



Drawing by:
Raj Singh Tattal

*Sahibzada Zorawar Singh and Sahibzada Fateh Singh
bid farewell to grandmother Mata Goojri in the
freezing-cold morning prior to being bricked alive in a wall.*

The Resolute Sikhs

Rajinder Singh Jolly

THE RESOLUTE SIKHS

Books from the same Pen

Panjabi

Sikh History

Soora So Pahchaniye (2016)

Brahmgyani-Guru Arjan Dev Ji (2015)

Sarbans Daani-Guru Gobind Singh Ji (2014)

Guru Nanak Darshan (2013)

Sikh Ithas Dian Jhalkian (2012)

Gazal Sangrah

Gardish (2008)

Ru-B-Ru (2007)

Guncha Gulab (2006)

Banjar Shikve (2000)

Siskian (1997)

Hanare Channan (1995)

Gazal te Geet Sangrah

Panne Ateet De (2003)

Geet Sangrah

Lun Lun Laggi Agg (2004)

Katah

Lamha Lamha (2005)

Lekh

Manukhta da Alambardar te Hore Lekh (2013)

Bataan Smundron Paar Dian(2011)

Autobiography

Mera Halphia Bayan (2014)

English

Glymps of Sikh History (2012)

THE RESOLUTE SIKHS



Sahibzada Zorawar Singh

And

Sahibzada Fateh Singh

bid farewell to grandmother Mata Goojri in the freezing-cold
morning prior to being bricked alive in a wall.

Drawing by: Raj Singh Tattal (The Pen-Tacular-Artist)

Rajinder Singh Jolly

The Resolute Sikhs

by

Rajinder Singh Jolly

Edited by:

Billo J. Jolly, M.A., English Literature, and

Narinder S. Jolly, Architect, AIA Emeritus

Published by:

Jolly Literature House,

43240 Lighthouse Place,

South Riding, Virginia 20152, U.S.A

Books available at:

Prof. (Dr.) Harchand Singh Bedi

Bedi House, 608 Park Lane,

Dr Het Ram Colony

Chheharta, Amritsar-143105

Sardar Pritpal Singh Jolly

A174 Dayanand Colony,

Lajpat Nagar IV, New Delhi 110024

Tel (LL) 26488517 (M) 9899606306

Sardar Makhan Singh

8/47 Panjabi bagh,

New Delhi-110026

Tel (M) 9810446269

Shri Purshottam Malik,

Rama Gallery

A 178 Dayanand Colony,

Lajpat Nagar IV, New Delhi 110024

Tel (LL) 65979494 (M) 9873400098

Rajinder P.S.Tattal,

16 York Road, Leyton,

LONDON-E105QG

Printed at:

Printwell, 146, Industrial Focal Point, Amritsar.

Billo J. Jolly has been an English Literature college lecturer, an entrepreneur, and a Fraud Investigator for the Florida Inspector General. She is a speaker at inter-faith community meetings, volunteers as a teacher at South Florida Sikh Gurudwara, and Fairchild Tropical Botanical Garden. She also provides rehabilitative support to victims of domestic violence, through an NGO called Sahara.

Narinder S. Jolly, architect, soon after 1968 graduation from Delhi University, he immigrated to America. Modernization of Miami International Airport is his career highlight. An adjunct lecturer at the University of Miami and Florida International University, he also presented professional papers at international conferences in Cannes, Buenos Aires, Trinidad, and Miami. He co-authored the book "Chuk De India- APath to Prosperity" that chronicles India's post-1991 economic renaissance and India's transformation from an impoverished nation to a vibrant emerging global economy.

In Reverence to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji

“ਫੇਰਿ ਕਿ ਅਗੈ ਰਖੀਐ ਜਿਤੁ ਦਿਸੈ ਦਰਬਾਰ”॥

ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਗੁ ਗ੍ ਸਾ (ਅੰਗ ੧)



“Pher ke agae rakhiae jī disai darbar”

Page 1, SGGS

Translation:

“I am mere care-taker of your graces.
What is mine that I could offer to seek your Darshan?”

Dedicated
to
the brave hearts
who embraced torture and
martyrdom
in protecting
Freedom of Religion

Ardaas

Tu Thakur Tum Pai Ardaas
Jeeo Pind Sab Teri Raas
Tum Maat Pita Hum Barak Terey
Tumri Kirpa Mein Sookh Ghanerey
Koi Na Janey Tumra Unt
Uchey Tey Ucha Bhagwant
Sagal Samugri Tumrey Sootar Dhari
Tum Tey Hoi So Aagyakari
Tumri Gatt Mitt Tum Hi Jaani
Nanak Daas Sdaa Kurbani

Prayer

O! Lord Thou are our Master, we offer this prayer to You.
The life, body and soul we posses is all due to your grace.
You being our mother and father, we are Your children.
You have bestowed endless joys and pleasures on us.
No one could know your limits.
O Highest of the High, Most Gracious God,
The entire creation has come from you,
And is under your command.
You alone know your greatness. Your servant, Nanak, will always be
awed (intensely devoted)
(Gauri Sukhmani- Ang. 268 G G)

Contents

FOREWORD	13
About Resolute Sikhs	17
In Immense Appreciation	19
Acknowledgement	20
Introduction	21
Guru Nanak Dev Ji	29
First Udaasi (Eastwards) -	33
Second Udaasi (Southwards) -	35
Third Udaasi (Northwards) -	36
Fourth Udaasi (Westwards) -	37
Guru Angad Dev Ji	42
Guru Amar Das Ji	48
Guru Ram Das Ji	55
Guru Arjan Dev Ji	60
Guru Hargobind Ji	72
Guru Hari Rai Ji	81
Guru Hari Krishan Ji	85
Guru Teg Bahadur	89
Guru Gobind Singh	98
Panj Pyarey	107
Chali Mukhtay	113
Pandit Kirpa (Ram) Singh	114
Guru Ji's move to Talwandi	114
Martyrdom of Sahibzada Zorawar Singh and Sahibzada Fateh Singh and Mata Goojri Ji	118
Successes and Struggles	121
Baba Banda Singh Bahadur	123
Bhai Mani Singh Ji	130

Nawab Kapoor Singh	133
Bhai Taru Singh	138
Bhai Subeg Singh and Bhai Shahbaz Singh	140
Bhai Sukha Singh and Bhai Mehtab Singh	142
Baba Deep Singh	144
Sardar Baghel Singh	146
Sultan Ul Kaum	150
Maharaja Ranjit Singh	157
Sardar Hari Singh Nalwa	165
The Resolute Sikh Women	168
Sri Guru Granth Sahib	179
Sikh Genocides	185
Inter-family relationship of Sikh Gurus starting from	
Sri Guru Amar Das Ji	192
Glossary	193
Reference Books	200

Figures

Figure 1: Guru Nanak Dev Ji emphasizing to people at Haridwar importance of performing good deeds rather than just rituals	33
Figure 2: Shrine commemorating Guru Nanak's visit to Baghdad	38
Figure 3: http://sikhbulletin.com/Bulletins/SikhBulletin May Jun 2015.pdf	39
Figure 4: Plaque in a public park in Istanbul, Turkey commemorating Guru Nanak's visit	39
Figure 5: Guru Angad Dev ji made hand written textbooks and took the classes for the children to spread light of education	45
Figure 6: Guru Amar Das Ji made it mandatory for everyone to have Langar community meal before joining the congregation	51
Figure 7: Guru Amar Das Ji denouncing the old age tradition of Sati	52
Figure 8: On being asked by Baba Sri Chand for purpose of his long beard, Guru Ram Das humbly replied "to clean the feet of holy persons like you."	58
Figure 9: Darbar Sahib, Amritsar	63
Figure 10: Guru Arjan Dev was made to sit on burning hot plate and burning hot sand poured over his body	70

Figure 11: Guru Hargobind Ji walking out of Gwalior Fort with 52 Rajput princes and zamindars	74
Figure 12: Shahi Hakim (royal physician) in Darbar of Guru Hari Rai Ji with a request for rare herbals for treatment of Dara Shikoh	83
Figure 13: Guru Hari Krishan Ji providing comfort and solace to the sick in Delhi	87
Figure 14: Mr. Raj Khanna at Gurudwara Sahib in Moradabad. Guru Teg Bahadur Ji visited here on his way back from Assam	92
Figure 15: Bhai Mati Das Ji being planks sawed alive in two pieces in Delhi	94
Figure 16: Bhai Sati Das Ji burnt alive wrapped in cotton	95
Figure 17: Bhai Dyala Ji being boiled alive in Cauldron	95
Figure 18: Guru Teg Bahadur Ji sacrificed his life for Kashmiri Pandits	96
Figure 19: Guru Gobind Rai taking Amrit from Panj Pyarey	104
Figure 20: Bhai Kanahaiya Ji serving water to wounded Mughal Soldier	109
Figure 21: Sahibzada Ajit Singh Ji and Sahibzada Jujhar Singh Ji (learning martial arts)	111
Figure 22: Takht Damdama Sahib, Sabo Ki Talwandi	115
Figure 23: Mata Goojri Ji preparing Sahibzadas for the supreme sacrifice	119
Figure 24: Younger Sahibzadas Being Bricked Alive In a Wall	120
Figure 25: Banda Singh Bahadur	124
Figure 26: Bhai Mani Singh ji's body being cut limb by limb at Nakhas, Horse Market, Lahore	130
Figure 27: Nawab Kapoor caring for the horses	133
Figure 28: Bhai Taru Singh's skull being removed by the butcher	138
Figure 29: Subeg Singh and Shahbaz Singh were martyred by crushing in the wheels	141
Figure 30: At the age of 75 Baba Deep Singh Ji with his Khanda	144
Figure 31: March 1783 Victory procession entering Lal Qila (Red Fort), Delhi.	146
Figure 32: Victory procession at Lahore - January 1764	150
Figure 33: Maharaja Ranjit Singh	157
Figure 34: 'The Shalimar Gardens, Lahore', by W.G. Osborne from The Court and Camp of Runjeet Sing, Henry Colburn Publisher, London 1840, p. 141 (courtesy Kapany Collection)	158

Figure 35: 'Schir Singh [Sher Singh] revenant d'une revue de troupes aux environs d'Umritsar, Mars 1842' by Alexis Soltykoff, Voyages dans l'Inde, Paris, 1851 (courtesy collection of Gursharan and Elvira Sidhu)	163
Figure 36: Fearless and brave commander-in-Chief Sardar Hari Singh Nalwa	165
Figure 37: Mata Kheevee preparing Langar for the Sangat	171
Figure 38: Mata Bhani with Guru Amar Das Ji, (Guru) Arjan and Bhai Jetha Ji (later Guru Ram Das Ji)	172
Figure 39: Mai Bhago Ji (Mata Bhag Kaur Ji)	174
Figure 40: Commander Sada Kaur	176
Figure 41: Sri Guru Granth Sahib in state	179

Foreword

S. Rajinder Singh Jolly of Virginia (USA) has spent two decades on writing on different subjects on a score of works which have been received well in the public. His current work, **Resolute Sikhs** is meant for youth to educate them on the vital subjects of Sikh history, philosophy and religion.



Sikhism is the youngest religion of about 550 years. All the (four) religions which came up in West Asia are based on revelation, as it comes out a partial one. In case of India, (two) were not born on revelation, while Lord Buddha got a revelation but a partial one, whereas Guru Nanak was the only one to have received full revelation. His nine successors fully followed without deviation. Bhai Gurdas, the first Sikh Philosopher, had mentioned of Guru Nanak of striking the sovereignty of the world, and launching Nirmal Panth. This was later converted as Khalsa, a synonymous of Nirmal, in 1699. Guru Gobind Singh said that, “I have not spoken an iota of falsehood, as Guru Nanak who is like a God for me, stands as a witness” (Ya me ranch in mithia bhakhi, Parbrahm Guru Nanak sakhi). Those who say Guru Gobind Singh in his earlier life was Tapasvi, or carried out Tapasya, at Hemkund, are all thoughtless or wicked persons.

Guru Nanak at the age of 29, had a revelation, as one can say, at the age of 29 years, 6 months, 4 days. Guru Nanak disappeared in Vein rivulet. As the Janam Sakhis say he was led to the presence of God, and says no soon does God manifests, Nanak also who returned was also God himself.

Guru Nanak while in presence of God summed up the personality of God Himself in Mul Mantra, or basic precept. It consists of 14 monosyllables; 1 (in digit, not words), Oankar, Sati, Namu, Karta, Purakhu, Nirbhau, Nirvairu, Akala, Murti, Ajuni, Saibhan, Guru, Prasad. Its translations as follows:

“The Only Infinite One (1) the Only Supreme Being -God (oankar), the Eternal (sati), the Universal Spirit (namu), the Creator (karta), the All-pervading (purakhu), the Sovereign (nirbhau), the Harmonious (nirvairu), the Immortal (akala), the Embodiment (murti), the Un-incarnated (ajuni), the Self-existent (Saibhan), the Enlightener (guru), The Bountiful (prasad).”

Sometimes gurprasad are joined to mean by the favour of the Guru. But this is a later development. Here, one is concerned with Guru Nanak’s perception of God. Then follows Japu or Japji Sahib which together with Mul Mantra sums up the quintessence of the Sikh philosophy contained in Sri Guru Granth Sahib, the holy book of the Sikhs.

Osho who wrote on Japji and on Guru Nanak’s communion with God says that “the each word uttered was so invaluable as to be beyond price”, but mischievously added, “each word equal to the words of Vedas.” But Guru Nanak has never said so, never quoted Vedas, Shastras, Smritis, Puranas or any other Hindu literature, as authority for what he was saying. Osho sooner eats his words: he dilates on, in stanza (pauri 22 - Chapter 10 of his work) when he concedes:

There are millions of underworlds, and infinite skies above
The Vedas says millions have searched and searched, only to end in exhaustion
The Vedas say in unison, as also thousand of Saints,
Eighteen Puranas, and the Semitic Texts viz. Tohra, Zabur (Psalms)
Injil (Gospel) and Quran,
That the source, Principal, of all creation is only One God.
If one could count his creation, he could write an account of it, His
Creation is beyond count,
O, say only, He himself knows, how great He is.

During the process of revelation Guru Nanak gained new vistas of cosmic consciousness, that divine light permeates the entire universe, and is the only source of light in all human beings. Fatherhood of God, universal brotherhood of human kind, shorn of angularities of tribe, race, creed, caste or sex (equality of man and woman – a concept far ahead of his times), and common heritage with equal opportunities to all, or a rational distribution of economic resources – all these formed an essential part of the revelation. God of Guru Nanak’s concept was the sole fulcrum of, what scientists now recall, the extended

universe, and exceed the concept of God in the whole gamut of Hindu literature and Semitic texts. He wanted the protagonists of Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Judaism and others, to rise above the mundane considerations to the essence of religion – a social and spiritual interaction with humanity, with new standards to judge political authorities. It were these aspect that surpassed the Hinduistic, Islamic Christian or Jewish concepts of God - whose spirits resides in each and every heart. All are equal; all the human races are one, and worship the same God without any distinctions. This realization, of oneness of God, without any divisions, needs to be hammered in the human mind and should find broad acceptance. It is herein that the future well-being of the humanity lies.

Guru Tegh Bahadur's Martyrdom was unique and unparalleled in the annals of human history. He laid down his life in defense of religious tolerance, freedom of worship, and freedom of conscience. In practical parlance this meant defense of the ritual sacred thread and frontal mark signifying the Brahminical way of life, which Sikhism has discarded now for two centuries. Here was a martyrdom which was self sought for the defense of basic human values, which centuries later were incorporate by the U.N. General Assembly in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in December 1948. It would have been in fitness of things that the Government of India should have projected the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur before the U.N. General Assembly in December 1948 when it adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in its proper perspective and asked for celebration of his martyrdom anniversary by all human kind as freedom of conscience day. But the new rulers of new independent India led by M.K. Gandhi's protégés, especially Jawaharlal Nehru who were angling to overwhelm Sikhism to make it fall within the framework of Hinduism, did not do so deliberately, as that would have highlighted an aspect of Sikh history that was unpalatable to them. It also would have meant their conceding that Sikhism was a distinct religion, which they had no intention to do.

Guru Gobind Singh in his peroration address at the time of cremation of severed *Head* of Guru Tegh Bahadur, said:

To protect their right to wear their caste-mark and thread,
Did he, in the dark age, perform the supreme sacrifice;
To help the saintly, he went to the utmost limits,
He offered his head but heaved not a sigh of regret.
He suffered martyrdom for the sake of his principles.

He lost his life but not the celestial horizon of his communion with God;
He disdained to perform miracles or jugglers tricks,
For these fill men of God with shame.

Having broken the potsherd (of his body) on the head of the ruler of Delhi,
He went to the abode of the Lord;

None has ever performed such a unique deed, that Tegh Bahadur has.
When Tegh Bahadur passed away, there were mourning throughout the
world,

The world was stunned and amazed (at his laying down his life for
other's religion)*,

While the shouts of glory, glory, glory rent the whole heaven.

*The line has been mis-translated by all scholars as cries of alas,
bemoaning, which is inherent in the previous line. Rather Guru Gobind
Singh conveys here the bewilderment of the populace at Guru Tegh
Bahadur's offering the sacrifice in defense of the Brahmins' *sacred
thread* and *frontal mark* which had been decried by Sikhism since the
childhood days of Guru Nanak, and standing by the side of Brahmins,
some of whom have been conspiring against Sikh movement now for
centuries.

In 1708, personal Guruship was abolished by Guru Gobind Singh; the
last Guru, conferred Guruship perpetually on *Granth Sahib* which now came
to be known as *Guru Granth Sahib* or *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*. No other holy
book of any other religion was compiled contemporaneously by religion
divines: these came into being later. Hence, *Guru Granth Sahib* is the only
divine work that has been conferred universal Guruship. As leading American
and European literatures who have studied *Guru Granth Sahib* opine that it
has something divine in it, which will retain its vitality for all times to come.
S. Rajinder Singh Jolly has presented the essentials of Sikh Philosophy in
Question and Answer form for the young readers and one hopes it will be
ideal in delivering the Universal Message of Sikhism.

I, heartily commend this Work.

(Dr) Sangat Singh

Author of *The Sikhs in History* (now 8th Edn) &
Itihas 'Ch Sikh (Panjabi) 4th Edn. Expected in 2016

M/s Singh Brothers,
223-24, The City Centre, Amritsar-143001 (Pb) India

About Resolute Sikhs

The present book is eighth in the long line of Sikh introductory that Rajinder Singh Jolly has produced to bring up the awareness of world community about Sikh religion, history and tradition. The format of catechism that he uses is highly useful to the young generation of Sikhs and to the outsiders who sometimes have doubts about Sikhism or its religious practices. Sikhs are a minority community, not only in different parts of the world but in their own country too. For obvious reasons, they are subject to number politics and other discriminations that their race, nationality and appearance engender. More so, after the horrifying event of 9/11 in the US and its follow up in other countries. Turban, flowing beard, long robes are some of the dress signs that distinguish them from western communities and to some extent identify them with traditional Muslims. Although such dress codes in Sikhism signify religious piety and moral uprightness, yet to the alien eyes they represent Muslim orthodoxy and, in the current context, an association with underworld hardliners like Osama Bin Laden.



To quell some of these doubts and misgivings about Sikhs, our Virginia based author has been publishing a series of books on Sikh religion and philosophy, mostly in three languages, English, Hindi and Punjabi, bearing the cost all by himself, to serve the cause of his Dharma and community at large. These books, that he distributes free of cost, and their question-answer layout are part of his missionary zeal by which he would like to reach out to a larger audience in the world community and highlight the distinctions that make Sikhs separate from others. Unlike his previous books, the present book has been produced in English only to cater to the needs of readers in host countries where Sikhs are residing outside India and to safeguard their interests and save them from such identity crisis.

Needless to say that production of such a book involves a lot of anticipation in terms of reader queries, investigation of authentic sources, and dedication to arrive at the most accurate information. Rajinder Singh Jolly has devoted years of hard work to provide these educative manuals to all those concerned with Sikhism.

The book raises a lot of issues that are generally debated in Sikh history and attempts to present some kind of resolution to them; at the same time it provides an elaborate description of the uniqueness of Sikh history, philosophy and culture. For instance, it refers to the story of Bhai Kanhiya, whose services during war times in seventeenth century recalls the work that the present day Red Cross is doing. The book makes a special attempt to highlight the Sikh history which is replete with the gallantry of great heroes and their sacrifices such as Guru Teg Bahadur, the four young warrior sons of Guru Gobind Singh and the valour of Banda Singh Bahadur. The book is an attempt to revive the fading memory of these stalwarts, who, upholding the supreme values of their dharma, stuck to their guns with unflinching faith. In a way, this book also is a token of the author's high faith and devotion to his religion.

I have highly enjoyed reading this book and appreciate the hard work that has gone in the making of it; and would like to congratulate him for his exemplary endeavour. I hope the book will go a long way in achieving its mission of dispelling fear in the minds of Sikhs and other communities who harbor certain prejudices against them on the basis their appearance and religion.

Dr. Harchand Singh Bedi

*Emeritus Professor of Immigrant Studies
Former Head, Centre for Immigrant Studies,
Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar.
Mb: +9198728-67377*

In Immense Appreciation

Of

Dr. Sangat Singh

Author of

The Sikhs in History

(First Published in 1995, in New York, U.S.A.)

for

his honest and thought provoking analysis:

“When the whole of India lay prostrate before Indira and her son Sanjay, the anti-emergency agitation from Golden Temple complex, with volunteers offering prayers at Akal Takht before offering themselves for arrest, was taken as a serious and personal affront by Indira”

“Indira got into her head that it were only the Sikhs who constituted a threat to her imperious and dynastic rule, and decided to inflict blows from which they take long, if at all, to recover. She took the decision at the time to push them out of the national mainstream, which was the undercurrent of the whole Nehruvian Era, to prevent them from playing such a role of upholders of the rule of law henceforth.”

(The Sikhs in History-page 342)

Sikh masses had to endure
yet another holocaust "Blue Star"
due to weak Sikh leadership in post 1947 India.

Author

Acknowledgement

- My sincere thanks to historians and researchers whose efforts and work made it easier for the author to produce this volume.
- I am humbled by the gesture of Dr. Sangat Singh Ji, an authority on Sikh history. Despite his preoccupation he wrote the foreword of this book, Resolute Sikhs.
- My sincere thanks to Dr Narinder Singh Kapany, the Chair of the Sikh Foundation, U.S.A for permitting me to reproduce the printed material, paintings of the Kapany Collection and collection of Gursharan and Elvira Sidhu from book SIKH ART & literature, in my quest to bring the accurate version of Sikh history.
- Special thanks to Prof. (Dr.) Harchand Singh Bedi for his help in making it easier for me, sitting at thousands of miles from India, to get my work published with the same priority and sincerity as if it was his own.
- I sincerely thank Raj, the Pen-Tacular artist, for allowing me to use his sketches in my book without financial considerations.
- I would also like to acknowledge Sardar Makhan Singh for helping me obtain certain sketches throughout the book.
- I also thank Sardar Bhagwant Singh of “Gurbani is Jag Mein Chanan” for his help in my research. I greatly appreciate his gesture.
- I can’t convey enough thanks to Billo & Narinder, Harjit & Manjeet, Nirmal & Gurcharan, Gurpreet & Kanwar, Jatinder & Amar, Pavneet & Gurpreet, Kanwalpreet & Satinderpal and Simran & Jasmeet for their moral and material support.
- I would also like to recognize my grandchildren, Gurbani and Kabir, for assisting me with Word Processor.

Rajinder Singh Jolly

Virginia, USA

July 05, 2016

Introduction

This book is a modest attempt to peek into the life of some of the most resolute men and women, the world has ever seen. These great individuals endeavored to fight for the freedom for the populace; freedom of religion, freedom from imperial oppression, freedom from social subjugation, freedom from the shackles of caste system, and freedom of women from chauvinistic male dominance. They infused courage in sparrow-like citizens to challenge hawks of the ruling class. Their mission warranted reforming the rulers and the ruled. These stalwarts first pursued their objectives through peaceful means - moral cajoling, call for spiritual redemption, civic responsibility, and social duty. And when all non-violent means failed, as a last resort they picked up the arms, fought against great odds, sacrificed their lives, but never gave up and never surrendered.

These pages narrate the stories of those determined do-gooders who witnessed the religious bigotry and preached equal divinity and human brotherhood. Those kind souls who heard the cries of oppressed and nursed their wounds. Those considerate minds who felt the anguish of the subservient and offered them equal social status. Those brave-hearts who saw the tyranny and fought it with principled ideology, passion, and finally with the sword. Sadly, most historians have glossed over the role of those resolute Sikhs in shaping the destiny of the region.

When the Mughal invaded India, Hinduism and Islam dominated the sub-continent. Northern India was a conglomerate of numerous Hindu and Muslim kingdoms. Muslim rule started in parts of north India in the early 13th century with the founding of the Delhi Sultanate of Afghan explorers. With the rise of powerful Hindu states like the Rajputs, the Delhi Sultanate declined in the late 14th century. Aspiring to capture the throne of Delhi, Mewar's ruler Sangram Singh is said to have invited Central Asian Mughal, Babur, to invade India. Perhaps, he thought that like his ancestor Timur, Babur would invade,

loot, and go back. Babur defeated the army of Ibrahim Lodi at Panipat in 1526 and laid the foundation for more than two-century long dynastic rule. When Sikh Empire, Maratha Empire, and Mysore Kingdom took control over large areas of the subcontinent in the early 18th century, the Mughals suffered a gradual decline.

Babur's bloody invasion brought immense death and devastation to India. Guru Nanak described the havoc he witnessed in Saidpur in this verse scribed on page 722-23 of SGGS:

ਤਿਲੰਗ ਮਹਲਾ ੧ ॥

ਜੈਸੀ ਮੈ ਆਵੈ ਖਸਮ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਤੈਸੜਾ ਕਰੀ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਵੇ ਲਾਲੋ ॥

ਪਾਪ ਕੀ ਜੰਵ ਲੈ ਕਾਬਲਹੁ ਧਾਇਆ ਜੋਰੀ ਮੰਗੈ ਦਾਨੁ ਵੇ ਲਾਲੋ ॥

ਸਰਮੁ ਧਰਮੁ ਦੁਇ ਛਪਿ ਖਲੋਏ ਕੂੜੁ ਫਿਰੈ ਪਰਧਾਨੁ ਵੇ ਲਾਲੋ ॥

ਕਾਜੀਆ ਬਾਮਣਾ ਕੀ ਗਲ ਥਕੀ ਅਗਦੁ ਪੜੈ ਸੈਤਾਨੁ ਵੇ ਲਾਲੋ ॥

ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨੀਆ ਪੜਹਿ ਕਤੇਬਾ ਕਸਟ ਮਹਿ ਕਰਹਿ ਖੁਦਾਇ ਵੇ ਲਾਲੋ ॥

ਜਾਤਿ ਸਨਾਤੀ ਹੋਰਿ ਹਿਦਵਾਣੀਆ ਏਹਿ ਭੀ ਲੇਖੈ ਲਾਇ ਵੇ ਲਾਲੋ ॥

ਖੂਨ ਕੇ ਸੋਹਿਲੇ ਗਾਵੀਅਹਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਰਤੁ ਕਾ ਕੁੰਗੂ ਪਾਇ ਵੇ ਲਾਲੋ ॥੧॥

Nanak recorded that Babur's rogue armed forces from Kabul, attacked and violated the soil of Hindustan, clamoring to establish their empire. Unabashed, the invaders without compassion colored the land red with the blood of the innocent victims. Guru Nanak described the plight of scared Hindu and Muslim women suffering abuse at the hands of the brutal and devilish army of Babur. The meek are singing the songs of the bloodbath, and are praying in pain, Guru Nanak wrote.

