American Congressman Dalip Singh Saund in Southern California in 2006. — PTI (Courtesy: The Tribune, December 11, 2020)

~ ~ ~

UT TO CELEBRATE GURU NANAK'S BIRTH ANNIVERSARY WITH MUSEUM OF TREES

Chandigarh: Punjab governor and Chandigarh administrator V P Singh Badnore will inaugurate a unique environmental landmark of Chandigarh - the Museum of Trees - on the occasion of the 551st birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev on Monday.

The inauguration will be done online in view of the Covid-19 pandemic. Conceived and curated by ex-IAS officer and author D S Jaspal, the Museum of Trees is a sacred grove created with genetically true replicas of sacred trees of Sikhism. The naming of sacred shrines after trees is unique to the Sikh religion. Ex-member of parliament and chairman of the minorities commission, Tarlochan Singh and PHD chamber of commerce and industry president Karan Gilotra will participate in the online inauguration.

Alongside each tree are eight foot high panels that carry a picture of the tree, along with a description of its botanical features as well as the relationship between the tree and the historical and religious background of the shrine. The museum has reproduced genetically true replicas of 12 sacred trees, including Dukh Bhanjani Ber tree of Golden Temple, Ber tree of gurdwara Ber Sahib at Sultanpur Lodhi

and the Ber tree of gurdwara Babe-di-Ber in Sialkot, Pakistan.

The project, said to be the first of its kind in the world, has been funded by the union ministry of culture and is promoted by the Chandigarh Nature and Health Society, a registered NGO. The project is the country's only outdoor walkthrough museum where visitors can see genetically true replicas of sacred trees. (Courtesy: Times of India, November 30, 2020)

~~~

### **FIGHTING FOR RIGHTS FOR 40 LONG YEARS, THIS FARMER WON'T GIVE UP**

Nirmal Singh's arms were chopped off while operating a fodder-making machine in 1982. Now, he is 68 and has poor eyesight. But, nothing dampens his spirit.

Camping at the Tikri border with several other protesters, he is a prime source of motivation for the youth. He has been fighting for farmer rights for last 40 years.

"We have been sitting here peacefully for the past 21 days. This agitation may be the longest as we are in direct conflict with the Centre, which is working for the corporate houses," Nirmal said.

Working as a cashier of Hathan village for BKU Ugrahan, he never misses a chance to encourage youth with the examples of several battles the community had won in the past.

His brother Kuldeep Singh has also been with him during most of the battles. But when Kuldeep is unable to stay for long, other members of the union take care of him.

"I am unmarried, but my brother is married. I know his responsibilities. Now, lakhs of members of the union are my family members and they take care of me. I have participated in several protests. Initially, youngsters were desperate for a solution, but now they have also settled here for long after detailed discussions with us," Nirmal said.

"Like us, almost everybody gets inspired by Nirmal Singh as he has been fighting for farmers for the past 40 years. He is always full of

energy and even during our march to New Delhi, he did not leave any stone unturned despite facing physical problems,” said Kulwinder Singh, cashier of BKU Ugrahan of Malerkotla block. (Courtesy: The Tribune, December 19, 2020)

~ ~ ~

### **LEADING HISTORIAN VN DATTA NO MORE**

New Delhi: Leading historian of modern India Vishwa Nath Datta (1926–2020), most celebrated for the pioneering work “Jallianwala Bagh”, passed away at his New Delhi residence on Monday. He was 94. Born into a famous business family of Amritsar, Datta was the first to chronicle the Jallianwala massacre and bring to light the findings of the Hunter Committee Report the British had long suppressed. A Padma Shri, Datta’s long career included his time as a contributor to The Tribune in which he started writing as a student at Lahore and went on to author “Off the Shelf”, a well-regarded column for years.

~ ~ ~

### **PASSPORT AND NATIONAL ID-CARD FOR SIKHS IN NORWAY !**

Latest amendment in law in wearing turban by the Sikh citizens in Norway has been made with the untiring efforts by an Indian born Norwegian citizen and Municipal Commissioner Amritpal Singh of the city of Darman and other Sikh organizations.

Amrit pal Singh has succeeded in getting the laws governing the style of tying turban by the Sikh citizens after a relentless struggle for many years. Earlier, the turban wearing sikh citizens were not granted passport after 2014 when the Government of Norway had amended the laws which made it compulsory for the Sikh citizens to ear their turbans while keeping their ears uncovered.

S Amaritpal Singh is the son-in-law of popular Punjabi author Paramjit Kaur Sirhind and belongs to district Kapurthala. He, in coordination with the Young Sikh League and other Sikh organizations, has been protesting against these laws and kept on corresponding with the Govt of Norway. As a result of their concerted efforts, new amendments have been made and Sikhs have now been allowed to

affix their photographs wearing turbans covering their ears on their passports and ID Cards. An announcement to this effect has been made by Norway Minister of Justice and Life Science Communities (STL) Indian embassy and Indian authorities have also supported the Sikh efforts to get their legitimate right. Amritpal deserves credit for this landmark achievement. Monica Meland announced this decision



S. Amritpal Singh

at Guru Nanak Gurdwarra in Oslo, the Country's Capital on October

We are grateful to live in a country that takes its constitutional rights such as democracy, rule of law and human rights very seriously. We are now confident that the authorities promote equality, equity and justice, and that they safeguard the rights of minorities.

Sikhs have used these tools in our six-year struggle to change the regulation. We have met countless elected representatives from various parties, written thorough hearing replies, sent emails, written articles, engaged international organizations, given interviews to Norwegian and foreign media, and met Ministers and State Secretaries. There is no doubt that we have used our democratic rights. At the same time, we have examined possible legal actions - to lift this case from the political sphere into legal courts. We have always based our claims on the grounds of constitutional human rights and argued how the pervasive regulation restricted and discriminated these very rights.

We have put in large number of working hours into this struggle.

The case has been discussed in Gurdwaras and families, among friends and colleagues. We have worked with various strategies and have relentlessly pursued our way to meetings with key figures. There has been a lot frustration and despair. It has been a long and tough battle.

We have won a case that means a lot to us, and with tools that we have acquired through education, work, socialization and dialogue. The gift the Norwegian society has given us, the knowledge of democracy, the rule of law and human rights, was key to unlock a closed door we have met in Norway.

~ ~ ~

### **REGISTRATION OF SIKHISM IN AUSTRIA A MILESTONE: SGPC**

The SGPC has congratulated the community members over the registration of Sikh religion in Austria while reiterating its continuous support to the farmers' stir by providing langar, medicines and lodging facilities.

Bibi Jagir Kaur, president of the SGPC, said the acknowledgement of Sikhism as a religion by the Austrian Government was a remarkable win for the Sikhs. She said the community members with their industriousness and integrity of character were scaling new milestones across the world. She said this would establish the Sikh identity in European countries. She thanked the Austrian Government for acknowledging the Sikh identity.