When Sikh faith came into being in late fifteenth century, Indian populace was crushed under political, religious, and social oppression. Babur used brute force to establish his Imperial presence and political authority. Having seized the political power, he enacted distinct rules for Muslim and non-Muslim population. Besides knocking-off civil liberties for non-Muslim population, they were subjected to special tax called Jazia. Akbar, the most secular of the Mughals, abolished such discriminatory laws but after Akbar's death, his future generations adopted Islamic revivalist attitude and chose hard line policies and ordered destruction of many temples. Except for sporadic conciliation, Hindu-Muslim polarity was a forceful factor of Indian life during Mughal rule. Religious bigotry and corruption rose to new highs as spiritual leaders of Hinduism and Islam pandered to the politically elite and abandoned their moral responsibilities. Within Hindu fold, Dalits and women were buried

under beastly burden of social discrimination. Victimized masses lacked courage to launch any resistance to those in control.

The Sikh Gurus, with revolutionary resolve to challenge the suppressive forces, uplifted the humanity spiritually. They reminded Mughal emperors of their responsibility to install rule of law with equal justice and civic liberties for all, instead of their high-handedness and unscrupulous behavior. With a message of One GOD and equality of human beings, they advanced the freedom of religion and rejected caste based divisions. Guru Nanak elevated Mardana belonging to the suppressed caste, to his own high social status, by calling him *Bhai* or brother. Gurus elevated woman at par with man and rejected purdah and Sati traditions. The traditions of Sangat and Langar were institutionalized to erase social stratification. The Gurus encouraged economic self-reliance through work and entrepreneurship. By promoting ten percent income donation for charity, they bonded the humanity into spiritual brotherhood. These attributes permeated the society in everlasting optimism and average citizen felt a sense of empowerment.

These egalitarian principles took roots quickly. And the institutions that practiced these principles gained popularity. These early Gurdwaras (*Dharamsal* in those days) were buzzing with devotees. A spiritual renaissance and social revolution was brewing. The focus of spiritual life was shifting from ceremonially demonstrative worship to purity of deeds. People, from both dominant faiths of the time, who were able to look beyond the rituals were supportive and did not feel threatened. But, those who benefitted from the religious animosity and social stratification were not happy and continued to undermine the cause.

Most of the Mughal rulers opposed the Sikhs because their power was founded on oppression, not freedom. The *Kazis* of the time opposed the Sikhs as their positions in the royal court and comfortable life styles depended on pleasing their imperial masters. Upper echelons of the Hindu faith also opposed the Sikhs because their own status and position of privileges depended on maintaining social stratification. And then there were disgruntled Guru kins who were not worthy of Guru-ship but lusted for the coveted leadership of the Sikhs.

These Corrupt and resentful officials and their cohorts with influence in the imperial courts provoked Mughal emperors and their top advisors, time and again, to halt the growth and popularity of the Sikhs. They filed false

complaints against the Sikh Gurus or the Sikh institutions as anti-Muslim, or seditious in nature. Mughal-Sikh relations started with intellectual conflict during Babur's reign and eased during the second half of the sixteenth century. During Akbar's reign, they may even be called congenial except for sporadic inciting by middle level officials in Akbar's court.

The compilation of Adi Granth was seen as a threat by the prevailing religious leaders. Emperor Akbar heard such complaints and he decided to investigate the allegations himself. Akbar asked for random readings from the Adi Granth Sahib, and found nothing objectionable in the scripture and dismissed the complaints.

After Akbar's death, similar complaints were made in the court of Jahangir. Influenced by the resentful minds, Jahangir took to animosity towards Guru Arjan. In his memoir "*Tuzak-i-Jehangiri*" Jahangir wrote that Guru Arjan had acquired fame in the country as an expounder of religion and that many Hindus and some ignorant Muslims admired his character and piety. He wrote that crowds extolled him as a true teacher. Then he expressed his intention to bring an end to it, or alternatively, to convert Guru Arjan to Islam. Unable to convert Guru Arjan, Jahangir ordered him killed through torture.

Thus began the severely strained relationship between Sikhs and Mughal kings. As Sikhs were denied freedom of religion, they became more resolute in pursuing their tenets and began to arm themselves, learned martial arts, horsemanship, and built a defensive force. Sikhs continued to grow in numbers and strengthen their resolve to live in freedom with the motto, "***Scare no one - Fear no one***". Guru Arjan sacrificed his life for freedom of Sikhs to practice their religion; seventy years later during Aurangzeb's reign, Guru Teg Bahadur gave his head to protect Hindus' freedom of religion.

After Guru Teg Bahadur's martyrdom, Guru Gobind Singh transformed Sikhs into a fighting force of Saint-Soldiers called Khalsa. Though heavily outnumbered by the imperial army, Sikhs refused to surrender to the oppressive Mughal rule. In early eighteenth century, Banda Singh Bahadur defeated the Mughals and established the first Sikh Raj that lasted only about a decade. After Banda Singh Bahadur's martyrdom, the Mughals escalated their attacks to subdue the Sikhs. For more than half a century, Sikhs were hunted because the Mughals declared price on Sikh heads.

Like the long-lived Greek mythological bird "Phoenix" that obtains new life by arising from the ashes of its predecessor, Sikhs were reborn. Towards the

later part of eighteenth century under a confederation of Sikh Missals, Sikhs controlled most of Punjab. The first half of the nineteenth century saw Maharaja Ranjit Singh's Sikh Empire spread in most of the North-Indian subcontinent, while the Maratha and Mysore kingdoms ruled the rest of India.

Sikh faith from the beginning has been about mankind's togetherness and inclusiveness. Peace, happiness, and spiritual salvation are about self-cleansing, not judging others. Some historians have labeled Sikh-Mughal battles as Sikh-Islam conflict. This has been done either out of ignorance or malicious effort to put the two communities at odds with each other. The Sikh-Mughal conflict was always about equality and freedom. It was not a battle of competing faiths. This is affirmed by the inclusion of verses of thirty-five great souls of India in Sri Guru Granth Sahib, only nine of whom were Sikhs (six gurus and three devotees). All others were either Muslim or Hindus. Sheikh Farid Ji, *Baba Bheekhan*, *Bhagat Ramanand Ji*, *Bhagat Parmaanand Ji*, *Bhagat Jaidev Ji*, *Bhagat Kabir Ji*, *Bhagat Ravidas Ji*, *Bhagat Sain Ji*, *Bhagat Namdev Ji*, *Bhagat Sadhna Ji*, *Bhagat Soordas Ji* and *Bhagat Dhanna Ji* and eleven Brahmin Bards (Bhats) occupy the exalted status along with Sikh Gurus. They all believed in one formless GOD, and unity of human beings as children of one GOD.

The inception and the evolution of Sikh faith have not been accurately preserved in history for several reasons. From the very beginning, Sikhs were pre-occupied with protecting their faith from those wanting to suppress the spread of freedom and equality. Thus they had no time to accurately document the history and events as they unfolded. The poetical narrations by Bhai Gurdas and other contemporaries of the Sikh Gurus do provide a conceptual accounting of the events, travels, and discoursed teachings of Sikh Gurus, but they are not detailed enough.

Much of Sikh history has been written by writers patronized by the Mughal rulers who could not write anything impinging on their repressive rule; therefore, they willfully ignored and distorted facts. Some writers came from the educated upper echelons of the socially divided Indian society. Both of these groups had no interest in accurately describing the lives of Sikh pioneers or the principles that guided them. They mostly tried to place their own masters on pedestals.

Later writings by European authors also were not accurately researched. They relied on available documentation of biased authors and had little interest

in writing with correctness of detail about a new religion. Stanley Wolpert's work is a good example. Dr. Sangat Singh, in his "The Sikhs in History", has pointed out the inaccuracies of this publication. Stanley Wolpert wrote on page 161 of his book "The New History of India" Third Edition, published in 1989, by Oxford University Press that "Ram Das, the fourth guru, had served at Akbar's court and was granted some land by the emperor between the rivers Sutlej and Ravi in Punjab, which was to become the site of Sikh's sacred capital." This is completely inaccurate. The fact is that Guru Amar Das Ji delegated *Bhai* Jetha Ji (later Guru Ram Das) to Akbar's court to explicate the fundamental tenets of the Sikh religion. *Bhai* Jetha Ji visited Akbar's court as an ambassador of the guru and was received at the royal court with due protocol. The story about *Bhai* Jetha Ji serving at Akbar's court is fiction.

The author further states that, "Shortly before his death in 1661, Har Rai designated his younger son, Hari Krishan, as his successor, but this son too, was forced to seek Alamgir's favor in Delhi." Both these descriptions are contortion of the facts. Indeed, Guru Hari Rai Ji had cautioned his son Guru Hari Krishan not to give audience to Alamgir and Guru Hari Krishan complied with his Guru father's guidance. Wolpert failed to root the facts.

Many similar incorrect and twisted versions of Sikh history have appeared in books that remain unchallenged. In this connection, Peter Cunningham's following remarks in the second edition of *The History of the Sikhs* merit consideration; "*but History, to be of any value should be written by one superior to the influences of private or personal feelings. What Gibson calls 'truth, naked, unblushing truth, the first virtue of more seriously history', should alone direct the pen of the historian; and truth alone influenced like the mind and guided the pen of the Author of this book.*" In the same article, Peter Cunningham also writes, "*The printed materials for the recent History of India are not of the character on which historians can rely. State Papers, presented to the people by 'both Houses of Parliament' have been altered to suit the temporary views of political warfare, or abridged out of mistaken regards to the tender feelings of survivors.*"

From the beginning of Sikhism, many writers, some of their own accord and some at others' behest, have been trying to undermine the Sikh principles of monotheism, one omnipresent and omnipotent formless divine entity, equality and freedom. They have produced literature that distorts Sikh fundamentals and invented myths about Sikh Gurus worshiping deities of

ancient India. They may have succeeded in polluting the history with their concoctions but they have often not been successful at distracting Sikhs from their core values preserved in the original and authenticated Sri Guru Granth Sahib (SGGS).

The Sikh story has always been about the battle between the axe and the tree. The axe has not been able to destroy the tree of Sikh principles because it has strong roots. It has been nurtured by the blood of innumerable Sikhs for centuries. The axe may not remember, but the tree does. The tree continues to provide shade and fruit to those in need. The tree lives on in every Sikh heart. And every Sikh heart remembers the sacrifices of “The Resolute Sikhs” in their daily *Ardaas* or prayer, never to be forgotten.

The divide and rule philosophy is deployed in political, religious and social realms, even today. Sikhs must remain watchful of such personalities amongst us. We have the eternal gift of authentic SGGS given to us by our Gurus. When in doubt, the litmus test of principles imbued in SGGS will always lead us to live righteously and do the right thing. While we can feel blessed to have the unadulterated scriptures bestowed to the Sikh generations by our founding fathers, it behooves us to try and preserve our accurate and heroic history, also for our future generations. Our revered institutions have a moral responsibility to establish think tanks of researchers, historians, and scholars to delve deeply into the past and bring forth the glorious record of our ancestors in the most accurate version, humanly possible. This is a humble request to correct the documentation of Sikh History by prejudiced pens.

It is not a difficult task. Our Jewish brethren, who suffered the greatest holocaust in history at the hands of Nazis, have done so and continue to do so. Eliezer “Elie” Wiesel, a Romanian-born American, Nobel Laureate and Holocaust survivor, single-handedly brought to justice many a perpetrators of Nazi crimes. He said, “There may be times when we are powerless to prevent injustice, but there must never be a time when we fail to protest.”

Sikh struggle has been about divinity, dignity, equality, and justice for all from the brutal tyranny of temporal and spiritual leaderships. Sikh contributions and sacrifices for India’s freedom from centuries old foreign rule far exceed their proportional population. Regrettably, neither the notable historians nor Indian Government have justly recognized “The Resolute Sikhs” of the centuries past or modern times. Sikhs do the right thing, not for recognition, but because it is in our DNA to do so.

Shining examples of this spirit are Khalsa Aid, a UK based international organization and United Sikhs, a U.N. affiliated, international non-profit, non-governmental, humanitarian relief, human development and advocacy organization, with the aim to provide humanitarian aid in disaster areas and civil conflict zones around the world. These organizations are guided by the Sikh principle of “Recognize the whole human race as one”.

Aptly, School systems in America, Canada, Great Britain and numerous other nations have adopted curriculum standards that include information on Sikh faith and Sikh identity to afford their citizens the opportunity to understand, recognize, and appreciate the rich history and shared principles of Sikhs. Hopefully, the school curriculum in India, the birthplace of Sikhism, also would endeavor to educate children about Guru Nanak’s revolutionary challenge to Babur’s imperial oppression. His call for One God and equality for all, Guru Arjan’s self-sacrifice for freedom of religion; Guru Teg Bahadur offering his head in defense of Hinduism; and Guru Gobind Singh’s initiation of The Resolute Sikhs to fight the mighty tyrants.

Rajinder Singh Jolly

Virginia USA

September 17, 2016

Guru Nanak Dev Ji

(1469-1539)

Since ancient times, Indians have believed that when darker forces surge and righteousness collapses, divine intervention brings ordained souls to earth to restore faith and serenity to ordinary people. Having endured centuries of foreign raiders, plunderers, and fiefs in combination with subservient life under the hierarchy of the caste system, Indian masses were indeed looking for a spiritual savior. In 1469, in the home of *Mehta* Kalyan Das Bedi and *Mata* Tripta, Nanak was born in Punjab's Talwandi town; Nankana Sahib in today's Pakistan. Bhai Gurdas, an admired poet of the time, described Nanak's birth as a divine intervention.

ਸੁਣੀ ਪੁਕਾਰਿ ਦਾਤਾਰ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਗ ਮਾਹਿ ਪਠਾਇਆ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ ੨੮, ਵਾਰਾਂ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ)

“Sunee pukaar Dataar Prabh, Gur Nanak jag maanhe pathayaa.”

Page 28, Varan Bhai Gurdas Ji.

Translation: The benevolent God responding to the worldly call, sent Guru Nanak to comfort the masses.

Nanak empathized with human suffering inflicted by the religious and political bias. Of the five major religions of that time, Hinduism and Islam dominated the Indian landscape. Except for sporadic conciliation, the Hindu-Muslim polarity was a forceful factor of Indian life. Lack of concern for common man in the leadership of both groups, was a beastly burden. Buddhism had almost disappeared from the land of its origin. Judaism and Christianity, the other two Semitic faiths had negligible presence in India. Invaders of Lodhi and Mughal dynasties were interested in plundering of India and forced conversion of Hindus into Islam. Caste system associated with India's indigenous faith also took its toll on people's psyche. Demoralized masses living with a victim mentality lacked courage to launch any resistance to those in control. Under

such discouraging circumstances, Guru Nanak showed revolutionary resolve in challenging both, the political and religious leadership.

To the rulers and religious leaders, Guru Nanak pointed out their high-handedness and unscrupulous behavior, and challenged them to reform their ways. To the masses, he advocated to displace their victim mentality with one of self-esteem and empowerment. He sermonized that One GOD created all humans and gave them equal divinity; therefore each individual deserves: Freedom of religion; Equal dignity without maltreatment; Equal human rights and respect; Equal opportunity in education, employment, and entrepreneurship; Rule of law, and equal justice against civil and criminal offenders.

That Nanak was special became apparent from his early years. His sister Nanaki, who was five years elder to him and married to *Diwan* Jai Ram, was the first person to notice his special traits. Their family priest and astrologer, *Pandit* Hardayal, predicted that both Hindus and Muslims would hold Nanak in reverence. To his teachers, *Pandey* Gopal Das, *Pandit* Brij Nath and *Maulvi* Kutabdeen, employed by *Mehta* Kalyan Das, Nanak was a child prodigy. His interpretations of Sanskrit scriptures and Persian poetry made pupils of his tutors. *Pandit* Gopal Das and *Pandit* Brij Nath, both wonderstruck by Nanak's abilities, told *Mehta* Kalyan Das that Nanak was destined to be a teacher to all humanity.

Having read Hindu and Muslim scriptures, Guru Nanak concluded that there cannot be two separate Gods; *Ram* for Hindus and *Allah* for Muslims, as claimed by leaders of these faiths. Nanak's revolutionary thoughts spread when *Pandit* Hardayal came to initiate Nanak with the *Janeu* (holy thread) ceremony, a Hindu ritual for upper-caste males only. Nine year old Nanak refused to wear it, proclaiming it was a sign of caste and gender discrimination. He told the priest that being high or low should be judged by our deeds. Being born in a high caste family, or wearing a sacred thread does not make one superior to others. "I will gladly accept a thread of kindness, empathy, contentment, high character, and equality, that will never wear off or burn" said Nanak.

Mehta Kalyan Das tried to dissuade Nanak away from his spiritual leanings, these efforts were not unfruitful. Hoping for Nanak to become a worldly retailer, Kalyan Das handed him some money to earn profits through trading. With the money given by his father, Nanak fed hungry ascetics, he met on the way. Nanak counseled them that renouncing the world and depending

on home-makers for their daily sustenance was not the way to a fulfilled life. In Guru Nanak's words:

ਜਤੀ ਸਦਾਵਹਿ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਨ ਜਾਣਹਿ ਛਡਿ ਬਹਹਿ ਘਰ ਬਾਰੁ ॥

ਅੰਗ ੪੬੯, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾ

“Jatti sdaveye, jugat na janey chhad bahe ghar baar.”

Page 469, SGGS

Translation: Calling themselves Jattis (in control of sensory desires), they abdicate their worldly responsibilities; however, they know not the way to peace of mind.

Nanak urged the ascetics to return home, and actualize their responsibilities towards their parents, spouses and children. “Seek spirituality within your hearts while staying engaged in society”, Nanak guided them. Mehta Kalyan Das, continuing his efforts to divert Nanak's attention, sent Nanak to elder sister Nanaki's home in Sultanpur, where he was given a job to keep daily sales records and warehouse stock in Nawab Daulat Khan's business. Someone complained to the Nawab that Nanak in his spiritual trances was being negligent and that the warehouse stock was deficient. After a methodical accounting, the warehouse stock was found to exceed the required inventory. The Nawab aware of Nanak's ethereal tendencies became his devotee.

Renowned author Dr. Sangat Singh, in his book-The Sikhs in History, has written, “In 1499, at the age of 30, after a great deal of meditation, Guru Nanak's cosmic consciousness blossomed in full. He had a revelation, or as the *Janam Sakhis* narrate, was led to the presence of God, and commissioned to propagate His message to mankind.” Dr. Sangat Singh adds, “Guru Nanak during the process of revelation gained new vistas of cosmic consciousness that divine light permeates the entire universe and is only source of light in all humans.” This revelation happened at Sultanpur when Guru Nanak disappeared into the river ‘Vayin’ for three days. Emerging from the river, Guru Nanak pronounced “*Na koi Hindu na Musalmaan*” asserting all human beings are children of One GOD who is beyond the religious divisions. He then recited the “*Mool Mantra*” or the root precept, the opening verse of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* (SGGS).

ੴ ਸਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

ਅੰਗ ੧, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾ

**“Ek oangkaar, sat naam, kartaa purakh, nirbhau, nirvair
Akaal moorat, ajoonee, saibhang, gur-prasaad.”**

Page 1, SGGS

Translation: One GOD, Eternal, Creator, Fearless, Revenge-less, Undying, Unborn, Self-illuminated, The Guru's gift.

M.A. Macauliffe, in his monumental work, *The Sikh Religion*, translated the invocation as follows: "There is but one God whose name is True, the creator, devoid of fear and enmity, immortal, unborn, self existent, great and bountiful."

Guru Nanak's message of monotheism, brotherly love, and dignity for all carried a wide appeal to the masses. He won over people not by magical tricks, or astute intellect, but by moral persuasion and the power of love. Guru Nanak appeared on the horizon like a beacon of hope to slay the dark forces. He was the bright star that not only emitted light but also possessed strong gravity that attracted everyone to him. Guru Nanak's disciples have grown in numbers to become the fifth largest religion of the world, and have come to be known as "*Sikhs*."

The great religions of the world expound about life in variant ways. Guru Nanak uses metaphors from nature to simplify the metaphysical aspects of human life. Using the example of a deer that smells the musk fragrance emitted by its own gland, wanders from bush to bush searching for the source, Guru Nanak communicated that we humans also feel the divine presence, but wander externally to find it through rituals, instead of exploring within. Guru Nanak metaphorically says, just as each drop of water in a flowing river rushes to meet the great ocean and loses its identity upon convergence, similarly human life's pursuit is to escape the cycle of reincarnation, and merge with the eternal. The path to this destination is paved with purity of thought, righteous actions, acknowledging the divine in all, honest work, empathy, service, and love.

To allay the suffering of humanity at the hands of tyrant rulers, devious priests, and Machiavellian miscreants, Guru Nanak travelled near and far in four separate journeys (*Udaasi*) to reform the society, as elaborated by *Bhai Gurdas Ji* in his poetry:

ਬਾਬੇ ਭੇਖ ਬਣਾਇਆ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਕੀ ਗੀਤਿ ਚਲਾਈ । ਚੜ੍ਹਿਆ ਸੋਧਣਿ ਧਰਤਿ ਲੁਕਾਈ ।੨੪।

ਪੰਨਾ ੩੦, ਵਾਰਾਂ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ

"Baabe Bhekh Banaya, udassi ki reet chalai

Chaliya sodhan dharat lukaai"

Page 30, Varan Bhai Gurdas Ji

Translation: The sage donned pilgrim's garb, to reform society.

Throughout these journeys, Guru Nanak confronted emperors, monarchs,

and their potentate about their injustices; priests about their superficial and superstitious rituals; and criminals about their acts of deceit and violence against innocent hardworking folks. Guru Nanak climbed the most remote mountains to meet with hermits (*Yogi*), and prodded them to return to society and engage in communal good. Preaching and living in humility, he preferred the company of honest and impoverished, as opposed to pompous and affluent, as he recites in *Siri Raga*, Page 15, SGGS:

ਨੀਚਾ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਨੀਚ ਜਾਤਿ ਨੀਚੀ ਹੂ ਅਤਿ ਨੀਚੁ ॥
ਨਾਨਕੁ ਤਿਨ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਸਾਥਿ ਵਡਿਆ ਸਿਉ ਕਿਆ ਰੀਸੁ ॥
ਜਿਥੈ ਨੀਚ ਸਮਾਲੀਅਨਿ ਤਿਥੈ ਨਦਰਿ ਤੇਰੀ ਬਖਸੀਸੁ ॥੪॥੩॥

**“Neecha under neech jaat, neechi hoon ut neech,
Nanak tin ke sung sath, vadiyan seun kya rees.”**

*Translation: Nanak befriends humble & obedient, instead of elites;
Divine graces gatherings of meek.*

First Udaasi (Eastwards) -



Figure 1: Guru Nanak Dev Ji emphasizing to people at Haridwar importance of performing good deeds rather than just rituals

Starting from Sultanpur in Punjab, Guru Nanak travelled to Haridwar (Hardwar), where he observed people throwing water towards sun- to their ancestors in the other world. Guru Nanak started throwing water towards other side. To those, who wanted to correct the Guru, Nanak asked - if their water could reach the unknown distance of the other world, then surely my water can reach my fields few hundred miles away. Guru Nanak preached showing concern for the elders in their old age, while they are living, instead of rituals for the dead.

During his first Udaasi, apart from Haridwar Guru Ji travelled to Banaras, Patna, Gauhati, Shillong, Sylhet, Agartala, Chittagong, Dhaka, Calcutta, and terminating in Jagannath Puri. Besides these well known towns, Guru Nanak made stops in lesser known villages and remote locations. In Sayadpur, Guru Nanak preferred to be the guest of *Bhai* Lalo, an honest, but poor carpenter, instead of staying with Malik Bhago, a wealthy but corrupt high ranking socialite. In Harrapa, Guru Nanak reformed a rogue by the name of Sajjan who under the pretense of providing food and shelter to tired travelers, would drug them and steal their belongings. While visiting Hasan Abdal, Guru Nanak's companion Mardana, feeling thirsty, went to Vali Kandhari, a renowned Muslim *Pir* residing on a mountain top. The *Pir* refused to share his water with a *Kafir*. Through Guru Nanak's blessing, water from *Pir's* mountaintop flowed down where Mardana drank it. The angry *Pir*, rolled down a heavy rock to hurt the visitors. Guru Nanak held the rock up with his palm leaving a handprint on the rock. Vali Kandhari's arrogance was usurped. Today, the rock, with Guru Nanak's hand print and waterfall are cherished visuals for visitors to the *Gurudwara* Punja Sahib, in Pakistan. On the occasion of Shivratri, Guru Nanak went to Kashi, now known as Varanasi or Banaras where wearing of rosary, and worshipping stone deity was popular. *Pandit* Chatur Das queried Guru Nanak why he was not donning religious garbs and participating in rituals? Instead of external garbs and ritualistic prayers in front of stones, union with God is achieved through purity of deeds acquired with Lord's kindness, Guru Nanak said to the *Pandit*:

ਸਾਲ ਗ੍ਰਾਮ ਬਿਪ ਪੂਜਿ ਮਨਾਵਹੁ ਸੁਕ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਤੁਲਸੀ ਮਾਲਾ ॥
ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਿ ਬੇੜਾ ਬਾਂਧਹੁ ਦਇਆ ਕਰਹੁ ਦਇਆਲਾ ॥੧॥

ਮ:੧ ਬਸੰਤੁ ਹਿੰਡੋਲ ਘਰ ੨ ਅੰਗ ੧੧੭੦, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ

**"Sali-gram bip pooj manavoh sukrit tulsi mala,
Ram naam jap berah bandhau daya karho dayala."**

Page 1170, SGGS

Translation: O merciful God, with your kindness I seek thee through pious deeds. I pray not to stones in rituals with holy basil rosary.

Pandit Chatur Das agreeing with Guru Nanak's message changed his ways and became a disciple of the Guru. On Guru Nanak's 500th birthday celebration in 1969, a new *Gurudwara* called Guru Ka Bagh was dedicated at the place. At Jagannath Puri, where Guru Nanak witnessed the elaborate ritual called "*Aarti*" to please deities of Hindu faith by offering a platter of pearls,

incense, and lamps lit with pure ghee, while hoards of devotees dance and sing loudly to the dings of drums, bells, jingles, chimes, and seashells. Nanak reminded the crowd that Mother Nature is continuously performing “Aarti” of almighty. He recited the hymn:

“ਗਗਨ ਮੈ ਥਾਲੁ ਰਵਿ ਚੰਦੁ ਦੀਪਕ ਬਨੇ ਤਾਰਿਕਾ ਮੰਡਲ ਜਨਕ ਮੋਤੀ”

ਰਾਗ ਧਨਾਸਰੀ ਮ: ੧ ਅੰਗ ੧੩, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾ

"Gagan mein thaal rav chand deepak banei..."

Raag Dhanasari, Page 13, SGGS

Translation: Performing rituals for sensory pleasures was not the way to connect with the creator; following the path of truthful living is!

Thousands, including Black-magic practitioner Lady Noorshah of Kamroop in Assam; Bhoomia thief in Dacca, Rai Bular of Emnabad, and Guru Nanak's house maid Tulsan were recipients of Guru Nanak's graces.

Second Udaasi (Southwards) -

Starting from Jagannath Puri for his second journey, Guru Nanak went south to Guntur, and Nagapattinam, then crossing the Indian Ocean to reach Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) where he visited Batticaloa, Kataragam, Badula, Kotte, Anuradhapur and Mannar. Returning from Ceylon, he visited Rameshwaram, Trivandrum, Bidar, Nanded, Ujjain, and Mathura.

In Ceylon, Guru Nanak met Raja Shivnabh(a follower of Shiva), but despite the royal request to stay at the palace, Guru Nanak chose to camp in a dispirited looking garden at Batticaloa. Guru Nanak's footsteps on that land turned the garden lush green blooming with flowers. Though Raja Shivnabh, had heard about Guru Ji from Mansukh, a Lahore businessman, he came to pay obeisance to Guru Nanak again, with expensive gifts, on hearing about the transformation of the garden. Guru Nanak blessed Raja Shivnabh and distributed the gifts he brought amongst the poor. Shivnabh became Guru Nanak Sahib's disciple and the place where Guru Nanak Sahib stayed was renamed as Kurukulam Mandap, meaning Guru's village. Note: Some writers have mentioned existence of a *Gurudwara* at Batticaloa. The author during his five-year stay in Colombodid not find any *Gurudwara* in Sri Lanka. A lone Sikh family is living in the area. An engraving mentioning Guru Nanak's visit (Nanak Acharya) to Ceylon does exist in archaeology department of Sri Lanka at Anuradhapuram. There is a place called Mardana in Colombo 10. A Muslim mosque and Zahira College also exists in predominantly Muslim area. However, no one could guide me about the source and origin of this locality

called Mardana. Can't say if this has any bearing with Guru Nanak's travel associate Mardana.

On his return journey from Ceylon, Guru Nanak Dev Ji was passing through a town called Mandhata in district Khandwa of Madhya Pradesh, where he met a priest-teacher in Oankareshwar temple, talking about numerous deities and idol-worshipping to his pupils. Guru Nanak recited fifty-four stanzas of Oankaar bani (*Dakhnee*, Page 929 SGGS) in a discourse with the *Pandit*, at that place.

ਓਅੰਕਾਰਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਉਤਪਤਿ॥ ਓਅੰਕਾਰਿ ਕੀਆ ਜਿਨਿ ਚਿਤਿ॥
ਓਅੰਕਾਰਿ ਸੈਲ ਜੁਗ ਭਏ॥ ਓਅੰਕਾਰਿ ਬੇਦ ਨਿਰਮਏ॥
ਓਅੰਕਾਰਿ ਸਬਦਿ ਉਧਰੇ॥ ਓਅੰਕਾਰਿ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਤਰੇ॥
ਓਨਮ ਅਖਰ ਸੁਣਹੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ॥ ਓਨਮ ਅਖਰੁ ਤ੍ਰਿਭਵਣ ਸਾਰ॥੧॥
ਸੁਣਿ ਪਾਡੇ ਕਿਆ ਲਿਖਹੁ ਜੰਜਾਲਾ॥ ਲਿਖੁ ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਗੋਪਾਲਾ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ॥

ਅੰਗ ੯੨੯, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾ

**"Oangkaar Brahma uttpatt, Oangkaar kiya jin chit;
Oangkaar saail jug bhave, Oangkaar bayd nirmaye;
Oangkaar sabad Uddharay, Oangkaar Gurmukh tarey;
Oanam akhhar sun bichar, Oanam akhar tribhavan saar;
Sun pandey kya likkho janjala, likh Raam Namm gurmukh Gopala."**

Page 929, SGGS

Translation: One ever-present GOD created the trinity of Brahma (Creator), Vishnu, (Operator), Mahesh (Destroyer). O religious teacher, instead of teaching about deities for rituals, teach them pious living for union with the eternal benevolent God.

In the first verse Guru Nanak talked about the philosophy the *Pandit* was teaching to his students. In the remaining 53 stanzas, Guru Nanak narrated attributes of God explaining that *Oamkaar* is the formless and eternal creator and all deities including the trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh are created by *Oamkaar*. A Sikh shrine with the name Oankareshwar exists in the Narmada River Valley in memory of Guru Nanak's visit. Traveling back towards Punjab, Guru Nanak enlightened "Rohela" slave traders, and a tribe of cannibals led by Kauda to change their devious ways and live righteously.

Third Udaasi (Northwards) -

For his third *Udaasi*, Guru Nanak Sahib went from Sultanpur to Kangra, Kullu (Manikaran), Mansarovar, Kailash Parbat, Leh, Sakardu, Kargil, Sri Nagar, Sialkot, and Pasrur. During this odyssey, he is also said to have visited places in Tibet, Nepal, China,

Sikkim, and Bhutan before returning to Kartarpur in Punjab.

In Kailash Mountains, Guru Nanak Dev Ji visited Gorakhnath and his circle of *SidhaYogis* at a place known as Gorakhmatta (Mount Sumaiyar). These ascetics claimed to have acquired supernatural powers through meditation. Arrogant of their years of musings, initially, they addressed Nanak as “*Baalay*” or a “child.” As the discourse progressed, the *Sidhas* adopted respectable language and reverence towards the Guru. The entirety of their conversation is scribed as *Sidha-Goshth* on page 938 of SGGS.

Fourth Udaasi (Westwards) -

Guru Nanak Travelled to great centers of Islam in Multan, Lakhpat, Hinglaj, Aden, Mecca, Medina, Baghdad, Tehran, Kandhar, and Kabul before concluding his journey in Punjab. *Bhai* Gurdas Ji has recorded Guru Nanak’s visit to Baghdad in the following verse:

ਫਿਰ ਬਾਬਾ ਗਇਆ ਬਗਦਾਦਿ ਨੈ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਜਾਇ ਕੀਆ ਅਸਥਾਨਾ।
ਇਕੁ ਬਾਬਾ ਅਕਾਲ ਰੂਪੁ ਦੂਜਾ ਰਬਾਬੀ ਮਰਦਾਨਾ।
ਦਿਤੀ ਬਾਂਗਿ ਨਿਵਾਜਿ ਕਰਿ ਸੁੰਨਿ ਸਮਾਨਿ ਹੋਆ ਜਹਾਨਾ।
ਸੁੰਨ ਮੁੰਨਿ ਨਗਰੀ ਭਈ ਦੇਖਿ ਪੀਰ ਭਇਆ ਹੈਰਾਨਾ॥੩੫॥

ਪੰਨਾ ੪੧, ਵਾਰਾਂ ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ

**"Baba gya Baghdad nu bahar jae kiya Asthana
Ik baba Akaal roop duja rababi Mardana
Diti bang namaz kar sun saman hoa jahana
Sun mun nagri bhaee dekh peer bhaya hairana"**

Page 41, Varaan Bhai Gurdas Ji

Translation: The sage of Divine glow & his musician friend, Mardana, arriving in Baghdad, they found a place of abode, listening to his (Nanak's) call for prayer, silence befell on the city, and the town Pir was filled with wonder.

Guru Nanak’s message of One GOD and brotherhood of mankind appealed to SufiPirBahlol of Baghdad. PirBahlol desired to be buried near the platform where Guru Nanak sat with him in discourse. An article written by Anwar Faruqi for AFP News on January 26, 2011, Mr. Faruqi provides the history and current state of the shrine. According to the article, the shrine, located to the west of the town, was rediscovered by Sikh soldiers after World War I. Dr. Kirpal Singh, a Captain in the Indian Medical Service at that time, in a letter dated October 15, 1918 wrote an account of the place “It is really a humble looking building and known to very few people except Sikhs. To some Arabs it is known as well by the name of tomb of Bahlol. You enter the building by a small door, on which

something is written in Arabic, not visible to a casual visitor. Even with attention it is difficult to read. I could not read it hence could not copy it. I have taken the photograph of the outside, which I shall forward to you in due course. Entering the building, you come to a brick paved passage going to your right straight into the room (with a veranda), wherein you find the tomb and the raised platform. In the courtyard there are a few trees, mostly pomegranates”.

The shrine was repaired by the Sikh soldier after the World War I and then again after World War II. The plaque at the entrance of the building commemorating Guru Nanak’s visit mentioned in Dr. Kirpal Singh letter



Figure 2: Shrine commemorating Guru Nanak's visit to Baghdad

became a casualty of the Gulf War (US invasion of Iraq). It is believed to either have been looted or destroyed.

Sikh Bulletin of May-June 2015 refers to a book by Dr Joseph H. Peterson about Mr. *Jeewanji Jamshedji Modi* of Bombay’s 1924 visit to Iran and Azerbaijan. He photographed Guru Nanak’s *Mool Mantra* inscribed in a deserted Hindu Temple in Baku-capital of Azerbaijan. Presence of this inscription in an ancient temple of Baku, a predominantly *Sufi* Muslim town, indicates possible visit of Guru Nanak Sahib. We are indebted to them both for documenting this artifact.

Author Inderjit Singh Jhaggi in his book “Babania Kahania” narrates Guru Nanak’s visit to Mecca, Medina, and Baghdad; “During Guru Nanak’s journeys in the Middle East, a local author, Taajudin Naqshabandhi, joined Guru Nanak and remained with him for roughly two years. Taajudin documented his time with Guru Nanak in great detail. Four centuries later, a young man from Kashmir,



Fig. 2-2. The inscription of 'Commencing Verse' of the Aad Guru Granth Sahib (commonly called as 'Mool Mantra' by many Sikhs) found on a wall in a temple in Baku, Azerbaijan. Reproduced with permission from Dr Joseph H. Peterson's Web site <http://www.aicsta.org/modi/baku.htm> (Modi, Jivanji Jamshedji. 1924. My Travels outside Bombay, Iran, Azerbaijan, Baku. <http://www.aicsta.org/modi/baku.htm>)

Figure 3: <http://sikhbulletin.com/Bulletins/SikhBulletinMayJun2015.pdf>

Syed Mushtaq Hussain, chanced upon Taajudin's handwritten manuscript while studying to become an Islamic scholar. This manuscript changed Mushtaq's life. He converted to Sikhism and went on to become the renowned Sant Syed Prithipal Singh. In the absence of any facility available for copying the book in facsimile, Mushtaq Hussain took notes from

Taajudin's manuscript. He also took notes from another book, Twarikh-e-Arab, written by Khwaja Jainul Abdin, a Muslim author who also accompanied Guru Nanak during his travels to Mecca. Mushtaq's notes later formed the basis of the Punjabi book, Babe Nanak di Baghdad Pheri."

Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal, in one of his writings has included a photograph of a 15 feet high and six feet wide plaque constructed in mortar, situated in a public park in Istanbul, Turkey engraved in local language noting of Guru Nanak's visit to the place in Turkey. The first line of the inscription states:

Jahangir jaman hind lat abd al majid Nanak
Translation: The Lord of the time, resident of India, Nanak - the man of God.¹

Near the end of his fourth journey in 1520, Guru Nanak and his long time companion Mardana were caught in the turmoil of the rising Mughal power at the ravaging of Saidpur by Babar's invasion. Guru Nanak confronted Babar about the



Figure 4: Plaque in a public park in Istanbul, Turkey commemorating Guru Nanak's visit

1. <http://www.iuscanada.com/journal/articles/monument2006.pdf>

killings of innocents and destruction caused by his forces. Babar imprisoned Guru Nanak and Mardana, but soon released them, when he learned about the Guru's divine personality.

Guru Nanak lamented about Babar's atrocities in the following verse on page 360 of SGGS:

ਖੁਰਾਸਾਨ ਖਸਮਾਨਾ ਕੀਆ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨੁ ਡਰਾਇਆ ॥
ਆਪੈ ਦੋਸੁ ਨ ਦੇਈ ਕਰਤਾ ਜਮੁ ਕਰਿ ਮੁਗਲੁ ਚੜਾਇਆ ॥
ਏਤੀ ਮਾਰ ਪਈ ਕਰਲਾਣੇ ਤੈਂ ਕੀ ਦਰਦੁ ਨ ਆਇਆ ॥੧॥
ਕਰਤਾ ਤੂੰਸਭਨਾ ਕਾ ਸੋਈ ॥ ਜੇਸਕਤਾ ਸਕਤੇ ਕਉ ਮਾਰੇ ਤਾ ਮਨਿ ਹੋਸੁ ਨ ਹੋਈ ॥੧॥

**"Khurasaan Khasmana kia Hindustan daraiya
Aape dos na daiye karta jum kar kar Mughal Chadaiya.
Aeti maar pae karlaney tain ki dard na aaiya.
Karta tu sabhna ka soi.**

Jae sakta saktey ko marey ta mun ros na hoi."

Translation: Leaving behind Khurasan, Babar is terrorizing Hindustan. For the Mughal in aggression over meek-can you remain blameless? At the suffering of innocent, didn't you feel remorse? O Creator Lord, You are the Master of all; one may not feel any grief if a mighty hurts another mighty.

Guru Nanak's message of unity brought people from all folds into his loving embrace. They associated honored words from their own culture with his name. The highly revered Guru Nanak Dev Ji of India is known as Valli Hind in Mecca, Baba Nanak in Iraq, Nanak Valli in Egypt, Nanak Pir in Baghdad, Baba Fusha in China, Nanak Rishi in Nepal, Nanak Kadamdar in Russia, Nanak Acharaya in Sri Lanka, Guru Riponchia in Bhutan, and Nanak Lama in Tibet.

After spreading his message of love through his travels, Guru Nanak settled down in Kartarpur, the town he established. He earned his living farming on his land and spent rest of his time in divine discourses with locals and visitors. Instead of religious garbs, he dressed in regular folks' attire, reminding his followers that persona, not attire, should define us. Guru Nanak's message may be summarized in three simple actions; *Naam Japna* or spiritual presence, *Kirt Karna* or honest work, and *Wand Chhakna* or love and charity.

Guru Nanak's message of the divine transcends creed, caste, color, race, gender, and national boundaries. He recorded the divine verses revealed to him throughout his life in a book he carried with him. A total of 974 verses recited by Guru Nanak are scribed in Guru Granth Sahib. He had envisioned the compilation of a scripture for humanity that would go beyond all man-made boundaries. That is why during his travels across the globe, Guru Nanak sought out both Hindu and Muslim saints who subscribed to the idea of one universal

God, and a classless society without superstitions. He met a few of his contemporaries and also visited the descendants of others.

He gathered their balladry and passed on the entire collection to successor Gurus along with his own writings. Guru Arjan scribed them all in the Adi Granth in 1604. Because many *bhagats* were not from high society or because they rejected social hierarchies, their reformist contributions were ignored by most Indian scholars. The Nanak V, Guru Arjan Dev Ji, throned these great souls at par, and preserved their ballads for eternity in Sri Guru Granth Sahib. Without Guru Nanak's effort, humanity would have been deprived of Sheikh Farid's soul-touching poetry, including the following verse recorded on page 1384 of SGGS;

ਇਕੁ ਫਿਕਾ ਨ ਗਾਲਾਇ ਸਭਨਾ ਮੈ ਸਚਾ ਧਣੀ॥
ਹਿਆਉ ਨ ਕੈਹੀ ਠਾਹਿ ਮਾਣਕ ਸਭ ਅਮੋਲਵੇ॥੧੨੯॥
ਸਭਨਾ ਮਨ ਮਾਣਿਕ ਠਾਹਣੁ ਮੂਲਿ ਮਚਾਂਗਵਾ॥
ਜੇ ਤਉ ਪਿਰੀਆ ਦੀ ਸਿਕ ਹਿਆਉ ਨ ਠਾਹੇ ਕਹੀ ਦਾ॥੧੩੦॥

**"Ik phikka na galaye sabnha main sacha dhanee;
hiaoo na kaihee thhaye manak sabh amolvay;
sabhna man manak tthahun mool machangvan;
jae tau Piiriya di sikk hiaoo na tthahay kahi da."**

*Translation: Speak never a rude word to any; the Lord eternal abides in all.
Break no heart; know each being a priceless jewel, evil it is to break any heart.*

Guru Nanak, acutely aware of subservient position assigned to woman in society, assigned them absolute equality to man by asserting, "Why call her evil, from whom great men are born?"

Guru Nanak describes our tiny earthly world, millions of galaxies, and the limitless universe to be the creation of benevolent God reflecting his divine expanse and order (*Hukam*) keeping it all in balance. For Guru Nanak the family, social, and economic system, all fall within the orbit of religious concern. This body is the temple of God. By living a life of piety and devoting oneself to the service of mankind is the pathway to self development and union with God.

Sikh Diaspora celebrates Guru Nanak's birthday with great enthusiasm and reverence on full moon of the Indian calendar month of *Kattak* or *Kaarthika*. Respected historian Professor Sahib Singh denotes April 15, 1469 as the birth date of Guru Nanak. Mid-April being the harvest time in rural Punjab, the celebrations were shifted by six months so the commemorations could linger during the relaxed time for the farmers.

Guru Nanak's message was, carried forward by his nine successors. Five days before breathing his last at the age of 70, he entrusted the Guru-ship to *Bhai Lahina*, renamed Guru Angad.

Guru Angad Dev Ji

(1504-1552)

Babar's eldest son Humayun, succeeded his father as the second ruler of the Mughal Empire. He ruled India for a decade before being ousted by the Afghan leader Sher Shah Suri. After his defeat at the hands of Sher Shah Suri in 1540, Humayun ran from Agra to Punjab for a sojourn and seek help from Guru Nanak's successor. When he reached Guru Angad Dev Ji's abode, Guru Ji was engaged in discourse with sangat and did not take note of the emperor's arrival. Feeling belittled, Humayun barged in, unsheathed his sword, and shouted in a fit of rage at Guru Ji. Much alike Guru Nanak challenged Babar's devastation of Saidpur, Guru Ji calmly welcomed Humayun and asked him - what happened to your powerful sword, and raging voice in the battlefield with Sher Shah? Why did you run away from the combat zone, o mighty king? The courageous confrontation by a saintly soul stunned the deposed emperor. Humayun expressed remorse at his behavior, and asked for forgiveness. Fifteen years later, Humayun regrouped his forces and defeated Sher Shah Suri's son Sikandar Suri and regained his throne. Humayun died in 1556.

Guru Nanak's mission to create an egalitarian society entailed educating and reforming the suppressors and elevating those who had accepted the subservient social status; this was a multi-generational task. To assure continuity of these teachings, all successors would have to be in Guru Nanak's own image of divine, compassion, courage, and resolve. *Bhai Lahina Ji*, who had spent seven years in the service of *Sangat* at Guru Nanak's place in Kartarpur, had learned the mission of Guru Nanak by carrying out the Guru's directives with devotion and unreserved obedience. As Guru Nanak states in *Asa-Ki-Var* verse on page 471 of SGGS;

ਹੁਕਮਿ ਮੰਨਿਐ ਹੋਵੈ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ ਤਾ ਖਸਮੈ ਕਾ ਮਹਲੁ ਪਾਇਸੀ ॥

"Hukam Maniye hovayparwaan taan khasmey ka mahal paisee."

Translation: Living within the divine order, one can attain the divine qualities.

Five days before his heavenly departure, on September 02, 1539, Guru Nanak placed Guru-ship in Lahina's person as narrated by Satta and Balvand (Balwand), cantors in Guru Angad's court, in an ode preserved on page 967 of Guru Granth Sahib,

ਜੋਤਿ ਸਮਾਣੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਮਾਹਿ ਆਪੁ ਆਪੈ ਸੇਤੀ ਮਿਕਿਓਨੁ ॥
ਸਿਖਾਂ ਪੁਤ੍ਰਾਂ ਘੋਖਿ ਕੈ ਸਭ ਉਮਤਿ ਵੇਖਹੁ ਜਿ ਕਿਓਨੁ ॥
ਜਾਂ ਸੁਧੋਸੁ ਤਾਂ ਲਹਣਾ ਟਿਕਿਓਨੁ ॥੪॥

**"Jot samani jot mah aap aapai sayti mikioun.
sikha putra ghokh kai sabh oumat vaikho je kioun.
jaan sudhos than lehna tikioun."**

Translation: Guru Nanak invested Lahina (instead of his own sons) with the mark of Guru-ship; he had the same light; the master had changed his bodily frame; Nanak installed Lahina and conferred on him the regalia of Guru-ship.

Sikhs have ten spiritual teachers who are regarded with equal reverence and adoration. Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth teacher, in his poetic autobiography *Bachitra Natak* states, Nanak assumed the body of Angad - later Angad became Amar Das, like one candle lighting another. He thus connects all ten Guru bodies with one soul. This oneness is re-affirmed by all Gurus using pen-name Nanak in their verses.

Second Sikh Guru was born to Mata Daya Kaur on March 31, 1504 in village Mate Di Saran, now known as Nanga in present day District Faridkot, Punjab. He was named Lahina. His father, *Bhai* Pheru Mal, owned a small trading business. At sixteen years of age, Lahina was married to Kheevée (Khivi), daughter of Devi Chand of village Sanghar near Khadur, Punjab. The couple was blessed with two sons, *Bhai* Datu Ji and *Bhai* Dasu Ji and two daughters, *Bibi* Amro and *Bibi* Anokhi.

Bhai Jodh, a neighbor of *Bhai* Lahina, was a follower of Guru Nanak. *Bhai* Lahina listened to Guru Nanak's verses from *Bhai* Jodh, which motivated him to meet Guru Nanak. Until then, *Bhai* Lahina was a devotee of Hindu deity *Jwalamukhi* and used to go for annual pilgrimages to her shrine. On one such pilgrimage the group he was leading, happened to pass by Kartarpur, the abode of Guru Nanak. So they decided to stop at the village and visit Guru Nanak. One brief discourse with Guru Nanak changed *Bhai* Lahina for life. He told his

companions that the purpose of his pilgrimage had been served. *Bhai Lahina* spent the rest of his life in Guru Nanak's company until Guru Nanak made him equal with himself and ordained him successor or Nanak II, with a new name Angad.

Woeful over their father's succession decision, *Baba Sri Chand* and *Baba Lakhmi Das*, were not taking kindly towards Guru Angad. Guru Nanak, therefore, had urged Angad Dev to move from Kartarpur to Khadur. It also provided an opportunity to spread Guru's message in the area. At Khadur, Guru Angad Dev stayed at *Bibi Bhraai's* place for about six months in quiet contemplation. *Baba Budha Ji* (original name Boorha) and other Sikhs requested Guru Ji to initiate daily spiritual exchange with the Sikh devotees.

Guru Angad promoted the virtues of righteous living and compassion. His daily routine started hours before sunrise. After bathing, he would engross in meditation and reciting Guru Nanak's verses, followed by musicians' singing of *Asa-Ki-Var*. Then he would attend to the sick and needy who came from faraway places, to be healed by the Guru. Then there would be recitation and exposition of Guru Nanak's ballads.

Meals were served from the community kitchen and all would sit together to eat without any distinction of caste and creed. Satta and Balvand, in their verse on page 967 of SGGS point out that while Guru Angad satisfied the spiritual yearning of the visitors, *Mata Kheev*, Guru's wife, took care of the community kitchen and assured all visitors were served fresh meals. The noble soul would wash the vegetables, cut them, and cook them herself. In addition to freshly bakes bread, she would also prepare sweet rice pudding with butter. Rendering her service in utmost humility and grace, *Mata Kheev*, is like a fruit tree with soothing shade, recorded the bard Balvand in SGGS.

In the afternoon, there would be educational classes for children, taught personally, by Guru Angad Dev Ji. In the evening there would be more singing of divine poetry. Khadur had become another center of Sikh faith just as Kartarpur where Sikhs from surrounding areas would come to seek blessing. Emperor Humayun also visited Khadur Sahib to pay obeisance to the Guru. Numerous Gurudwaras in Khadur Sahib commemorate Guru Angad's life in this historic town; his residence, his wrestling school, and places associated with important episodes of his long stay there. The soil of Khadur Sahib has the privilege of visit by all Sikh Gurus, except for Guru HariKrishan Ji and Guru Gobind Singh Ji. Guru's residential compound included an athletic field (an



Figure 5: Guru Angad Dev ji made hand written textbooks and took the classes for the children to spread light of education

admixture of *Bhakti* and *Shakti*) or *Mal Akharha* to promote physical fitness training. Wrestling and gymnastic routines encouraged healthful living, and opportunity for physical interaction between people of various castes, thus further diluting the social taboos and caste differentials. The task of uplifting the common person was progressing through education, emphasis on self-reliance, and community service.

Shiv Nath was an unscrupulous *Yogi* who lived off others and used trickery to extract money and gifts from innocent residents of the village. He was not happy about Guru Angad's arrival in town and was looking for an opportunity to expel him. A long dry spell in the village gave him the excuse. He told the villagers that rains would come only if Guru Angad left the town. Guru Ji left town on his own, when he heard this. Even after Guru Ji's departure, rains did not come, and the *Yogi*'s falsehood was exposed. *Baba Amar Das*, a devotee in service to Guru Angad learned about the *Yogi*'s cunning to oust Guru Angad. He told the villagers that if you want rain, tie the *Yogi*'s feet with a rope and drag him in your fields. It rained wherever the *Yogi* was dragged. Finally, the fraudster was allowed to leave. Guru Angad, displeased at the incidence, counseled *Baba Amar Das* to refrain from such ego-boasting acts.

In a class-conscious society, education was considered the heritage of selected few; but Sikh Gurus urged literacy. Punjabi was the spoken language of the people of Punjab, centuries before Guru Nanak's birth. Depending on who

was one's teacher, Urdu, Sindhi, Devnagri, or pre-Gurmukhi Punjabi alphabets were used to write it. Sheikh Farid Ji, born in Punjab three hundred years prior to Guru Nanak, wrote his Punjabi verses in Urdu script. Guru Arjan Dev Ji transliterated them in Gurmukhi script for inclusion in Guru Granth Sahib. Guru Nanak composed all his hymns in his mother tongue. He expressed his longing for the infinite, and his wonderment at the vastness and beauty of creation, using the popular Punjabi vocabulary of fifteenth century. Guru Nanak propagated Punjabi into a vital cultural expression. Guru Angad Dev Ji formalized Gurmukhi alphabet, vowel symbols, and grammar that became known as Gurmukhi. Guru Angad prepared replicas of his new Gurmukhi alphabet, and distributed copies amongst his students.

The Gurmukhi script has further evolved since Guru Arjan Dev Ji compiled Adi Granth. It now includes additional letters and punctuation symbols. Letters with "Bindi" subscript, common today, are not found in SGGS. Punctuation in SGGS consists primarily of a double vertical line (II), representing full stop. Comma, question mark, exclamation mark, colon, semi-colon, are part of modern script, but not found in SGGS. "Adhak" is also not found in SGGS, because, it was not part of the script of the time, but is found in Guru Gobind Singh Ji's verses.

Goinda - a rich *Khatri* landlord, desirous to raise a new town on his land, had expressed his wish to Guru Angad Dev Ji. Guru Angad sent *Baba Amar Das* to help Goinda develop the new township that later became known as *Goindwal* (corner stone was laid in Samat 1603- year 1546 AD). Guru Nanak Sahib visited the site during his first *Udaasi* and had salvaged a leper (Sikh Heritage in Paintings by Punjab & Sind Bank, 1995). Prior to his heavenly departure in 1552, Guru Angad Dev Ji appointed *Baba Amar Das Ji* as his successor as Nanak III. Just as Guru Nanak Sahib, advised Guru Angad to shift to Khadur to avoid conflict with his sons, similarly Guru Angad advised Guru Amar Das to move to *Goindwal*.

Guru Angad was an inspired poet and scribed 64 *slokas* in conformity with the teachings of Guru Nanak. These *slokas* were passed on to successor Gurus and are incorporated in SGGS. His disciplined routine at Khadur Sahib set the early morning as the time for prayer and worship and acting with virtue all day long. Guru Angad in his following *sloka* on page 474 of SGGS reminds us that a believer of One formless Divine, remains forever faithfully resolute:

ਏਹ ਕਿਨੇਹੀ ਆਸਕੀ ਦੂਜੈ ਲਗੈ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਆਸਕੁ ਕਾਂਢੀਐ ਸਦ ਹੀ ਰਹੈ ਸਮਾਇ ॥

"Eh kinehee aashiqui dujay lagae jaye;

Nanak aashique kandiye sadd hee rahay samayay."

Translation: A true lover seeks not another. Nanak, a true lover remains captivated forever.

Guru Amar Das Ji

(1501-1574)

In an affluent upper caste *Vaishnav* family of Tej Bhan Ji and his wife Sulakhni Ji, in Basarke village of Amritsar, *Baba* Amar Das was born on May 5, 1501 (though some historians believe his birth year 1479, Dr. Sangat Singh – *The Sikhs in History* put his birth in 1501). *Baba* Amar Das was married to Mansa Devi, daughter of Devi Chand Bahl. The couple was blessed with two sons, *Baba* Mohri Ji and *Baba* Mohan Ji, and two daughters named bibi Daani Ji and bibi Bhani Ji. Conforming to his family's *Vaishnav* traditions, *Baba* Amar Das practiced fasting and many other outward rituals, aimed at spiritual salvation. Twice a year, he travelled to Haridwar for pilgrimage and catering feasts for Brahmins. On his 21st pilgrimage trip a Brahmin forecasted that he would become a great King in the near future. During this journey *baba* Amar Das also met an unmarried Brahmin, who accompanied him to his house and accepted the food prepared by the family. Upon learning that *Baba* Amar Das had not yet espoused any spiritual mentor, the guest Brahmin left the house in anger, disparaging *baba* Amar Das as *Nigura* (without spiritual guide).

Baba Amar Das's nephew (son of his younger brother *Bhai* Manak Chand) was married to Guru Angad's daughter *Bibi* Amro, who used to sing Guru Nanak's verses while performing household chores. When *Baba* Amar Das heard the inspiring poetry, he expressed a heartfelt desire to meet Guru Angad Dev Ji and asked *Bibi* Amro to arrange a visit to his home. The spiritual discourse with Guru Angad during the visit proved to be the turning point for him. *Baba* Amar Das requested Guru Angad Dev Ji to accept him as his disciple. *Baba* Amar Das gave up his personal comforts and took upon serving the *Sangat* (holy congregation) and look after the personal needs of Guru Angad Dev Ji. He would get up in the wee hours of the morning to bring water for Guru's bath from river Bias. Half way home, he would take a small rest break under a *Babool* tree. To commemorate the place, Sikhs have constructed a *Gurudwara* named Khadi

Sahib, at the location. Thereafter, he would bring fire wood from the jungle and water from the village well to help prepare food in the community kitchen. He would also tend to the needs of local visitors and out of town pilgrims.

Almost twelve years passed by as *Baba Amar Das* persevered in this service. One stormy night, while returning from the river with water pitcher, he tripped on a dead tree stump and fell down in the weaver's pit, close to Guru's place. Awoken by the sudden loud noise, weaver's wife sarcastically remarked that it must be "*Amru Nithawan*" (homeless Amar Das) and spoke ill of Guru Angad Dev too.

Max Arthur Macauliffe describes this incidence in his book -*The Sikh Religion*; "Amar Das could endure hearing disrespectful language of himself, but not of his Guru. He told the weaver's wife that she had gone mad, and hence her slander of the Guru. Saying this, he took his vessel of water to the Guru. It is said that the weaver's wife did in fact go mad as the result of Amar Das' censure. They sent for physicians, who however knew no medicine to restore her. It soon became known that she had offended the Guru by her language, so on the failure of the physicians the weavers decided to take her to him with the object of imploring his pardon." Macauliffe continues, "The weavers informed the Guru of what had occurred, and implored him to pardon the mad woman's error. The Guru said, Amar Das hath done great service and his toil is acceptable. His words prove true; wealth, supernatural power, and all earthly advantages wait on him. The peg against which he struck his foot, shall grow green, and the weaver's wife shall recover. He who serveth Amar Das shall obtain the fruit his heart desireth. Ye describe him as homeless, and lowly, but he shall be the home of the homeless, the honor of the dishonored, the strength of the strengthless, the support of the unsupported, the shelter of the unsheltered, the protector of the unprotected, the restorer of what is lost, the emancipator of the captive." After that the Guru sent for five copper coins and a coconut, bathed Amar Das, clothed him in a new dress, and installed him in the Guru's seat. Thus was Guru Amar Das solemnly appointed Angad's successor, in the year 1552.

Bhai Datu, son of Guru Angad Dev Ji, considered himself as the heir apparent. Obstinate in his own thinking, and at the instigation of those who were opposed to the socially reforming message of Guru Nanak, a furious *Bhai Datu*, came to Guru Amar Das Ji and kicked him very hard in the back. With reverence towards Guru's son, Guru Amar Das Ji said in humility, "I hope my bones did not cause any hurt to your foot."

As directed by Guru Angad Dev Ji, Guru Amar Das moved to Goindwal. With great enthusiasm, he took on the task of spreading Guru Nanak's message and implementing social reforms to uplift people's lives spiritually, socially, and economically. The town had only one well that served the upper crust of society. Commoners suffered hardships due to lack of water resources. Guru Amar Das initiated the construction of a *Baoli* or brick-lined, stepped well to satisfy water needs of the *Sangat*. *Baba Budha Ji* laid the foundation stone of the project. Devotee volunteers worked with great zeal to dig down, construct the well, and long stretch of eighty-four steps to reach the deep water table; a task completed in 1556, after three years of strenuous diligence. Community members' working cooperatively, washing and bathing together, intensified the spirit of equality. These days Sikhs from all over the world reverently visit Goindwal Sahib and drink water from this *Baoli*.

Shortly after taking over the responsibility for leading the Sikh nation, he journeyed to Kurukreshtra and Haridwar to disseminate Guru Nanak's message. The growing popularity of Guru Amar Das and his increasing influence amongst masses annoyed high caste Brahmins and other beneficiaries of the social stratification. They complained to Emperor Akbar that Amar Das had abandoned his religion. Additionally, he was advocating abolishing the distinction of age old tradition of religious caste system. Humayun's son and father of Jahangir, Jalal ud-din Muhammad Akbar, was India's Emperor from 1556 until his death in 1605. He was known for his policy of religious tolerance.

At Akbar's behest Guru Amar Das Ji deputed *Bhai Jetha Ji*, a young disciple, to the King's court, as his ambassador to expound the basics of Sikhism. *Bhai Jetha* explained the concept of Sikhism to the king's utmost satisfaction. Akbar not only dismissed the complaint, he also expressed a desire to visit Guru Amar Das's place. In the year 1571, Akbar on a mission to visit numerous religious places, also came to see Guru Amar Das Ji. By that time Guru Amar Das Ji had ordained all pilgrims mandatory partaking of community meals (*Langar*) to promote spiritual and social equality, before they could visit with the Guru. Emperor Akbar also followed the convention and took meals sitting along with commoners and his subjects, before he met Guru Amar Das.

Daily congregations at Goindwal started hours before dawn, where Guru Amar Das Ji along with devotees, listened to Kirtan followed by discourses with the *Sangat*. Guru Ji would listen to challenges Sikhs faced in their everyday



Figure 6: Guru Amar Das Ji made it mandatory for everyone to have
Langar community meal before joining the congregation.
Drawing by: Raj Singh Tattal (the Pen-Tacular-Artist)

life and offer solutions and respond to their queries. Guru Amar Das underscored the importance of thoughtful contemplation of Guru's message followed by righteous living. Simply visiting spiritual centers and shrines is not enough to achieve peace, he wrote in the following lines scribed on page 594 of SGGS;

ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਨੋ ਸਭੁ ਕੋ ਵੇਖਦਾ ਜੇਤਾ ਜਗਤ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ॥
ਡਿਠੈ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ ਜਿਚਰੁ ਸਬਦਿ ਨ ਕਰੇ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ ॥

**"Satgur nau sabh ko vekhda jetta jagat sansar,
Dithhe mukt na hovyee, jicher shabad na kareh veechar."**

Translation: All beings behold the True Guru in vision. Seeing alone cannot liberate, contemplation on the message is a must.

Amar Das Ji led the Sikh community for a period of 22 years during which he initiated major reforms to elevate the status of the suppressed masses. Elevating the social status of women, the most subservient of the society, he vehemently censored the barbaric Indian practice called "Sati" that forced a widowed woman to self-immolate on the cremation pyre of her dead husband. Guru Amar Das pronounced:

ਸਤੀਆ ਏਹਿ ਨਾ ਆਖੀਅਨਿ ਜੋ ਮੜਿਆ ਲਗਿ ਜਲੰਨਿ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਸਤਿਆ ਜਾਣੀਅਨਿ ਜਿ ਬਿਰਹੇ ਚੋਟ ਮਰੰਨਿ ॥੧॥

ਅੰਗ ੭੮੭, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾ

**"Satia eh na aakhian jo marhian lag jalan.
Nanak satia janean je birehae chot maran"**

Page 787, SGGS

*Translation: Satis perish not in flames for union with dead husbands.
O Nanak, true satis desire union with One formless husband (God) of all.*

Guru Amar Das issued *Hukamnama* or edict to abolish *Sati* System among Sikhs. The practice was out-lawed in India by the British. Guru Amar Das also abolished the tradition for women to hide their faces, when stepping out of their home. In Sikh congregations, since Guru Amar Das, women do not pull a veil over their face. Guru Amar Das also approved of re-marriage for widowed or divorced ladies. He arranged re-marriage for the divorced wife of Raja of Haripur, after he left her stranded at Goindwal (Gurbani-Chanan, March 2016). The renowned writer Mulk Raj Anand, praising Sikh Gurus for uplifting of women, writes; "One other heritage, which the Sikh Gurus left for posterity, is their treatment of women as equal of men. And as dignity of labor was cornerstone of the faith, woman, the doer of household chores, cook, rearer of children, who tends the sick, has been honored in the Sikh faith, while in other religions woman's position has been degraded by consigning the female to darkness behind veils, and as servant in the house, bearing children from lust of males" (Sikh heritage in paintings - Punjab & Sind Bank - year 1995).



Figure 7: Guru Amar Das Ji denouncing the old age tradition of Sati

Guru Amar Das Ji also preached strongly against alcohol drinking and drug use. For economic stimulation of community and families, he encouraged

his disciples to learn a variety of trades and technical skills to produce items of common use.

Tradition of *Langar*, initiated by Guru Nanak was accentuated by Guru Angad and *Mata Kheev* Ji. Guru Amar Das Ji institutionalized it. This custom of sharing and caring as equals was aimed at eliminating the social stratification. Guru Amar Das mandated for every person wishing to meet him, to first eat in the community *Langar*. Only vegetarian dishes cooked in a clean environment are served in the *Langar* for its acceptability to people from all sections of society. When Akbar came to visit Guru Amar Das Ji he was so impressed by the tradition, he expressed his desire to donate land for the expansion of Guru's compound. Guru Amar Das Ji politely informed the emperor that to develop and reinforce the spirit of service in Sikhs, all services provided in the sanctuary must be funded, built, operated and managed through voluntary service and offerings from *Sangat* only. Sikhs are urged to spend ten percent or *Dasvand* of their earnings on charitable work.

Tending to sick and ailing is another tradition of service started by Guru Nanak. During his first odyssey, Guru Nanak Sahib had visited the site where Goindwal is built now, with *Bhai Mardana*. Guru Nanak cured a leper to good health with his care and blessings. Guru Angad's routine, after the morning prayers, included nursing care for the infirm. Similarly many a sick were cared for and cured during Guru Amar Das's time. Guru Amar Das gave a bath to one *Prema Chaudhri* (a leper) with his own hands, restored him to good health. He got him married calling him "My son Murari" (Sikh heritage in Paintings-Punjab & Sind Bank-1995).

To spread Guru Nanak's message, Guru Amar Das Ji established great number of centers that covered areas from Afghanistan to West Bengal. Larger centers were called *Manjees* and smaller units were named *Pirhas*. Sikhs, men and women, who understood the message of Guru Nanak and practiced it in their life, were appointed ambassadors, called *Masand*, to these centers. Diwali, Maghi, and Vaisakhi, three days per year, were affixed for the *Sangat* from all centers to gather for large scale celebrations of these festivals and build camaraderie amongst Sikhs from faraway places. *Masands* would review their work and challenges they faced with each other and Guru Ji.

A total of 970 ballads and *slokas* in 17 Ragas composed by Guru Amar Das Ji are scribed in SGGS. His composition, *Anand*, meaning blissful, composed in Raag *Ramkali*, is sung as the concluding ballad in every Sikh worship. He liberated Sikhs from prolonged ritualistic services of past, to

simple prayer sessions, for life's critical milestones such as birth, marriage, and death. With angelic awareness that his time to leave the physical world was near Guru Amar Das gathered his family to convey to them his last message. The episode of Guru's final directives was recorded by *Baba Sunder Ji* (Guru's grandson) under the title "*Sadd*" meaning call of the destiny, scribed on pages 923 and 924 of SGGS as "It is time for me to bid farewell. Do not wail or cry after me. Instead gather the Sikh *Sangat* and recite verses from SGGS."

ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਭਾਣੈ ਆਪਣੈ ਬਹਿ ਪਰਵਾਰੁ ਸਦਾਇਆ ॥
ਮਤ ਮੈ ਪਿਛੈ ਕੋਈ ਰੋਵਸੀ ਸੋ ਮੈ ਮੂਲਿ ਨ ਭਾਇਆ ॥

...

ਅੰਤੇ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਬੋਲਿਆ ਮੈ ਪਿਛੈ ਕੀਰਤਨੁ ਕਰਿਅਹੁ ਨਿਰਬਾਣੁ ਜੀਉ ॥
ਕੋਸੇ ਗੋਪਾਲ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਸਦਿਅਹੁ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਕਥਾ ਪੜਹਿ ਪੁਰਾਣੁ ਜੀਉ ॥

...

ਹਰਿ ਭਾਇਆ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਬੋਲਿਆ ਹਰਿ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਸੁਜਾਣੁ ਜੀਉ ॥
ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਸੋਢੀ ਤਿਲਕੁ ਦੀਆ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦੁ ਸਚੁ ਨੀਸਾਣੁ ਜੀਉ ॥
ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਜਿ ਬੋਲਿਆ ਗੁਰਸਿਖਾ ਮੰਨਿ ਲਈ ਰਜਾਇ ਜੀਉ ॥
ਮੋਹਿਰੀ ਪੁਤੁ ਸਨਮੁਖੁ ਹੋਇਆ ਰਾਮਦਾਸੈ ਪੈਰੀ ਪਾਇ ਜੀਉ ॥

...

**"Satgur bhanai apanai beh paravar sadaeia,
Mutt mai pichai koi rovasi so mai mool na bhaeia,**

...

**Antae satgur bolia mai pichai kiratan kareo nirban jeo,
Kaeso gopal pandit sadiu har har katha pareh puran jeo,**

...

**Har bhaeia satigur bolia har milia purakh sujan jeo,
Ramdas Sodhi tilak dia gur sabad sach nisan jeo,
Satgur purakh jae bolia gursikha man le rajae jeo,
Mohari put sanmukh hoeia Ramdasai pairi pae jeo."**

Guru Amar Das Ji appointed Bhai Jetha Ji, his son-in-law, as his successor and gave him a new name (Guru) Ram Das on August 30, 1574. Guru Amar Das had seen the filial love and utmost humility and obedience in Bhai Jetha. Like his predecessors, Guru Amar Das also by-passed his sons Baba Mohan Ji and Baba Mohri Ji to be the Guru successor. However, unlike the children of the first two Gurus, Mohan Ji and Mohri Ji did not begrudge the selection of Bhai Jetha Ji. In the above written lines of Ramkali Sadd, Baba Mohri Ji narrates the unanimous acceptance of the Nanak IV by the entire Sangat. Two days later, on September 1, 1574, Guru Amar Das Ji departed for his heavenly abode.

Guru Ram Das Ji

(1534-1581)

Bibi Daya Kaur and her husband Hardas Sodhi of Chuni Mandi, Lahore(*Bhai* Kahn Singh Nabha-Mahan Kosh, page 775-edition 2004) were blessed with a baby boy on September 24, 1534. Being the first child, he was named Jetha, meaning elder. Jetha became an orphan at age seven, therefore, her maternal grandmother - *Nanee*, brought him to her small village “*Basarke*” for his upbringing. Because the old grandmother had no source of income, Jetha started vending boiled and salted garbanzos to take care of daily necessities.

At age twelve, Jetha accompanied a group of pilgrims from his village to Goindwal, the town founded by Guru Amar Das Ji. *Bhai* Jetha found life in a bigger town more fascinating than a small rural village. Besides his vending business, he would find time to gain education and participate in community service - *Karseva* at the Sikh spiritual center called *Dharamsal* in those days. Guru Amar Das Ji, also born in “*Basarke*” village, watched *Bhai* Jetha with appreciation for his desire to learn, self-reliance, devotion, and his spirit of service.

Mata Mansa, wife of Guru Amar Das, was beginning to prod Guru Ji to find a suitable match for their daughter *Bibi* Bhani. *Mata* Ji keenly wanting to arrange her daughter’s marriage, asked Guru Ji to find a young man of good character, hard-working, devoted, and handsome like Jetha. Guru Amar Dassaid to his wife, “Jetha is the only one of his kind; honorable, hard-working, and handsome.” Disregarding *Bhai* Jetha’s weak financial status, they determined him to be a worthy match for their daughter.

With appropriate arrangements, *Bibi* Bhani was married to nineteen years old *Bhai* Jetha in December, 1552. *Bhai* Jetha Ji started living with Guru Amar Das’ family. A man living with his-in-laws was frowned upon, socially, but Jetha Ji did not pay attention to the gossipmongers. He saw in Guru Amar Das’ person, a spiritual guide; not his father-in-law. Living with the Guru was an opportunity

for learning about life, building character, and ability to engage in greater service of *Sangat* at the *Dharamsal*.

Within a short few years, *Bhai* Jetha Ji had not only memorized, but also became well versed with the Sikh scriptures and Sikh way of life. Besides taking care of his own family needs, he would do everything possible to improve the quality of life for others in town. In service of local *Sangat* and visiting pilgrims from afar, he would make their beds, fan them in hot summer nights for comfortable sleep. During the day time he would help with the construction activities or work in the community kitchen. In time, *Bhai* Jetha Ji and *Bibi* Bhani Ji were blessed with three sons, *Baba* Prithi Chand, *Baba* Mahadev, and the youngest Arjan Dev.

In the year 1553, Guru Amar Das Ji, accompanied by *Bhai* Jetha Ji, toured India's places for pilgrimage, including Kurukshetra and Haridwar (at the time of solar eclipse of *Abijit Nakshatra*, "January 14, 1553" which is believed to occurs only after 19 years) with the aim of spreading awareness of Sikh values. Guru Ram Das Ji's ballads in *Tukhari Raag* (page 1116-17) provide glimpses of this quest. Religion lies not just in bathing at holy shrines; religion lies not just in repeating memorized scriptures; religion lies not in wandering at tombs or crematoriums; religion warrants accepting unity of GOD; religion warrants treating all people with equal dignity and respect, religion warrants respecting woman as man's equal; religion warrants living a life uncontaminated by human vices; religion warrants fulfilling our worldly responsibilities with ethics and without yielding to temptations - this message of Guru Nanak was gaining wide spread appeal. The beneficiaries of the traditional ritualistic system in India, feeling threatened, lodged a complaint in the court of Emperor Akbar against Guru Amar Das Ji. Responding to Akbar's summons, Guru Amar Das Ji sent *Bhai* Jetha Ji to the royal court to explicate the Sikh tenets and balk at the malevolent designs of those disseminating misinformation.

Bhai Jetha Ji went to Lahore, stayed at his native house in Chuni Mandi. In Akbar's court he explained the concept and meaning of *Ik Oangkaar* as one God. He explained that discrimination against any one on the basis of castes is not acceptable in Sikhism since all human beings are children of one God. He elaborated that each human is endowed with equal divinity and has ability to connect with the form less creator, through introspection, instead of blindly following the religiously garbed exploiters. The Emperor was so pleased with

the replies and explanations that he dismissed the charge and made it a point to visit Goindwal to pay his personal regards to Guru Amar Das Ji.

Bhai Jetha Ji continued his spiritual growth and service in the Sikh center under the affectionate guidance of Guru Amar Das Ji, until the Guru father realized that his time for departure from this earth had come. Guru Amar Das Ji gave final instructions to his family, changed Jetha Ji's name to Ram Das, and anointed him as Nanak IV on August 30, 1574. Guru Amar Das Ji urged Guru Ram Das to relocate to the land envisioned where newly developed town of *Guru Ka Chakk*.

Guru Nanak and Guru Amar Das Ji, each established new townships of Kartarpur and Goindwal. Guru Angad was relocated at Khadur, where his wife and children lived. According to Prof Teja Singh, Guru Angad did vigorous preaching and at his behest as many as 131 *Sangats* were established (The Sikhs in History). Developing new cities facilitated spread of the egalitarian message of Guru Nanak and also added to the economic vitality and prosperity of the Sikh community. These cities became centers of commerce and trade thus generating employment opportunities for masses. It was probably with this viewpoint Guru Amar Das had discussed with *Bhai* Jetha the concept of developing another new town that was named *Guru Ka Chakk*.

Figure 9: On being asked by Baba Sri Chand for purpose of his long beard, Guru Ram Das humbly replied "to clean the feet of holy persons like you."

The foundation of the new town was laid in 1577 by Guru Ram Das Ji, by initiating the digging of a holy water tank or *Sarovar*, to be named Amritsar (*Amrit* or nectar + *Sar* or pool). The town began to be known as *Guru Ka Chukk*, *Chukk-Guru* or *Ramdasapur*. According to some writers, the land was purchased from the residents of village *Tung* at the time of Guru Amar Das. According to others, Akbar, the great, offered the land as a gift to Guru Amar Das Ji, who declined because Sikh assets belong to the entire community and are acquired through *Sangat* offerings. P.S.Arshi in the book 'The Golden Temple, History, Art and Architecture-1988' writes that "In A.D. 1577 he (Guru Ram Das) obtained a grant of site together with 500 *bighas* of land from Emperor Akbar, on payment of Rs 700 to the *Zamindars* of village *Tung* who owned the land." Dr. Sangat Singh, author of the Sikhs in History also endorses the same research views. Guru Ram Das encouraged traders, business people and professionals to set up shop in the new the town. *Bhai* Salo, *Bhai* Chander

Bhan, and *Bhai* Rup Ram were the devoted Sikhs who helped Guru Ram Das Ji in development of Ramdasapur. The city expansion accelerated under his son and successor, Guru Arjan. He completed the construction of the *Sarovar*, and in the middle of the tank he built the holy *Harimandir*, now famous as the Golden Temple. On August 15, 1604, Guru Arjan installed Adi Granth (later SGGS) in the *Harimandir* for the first time. With the passage of time, the town's name changed to Amritsar, a site of pilgrimage for Sikhs from all over the globe.



Figure 8: On being asked by Baba Sri Chand for purpose of his long beard, Guru Ram Das humbly replied “to clean the feet of holy persons like you.”

Guru Ram Das Ji was a down to earth humble soul. He made it a point to meet *Baba Sri Chand*, son of Guru Nanak Sahib, during his visit to Amritsar and reconciliation reached. Guru Ram Das was a poetic genius and his verses touched every heart. All 679 of his verses plus ballads are scribed in Sri Guru Granth Sahib. In one of his hymns on page 305 of SGGS, Guru Ram Das Ji logged the Sikh code of conduct (worship) as;

ਗੁਰ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਜੋ ਸਿਖੁ ਅਖਾਵੈ ਸੁ ਭਲਕੇ ਉਠਿ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਵੈ॥
ਉਦਮੁ ਕਰੇ ਭਲਕੇ ਪਰਭਾਤੀ ਇਸਨਾਨੁ ਕਰੇ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਸਰਿ ਨਾਵੈ॥
ਉਪਦੇਸਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਜਪੁ ਜਾਪੈ ਸਭਿ ਕਿਲਵਿਖ ਪਾਪ ਦੋਖ ਲਹਿ ਜਾਵੈ॥
ਫਿਰਿ ਚੜੈ ਦਿਵਸੁ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਗਾਵੈ ਬਹਦਿਆ ਉਠਦਿਆ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਵੈ॥
ਜੋ ਸਾਸਿ ਗਿਰਾਸਿ ਧਿਆਏ ਮੇਰਾ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਸੋ ਗੁਰਸਿਖੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਮਨਿ ਭਾਵੈ॥

**"Gur Satgur ka jo Sikh akhvaye so bhalke uth Hari Naam dhiyavay;
 Udam karay bhalkey parbhatee isnaan karey Amritsar naavay;
 updes guru hari hari jap jaapay sabh kilvikh paap dokh leh jaavay;
 phir chadhay divas gurbani gaavay behandiyan uthdiyan hari naam dhiavay;
 jo saas giraas dhiaye mere hari hari so gursikh guru man bhavay."**

Translation: One who calls oneself Guru's Sikh, shall wake up before Sunrise; After body bath-cleansing, shall meditate on the Lord's name; Through Guru's teachings imbibe purity of thought; At Sunrise, sing from scriptures and stay connected to divine all day; Guru is pleased with that Sikh who acts with piety every moment.

To free the Sikh Community from the clutches of meaningless rituals, Sri Guru Ram Das Ji also introduced character strengthening guidelines for major milestones of life. He wrote the song of bliss (*Anand Karaj*) for ratification of marriage parallel to spiritual union of God and human beings. He extricated Sikh community from astrological and palm-reading superstitions to schedule important events. Instead he directed Sikhs to seek God's blessings before initiating a new venture.

ਕੀਤਾ ਲੋੜੀਐ ਕੰਮੁ ਸੁ ਹਰਿ ਪਹਿ ਆਖੀਐ ॥
 ਕਾਰਜੁ ਦੇਇ ਸਵਾਰਿ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਸਚੁ ਸਾਖੀਐ ॥
 ਸੰਤਾ ਸੰਗਿ ਨਿਧਾਨੁ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਚਾਖੀਐ ॥
 ਭੈ ਭੰਜਨ ਮਿਜਰਵਾਨ ਦਾਸ ਕੀ ਰਾਖੀਐ ॥
 ਨਾਨਕ ਹਰਿ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਇ ਅਲਖੁ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਲਾਖੀਐ ॥੨੦॥

ਅੰਗ ੯੧, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾ

**"Keeta Lorhiye Kum so Har pei Akhiye
 Kaaraj deh savar satgur such saakhiye;
 Suntaan sung nidhaan amrit chakhiye;
 Bhay bhanjan meharvan daas ki raakhiye;
 Nanak har gun gaaye alakh prabh laakhiye."**

Page 91, SGGS

Translation: Seek from the Lord to fulfill your wishes. In the company of holy cherish the divine pleasures in peace. . The merciful Lord protects from all fear. Through righteous living, one can connect with the divine.

Guru Arjan Dev Ji

(1563-1606)

In the century since Guru Nanak challenged the brutality of Babar's invasion of India and cruelty of India's own caste system, Nanak's message of monotheism, brotherhood of mankind, equality, and dignity for all, had taken hold. The progressive message uplifted the spirit of the suppressed masses, bringing thousands in the new fold to live a life of peace, harmony and love. The revolution that was taking place was not palatable to those who used fear and intimidation to force their will on masses. When Nanak V, Guru Arjan Dev Ji, compiled Adi Granth, Akbar, the most secular of the Mughal dynasty, was the emperor. Slanderers of the Sikh values alleged to Akbar that the Sikh Holy Scripture vilified Islam. After random reading of Adi Granth, nothing objectionable was found. Akbar indeed appreciated the universal message and sent gifts for the Guru.

After Akbar's death, his son Jahangir came under the influence of fundamentalist Islamic leaders with a zeal to proselytize and bring everyone into the Islamic fold, even by force. They called Adi Granth a false book and its propagators as spreading falsehood. Jahangir summoned the Guru and gave him the choice of either converting to Islam or be ready for a cruel death. Guru Arjan, *resolute* on the principle of "Freedom of religion" chose death, with a smile.

Arjan, the youngest son of Guru Ram Das Ji was born on April 15, 1563 at Goindwal. Grandfather Guru Amar Das, maternal uncle *Baba* Mohan, and great Sikh scholar *Bhai* Gurdas and *Baba* Budha Ji saw to Arjan's education, during his years at Goindwal. Obedience, service, and compassion were deeply rooted in his personality. Arjan's affable attributes and his congenial conduct made him family's favorite, causing jealousy in Prithi Chand, the eldest brother. Prithi Chand viewed the Guruship as a status symbol and family wealth to be cherished; instead of what it was - a spiritual gift of love and devotion in the

service of mankind. Ignoring his Guru father's counsel, he never cultivated values to become worthy of the honor. He expected to inherit the position as the elder son, and continuously conspired against Arjan. Despite the older brother's shenanigans, succession was gifted to Arjan in 1581 by Guru Ram Das Ji, two days before his heavenly departure. Guru Arjan got married to *Mata Ganga Ji*, daughter of *Bhai Kishan Chand* of village Mau, Tehsil Phillaur on June 19, 1589. He was blessed with one son in Hargobind, born on June 18, 1590 (some historians give the year of birth as 1595, which does not collaborate with the future incidents).

Prithi Chand furiously opposed Guru Arjan, started scheming to seize the position. Conspiring with some disgruntled emissaries of the Guru, he instigated a few Brahmins not happy with Sikh message of equality, to file fictitious charges in the emperor's court. Emperor's senior Minister Bir Bal (real name Mahesh Das), directed Sulhi Khan, a district revenue officer to take action against Guru Arjan. Sulhi Khan on his expedition to harm Guru Arjan was accidentally burnt alive in a brick kiln, an unholy death in Islam. Guru Arjan expressed his gratitude to the Divine in the following hymn, on page 825 of SGGS;

ਸੁਲਹੀ ਤੇ ਨਾਰਾਇਣ ਰਾਖ ॥

ਸੁਲਹੀ ਕਾ ਹਾਥੁ ਕਹੀ ਨ ਪਹੁਚੈ ਸੁਲਹੀ ਹੋਇ ਮੂਆ ਨਾਪਾਕੁ ॥

"Sulhi tey Narain raakh;

Sulhi ka haath kahin na pahunchey Suhi hoe mooa napaak"

Translation: The Lord saved me from Sulhi Khan. Sulhi Khan did not succeed in his plot, and he died in disgrace.

Guru Arjan Dev Ji was not only a prolific poet and gifted philosopher; he was a visionary, a builder and a skilled organizer. He had seen the tremendous contribution towards the well-being of the community resulting from development of new townships of Kartarpur, Khadur Sahib, and Goindwal, by Guru Nanak, Guru Angad, and Guru Amar Das Ji, respectively. Developing new cities facilitated spread of the egalitarian message of Guru Nanak, and also added to the economic vitality and prosperity of the Sikh community. These cities became centers of commerce and trade, thus generating employment opportunities for masses. It was probably with this viewpoint Guru Amar Das had discussed with *Bhai Jetha* the concept of developing another new town that was named *Guru Ka Chakk*. To further the previous Gurus' legacy of development of new towns and raising the spirit of self reliance in every Sikh,

he identified various unfinished construction projects started by Guru Ram Das Ji, and initiated action to complete their construction. Guru ka Chakk, *sarovar* near *Dukhbhanjani* were attended to on priority. Unfinished work on *Santokhsar* complex was also completed quickly. The form and function of buildings he developed depict his taste of art and architecture.

In an empire, at a time, when admittance into places of worship was restricted based on religion, caste and gender, many had no place to worship at all. Guru Arjan imagined building a spiritual compound with a shrine where everyone could pray together, without restriction, and without divisive rituals. It would be a place where devotees desirous of concentrating on spirituality will gather everyday to pray together. Pilgrims from faraway places would have lodging quarters within the temple complex where they will also share meals from a common community kitchen; a hallmark of Sikh spiritual centers. It would be a place where everyone will feel equal, take pleasure in serving others, and be served by others. The shrine would be called *Hari-Mandir* or the Abode of the Divine. *Durbar Sahib* or the Court of the Divine is another popular synonym for *Hari-Mandir*.

The chosen location had been visited by Guru Nanak Dev Ji, and Guru Amar Das Ji together with *Bhai* Jetha (later Guru Ram Das) had purchased the land during Akbar's rule. The ceremonious cut to begin the digging of the *Sarovar* (water tank) named Amrit-sar, was made on November 6, 1578 by *Bhai* Jetha Ji. On December 28, 1588, the foundation stone of the distinctive shrine was laid by *Sai* Mian Mir, an exalted *Sufi* saint (Golden Temple authorities have endorsed this version in the *Report Sri Darbar Sahib*, published in A.D. 1929). However some historians like Giani Gian Singh, *Tawarikh- Guru Khalsa*, Sialkot, 1892 and M.A. Macauliffe are of the view that the foundation stone was laid by the Guru Arjan himself. Guru Arjan Dev Ji personally oversaw the construction work progress from near *Dukhbhanjani*, where the first cut was made years ago.

The main shrine sitting in the middle of the water tank or *Sarovar* metaphorically represents a lotus flower blooming in a pond. Just as a lotus flower takes its sustenance from water, even murky water, but it does not grow roots to attach itself to the dirt underneath, and remains aloof above the water surface; the metaphor is a lesson for human beings to live in the murky world, but remain unattached to the temptations that take one to the darker side. *Durbar Sahib* building is a three-storey structure, the lowest level 66.4 feet square on

the outside is totally immersed in water as if a basement. The sanctum sanctorum, 40.4 feet square in size, with an exterior walkway is the middle level. The upper level is accessible by a staircase located towards the back of the building. The structure is topped by a larger primary dome and several smaller domes and *chhatris*. Each dome is fluted to look like a lotus flower. Just as the lotus flower needs sunlight to bloom, human mind can bloom with the spiritual wisdom emanating from SGGS.

The water tank is almost a square 510' x 490' with tapered retaining walls for a 490' x 470' bottom, and has a wide circumambulatory walkway on all four sides. The exterior perimeter of the walkway is lined with numerous buildings for ancillary functions and is punctuated with entrance ways at selected locations. The main shrine is accessed only via a bridge, 21 feet wide and 202 feet long, connected to the circumambulatory walkway. At the other end of this bridge is an elaborate entrance gateway called *Darshani Deorhi*. Indian mythology suggests that there are eighty-four lakh life forms; humanity tops the hierarchy. According to *karma*, reincarnation continues until spiritual union with GOD is attained. Guru Granth guides us that each one of us is born with two seeds within; one toxin, the other nectar. The toxin seed grows ego, anger, greed, arrogance, jealousy, lies, sorrow, self-pity, guilt, and resentment. The other



Figure 9: Darbar Sahib, Amritsar
Drawing by: Raj Singh Tattal (the Pen-Tacular-Artist)

grows truth, contentment, compassion, kindness, righteousness, patience, serenity, joy, love, hope, humility, benevolence, empathy, faith, and peace. We harvest the fruit of the tree we feed. The walk from the *Darshani Deorhi* to the door of the sanctum is about eighty-four steps representing an opportunity for righteous living through teachings of SGGS; thus an opportunity to escape the cycle of birth and death and to realize union with God.

To welcome all, Guru Arjan Dev designed the *Hari-Mandir* with four doors; one on each side of the shrine representing openness to all and the universal relevance of the message to emanate from the sanctum sanctorum. The omnipresence of GOD in Sikh belief does not mandate any orientation for its shrines, unlike some religions that orient shrines towards their geographic holy landmarks. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* placed on a raised throne, presides over the proceedings in all *Gurudwaras*. Except for the morning and evening supplication called *Ardaas*, only verses from *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* are sung inside the sanctum sanctorum.

Thousands of volunteers performed construction services (*Kaar-seva*) for this community project. *Bhai Banno Ji* is believed to have made very significant contribution in *Karseva* of *Hari-Mandir Sahib*. It is believed that Guru Arjan Dev Ji personally served *Bhai Banno Ji* the first platter of the feast from *langar*. In the pre-cement era of more than four centuries past, the brick-mortar for construction was strengthened with hand ground horse bean lentil. Construction of *Hari-Mandir* was completed in 1603/1604 before enshrinement of *Adi Granth* in 1604. To induce urban development in the areas surrounding the *Hari-Mandir*, Guru Arjan Dev Ji planned traders' markets, residential areas with gardens, and other accessory use buildings also. Guru himself occupied one of the houses in proximity to *Durbar sahib* and encouraged devotees to move into the newly developed township.

Hari-Mandir Sahib has been damaged several times by Afghan invaders, including Ahmad Shah Abdali's forces."DiwanLakhpur Rai of Lahore vowed to finish the Sikhs to avenge the death of his brother, Jaspat Rai. He got the Harimandir desecrated and tank was filled with earth in 1746"(The Golden Temple, Its Theo –political status, The Sikh Review, Calcutta, Sept 1960, by Kapur Singh, p 14). In 1748, Sikh forces of *Taruna Dal* under the command of *Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia*, attacked *SalabatKhan's* forces, killed *Salabat Khan* and took custody of the shrine. The *Diwali* festival of 1748 was celebrated with great enthusiasm. *Ahmed Shah Abdali* invaded India once again in 1757.

He plundered Amritsar city and demolished the temple and other Sikh shrines. Immediately after his departure, Sikhs came out of their hide outs in 1758. Immediately, Khalsa started the reconstruction of the damaged shrine. Abdali once again attacked Amritsar in 1762, blew up the restored sacred shrine (It is believed that flying brick of the building struck Abdali on his nose, which became the cause of his death on 1773).

After the departure of the Afghan invader, Sardar Charat Singh, the grandfather of Maharaja Ranjit Singh acquired the possession of Amritsar in 1763 (The Golden Temple- History, Art and Architecture by P S Arshi 1989). He was made in-charge of restoring and rebuilding of Harimandir and the holy tank. In December, 1764 Abdali attacked once again with the purpose of destroying the Sikhs. He found the city abandoned and could not find any Sikh. There were 30 Sikhs in the vicinity of the holy shrine, though they offered resistance, they lost. He pulled down the reconstructed shrine.

In the meantime, a confederation of Sikh *Misals* was founded and slowly they became the master of the land. According to Giani Gian Singh, the construction work of Harimandir, The Tank, the causeway and Darshni Deorhi Was completed in 1776. A decade later, in 1785, two *Udaasi* saints and Sikh *Misal* chiefs jointly, built a canal connection from Ravi River as a permanent source of water for the *Sarovar*. In early nineteenth century, Maharaja Ranjit Singh, in obeisance to *Akaalpurkh*, gold-plated the *Hari-Mandir*; thus Hari-Mandir Sahib came to be known in the world, as The Golden Temple of Amritsar.

Sikh Gurus in their farsightedness purchased land for developing new cities and commerce centers to spur economic growth and prosperity of masses. Wanting to promote communal cooperation and self-reliance in Sikhs, they did not accept donations or endowments from royals or landlords; instead they purchased the real estate. To develop the town of *Taran-Taaran* and construct a *Sarovar*, Guru Arjan purchased land from the residents of village Khara and Paklasar. After five years of diligent labor, the water tank construction was completed. Guru Arjan also constructed a leper House near the *Taran-Taaran Sarovar*, where he would visit regularly to look after the comforts and needs of lepers. He also planned and populated the city of Kartarpur on the bank of Ravi River. Gangsar well at Kartarpur, *Baoli Sahib* at Dabbi Bazaar, and Raamsar were dug to meet the water needs of people. To reduce farmers' dependence on unpredictable rains, Guru arranged the digging of six channel wheel well (*Chhehartara*) for irrigation of peasants' fields. The place near

Amritsar is now known as *Chheharta*. During his travels through Majha and Doaba, Guru Arjan Dev Ji founded GobindPur on Beas River. Emperor Akbar visited Guru Arjan Dev at Goindwal on November 24, 1598 to a warm and joyous reception by Guru Arjan Dev Ji. Akbar expressed appreciation of the Guru's work towards improving quality of life for regular citizens. Guru Arjan made Akbar aware of difficulties farmers faced and their inability to pay the high crop taxes. At Guru's urging, Emperor Akbar reduced the tax on area farmers, to one-sixth.

Hari-Mandir, a unique place for worship by all, was designed by Guru Arjan Dev Ji to be the seat for a unique scripture he would compile and call it *Adi Granth*. *Bhai* Gurdas Ji was chosen to be the scrivener for this unique anthology that would include spiritual wisdom and words of numerous great souls spanning five centuries. Some scholars suggest that Guru Arjan thought of creating an authentic scripture containing genuine works of the Gurus and Bhagats because of growing apocryphal imitations of *Gurbani*. Undoubtedly, screening the authentic *Gurbani* from imitations was a task Guru Arjan Dev ascertained for himself, however, the idea of a unique scripture that would include spiritual wisdom and words of thirty-five great souls belonging to diverse faiths and social status was evidently envisioned by Guru Nanak. Guru Nanak always carrying a book to write his personal spiritual recitations depicts this vision. Guru Nanak visiting his contemporary Bhagats and visiting the descendants of Bhagats past, to gather their Divine poetry affirms the thought of a future scripture for humanity. Dr. Jaswant Singh Neki, a renowned Sikh scholar wrote in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib & its Context*, "The Guru exhibited great editorial skill in classifying the compositions, arranging them in a systematized order, and lending it such a calligraphic economy as would not permit polluting insertion of even a single letter, leave alone a whole verse. The words were joined together without leaving any space between them. This was done to prevent the risk of vicarious insertion even though it made the reading of the text somewhat uncomfortable." Dr. Neki adds, "The same design was preserved by Guru Gobind Singh when he produced the second recension of the *Granth* in which he included the works of his father, Guru Teg Bahadur."

The *Adi Granth* was completed after four years of intensive effort. Holy *Granth* is the perennial spiritual guide for the Sikhs containing ballads of love, devotion, thankfulness, courage, and social responsibility. Dr. Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of India, in his inaugural address at the International

seminar on *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* and its Context on October 30, 2005 said, “...it is simultaneously ironic and a little saddening to realize that many of the same evils that plagued our society four hundred years ago, continue to do so today. I therefore believe that the message that emerges from the *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* aims addressing the most basic doubts and dilemmas of humanity, which have remained unchanged over centuries.”

Guru Arjan Dev Ji, in choosing the compositions (*Bani*) for inclusion in the Granth, applied a set of principles. Writings that did not conform to those principles were not selected. All hymns recited by Guru Nanak Sahib, Guru Angad, Guru Amar Das, Guru Ram Das, and Guru Arjan Dev Ji were included. *Bani* penned by *Sufi* Muslims *Sheikh* Farid Ji and *Baba* Bheekhan; Brahmin *Bhagat* Ramanand Ji, *Bhagat* Parmaanand Ji, and *Bhagat* Jaidev Ji, *Bhagat* Kabir Ji (a Muslim weaver), *Bhagat* Ravidas Ji (Dalit-leather worker), *Bhagat* Sain Ji (a Dalit barber), *Bhagat* Namdev Ji (washerman), *Bhagat* Sadhna Ji (butcher), *Bhagat* Soordas Ji (Hindu) and *Bhagat* Dhanna Ji (Jaat) was scribed. Three Sikh devotees (*Bhai* Satta, *Bhai* Balvand, and *Baba* Sunder Ji, and eleven Brahmin Bards (Bhats) also found a place in the Granth. The completed Granth was declared “*Pothi Parmeshwar ka thaan*” - the abode of the Divine. On August 15, 1604, *Bhai* Banno Ji was sent to Lahore for binding together of individual pages. The bound *Granth* was taken in a ceremonial procession from Raamsar to *Hari-Mandir*, which had been readied for the occasion.

The Holy Granth was installed in the presiding position at the center of the shrine for the first time on September 1, 1604. As head of Sikh nation, and embodiment of Sikh Gurus, the Holy *Granth* (*Shabad Guru*) was conferred the same status as royalty: thus it was seated with three symbols of Indian royalty, *Chavar* (Attendant), *Chatter* (canopy), and *Takht* (throne). Like a royal presiding over his court, the Holy Granth sat atop a throne, with a canopy overhead, and an attendant with a *Chavar*. To instill the utmost respect for the Holy *Granth* in Sikh hearts, Guru Arjan Dev Ji sat on the floor, with all his disciples. Sikhs entering the shrine bowed their heads in reverence: a gesture in humility seeking wisdom of the Granth. *Baba* Budha Ji was entrusted to conduct the first advent of the Holy Granth. The very first *Hukamnama* or Decree from page 783 of SGGS was;

ਸ੍ਰੁਹੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ ॥

ਸੰਤਾ ਕੇ ਕਾਰਜਿ ਆਪਿ ਖਲੋਇਆ ਹਰਿ ਕੰਮੁ ਕਰਾਵਣਿ ਆਇਆ ਰਾਮ ॥

Soohi Mohallah 5

"Santaañ kay karaj aap Khloeya, Har kam Karavan aayeiya Raam"

Translation: The Divine Lord extends a helping hand to complete his devotees work.

Guru Arjan's son Hargobind was born on June 18, 1590. Along with his intellectual and scriptural education, he was trained in martial arts including horse riding, swordsmanship and warfare tactics under the guidance of *Baba Budha Ji*. In view of the persistent hostilities of rulers and their stalwarts, Guru Arjan Dev had perceived a need for Sikhs to supplement their spiritual strength with a defensive martial force. Guru visualized that Sikhs must learn horse riding and should be able to assess quality of the horse. Guru encouraged Sikhs to take horse trading as profession.

In time, Gurus' devotees multiplied and *Hari-Mandir* became a popular pilgrimage center. At the same time, opponents of freedom, and equality were gathering steam too. Emperor Akbar's death in October, 1605 marked a major shift in the policies adopted by his son Nurruddin Jahangir, the successor emperor. Jahangir adopted Islamic revivalist attitude on the prompting of his advisors. Mohsin Fani, a Persian Historian, wrote, "It looked like that Guru Arjan was running a parallel government." After coronation, Islamic Fundamentalists, aligned with Jahangir, extracted a promise to reverse the policies pursued by Akbar. Meanwhile, Guru's elder brother Prithi Chand continued his hostilities with frequent complaints in the royal court via his emissaries, jealous *Brahmins*, and *Maulvis* (Muslim religious leaders). Jahangir was also looking for an opportunity to remove Guru Arjan Dev from scene. The chance Jahangir was waiting for came when his son Prince Khusro revolted to seize the throne from him. Khusro crossed river Beas and was followed by *Sheikh* Farid Bukhari who inflicted on him a crushing defeat, captured him, and brought him to Lahore. All those conspiring against Guru Arjan, sent a false report to Jahangir that Arjan Guru had supported Khusro with his blessings. Jahangir ordered confiscation of Guru's property, handing over his houses and children to Murtaza Khan. He also issued summons to Guru Arjan for his personal appearance in the emperor's court.

Jahangir, in his memoir *Tuzak-i-Jehangiri* wrote, "In Goindwal, which is situated on the bank of river Beas, there lived a Hindu whose name was Arjan who professed to be a religious teacher. Thus he acquired quite some fame in the country as an expounder of religion and many a simple-minded Hindu and

also some ignorant Muslims admired his character and piety. They called him the Guru. From all directions crowds of people gather around him and extolled him as a true teacher.

This business had been going on for three or four generations. For a long time past, it had been my intention to shut this shop of falsehood or, alternatively, to convert this man to Islam.

During these days Khusrau happened to pass that way. This fool of a man Arjan entertained the desire to seek the Prince's nearness. Khusrau happened to camp at that place where this man resided. He came and had an audience with the prince and made certain communications to him. He made a mark of saffron on the Prince's forehead with his finger. This is called qashqa by the Hindu's and is considered auspicious.

When all this was reported to us, and when we became convinced that the man was charlatan and a false prophet, we ordered that he should be brought into our presence. We further ordered that his immovable property, his sons and dependants should be handed over to the custody of Murtaza Khan. We confiscated all his moveable property and belongings and we ordered that he should be dealt with in accordance with the penal Laws of Yasa." (Selected Works of Sirdar Kapur Singh: Guru Arjan and his Sukhmani- by Dr Madanjit Kaur and Piar Singh-courtesy Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar).

It is also believed that the King imposed a fine of rupees two lakhs on Guru Ji. Guru Arjan refused to pay the illegitimate fine imposed upon him. (Tuzak-i-Jehagiri does not mention the fine). J. D. Cunningham in his book "History of the Sikhs" 1997 edition mentions "The Guru was summoned to the emperor's presence, and fined and imprisoned." Guru was summoned to Lahore while Guru's property was confiscated. Guru Arjan knew that Jahangir would not spare his life; therefore, prior to leaving for Lahore, he nominated his son Hargobind to be his successor.

Guru's devotees were under shock at this news. At Lahore Guru Arjan Dev was asked to write appreciation of Mohammad Sahib in the Holy Granth or accept Islam, if he wished to live. Guru Arjan rejected both conditions, and added that if his death be GOD's will, he would accept it with a smile. Guru Arjan Dev Ji told the court *Kazi*, the emperor's religious lawyer, that he was born in Sikh faith under the Divine dictate. Therefore, he cannot abdicate the "Right of religious freedom." Jahangir, longing for the moment, ordered a cruel end to Guru Arjan's life under Yassa Law (an unpublished decree, introduced by Genghis Khan) – death by torture without bleeding.

Guru Arjan Dev Ji was tortured incrementally to weaken his will, and coerce him into surrender. During simmering summer days in May 1606, the Guru was made to sit on a hot plate and burning sand was poured over his body. On the subsequent day, he was made to sit in boiling water in a cauldron till his entire body was blistered. Torture went for four continued days. Flustered *Kazis* not able to rile Guru Arjan decided to brutalize Guru's wounded body some more. On May 30, 1606 with his hands and feet tied, cool water of River Ravi was poured on his blistered and peeling skin. Unable to dilute his spiritual and mental strength with intensely violent treatment, the flustered *Kazis* dropped Guru Arjan's mangled body in the cool currents of the river for drowning and disintegrating. The *Kazis*, to attenuate any backlash for their premeditated acts of violence, spread a rumor that Guru Arjan accidentally drowned while bathing in the river. One tends to agree with the contention of many historians including Ganda Singh that "much of the Chandu-story was given currency to it in those very days to shift the responsibility of torture inflicted on the Guru from the Mughal officials to the Kafir."

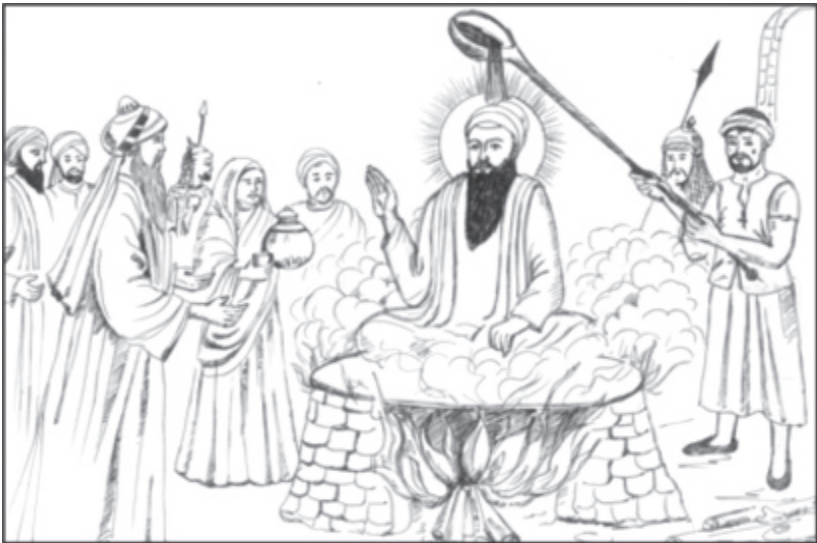


Figure 10: Guru Arjan Dev was made to sit on burning hot plate and burning hot sand poured over his body

Guru Arjan Dev Ji sacrificed his life for "The Right of Religious Freedom." Resolute, throughout the intense violence subjected at his body, he remained in a calm meditative posture, reciting his own verse scribed on page 394 of SGGS;

ਤੇਰਾ ਕੀਆ ਮੀਠਾ ਲਾਗੈ ॥

"Tera Kiya Meetha Laage"

Translation: Thy will I embrace with a smile.

Guru Arjan Dev Ji when summoned to Lahore by Jahangir had realized that the Mughal Rulers will do their utmost to suppress the life of independence and *Chardi Kala* Sikhs had been building since Guru Nanak's time. Sikhs will have to confront the wrath of the Mughal Kings for generations to come. The fearlessness and courage Guru Nanak planted in his followers to live a life of divinity with dignity in peace, now needed to be strengthened further. Sikhs would have to arm themselves and be ready to fight in defense of their way of life. He therefore, before leaving for Lahore, had prepared his son Hargobind Ji for this with an excellent martial arts training.

Hargobind Ji, born in 1590, (The Sikhs in History by Dr. Sangat Singh) was only sixteen years of age, when his Guru Father was martyred. His distraught uncle Prithi Chand tried again to gain the Guruship. J D Cunningham in his History of the Sikhs explains, "On the death of Arjan, his brother Prithi Chand made some attempts to be recognized as Guru, for the only son of the deceased teacher was young, and ecclesiastical usages had everywhere admitted a latitude of succession." His political gamesmanship and cunning was not enough to win over the Sikhs and Hargobind Ji ceremoniously succeeded Guru Arjan Dev.

At the Guruship conferring observance Hargobind Ji donned two swords, a visible indication of Sikh sovereignty. The two swords represented *Miri and Piri*, or spiritual and temporal independence. The Sikh sentiments were akin to the words of the second US President John Adam "People and Nations are forged in the fire of adversities." Guru Nanak's saintly Sikhs had began another transformation; the one that would ultimately make them a mighty force of saint-soldiers.

Guru Hargobind Ji

(1590-1644)

Following the martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev, *Baba Budha Ji* anointed sixteen years old Hargobind as the next Guru of the Sikhs on June 01, 1606. Notwithstanding his age, Guru Hargobind had realized that the Mughal monarchs were determined to rule their subjects through fear and intimidation. Those wanting to live in freedom with dignity will be trampled by the massive force of the empire. Desirous of a peaceful life with dignity, Sikhs were willing to confront and challenge the brutality of the ruling class. Perhaps Guru Arjan Dev Ji, having envisioned struggles to come, had prepared Hargobind for it, through extensive education and training in Marshall Arts.

The resolve to live a life of freedom and dignity was displayed by Guru Hargobind Ji on the day of his anointment. Forsaking the traditional ceremonial garbs, he chose to dress-up as a King wearing two swords; representing political and religious independence. The two swords became famous as *Miri and Piri* symbols of spiritual and temporal freedom of Sikhs. Guru Hargobind Ji also decorated his turban with the aigrette or *Kalgi*, a sign of sovereignty and royalty. People, witnessing this unusual act, were awed and elated, because, carrying arms and wearing a turban with an egret was exclusively reserved for the royals and forbidden for their citizens.

Guru Hargobind's mission was to challenge the growing imperial intolerance of Hindus, Sikhs, and other non-Muslims. He was determined to free the masses from the fear so they could practice their chosen faith and also release them from the bondage of caste discrimination. Like his father, Guru Hargobind was not going to yield to oppression. His followers were inspired to attain equal rights. On the advice of leading Sikhs, Guru Hargobind moved to forested and isolated Malwa area to plan for the future, and avoid immediate confrontation with the empire. On June 4, 1606, Guru Hargobind accompanied by *Mata Ganga Ji*, and his wife Damodari, arrived at his brother-in-law Sain Das's home

in village Daroli, District Ferozepur. *Bhai* Sain Das' wife Ramo and Damodari were sisters. They were also devout Sikhs of Guru Arjan (This means that the Guru family must have left for Daroli, immediately after the investiture ceremony on June 01, 1606). *Mata* Damodari gave birth to their first son *Baba* Gurditta (Sept 1608) during their eighteen month stay at the village. As per *Bhai* Kahn Singh Nabha, Mahan Kosh (Delhi 1990 reprint) Guru Hargobind Ji got a well dug at Daroli. He also held regular congregations at a site outside the village.

Guru Hargobind returned to Amritsar in end of 1607 or early 1608, and as a first step to establish sovereignty over Sikh affairs, he laid the foundation of *Akaal-bunga*, a seat of temporal power, in front of *Har-Mandir Sahib*. The completed building-a royal court with a high throne, was named *Akaal-Takht* or the throne of the timeless. Guru Hargobind Ji dressed in his royal robes would issue edicts and decrees and also resolve disputes amongst devotees. Guru Hargobind Ji encouraged Sikhs to memorize Gurbani and would honor those able to recite the verses of SGGS accurately. Guru Ji gave his personal horse to *Bhai* Gopala Ji for narrating the perfect *Japu Ji Sahib*. Guru Ji ordained that while at *Hari-Mandir*, he would focus on spiritual matters and when at *Akaal-Takht* he would tend to temporal issues. The foundation had been laid for a life style of saint-soldier; embodiment of piety of a saint and courage of a soldier.

The Guru urged his emissaries to muster good breed horses, better swords, arrows, and armaments to build up a defensive force. Disciples began to volunteer to serve as Guru's soldiers, keenly receiving martial arts training. Young Sikhs were championing horsemanship and swordsmanship. What began as the first Sikh regiment of 52 valiant soldiers soon grew to become an army. To house his men and fleet of horses, Guru Hargobind built a fort around Amritsar in 1609 and named it *Loh-garh* or the Fort of steel. J.D.Cunningham in his History of the Sikhs (2nd edition) writes that Guru Hargobind "had a stable of eight hundred horses, and three hundred mounted followers (soldiers) were constantly in his attendance upon him."

In early 1612 emperor Jahangir re-appointed Murtaza Khan the governor of Panjab. He became apprehensive of Guru Hargobind's growing force and fortification of *Loh-garh*. Murtaza Khan sent an alarming report to Jahangir about Guru Hargobind. The emperor invited the Guru at Agra. On December 31, 1612 Guru Hargobind Ji left for Delhi after making arrangements for the

management of *Hari-Mandir Sahib* under *Baba Budha Ji*'s guidance, and assigning *Bhai Gurdas Ji* to be acting *sewadar* (in service) of *Akaal-bunga*.

Chandu, a petty officer in the King's court, maintained animosity towards Guru Hargobind, because Guru Arjan had declined the marriage of his son Hargobind to Chandu's daughter. Guru Arjan had also refused to scribe verses of Saint Kanha Ji, a relation of Chandu, in SGGS because the verses did not meet the standards set by the Guru. Chandu was further irked over this rejection.



Figure 11: Guru Hargobind Ji walking out of Gwalior Fort
with 52 Rajput princes and zamindars

When Guru Hargobind Ji arrived in Delhi on his way to Agra, ruffled Chandu took him into custody and sent him to Gwalior penitentiary, where fifty-two other Rajas and political prisoners were being detained in high security.

Sai Miyan Mir, an esteemed *Sufi* Muslim saint who had laid the foundation stone of *Hari-Mandir Sahib* in Amritsar and King's wife *Begum Nurjahan* tried to persuade Jahangir to build good relationships with Guru Hargobind, but Chandu was hateful towards the Guru's family. Chandu tried to induce Hari Das (some scholars name him as Hari Ram), the Gwalior fort commander (Daroga), to kill Guru Hargobind. Chandu's plans failed because

Hari Das had heard about the pious life of Guru Hargobind Ji and so he became Guru's devotee, instead. Some historians have written that since Hargobind Ji's imprisonment, Jahangir was having nightmares. Meanwhile, *Sain Mian Mir* and queen prevailed upon Jahangir to release Guru Hargobind Ji from Gwalior prison. He also invited Guru Sahib to visit Delhi.

Guru Hargobind Ji declined to leave the prison unless fifty-two other political prisoners being detained in Gwalior prison were also freed. Jahangir agreed to release as many other prisoners as could walk out of the prison while holding on to the Guru's robe. Guru asked Hari Das to get a new robe stitched for him, with fifty-two coat-tails. As Guru walked out of the prison after almost seven years of incarceration, each of the fifty-two inmates held on to none of the Guru's coat-tails to exit the prison and be free. After freeing the fifty-two Rajput princes and *zamindars* from Jahangir's captivity, Guru Hargobind came to be known as *Bandi-Chhorh* or the emancipator. Guru Ji stayed at Hari Das' home, for one day, prior to departing for Amritsar. According to *Bhat Vehi Jadobansian, Barhtian Ka Khata* (historic documents) Guru Ji reached Amritsar on October 26, 1619; the day of Diwali. The entire *Darbar Sahib* complex had been lit with oil lamps for a jovial celebration of Guru's arrival. Since then, the day is celebrated as the *Bandi-Chhorh Divas* in Sikh Religion.

The seven year long incarceration of Guru Hargobind in Gwalior was a testing period for Sikh Panth. First, Prithi Chand tried to win Sikh hearts. After his death in 1618, his son scholarly Meharban, sought to subvert the Sikh movement. *Bhai* Gurdas wrote extensively about this and condemned the deceitful. He assured Sikh masses that Guru Hargobind was the true successor of previous five Gurus and leader of the community. The return of Guru Hargobind on Diwali brought jubilation in the community.

Return to Guruship in freedom brought a situation of quandary for Guru Hargobind Ji. Parents of two young girls desirous of marrying their daughters to Guru Hargobind Ji, had pledged the relationship. The tradition of the time would warrant the declined lady to remain spinster, for life; an unfair treatment for a young girl. Under the circumstances Guru married Nanki on March 28, 1620 and Mehrai on July 10, 1620. Guru Hargobind, not happy about this sexist tradition, ordained Sikhs to abolish this cultural tradition. Guru Hargobind Sahib had six children, namely *Baba Gurditta Ji*, *Baba Suraj Mal Ji*, *Baba Ani Rai Ji*, *Baba Atal* and *Baba Tyag Mal Ji* (later named Teg Bahadur) and *Bibi Veero Ji*.

Guru Hargobind continued the development of Amritsar town. *Lohgarh* Fort had already been constructed in 1609 to house soldiers and fleet of horses. For protection against invaders, the city was fortified with a perimeter wall. A garden adjoining *Guru Ka Chowk*, presently known as *Akaalian da bagh*, was built.

Two skirmishes took place within a few days of each other during September and October of 1621 at village Rohilla of Batala. The town of Hargobindpur, established by Guru Arjan Dev Ji, was taken over by Bhagwan Das Gherar, the town administrator. Chandu's son Karam Chand continued his family animosity towards Sikhs, and asked his relative Rattan Chand (Bhagwan Das Gherar's son) to incite Abdulla Khan, Faujdar of Jullundur, to clash with Sikhs. Both Rattan Chand and Abdulla Khan were killed in that battle. Royal army suffered heavy losses in a shameful defeat. The cause for this animosity is believed to be Chandu's death at the hands of Sikhs after being handed over to Guru for torturing Guru Arjan. Chandu met a sad end at the hands of *Sangat* (*Bhai Kahn Singh*, Encyclopedia of Sikh Literature 2004- page 361).

After Jahangir's death in 1627, Shahjahan took over reigns of the Mughal Empire. This also ended the equation between Guru and the Emperor. Shahjahan chose hard line policies against Sikhs and ordered destruction of many temples under construction or incomplete. The Baoli at Dabbi Bazaar, Lahore, which was constructed by Guru Arjan Dev Ji, was also filled. The kitchen portion of the site was converted into mosque. Sikh-Mughal relations were severally strained. In April, 1634 when the guru was busy making arrangements for the marriage of her daughter *Bibi Viro* (Veero), a royal white falcon was captured by Sikhs, the royal army attacked Amritsar under the command of Mukhlis Khan. Cunningham, in his "History of the Sikhs" writes, "Mukhlis Khan was commanding a force of 7,000 against Sikh force of 5,000 only." In a fierce battle lasting about nine hours, Mukhlis Khan was beheaded by Guru Hargobind Ji and the Mogul forces retreated to Lahore. Guru Hargobind Ji's daughter Viro's wedding had been fixed to take place during these days. The marriage was solemnized in Sikh tradition near village Jhabal on the preset day, as the Sikh forces were returning from the unexpected battlefield.

Though Guru Hargobind had won this battle, the Mogul forces under the command of Lalla Beg and Qamar Beg confronted Sikh militia once again, in Mid December 1634 near Mehraj. Both, Qamar beg and Lalla Begh, were killed at the hands of the Guru and the royal army was forced to retreat. Though Guru

Hargobind lost 1200 soldiers, Mughal losses were significantly higher. Mohammad Latif's "History of the Punjab" (1891-1989 reprint) wrote, "the Moghul force on being defeated by the Sikhs, fled to Lahore, leaving its slain commanders in the battlefield."

The fourth and the last battle with royal army was fought in 1635 at Kartarpur, which was spread for many days. Guru Hargobind was besieged at Kartarpur. Painsa Khan was the son of Guru's one time nurse. Guru Ji had raised and trained the orphan Painsa Khan in the art of warfare affectionately and been very generous to him. Royal influence induced Painsa Khan to betray Guru Ji. He was able to persuade Jalandhar's Commander to attack Sikh Army. Facing Painsa Khan in the battlefield, Guru Hargobind Sahib gave three chances to Painsa Khan to strike him. All three attempts failed. Guru Hargobind Ji killed Painsa Khan in his first attempt (April 28, 1635). In his last moments, Painsa Khan realized his mistake and asked for forgiveness and blessing from Guru Sahib. Because Painsa Khan was a Muslim, Guru Sahib advised him to pray to Allah, prior to breathing his last.

Guru's troupe was moving towards Phagwara. By the evening a detachment of Mughal force made a sudden appearance. Both sides had another battle near village Palahi resulting in many casualties on both sides. Two noted members of Guru's household, *Baba Gurditta Ji* and *Bidhi Chand Ji* displayed great bravery in this battle. Mughals finally retreated. Sikh soldiers and Guru's family witnessed the agility and swordsmanship of Tyag Mal (*Bhat Vehi Multani Sindhi* in n 87, p 30 states "In the battle Guru's son Tyag Mal, then less than 14 years age, showed adeptness in playing of the sword. This earned him the name of Teg Bahadur"). Guru Hargobind Ji honored his son for bravery and Tyag Mal was renamed Teg Bahadur (Master of sword) by Guru Hargobind Sahib. After these battles, Guru Hargobind Ji decided to settle down in Kiratpur Sahib. Promoting Sikh values, he blessed multiple people while traveling through Kashmir, Rawalpindi, Jhelum, Gujrat, Sheikhupura, Lahore Nankana Sahib, Pilibhit and Malwa. Sikh numbers increased substantially during the time of Guru Hargobind Ji. The life of piety, dignity, courage, and economic opportunities in new towns, set up by Gurus, welcomed people from all folds of life into Sikh circles.

Raja of Kohalur, who was one of the 52 Rajas emancipated by Guru Hargobind from Gwalior prison, offered an expanse of land in Shivalik Hills, Guru Hargobind Ji's son *Baba Gurditta Ji* at the request of *Pir Budhan Shah*,

established a town of Kiratpur at this land. Guru Hargobind Sahib shifted religious headquarters of Sikhs to Kiratpur, and spent last decade of his life on this peaceful place. Kiratpur is also the birth place of Guru Hari Rai Ji and Guru Hari Krishan Ji.

Shifting of Sikh headquarters from Amritsar to Kiratpur caused a significant negative impact on Sikh ideology. Estranged family of Prithi Chand, specially his son, Meharban and grandson Harji, gained control of *Hari-Mandir* Sahib. Conspiring with Hindu priests or *Pujaris* and Muslim ruling class, they inserted myths and puranic mythology in Guru Nanak's Janam Sakhis to prove that Guru Nanak was a Hindu Avatar. Meharban claimed Guruship for himself as seventh Guru of the Sikhs. They created a new Granth (according to Kesar Singh Chhibbar) by including their own writings and excluding the verses of Bhagats belonging to low caste. It is believed that *Pandit* Kesho, in collaboration with Meharban, composed the new Granth and Guru Nanak's Janam Sakhis. They installed their own Granth at Darbar Sahib in place of Adi Granth, which was carried away by Dhir Mal, the devious eldest son of Guru Ji. The deranged cousins continued the family feuds during the time of the next three Sikh Gurus; Guru Hari Rai Ji, Guru Hari Krishan Ji and Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji.

Settled at Kiratpur, though his armed forces were intact, his emphasis was more on missionary work. Guru Ji deputed Bidhi Chand to take care of the missionary work for east with headquarters in Bengal. While at Kiratpur, Raja Himmat Chand of Handur, accompanied by his Diwan Dharam Chand, approached Guru Ji for help to ward off the aggression of Mohamad Beg, nephew of Nawab Nasar Ali Khan of Ropar. After Guru Ji was convinced of the situation, he deputed his elder son *Baba* Gurditta with 100 horsemen. The battle was fought on 1 sawan BK, 1692 (June 1635) at Nangal Gujran. Mohamad Beg suffered serious losses and his forces retreated, which were pursued up to Malikpur Rangran (as per *Bhat* Vehi Talaunds, Pargana Jind page 36). On learning about Guru Hargobind's shifting his residence at Kiratpur, Nawab Nasar Ali Khan approached Guru Ji for arranging peace settlement between both the sides. After the peace was reached the Nawab, Nasar Ali Khan arranged for a reception of the Guru Ji, which enhanced Guru Ji's position further.

Devoted men and women from all walks of life, by the thousands, dedicated their lives in egalitarian service of humanity during the times of Sikh Gurus and in the centuries since then. They deserve to be honored for their

fearless and selfless service of humanity. Recognizing all of those dedicated, determined, and humble stalwarts from Sikh history is beyond the scope of this work. A few select personalities are acknowledged in subsequent chapters of this book. However, four great souls whose lives were changed through the privilege of living in the physical presence of Gurus merit a mention in this chapter.

Baba Budha Ji spent all of his 125 years of life in the service of *Gurughar*. Born in 1506 in village Kathu Nangal, he was given a name *Boorha*. He became a follower of Guru Nanak at a young age. In his youth, he displayed the wisdom of old age; thus he was lovingly called *baba Budha*. His long life bestowed him the distinction of sharing his time with six Gurus. *Baba Budha Ji* taught horse riding, martial arts, swimming etc to Guru Hargobind Ji. When *Adi Granth* was brought in the *Hari-Mandir* for the first time, he was honored by Guru Arjan Dev Ji to be the first *Granthi* or cantor. Approaching his last days, he requested Guru Hargobind Ji's holy presence. Guru Hargobind Sahib came from Kiratpur to be with *Baba Budha Ji* in his final hours, in village Ramdaspur. On November 16, 1631, Guru Hargobind Ji performed the final cremation rites for *Baba Budha Ji*.

Bhai Gurdas Ji, another renowned personality of Sikh history was born in 1551. He was son of *Bhai Isher Das*, younger brother of Guru Amar Das Ji. He got attached to *Gurughar* from an early age after his parent's demise. Educated under the guidance of Guru Amar Das Ji, he sculpted a virtuous personality. Guru Arjan Dev Ji sent him to Banaras to learn Sanskrit. He was the scribe of the *Adi Granth* compiled by Guru Arjan Dev Ji. His famed poetry, known as *Varan*, is called the Key to unlock the mystic wisdom of *Guru Granth Sahib*. *Bhai Gurdas Ji* was appointed as the *Jathedar* (Caretaker) of *Akaal Takht* during Guru Hargobind Ji's captivity at Gwalior. In his final years he moved to Goindwal. Guru Hargobind Sahib also performed his last rites upon his death on August 25, 1636.

Pir Budhan Shah, a Muslim *Sufi* spirit, lived at Kohalur Mountains seeking spiritual union with Divine. His given name was Shamsuddin, but for his old age, people called him Budhan Shah (Elderly). He had heard vocals of Guru Nanak accompanied by *Bhai Mardana* on rebecc (*Rebab*) during Nanak's travels. Guru Nanak and Budhan Shah discoursed about purpose of life. Budhan Shah wished for another meeting with Guru Nanak. Promising to visit him as sixth Nanak, Guru Ji took his leave. How will I recognize you asked *Pir*

Ji? This time you offered me milk; next time, I will ask for it, Guru Nanak said. Guru Hargobind Ji deputed his son *Baba Gurditta Ji* to visit *Pir Budhan Shah*, asked for milk, to the sage's contentment. Guru Ji also visited the place sometime later and established the town of Kiratpur in 1626 at Budhan Shah's request. *Pir Budhan Shah* breathed his last sometime in the year 1643.

Sain Mian Mir, a *Sufi* Muslim, served the humanity. Because of his secular and spiritual disposition Guru Arjan Dev Ji honored him by asking him to lay the foundation stone of *Durbar Sahib*, Amritsar. *Sain Mian Mir Ji* rescued a young girl named Kaulan to safety. *Kazi Rustam Khan* of Mujang killed Kaulan's father and took her mother as his concubine. *Kazi* was also eyeing youthful Kaulan. *Sain Mian Mir* at Kaulan's mother's asking escorted Kaulan to Amritsar under Guru Hargobind Ji's protection. She was given a house (sanctuary) near *Durbar Sahib* to live a peaceful life. Before her death in 1629, Kaulan offered all her valuable to Guru Ji to construct a memorial for her. Kaulsar was constructed in her memory. *Mian Mir Ji*, a revered personality amongst Sikhs, spent years in respectful friendship with Guru Arjan and Guru Hargobind Ji.

On March 3, 1644, Guru Hargobind Ji anointed his grandson Hari Rai Ji, son of *Baba Gurditta Ji* as the seventh Guru. Before his heavenly departure, he asked his wife *Mata Nanaki Ji* and his youngest son Tyag Mal to depart from Kiratpur and take up residence in Bakala town.

Guru Hari Rai Ji

(1630- 1661)

Guru Hari Rai Ji, the seventh successor to Guru Nanak, was grandson of Guru Hargobind Ji and son of *Baba Gurditta Ji*, *Mata Nihal Kaur*. He was born on January 16, 1630 at Kiratpur. Guru Hargobind Ji assured good scholarly education as well as mastery of martial arts, for his grandson. At fourteen years of age, Hari Rai was married to Krishan Kaur popularly known as *Bibi Sulakhni*, daughter of *Shri Daya Ram* of Anoop Shahar, Uttar Pradesh. The couple was blessed with two sons, Ram Rai born in March 1646 and Hari Krishan, born on July 07, 1652, and a daughter Roop Kaur born in April 1649.

Of Guru Hargobind Ji's five sons, *Baba Gurditta* and *Baba Attal Ji* both had earned displeasure of their Guru father for displaying supernatural powers, a taboo in Sikhism. Two other sons, *Baba Suraj Mal* and *Ani Rai* with worldly inclinations, were entrusted to look after family affairs. Tyag Mal was too young; thus Guru Hargobind chose his grandson to succeed him.

Dhirmal, the eldest grandson of Guru Hargobind Ji, considered himself to be the heir apparent. He lived at Kartarpur with his mother, expecting to inherit the Guruship. Dhirmal did not even accompany his mother to attend the final rites of his father, *Baba Gurditta*, in Kiratpur. He also claimed the possession of the original *Adi Granth*, the Sikh scripture dictated, edited, and signed by *Guru Arjan Dev Ji* - that had been left at Kartarpur when *Guru Hargobind Ji* shifted to Kiratpur. Finding Dhirmal unworthy, *Guru Hargobind Ji* ordained young *Hari Rai*, to be the next *Guru* of the Sikhs. Principal *Satbir Singh*, a Sikh Historian, writes that all sons of *Guru Hargobind Ji* accepted the will of their father *Guru*. On March 3, 1644, fourteen years old *Hari Rai Ji* became *Nanak VII*.

Prior to his heavenly departure, *Guru Hargobind Ji* had advised *Guru Hari Rai* to lead a life of peace while continuing the *Miri-Piri* spirit and maintaining a well trained cavalry as a defensive force. Accordingly, *Guru Ji* maintained a

squad of 2200 skilled fighters, but never engaged in any war with the ruling Mughals. Due to limited hostility from the royal machinery, Guru Hari Rai dedicated more time to travels in Doaba and Malwa on missionary work.

Once when Guru Hari Rai Ji accompanied by his troops was returning from Malwa, Mohd Yaar Khan, son of Mukhlis Khan and their troops were proceeding to Delhi. Learning about Guru Hari Rai's travel, he launched a sudden attack on the Guru Hari Rai's caravan. Guru's men braved this attack. *Bhai* Gaura (a Sikh, who earned displeasure of Guru Hari Rai Ji for hitting his whisker Jassa - Mahan Kosh) was also trailing the caravan with his soldiers. When he found out about Yaar Khan's stealth attack, he pounced upon Mohd Yaar Khan's men, killed many of them and thwarted the attack. Suffering heavy losses, Khan fled the scene. Guru Ji pardoned him when he learnt about the sincerity and bravery of *Bhai* Gaura.

During his extensive travels in Doaba and Malwa areas, Guru Hari Rai met with considerable success in advancing Guru Nanak's mission. Great number of people accepted Sikhism. "He made *Bhai* families of Kaithal and Bagrian responsible for missionary work between Sutlej and Yamuna. Bhagat Bhagwan, a Bairagi was reclaimed and appointed in charge missionary work in the east, where he and his followers established 360 centres" (The Sikhs in History). Guru Hari Rai Ji also visited areas in Pathankote, Raigarh, Lahore, Sialkote, parts of Jammu and Kashmir and many more places for missionary work. While at Kiratpur, Guru Hari Rai Ji continued the daily physical fitness routine, a tradition started by Guru Angad Dev Ji, to insure athleticism and toughness of Sikh youth.

Paying great attention to good health of masses, Guru Hari Rai established an Ayurvedic hospital and research center at Kiratpur. Free medicines were given to all patients, irrespective of their cast, creed and status. Once, emperor Shahjahan's son Dara Shikoh was suffering from a serious illness, and he needed rare herbal medicines not available in the royal pharmacy. The royal hakim personally came to Kiratpur to obtain the medicines from Guru Ji. When Dara Shikoh was cured, emperor Shahjahan offered compensation (*Jagir*), but Guru Ji politely declined. Guru Hari Rai Ji's compassion for human beings also extended to nature; animals and birds alike. During his sprees through the woods, he would bring injured birds and animals back to his hospital. After their treatment, he would release them in the greenery of Kiratpur.

Aurangzeb revolted against his father emperor Shahjahan, to become the



Figure 12: Shahi Hakim (royal physician) in Darbar of Guru Hari Rai Ji with a request for rare herbals for treatment of Dara Shikoh

emperor of India. He killed his brother Dara Shikoh and imprisoned his father. Then Aurangzeb's ire fell on Mian Mir's successor, Mullah Shah and Sarmad, holding them responsible for 'heretic' views of Dara Shikoh. Mullah Shah died immediately after receiving the summons from Aurangzeb. Mohd Said Sarmad, a *Sufi* saint of Jewish origin, who is understood to have conferred spiritual sovereignty on Dara Shikoh, mounted the scaffold himself under fear of torture by the Emperor (The Sikhs in History-page 50). Aurangzeb's confidants fussed about Guru Ji's unspecified help in healing Dara Shikoh; prompting him to summon Guru Hari Rai Ji to his court. Author Trilochan Singh in his book-Life of Guru Hari Krishan, says that in response Guru Hari Rai Ji told Aurangzeb "It is against the principles and tradition of Sikh Gurus to go to any king's court either for favors or political submission. Dara Shikoh visited me on numerous occasions and received my blessings as a friend. Since your Majesty has expressed such a keen interest in knowing about the faith of *Baba Nanak* and the mysteries of Sikh scripture, I am sending my elder son Ram Rai with some missionaries, to remove your doubts and misgivings about Sikh Religion."

Guru Hari Rai Ji sent his son Ram Rai as his ambassador to detail the Sikh principles and teachings. Guru Ji counseled his son to respond to all queries accurately and fearlessly. However, Ram Rai was mesmerized by the royal

glitter. Using his super-natural powers, he exhibited some miracle. Also on being asked about verse from Guru Granth Sahib:

ਮਿਟੀ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਕੀ ਪੇੜੈ ਪਈ ਕੁਮ੍ਹਿਆਰ ॥

ਅੰਗ ੪੬੬, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾ

"Mitti Musalman ki Perheirh Pai kumhiar"

Page 466, SGGS

Translation: The clay of the Muslim's grave becomes clay for the potter's wheel.

He, instead of elaborating and explaining the verse accurately, stated that the correct version is:

"Mitti Be-iman ki Perhieirh Pai Kumhiar." Diwan Durgah Mall who had accompanied Ram Rai to the court, informed Guru Hari Rai Ji about the distortion by Ram Rai. Guru Hari Rai disappointed at his son, sent a written reprimand excommunicating Ram Rai.

Guru Hari Rai Ji passed on the *Gurujote* (Guru-ship) to his younger son Hari Krishan on Oct 6, 1661 and departed for his heavenly abode at only thirty-one years of age. According to "The Sikhs in History" by Dr. Sangat Singh, "Guru Hari Rai Ji's departing instructions to Guru Harikrishan Ji were to not permit Sikhism to become a political tool in the hands of Delhi Rulers."

Guru Hari Krishan Ji

(1652- 1664)

Hari Krishan Ji was ceremoniously consecrated to the Guruship by *Bhai* Bhana Ji, son of *Bhai* Budha Ji, on October 6, 1661. Hari Krishan Ji was born to *Mata* Krishan Kaur (also known as Sulakhni) on July 7, 1652 (corresponding savan vadi BS 1709), at Kiratpur Sahib, according to *Bhat Vehis*, or formal recording documents of the time. Ten year old Guru Hari Krishan Ji had inherited the responsibility, to protect the almost two centuries old heritage of Guru Nanak, safeguarded by his seven predecessors. Clearly, to resist the evil designs of Emperor Aurangzeb, little more than nine year old child Guru had also inherited the wisdom and determination of his predecessor Gurus.

Aurangzeb imprisoned his own father, and killed his own brother to seize the Imperial throne of Delhi. Having removed his own family members as possible roadblocks in his ambitions, he began to see Sikhs as a threat and resistance force to his purpose; thus he kept looking for opportunities to interfere in Sikh matters, to contain and control them. Ram Rai, unhappy over Guru Hari Rai's decision about succession to Guruship, appealed in Aurangzeb's court. Aurangzeb, anxiously waiting for such an opportunity, coaxed Raja Jai Singh of Ambar to invite Guru Hari Krishan Ji to Delhi. Knowing that Guru Ji would not consent to a meeting with Aurangzeb, Raja Jai Singh's invitation expressed his personal desire and yearning of Delhi Sikhs, to see Guru Ji in January 1664. Guru Hari Krishan Ji accompanied by five prominent Sikhs, *Mata* Sulakhni Ji, *Diwan* Durgah Mall, *Bhai* Dariya Parmar, *Bhai* Mani Ram, and *Bhai* Gurditta left for Delhi.

On his way to Delhi, Guru Hari Krishan Ji stopped at village Panjokhara near Ambala (presently in Haryana) preaching to the locals that spirituality is not the domain of high cast people only. Everybody has the potential to attain gyan or spiritual scholarship. *Pandit* Lal Chand, an arrogant scholar, doubting a ten year old discoursing in spiritual realm, challenged the Guru to prove his

view point. He mocked the young Guru about his name Hari Krishan. The *Pandit* lauded, Krishan Ji recited Geeta; with Hari Krishan name, can you merely translate it?

If I translate the Geeta verses, you would think that I must have memorized them and your doubts will remain intact, Guru Ji responded to *Pandit* Lal Chand. Why don't you bring a villager of your choice and he would interpret Geeta *Slokas* on my behalf. Lal Chand, happy at the opportunity to embarrass the Guru, brought an illiterate water carrier named Chhajju for the purpose. Graciously blessing him, Guru Ji sat Chhajju beside himself and asked *Pandit* Lal Chand to recite any *Slok* of Geeta that he wanted *Bhai* Chhajju to interpret. *Bhai* Chhajju's eloquent and thorough exposition stunned *Pandit* Lal Chand and everyone else present. Humbled Lal Chand, *Bhai* Chhajju, and numerous villagers became Guru's disciples.

Bhai Chhajju became a devoted and learned Sikh and was sent as a preacher of righteousness to Jagannath Puri. At the 1699 Anandpur gathering of Sikhs by Guru Gobind Rai Ji, *Bhai* Chhajju's son *Bhai* Himmat Chand was the third Sikh, responding to the call of the tenth Nanak, to offer his head.

After Panjokhara the group halted at Kurukshetra, Panipat and a few more places, finally reaching Delhi. For his encampment and holding religious congregations, Guru Ji chose the place on the bank of river Yamuna, where *Gurudwara* Bala Sahib stands now in South Delhi. However, at Raja Jai Singh's request, he spent a few nights at his mansion. To lure Guru Ji to visit his palace, Aurangzeb sent his younger son with precious gifts. Guru Ji accepted a prayer rosary and returned all other gifts graciously. Aurangzeb tried to arrange a forum to engage Guru Hari Krishan Ji, but Guru Ji, remembering his Guru father's final words, refused. He did not want the office of the Guru or the Sikh movement to become a subject matter of intervention by Delhi rulers.

J.D.Cunningham in his book, History of Sikhs writes. "The dispute between the partisans of the two brothers ran high, and the decision at last was referred to the emperor. Aurangzeb may have been willing to allow the Sikhs to choose their own guru, as some accounts have it, but the more cherished tradition relates that, being instantly struck with the child's instant recognition of empress among a number of ladies similarly arrayed, he declared the right of Hari Krishan to be indisputable, and he was accordingly recognized as head of Sikhs." Some historians have written that Guru Hari Krishan did go to the royal court once, to refute his elder brother's claims about succession. Swaroop

Singh Kaushik's *Guru Kian Sakhian* and Swarup Das Bhalla's *Mehma Parkash* suggest that Guru Hari Krishan Ji visited the royal court on Thursday, March 24, 1664, to rebut Ram Rai's appeal and reasoning. These authors, however, don't subscribe to the queen identification story. It is possible that Raja Jai Singh himself may have created the tale to avoid any irksome environment amongst Sikhs or the Emperor, since he was instrumental in bringing Guru Hari Krishan Ji to Delhi.

Teg Bahadur Ji, not yet Guru, also came to see his grandnephew Guru Hari Krishan Ji and pay his obeisance, in Delhi, because he had not seen him since the coronation. At that time, Teg Bahadur Ji was traveling through eastern India. In Delhi, Teg Bahadur Ji stayed at *Bhai Kalyana's* home. After greeting and discourses with the young Guru, he departed for Kiratpur for commiseration with the extended family at Guru Hari Rai Ji's heavenly departure. Shortly thereafter, he returned to Bakala, the town of his residency between 1644 and 1656.

Delhi was experiencing a small pox epidemic during the days of Guru Hari Krishan's visit with Raja Jai Singh. Caring for diseased and debilitated was a tradition of Guru Nanak's house. During his first *Udaasi*, Guru Nanak Dev Ji stayed at the house of a leper and cured him, near Goindwal. Guru Angad Dev Ji tended to sick after morning congregation, everyday. Guru Amar Das Ji personally gave bath to leper Prema Chaudhury, cured him and arranged his marriage. Guru Arjan Dev Ji constructed a leper house at Taran-Taaran, and personally looked after their needs. Guru Hari Rai Ji opened an Ayurvedic treatment and research center at Kiratpur.



Figure 13: Guru Hari Krishan Ji providing comfort and solace to the sick in Delhi

People learning about Guru Ji being in Delhi, started visiting him in hordes. To the sick and infirm of Delhi, Guru Hari Krishan Ji provided solace. His merciful touch and medical care healed many. Guru Ji authorized to spend the entire income from offerings for the welfare of those suffering from the epidemic.

He would personally move sick persons to safe areas and also remove the dead bodies for respectful cremation. Helping the thousand who came for cure and comfort, Guru Ji himself was stricken with the terminal disease. On March 30, 1664 Guru Hari Krishan Ji departed for his heavenly abode.

Before he breathed his last, Sikhs asked Guru Hari Krishan Ji as to who will lead them in the future? Guru Ji responded ‘*Baba Bakale*’ meaning his grandfather in Bakala. Leaving no doubt about it, he told *Diwan* Durgah Mall, *Bhai* Gurditta Ji, and his mother that *Baba* Teg Bahadur Ji would succeed him. *Gurudwara* Bala Sahib on the banks of river Yamuna now stands where his mortal remains were cremated. Raja Jai Singh’s Bungalow, where Guru Ji served those suffering from small pox, now stands *Gurudwara* Bangla Sahib where devotees by the thousands visit every day to seek the blessings of the Guru. The tenth Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh Ji’s verse in praise of a youthful and *resolute* sage, Guru Hari Krishan Ji, lives on memorized in every Sikh heart.

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਹਰਿਕ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਨ ਧਿਆਈਐ ਜਿਸ ਡਿਠੇ ਸਭਿ ਦੁਖ ਜਾਇ ॥

"Sri Hari Krishan dhiaaeai jis dithe sabh dukh jaae"

Translation: Being mindful of Guru Hari Krishan; all miseries cease.

Guru Teg Bahadur

(1621-1675)

Life for Indian people, except for those who had converted to Islam, was full of miseries, in mid seventeenth century, during Mughal king Aurangzeb's reign. Having seized the Imperial throne by imprisoning his father and killing his brother, Aurangzeb became the emperor. Perhaps, in atonement for his misdeeds he became an Islamist zealot who desired to convert every Indian, by force. Was it reparation for his wickedness? Or was he trying to create a cohesive society, practicing a single religion? Regardless of his motives, Aurangzeb banned construction of new Hindu temples. Beginning in 1669, he ordered demolition of existing temples, and construction of mosques to replace them. Non-Muslim population was exasperated by repressive religious, political, and economic conditions. Choice for them was either conversion, or loss of civil rights, excessive taxation, torture, and frequently death. Fearful, Hindus by the thousands, converted to Islam.

Even upper-caste Hindus in Varanasi and other centers of Hinduism embraced Islam. Aurangzeb ordered his Governor of Kashmir, Nawab Iftikhar Khan (1671-75) to increase brutalities against Brahmins. Life for Hindus of Kashmir was made very difficult by Iftikhar Khan on behest of Aurangzeb. Their visible religious symbols - sacred thread and forehead markings were being forcibly removed. Refusal to accept Islam meant torture and death. Finding no other refuge, and no one else to protect them, Brahmins from Kashmir made the decision to take their plight to Guru Teg Bahadur. Under leadership of *Pandit* Kirpa Ram (Dutt) of Mattan, a group of *Pandits* arrived at Anandpur Sahib on May 25, 1675 and pleaded to Guru Ji for help.

Teg Bahadur, named Tyag Mal in his childhood, was born to *Mata* Nanaki and Guru Hargobind Ji at Guru Ka Mahal on April 1, 1621. He was grandson of Guru Arjan Dev Ji, and great grandson of Guru Ram Das Ji. *Baba* Tyag Mal received his spiritual education from *Baba* Budha Ji and *Bhai* Gurdas

Ji, while his father Guru Hargobind Ji trained him in martial arts. In 1634, during Vaisakhi celebrations at Kartarpur, Painsa Khan in collusion with Kale Khan of Jullundur attacked the Sikh congregation. Both Painsa Khan and Kale Khan were killed and their forces retreated. Concluding the celebrations early, Guru Hargobind Ji and entourage was marching towards Kiratpur when regrouped Mughal forces launched a surprise attack on Sikhs again, near Palahi Village. Guru Hargobind Ji, *Baba* Gurditta Ji and Sikhs defeated the royal forces once again. Thirteen years old Tyag Mal displayed exceptional bravery and battle skills during these skirmishes. Arriving back in Kiratpur, Guru Hargobind Ji, pleased with his son's swordsmanship, honored him by changing his name to Teg Bahadur, meaning the master of the sword.

Teg Bahadur's marriage was arranged with *Mata* Goojri in 1633. Abiding with his father's wishes, Teg Bahadur Ji moved to his maternal grandparents' home in Bakala town in 1644. In 1661, when Guru Hari Krishan Ji acceded to Guruship, Teg Bahadur Ji was traveling in Eastern India and was not able to be part of the ceremonies to pay homage to the Guru. Therefore, in 1664, he came to Delhi to visit with the young Guru Hari Krishan Ji and soon after he returned to Bakala. Bakala is where Makhan Shah Lubhana was able to distinguish the true Guru amongst 22 imposters. He announced the episode of his discovery, to the great pleasure of the Sikh sangat.

When Guru Hargobind Ji moved from Amritsar to Kiratpur, Harji, son of Meharban, and grandson of Prithi Chand, wanting to depose the real Guru, forcibly took over the control of Durbar Sahib, Amritsar. He began to recite his own poetry and called it Gurbani. To mitigate the adulteration, Guru Teg Bahadur arrived in Amritsar on November 22, 1664. Emissaries of Harji closed the gates, and prevented Guru Teg Bahadur Ji from entering the Sanctum Sanctorum. To avoid open confrontation with estranged family members, Guru Teg Bahadur sat at a nearby open place, now *Gurudwara* Tharha Sahib, for his discourses with Sikhs. Next day he departed for village Valla.

Guru Teg Bahadur Ji spent next couple of months traveling in Majha and Malva. He visited Chukewali, Nijharia, Taran-Taaran, Khadur, Goindwal, Khem Karan, Chola, Zira, Moga Daroli, and Sabo ki Talwandi. At Talwandi, Guru Teg Bahadur Ji facilitated construction of a *sarovar* named "*Gursar*" on the occasion of Vaisakhi 1665. Later, Guru Ji visited Bangar area and blessed the crowds in Dhamdhan, where a well was dug in memory of Guru's visit.

Rani Champa Devi, widow of Bilaspur Raja, who was freed from Gwalior

Jail by Guru Hargobind Ji, requested Guru Ji to attend his final rites on May 13, 1665. Guru Ji honored the widow's request. Guru Teg Bahadur accompanied by his mother Nanaki and members of his Darbar reached Bilaspur. As a sign of reverence towards Sikh Gurus, Champa Devi wanted to gift three villages-Lodipur, Mianpur, and Sohota to Guru Ji. Some historians suggest that Guru Ji instead of accepting the land as a gift, he purchased the real estate and asked *Baba* Gurditta, son of *Baba*Budha Ji, to lay the foundation of new township and called it Chak Nanaki, now known as Anandpur Sahib. Guru Ji also travelled to the areas of Mathura, Garh Mukteshwar, Agra, Etawah, Kanpur, Allahabad, and Patna. Gobind Rai, later Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Nanak, was born at Patna, in the year 1661 (as per *Bhat* Vehis).

The Mughals of Delhi were uneasy with the expanding influence of Sikhs. Aurangzeb and his deputies were also annoyed at the sovereignty Sikhs exercised over their own affairs, and had wanted to impose their control over them. With an opportunity to question anointing of Guru Teg Bahadur Ji, Aurangzeb directed Alam Khan Rohela to take Guru Ji in custody (The Sikhs in History-p55). Guru Ji and his entourage, consisting of *Diwan* Mati Das and his brother Sati Das, sons of Hira Nand Chabbar, Gual Das, son of Chhutta Mal Chhibbar, Gurdas, son of Kirat Bhartia, Sangat, son of Bina Uppal, Jetha and Dayal Das, sons of Mai Das Jalahana Balaunt and some other Sikh Fakirs-according to *Bhat* Vehi Jodobansian (account of Barthias) was rounded up and brought to Delhi on November 8, 1665. Aurangzeb asked Guru Teg Bahadur Ji to showcase supernatural powers associated with a spiritual leader. Calling his request sacrilegious, Guru Teg Bahadur refused. Displeased Aurangzeb ordered execution of Guru Teg Bahadur Ji, as mentioned in *Guru kian Sakhian* by Saroop Singh. Kanwar Ram Singh, son of Raja Jai Singh, intervened and Aurangzeb changed his orders to imprisonment. According to historians S.M.Latif, this was the only time Guru Teg Bahadur Ji met Aurangzeb. Guru Ji was released from captivity on December 16, 1665.

With his companion Sikhs, Guru Teg Bahadur Ji left for Patna to continue his spiritual mission onwards. At the request of Raja Ram Singh of Assam Guru Ji visited him, where he brought peace between Raja Chankardhwaj and Raja Ram Singh. Rejoicing their peace treaty, they erected a monument of peace, love and affection. In early 1672, Guru Ji moved to Chak Nanaki in Punjab, now famed city of Anandpur Sahib.

On his return journey from Assam, Guru Teg Bahadur Ji visited Ayodhya

and Varanasi where Sikh *Sangat* and emissary of Jaunpour welcomed him enthusiastically. Arrangements of Guru Ji's stay were made at the residence of Kalyan Das. Maharaja Narinder Singh of Patiala acquired that place in 1854 and constructed Barhi Sangat *Gurudwara*. In 1950, a new *Gurudwara* building was constructed to replace the original building. *Gurudwara* Barhi Sangat premise has two additional *Gurudwaras*; “*Tupp Asthan*” and “*Ganga Pargat*.” *Gurudwara* Tupp Asthan is where Guru Teg Bahadur Ji meditated during his stay. *Gurudwara* Ganga Pargat is where Guru Ji had asked Kalyan Das to lift a rock for water from holy Ganges to flows and it did. A modern-day Baoli Well has been constructed for the benefit of pilgrims. 17 *Hukamnamas* or Edicts, one *Chola* or gown, and one pair of wooden sandals of Guru Ji have been preserved, for all visitors to see. A pair of child Gobind Rai's sandals, though weathered, is also showcased here. From Varanasi Guru Sahib proceeded to Lucknow, Shahjahanpur, Pilibhit Nanakmatta, Bareilly and stayed at Lal Bagh area of Moradabad at the spot Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib stepped on in Moradabad.

Principal Satbir Singh deserves gratitude for his valuable research and his patronage for the construction of this *Gurudwara* in Moradabad. Mrs. Neelu Khanna and Mr. Raj Khanna provided this vital information and photographs of *Gurudwara* Sahib at Moradabad, and merit our gratefulness. From Moradabad Guru Teg Bahadur Ji traveling through Haridwar, Jagadhry, and Ambala arrived in Lakhnau on September 13, 1670.



Figure 14: Mr. Raj Khanna at Gurudwara Sahib in Moradabad.
Guru Teg Bahadur Ji visited here on his way back from Assam

Brahmins from Kashmir made the decision to take their plight to Guru Teg Bahadur. Under leadership of *Pandit* Kirpa Ram (Dutt) of Mattan, a group of *Pandits* arrived at Anandpur Sahib on May 25, 1675 and pleaded to Guru Ji for help. “History of Kashmir” by P.N.K.Bamzai, page 371, says, “tyrannized

by the new Governor Nawab Iftikhar Khan, Kashmiri Brahmins got the idea to approach Guru Teg Bahadur, after praying to Lord Shiva at Amar Nath Cave Temple in March 1675.”

Sikhism does not subscribe to sacred thread, forehead markings, caste-based social segregation, and other Hindu rituals. Sikhs also do not subscribe to forced conversions, and strongly believe in “freedom of religion.” Guru Teg Bahadur Ji heard the Brahmins’ plea for aid contemplated on possible solutions. Meanwhile, for the comfort of Kashmiri visitors, he asked Sikhs to arrange for lodging and cooking facilities respecting Brahminical traditions, under the supervision of Kashmiri *Pandit* Gangu Brahmin (full name Ganga Ram Kaul), who also constituted part of delegation.

Pandit Kirpa Ram’s plea convinced Guru Teg Bahadur Ji that Aurangzeb’s forced conversions could be halted only if a great soul would offer the highest personal sacrifice. Ready in his mind to give up his own head, he did not ask Kashmiri *Pandits* to do so. Gobind Rai, his young son, supportingly affirmed that there was no greater soul to meet the challenge.

Guru Ji advised Kirpa Ram to convey to Aurangzeb that if Guru Teg Bahadur converted to Islam, they all will follow. In human history, a rare event was in the making. A pious soul was preparing to give his life to defend religious rights of another faith. He nominated his son Gobind Rai (b December 18, 1661- ‘Sikhs in History-Dr. Sangat Singh) as the next guru to lead Sikh community.

Accompanied by *Diwan* Mati Das, *Bhai* Sati Das, *Bhai* Dayal Das Guru Teg Bahadur planned to reason the case of Kashmiri Brahmins with Aurangzeb. The group was taken in custody at village Malikpur Ranghran, Paargana Ghanaula on July 12, 1675 (The Sikhs in History by Dr. Sangat Singh) They were detained in Sirhind for about four months, before being sent to Delhi via Agra. At Agra, they were camped at village kakreta in Sikandra area. After keeping in captivity for 9 days, Guru's entourage was sent to Delhi under escort of a force of 1200 soldiers. A magnificent Gurudwara building named Guru Ka Taal stands now at Agra. At the time, Aurangzeb was dealing with the mutiny of Pathans in Hasan Abdal; therefore, Saifuddin Sirhindi, successor of Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi, was entrusted the job of convincing Guru Teg Bahadur and bring him under Islamic umbrella. Unsuccessful in their arguments, they tortured Guru Teg Bahadur and on November 5, 1675 took him to Delhi in an open cage, to scare his disciples.

Subedar of Delhi and the royal *Kazi* asked Guru Ji to either display his

spiritual powers, or accept Islam. Refusal on both counts would result in his beheading. Guru Ji responded; all individuals must be free to choose their religion, and showing miracles is tantamount to interference in the affairs of God and taboo in Sikhism.

To deter Guru Teg Bahadur from his firm faith, Aurangzeb's forces attempted to torture and kill his three followers who had accompanied him from Anandpur Sahib. *Bhai MATI DAS* was the first to be martyred. On refusal to accept *Islam*, he was made to stand between two wooden logs and his body was cut in two pieces with the saw. *Bhai Mati Das Ji* was son of *Bhai Hira Nand Ji* of village Kariyala in Jhelum District. His grandfather was *Jathedar* in Guru



Figure 15: Bhai Mati Das Ji being planks sawed alive in two pieces in Delhi

Hargobind's force. *Bhai Mati Das* was appointed *Diwan* by Guru Teg Bahadur Ji. Before being cut into 2 pieces, *Bhai Mati Das* expressed his only desire, to be facing the Guru, when being sawed, so that he can have Guru's glimpse when he breathes his last.

The callous butchers were awed by Sikhs' determination. The heartless rulers were not about to give up. Next day, *Bhai Sati Das Ji*, younger brother of *Bhai Mati Das Ji*, was ordered by the Qazi to be wrapped in cotton and set afire, hoping to frighten the Guru, but to no avail. Again *Bhai Mati das Ji* too expressed his only desire to be facing the Guru, before being set ablaze, so that



Figure 16: Bhai Sati Das Ji burnt alive, wrapped in cotton

he can have Guru's glimpse when he breathed his last.

Still wanting to terrify the Guru, The Qazi next ordered *Bhai Dayal Das Ji* to be boiled alive in a cauldron. According to *Bhat Vehis*, *Bhai Dayal Das*



Figure 17: Bhai Dyala Ji being boiled alive in Cauldron

also known as *Bhai Dayala*, was son of *Bhai Mati Das* and grandson of *Bhai Balu Ram*, who attained martyrdom while fighting alongside *Guru Hargobind*. He was resident of *Alipur Multan*. *Bhai Dayala Ji* too expressed his only desire to be facing the *Guru*, so that he can have *Guru's* last glimpse. Seeing such unfaltering and resolute faith of the *Sikh Followers*, even the staunchest *Mughals* were taken aback.

To prove devotion and belief in their *guru*, all the three devotees wanted their faces be kept facing their *guru* as their last wish, while executioners completed their job. Calmly reciting



Figure 18: Guru Teg Bahadur Ji sacrificed his life for Kashmiri Pandits

Drawing by: Raj Singh Tattal (The Pen-Tacular-Artist)

Jap Ji (spiritual hymns), the three *Sikhs* were tortured to death.

Unable to induce fear in *Guru Teg Bahadur*, *Aurangzeb* announced the beheading of *Guru Ji* on November 11, 1675, and challenged *Sikhs* to show their resolve and try to remove the dead body after the beheading. Miraculously, concurrent with the *Guru's* beheading, the area in *Delhi*, now famous as *Chandni Chowk*, experienced a huge dust storm. *Bhai Nannu Rai*, *Bhai Agya* and his son *Bhai Jaita Ji* took the severed head to *Bhai Jaita's* (*Bhai Jeewan Singh Ji*, later) house in *Delhi*. *Bhai Jaita*, *Bhai Nannu* and *Bhai Udha* (*Oodha*) took the revered head to *Kiratpur Sahib* on November 16th, 1675 (*The Sikhs in History-Dr Sangat Singh*).

Meanwhile, in *Chandni Chowk*, *Bhai Lakhi Dass* (*Shah*) *Vanjara*, and his three sons (*Nigahia*, *Hema* and *Harhi* of *Jadobansia Kanaut* and *Naik Dhooma* son of *Bhai Nannu* picked up the body of *Guru Teg Bahadur Ji* and rushed to *Lakhi Das's* house in *Raisina* area. To cremate the body without detection or interference by king's forces, *Lakhi Shah* placed the body in his house and

torched his house. *Gurudwara* Rakabgunj Sahib stands now at that site. According to Dr Trilochan Singh, the two parts of Guru's body were removed in complicity with Kotwal and Daroga, Khwaja Abdullah. Guru Gobind Singh Ji during his visit to Delhi marked the site of Guru Teg Bahadur's Martyrdom and later *Baba* Baghel Singh was instrumental to construct the *Gurudwara* at that site. The bodies of *Bhai* Mati Das, *Bhai* Sati Das, and *Bhai* Dayala Ji were handed over to Sikh Community. They were cremated on the bank of Jamuna River, in south Delhi near Bhogal village.

From Kiratpur, a message was sent to Guru Gobind Rai at Anandpur about the arrival of *Bhai* Jaita Ji and party. Guru Gobind Rai honored *Bhai* Jaita Ji by saying, "*Rangreta Guru ka Beta.*" The hallowed head was taken in procession led by Guru Gobind Rai Ji, to Makhawal in Anandpur for cremation. Today, *Gurudwara* Sisgunj Sahib stands at the location.

Martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur Ji has in upholding the principle of "freedom of religion" has no parallel in the annals of human history. He laid down his life to protect the religious sentiments of the ancient Indian religion and its rituals, even though he did not subscribe to them.

Guru Teg Bahadur's divine poetry scribed in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* provides tranquility and inspires the reader to explore one's metaphysical self. Guru propounds us not to waste precious time on petty material gains, and stimulates us to cultivate divine qualities and a strong moral character.

Guru Gobind Singh

(1661-1708)

Hindustan, divided by caste, creed, class, and race was soaked in tribal tangles, in the fifteenth century, when Guru Nanak was born. Burdened by superstition, meaningless rituals, and religious carvings, society was suffocated. Meek masses had surrendered their civil rights and human rights, without resistance, to the tyrannical marauder Babar. The Godsend Guru Nanak set out on a mission to change the governors and the governed to usher in liberty and justice for all. He began the change by inspiring common people to believe in Oneuniversal, omnipresent GOD, and the brotherhood of mankind. The mission required inducing dignity and courage in the hearts and minds of downtrodden. He also challenged the political and religious establishments to unfurl justice and get rid of religious bigotry. He knew making this idea last was a multi-generational task; thus the torch was passed on to his nine successors.

The last human successor to Guru Nanak was born to *Mata Goojri Ji*, wife of Guru Teg Bahadur Ji on December 18, 1661, at Patna, a northeastern city of India(as per *Bhat Vehis*- which is considered as Municipal records of the present day). Named Gobind Rai, he received his schooling, spiritual tutoring, and martial arts training from *Bhai Chopati Rai* and *Munshi Sahib Chand*. Gobind Rai shouldered the responsibility to complete the mission of Guru Nanak, at age fourteen, when his father Guru Teg Bahadur Ji sacrificed his life in defense of the principle of freedom of religion.

When *Bhai Jaita Ji* brought Guru Teg Bahadur Ji's severed head to Guru Gobind Rai, he narrated the eyewitness account of happenings in Delhi. Though many devotees of Guru Teg Bahadur witnessed the martyrdom of the Guru Ji in Delhi, only a few openly professed to be Sikhs due to fear of Mughals. Common citizen, intimidated by the ruling class and the religious leaders, had become docile and frightened. Guru Gobind Rai knew reforming the society was a three-pronged task.

- To breed dignity, discipline, freedom, and courage in common citizens. Towards this end, he would have to transform a nation of Saint-Soldiers, into Khalsa.
- To mitigate religious bigotry and challenge religious leaders to abandon caste distinctions, proselytization, and see divinity in all.
- To challenge the rulers to dispense equal justice and equal rights to all citizens.

ਏਕ ਪਿਤਾ ਏਕਸ ਕੇ ਹਮ ਬਾਰਿਕ ॥

Eik pita, ekas kay hum baruk"

Translation: We are children of One GOD.

He also says in *Akaal Ustat*, "Ye recognize all human race as one."

ਮਾਨਸ ਕੀ ਜਾਤ ਸਬੈ ਏਕੈ ਪਹਿਚਾਨਿਓ ॥

"maanas kee jaath sabai eakai pehichaanabo"

Translation: Recognize the Human Race as One.

Aurangzeb had enacted many laws to deny basic human rights for non-Muslim Indians. Jizya, a special tax levied on non-Muslims, suspended by Akbar, was reinstated by Aurangzeb. Horse-riding, owning elephants, being armed, wearing a crown or a turban, and banging of war drums amongst many other privileges were reserved for powerful and mighty ruling class. Guru Gobind Rai began incremental steps to achieve his mission.

Refusing to accept second-class citizenship, Guru Gobind Rai defied all such laws. Sikhs had been maintaining troopers, were fully armed, and wore symbols of royalty, since Guru Hargobind Ji's time. Guru Gobind Rai reinforced the symbols of sovereignty in Sikhs and made them men of mettle. As an additional affront to the Imperial partisanship, Guru Gobind Rai installed a huge war Drum and named it Ranjit Nagara at Kesgarh Sahib, in 1679. Drums were banged to announce special events or for arousing enthusiasm among soldiers. As a sign of Sikh sovereignty, Guru Ji initiated rhythmic playing of drums on a daily basis, at the conclusion of morning and evening prayers (Morning only *Bhakti* and evening *Shakti*, wrestling- Guru Angad's concept of Mal Akharha).

Guru Gobind Rai was married to *Mata Jito Ji* (Ajit Kaur after baptism), daughter of *Bhai Harjas Khatri* of Lahore on 23 Harh, samat 1734 at Guru ke Lahore- Mahan Kosh page 393), corresponding year 1678 A.D. Harjas had a desire to perform her daughter's wedding at Lahore with great pomp and show. However, Guru Ji was busy battling with Hill Rajas. To honor Harjas' wishes,

a replica of Lahore (now known as Guru Ka Lahore) was made in Village Basantgarh about 10 miles from Anandpur and the marriage performed there. *Mata Jito Ji* did not bear any child for a very long time. *Bhai Ram Saran Ji* of Bajwara (now Hoshiarpur) had a daughter *Sundri* born on December 23, 1667. He wished to have her married to *Guru Gobind Rai*. Being already married, *Guru Ji* declined. *Mata Goojri (Gujri) Ji*, wanting to become a grandmother, coerced her son *Gobind Rai* to accept the proposal. The wedding was performed on April 4, 1684 at Anandpur Sahib. *Mata Sundri Ji* gave birth to *Baba Ajit Singh Ji* in year 1687 A.D. 23 Magh, samat 1743-Mahan Kosh page 36 (year 2004) at Paonta Sahib. Subsequently, *Mata Jito Ji* also bore three sons; *Jujhar Singh* in samat 1747- Mahan Kosh page 396, Corresponding year 1691 A.D, *Zorawar Singh* on 3 Maghar, 1753- Mahan Kosh- page 402 (year 2004) corresponding year 1696 and *Fateh Singh* on 7 Phagun, samat 1755- Mahan Kosh page 606, corresponding year 1699. *Mata Jito Ji* passed away on December 5, 1700; therefore, *Mata Sundri Ji* took over the responsibilities for raising and educating the four sons. *Mata Sundri Ji* lived almost forty years after *Guru Gobind Singh Ji*, and guided the community through challenging times. She breathed her last in year 1747 and was cremated at *Gurudwara Bala Sahib* compound in Delhi. The house in Delhi where she stayed for many years has been converted to *Mata Sundri Gurudwara*.

Honored with the epithet “Mother of Khalsa” *Mata Sahib Kaur* was spiritual-consort of *Guru Gobind Singh Ji*. She was daughter of *Bhai Rama Ji* and *bibi Jas Devi* of Rohtas, in Pothohar (now in Pakistan) born in year 1681. In her youth years she told her parents that she has assumed herself as wife of *Guru Gobind Singh Ji*, already married and father of four sons, when approached by her parents, declined the marriage, However on their persistence request accepted her as spiritual soul-mate on April 15, 1701. Every Sikh as the spiritual-son of *Guru Gobind Singh*, is her son also; thus the title “Mother of Khalsa” she was by the side of *Guru Ji* in his last moments in Nander in 1708. Thereafter *Bhai Mani Singh Ji* escorted her to Delhi, where she spent her remaining life with *Mata Sundri Ji*. She breathed her last in the year 1747 in Delhi.

At the invitation of *Raja Medni Prakash* in 1685, *Guru Gobind Rai* visited Sirmaur, a mountainous area on the banks of river Yamuna in modern day Himachal Pradesh and developed a new township where he stayed from 1685 to 1689. The town became known as Paonta Sahib. The mountains, valleys, with Yamuna flowing in the midst, provided a perfect ambience for literary pursuit.

Guru Gobind Rai himself was a versatile poet, fluent in several languages, including Persian and Sanskrit. Being a great patron of literature, it is believed that he forged a literary circle of fifty-two bards and thirty-six essayists. In his residential compound he built a courtyard where these scholars often deliberated and recited their compositions.

Bhai Nand Lal Ji of Gazni, Afghanistan was one of the 52 versatile writers in the court of Guru Gobind Rai. Emperor Aurangzeb impressed by *Bhai* Nanad Lal's Arabic poetry, wanted to convert him to Islam. To escape Aurangzeb's wrath, *Bhai* Nanad Lal moved to Paonta Sahib. Amongst his many books, *Gunjnama*, *Zindginama* and *Devan-e Goya* are worth a mention. His couplet, "*din dunia dar kamade aa pari rukhsaar maa, Har do alam keemte yak taar mooey yaar maa*" means: kingdom of two worlds is hidden in even a small part of his hair. Guru Gobind Rai's own poetry is in praise of God, human pursuit of divine, and disciplined living.

Some Hill Town Chiefs, royal army commanders, and jealous religious heads in towns surrounding Anandpur Sahib, begrudged the spiritual and temporal sovereignty Sikhs exercised. They would often lodge complaints in royal courts, against Sikhs, to stir up conflicts aimed at subjugating Sikhs. Sikhs never shied away from defending themselves or helpless people against aggression. Bhangani, Chamkaur, Anandpur, Nadaun, Muktsar, and Kurukshetra were amongst fourteen battles Guru Gobind Rai had to engage in. Despite being outnumbered, Guru Gobind Singh won every battle. Victorious Guru Ji did not grab spoils of war to expand his territorial boundaries as per the traditions of the time. At the same time, he was also not oblivious of the importance of political power for uplifting the society, but he would not compromise on righteousness, ever. "... at the time of battle of Bhangani, he had enunciated the doctrine that 'Without political power, *dharma* (the rule of law) cannot be established; and without *dharma* the society was an admixture of scum" or "Religion without political freedoms and dignity was an abject slavery, and politics without religious morality was an organized barbarism." Political power, as such, was a mean to attain their objective viz., "to uphold the saints and destroy the wicked"- Page 79, *The Sikhs in History* by Dr Sangat Singh.

One battle was fought to rescue Brahmin Devki Das' wife who was abducted by Commander Jabar Khan. Sahibzada Ajit Singh led his force to free the abducted lady, and arrest Jabar Khan. The bigger battle at Bhangani

resulted from jealousy of hill chief Bhim Chand. Raja Ram Rai of Assam and his queen Swarn Mati greatly revered Guru Teg Bahadur Ji. After Guru Teg Bahadur Ji's martyrdom, Raja Ram Rai visited Guru Gobind Rai and brought many gifts including five horses and an elephant named Parshadi. Raja Bhim Chand of Bilaspur asked for Parshadi elephant from Guru Ji at his son's wedding. Guru Gobind Rai Ji refused since all gifts were considered belongings of Sikh nation, not personal. Angry Bhim Chand in collusion with a few other chieftains sent a message to Guru Ji to accept Bhim Chand's subordination. Guru Gobind Rai Ji claiming sovereignty over Sikh owned land and properties, declined. Anticipating a battle, Guru Ji gathered arms, ammunition, and army at a place called Bhangani, 10 miles from Paonta Sahib. Many hill Rajas, Mughals and high caste Hindus joined hands against Sikhs. Bhikhan Khan, Najabat Khan and Hayat Khan with their forces had defected from Guru's side to join the Hill Rajas. *Pir* Budhu Shah, accompanied by his 700 disciples, joined Guru Ji in friendship. In the gruesome battle fought at the end of August 1688, mighty joint forces of Hill Rajas and Mughals experienced a crushing defeat. Many Sikhs and Budhu Shah's soldiers also suffered casualties. Guru Hargobind Ji's daughter *Bibi Viro* Ji's son attained martyrdom in the battle.

Pir Badrudin alias Budhu Shah was a noble soul who became a close associate of Guru Gobind Rai. Born on January 13, 1647, he was a resident of Village Saddhaura in Ambala city. Budhu Shah's cooperation with Guru Gobind Rai Ji strengthened the training and equipment of the Sikh forces. Guru Ji had employed 500 *Pathans* soldiers, but they deserted Guru Ji prior to the battle of Bhangani. When Budhu Shah learnt this, he, his family, and many followers fought alongside Guru Ji. Pleased with Budhu Shah's loyalty, Guru Ji asked for *Pir* Ji's wish. *Pir* Budhu Shah had heard *Bhai* Nand Lal Ji's couplet about Guru Ji, "*Din dunia dar kamande aan pari rukhsaar ma, Har do alam keemtey yak tar muuye yaar ma.*" As a believer, he requested Guru Ji's one broken hair, comb and turban, and Guru Ji obliged. At governor Wazir Khan's prompting, Usman Khan Daroga of Sadhaura killed *Pir* Budhu Shah on March 21, 1704. In retribution for the murder of *Pir* Budhu Shah, Banda Singh Bahadur killed Usman Khan in 1709. A writer of esteem Mulk Raj Anand, pays tribute to Guru Gobind Singh Ji, "And the resilience of the last Guru, Guru Gobind Singh, who heroically fought against the armies of Mughal Durbar, is that of a hero who fought his way through from north to middle India, with courage which set undying example for his followers" (Sikh heritage in paintings-1995 Punjab & Sind Bank).

Guru observed that on the eve of Holi, people while playing with color do not hesitate to indulge throwing mud and dirt on others, which means wastage of human energy on meaningless activities. To improve on the health for channelizing the Khalsa's energy and crystallize the style and energy of Khalsa, as also, to train the Khalsa for battlefield, if and when the circumstances warrant, Guru Ji asked his followers to use gulal and kesar colors only on festival. He also introduced the martial art display on the day of festival and to encourage people to take part in large number he would honor the brave and winners. He thus renamed the festival as Hola Mohallah.

Why do some people try to differentiate between Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh? Occasionally it is ignorance, but often purposeful malice? Malice because those people benefit from the social stratification and religious rifts, they wish to maintain. The opponents of equality should understand that their lives will not be any lesser if others are uplifted.

Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh, ten embodiments of one soul lived and sacrificed their all, for more than two centuries of dedicated service to unite humanity. They sought to reform society by spreading a message of unity, love, service, and courage. They motivated masses to discard pointless rituals in favor of spiritual wellbeing through living life with purity of deeds, dignity, and peace. Sikh Gurus travelled to faraway places, planned and developed new towns, safeguarded the repressed and stifled citizens, and showcased a life of honor and humbleness.

Guru Nanak makes his disciples “ਨਿਰਭਉ” “*Nirbhau*” or fearless, not only of day to day hurdles of life but also fearless of death, when he says; ਜਉ ਤਉ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਖੇਲਣ ਕਾ ਚਾਉ ॥ ਸਿਰੁ ਧਰਿ ਤਲੀ ਗਲੀ ਮੇਰੀ ਆਉ ॥ He frees them from animosity by making them “ਨਿਰਧਰੁ” “*Nirvair*.” Guru Nanak uplifts musician Mardana, from the bottom strata of the social system, to his equal by calling him *Bhai* Mardana, or my brother. Guru Angad promotes education and healthfulness. Guru Amar Das equates peasants to Emperor Akbar by serving them *langar* in Sikh community kitchen. Guru Arjan compiles the pious poetry of thirty-five great souls in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* and abolishes all distinctions. Sikhs bow to SGGS with identical reverence towards the Gurus, *Dalit* Ravidas Ji, *Muslim* Sheikh Farid Ji, or *Brahmin* Ramanand Ji. Their family status, religious preference, or line of work, all symbols of social status dissolved to focus on the saintly message. In exemplary humility, all Gurus served the tired, the sick,



Figure 19: Guru Gobind Rai taking Amrit from Panj Pyarey
ਗੁਰੂ ਚੇਲਾ ਹੈ ਆਪੇ (ਅੰਗ ੭੯੭, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁ ਗ੍ਰੰ ਸਾ)

the impoverished and the dejected, to heal and uplift them. Guru Arjan submits his body to torture and termination for freedom of religion. His grandson Guru Teg Bahadur accepts beheading to protect someone else's freedom of religion. Guru Arjan's great grandson Gobind Singh sacrifices his parents, his four sons and fights all his life for liberty and justice for all.

Khalsa was in the making since 1469 birth of Guru Nanak. By 1699, two hundred thirty years later, the core values of a progressive society, had been woven into Sikh minds and hearts. Vaisakhi of 1699 was one of the defining moments, of which it can truly be said "Here history was made" or "Here mankind's passage through the ages took a new direction or turned towards a new horizon." in the fashion of what Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre, authors of "Freedom at Midnight" said about India's independence from the British on August 15, 1947. Sikh differentness was formalized into a distinct identity with a distinct code of conduct. Guru Gobind Rai Ji in his poetic autobiography titled, "*Bachitra Natak*" recalls the names of all Sikh Gurus as embodiment of light of Guru Nanak. He also elaborates his union with the Divine after intense meditation. He also discusses his Divine mission, when the Almighty told him to take birth in the world and set people on the righteous path. Guru Gobind Singh accepted the charge humbly. Then he tells the story

of his birth in Patna, his father's martyrdom, and his armed battles with hill Rajas. Re-affirming his faith in God's cosmic play and that God protects his righteous beings from all harm and grants them peace here and hereafter. He confirmed the teachings of the preceding Gurus' centering on the oneness of GOD and infiniteness of his creation. He pointedly tells his followers that he was, but, a slave of the Creator. Anyone calling him GOD shall be hell-bound.

It is a matter of concern for all Sikh Community that hand written manuscripts of Guru Gobind's writings are not available. It therefore, raises certain doubts about authenticity of the compositions, which need thorough examination.

To actualize his Divine mission, Guru Gobind Rai asked his followers from all across India to congregate at a place today known as Kes-Garh Sahib in Anandpur, on *Vaisakhi*, March 29, 1699. Addressing the Sikhs, Guru asked for a volunteer willing to offer his head. *Bhai* Daya Ram was the first one to rise. Guru took him inside a small tent and came out with a blood dripping sword. Guru repeated his call four more times. *Bhai* Dharam Das, *Bhai* Himmat Chand, *Bhai* Mohkam Chand and *Bhai* Sahib Chand volunteered one after the other. After a while, Guru came out of the tent with all five dressed in a uniform symbolized by five "K"s, and introduced them to the congregation as Panj Pyarey" or five beloved ones. Neither the Guru nor the five beloved ones disclosed what happened inside the tent. Guru then dispensed "*Pahul*" or nectar he had prepared with water and sugar candy "*patasa*" stirring it with a "*Khanda*" or double-edged sword while reciting selected spiritual verses. The Panj Pyarey were the first members of the Khalsa fraternity, a community of equals, liberated from their stratified castes, creed, and rituals. Their first names would be supplemented with the appellation "*Singh*" for men and "*Kaur*" for women (it is necessary to understand that when the Guru asked for the heads, he meant a complete surrender. Guru wished to create Khalsa without ego). He established corporate leadership in the five beloved ones. Sikh greeting from that day forward would be in humility, "*Waheguru Ji ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji ki Fateh*" meaning "Khalsa belongs to Waheguru and his triumphs also belong to Waheguru." Ordained to live a pious life with the courage of a man-at-arms, Khalsa would be a force of Saint-Soldiers. Then Guru Gobind Rai requested induction into Khalsa brotherhood and asked for "*Pahul*" from the Panj Pyarey and thereafter, Guru Gobind Rai became Guru Gobind Singh. Thousands more including women volunteered that day to join the Khalsa brigade. The

newswriter, Ghulam Mohiyudin reporting to the Emperor about the Guru's address and the day's proceedings, significantly wrote "He has abolished caste and custom, old rituals, beliefs and superstitions of the Hindus and bonded them in to one brotherhood. No one will be superior or inferior to other. Men of all castes have been made to eat out of the same bowl. Though orthodox men have opposed him, about twenty thousand men and women have taken baptism of steel at his hand on the first day. The Guru has also told the gathering "I'll call myself Gobind Singh only if I can make the meek sparrows pounce upon the hawks and tear them" (The Sikhs in History). Even the English author J D Cunningham in his book –History of the Sikhs, page 240 gives credit on this account when he writes "'Khalsa' was a word which could be used to unite the high and low."

Becoming a Khalsa is a voluntary act, never through proselytization. Each Sikh is sovereign and beholding only to the one supreme God, guided by the teachings of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* and code of conduct prescribed in Sikh Rehat Maryada. The names of the first five Singhs equate to values Sikhs are urged to acquire. Divine presence in the creation of this distinct kinship is reflected in their names and the order in which they offered themselves to the Guru.

Panj Pyarey

Bhai DAYA SINGH was the first one to heed the Guru's call. *Daya* means compassion; thus being kind to all is the first quality for a Sikh. He was born on August 26, 1669 to *Bhai* Sudha Ji and *Bibi* Dyali Ji's at Lahore -now in Pakistan- Mahan Kosh). *Bhai* Daya Singh carried the victory letter or *Zafarnama* written by Guru Gobind Singh Ji from Dina Kangarh to Emperor Aurangzeb in the year 1763 (Mahan Kosh). He accompanied Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji to Nanded, where he breathed his last while his family stayed with *Mata* Sundri Ji in Delhi.

Bhai DHARAM SINGH was next to offer himself. *Dharam* or righteous acts materialize from *resolute* individuals only. *Bhai* Dharam Das son of *Bhai* Sant Ram Ji and *Bibi* Savoo Ji was born at Hastinapur in U.P. on November, 1668. Renamed *Bhai* Dharam Singh Ji, he settled down in Anandpur Sahib and learnt martial arts from Guru Gobind Singh Ji. He also accompanied *Bhai* Daya Singh while carrying *Zafarnama* for delivery to Aurangzeb. He remained in the company of Guru Gobind Singh Ji until he breathed his last in the year 1708 at Nanded.

Bhai HIMMAT SINGH was the third Sikh to stand up courageously and surrender himself to the will of the Guru. Son of *Bhai* Chhaju Ram who interpreted Gita at Panjokhrha village during Hari Krishan Ji's visit, *Bhai* Chhaju Ram was sent as a preacher to Jagannath Puri, Orissa (The Sikhs in History-page 52), where Himmat Chand was born. A cook by trade, Himmat Chand became a saint-soldier on Vaisakhi 1699 and stayed in Anandpur Sahib for the rest of his life. Fighting bravely alongside Sahibzada Jujhar Singh in the 1705 battle of Chamkaur, he attained martyrdom.

Bhai MOKHAM SINGH, imbued with moral fiber and lion-hearted, rose to the occasion next. A resident of Dwaraka in Gujrat, Mohkam Chand was born on June 6, 1663 and worked as a washerman. His father's name was *Bhai* Tirath Chand and mother *Bibi* Devi Bai. After taking *Pahul* from Guru Gobind Singh

Ji, he also settled down in Anandpur Sahib and joined the Khalsa forces. Fighting the battle of Chamkaur in the band of Sahibzada Ajit Singh, against the Mughal army of hundreds of thousands, he laid down his life for the principles, a real brave-heart.

Bhai SAHIB SINGH honorably took his place in history as the fifth face of fortitude. *Bhai* Sahib Chand was born to *Bibi* Sona Bai, wife of *Bhai* Chaman Rai of Bidar on June 17, 1762. Barber by trade, before becoming a disciple of Guru Gobind Rai, he joined the keshadhari Khalsa soldiers. Trained in martial arts by Guru Gobind Singh Ji, he too fought with exceptional bravery against the massive Mughal Force at Chamkaur, accompanying Sahibzada Jujhar Singh and attained martyrdom in 1705.

Taking "*Pahul*" alone does not make a Khalsa. Guru Gobind Singh Ji mandated certain discipline for his Sikhs. Physical appearance with unshorn hair (*Kesh*) and four additional "K"s must be reinforced by the content of their character; specifically prohibited to indulge in intoxicating substances, and committed to absolute fidelity to one's spouse. Khalsa must be soaked in righteousness, equality, self-reliance, self-respect, compassion, service, contentment, patience, courage, and eternal optimism or *Chardi Kala*, and freed from superstition. Gokul Chand Narang, historian gives his tributes to Guru Gobind Singh, when he opines that "Hindus had religion without national feelings, Guru Gobind Singh made the nationalism religion of Khalsa."

The tenacity of Sikh discipline has often been described in the context of courage of a soldier. Sikhs conduct themselves with the same tenacity in the service of mankind. The tradition of serving the needy was started by Guru Nanak. In conformance to *Kaanrha* Moh 5, *Aung* (page) 1299 SGGS verse:

ਨਾ ਕੋ ਬੈਰੀ ਨਹੀ ਬਿਗਾਨਾ ਸਗਲ ਸੰਗਿ ਹਮ ਕਉ ਬਨਿ ਆਈ ॥

"Naa ko bairee nehee begana Sagal sung hum ko ban aaei"

Translation: I see no enemy and no strangers, All are friends to me.

Bhai Kanahaiya Ji, a contemporary of Guru Gobind Singh Ji represents the epitome of this volunteerism. *Bhai* KANAHAIYA JI was a blessed man, born in the village Sodhara near Wazirabad in Sialkot district (Now in Pakistan) in a rich daman Khatri family. From his childhood days, instead of taking interest in worldly matters, he preferred company of godly souls. This brought him in contact with Guru Teg Bahadar Ji and under his influence he established a sanctuary or *Dharamsala* in village Kahva in Attak to serve the travelers and for religious gatherings.



Figure 20: Bhai Kanhaiya Ji serving water to wounded Mughal Soldier
Drawing by: Raj Singh Tattal (the Pen-Tacular-Artist)

Bhai Kanhaiya Ji moved to Anandpur Sahib and during armed conflict with hill Rajas and Mughals he was assigned the responsibility of serving water to injured soldiers of the Sikh Army. In the battlefield, he would serve water to all injured soldiers, Sikhs, Mughals, or others. A complaint reached Guru Ji about *Bhai Kanhaiya* giving water to enemy soldiers.

Guru Ji in his open court asked *Bhai Kanhaiya Ji* about his behavior. My Lord, in doing my job, I simply see your presence in every soldier per your teachings, “*Manas Ki Jaat Sabhe Ikke Pehchanbo*” (human race as one); thus, “I offer water to every soldier.” Guru Ji, pleased with his reply, said, “*Bhai Kanhaiya Ji* has understood the meaning of Gurbani in the true sense.” Guru Ji gave him a box of ointment to apply to the soldiers’ injuries. It is gratifying to witness the noble spirit of service in *Bhai Kanhaiya*, in the modern day Red Cross, and numerous Sikh charities. Victims of flooding, earthquakes and many other recent disasters all over the globe have experienced the compassionate service of Sikh diaspora in bringing, food, water and essentials to the suffering. *Khalsa Aid*, a UK charity established in 1999, is a shining example of Nishkam (selfless) service and universal love providing relief assistance to victims of disasters, wars, and other tragic events around the world.

Sahibzadas AJIT SINGH and JUJHAR SINGH, both educated under the

vigilant eyes of their father Guru Gobind Singh Ji, learned all about Sikh code of conduct, horsemanship, swordsmanship, and other militaristic skills arts. Baba Ajit Singh Ji, (b 13 Magh Samat 1743- Mahan Kosh (year 1687 A.D. at Paonta) aged twelve and Sahibzada Jujhar Singh (b Samat 1747-Mahan Kosh, year 1691 A.D.) aged 8 years at the time of creation of Khalsa in 1699 were baptized with thousands more. Sahibzada Ajit Singh Ji had shown his mettle many times in battlefields. Ranghars and goojars would often attack to loot unarmed Sikh pilgrims from far away. Sahibzada Ajit Singh and his men punished the looters, and recovered pilgrims' belongings. In December 1705, Mughal forces in cahoots with Hill Rajas wanting to capture Guru Gobind Singh dead or alive, attacked Anandpur fort. They laid siege around the fort for almost seven months (May 03 1705 to Dec 04 1705) cut off all supply lines for Guru Ji and his Sikhs inside the fort. Arrows fired from inside the fort killed thousands of enemy soldiers, but Mughals could not break into the fort. Mughals, to trick the Sikhs into leaving the fort, swore on Koran and Hill Rajas swore on Cow, promising a safe passage for Guru Ji and Sikh forces. Guru Gobind Singh Ji formed two groups one consisting of *Mata Goojri Ji*, *Mata Sunder Kaur Ji*, *Mata Sahib Kaur Ji*, Sahibzadas Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh, along with some women. The second group comprised Guru Ji himself, *Baba Ajit Singh Ji*, *Baba Jujhar Singh Ji*, the five beloved ones, and some Sikh warriors. When Guru Ji and his forces began moving out, the Mughal forces broke their pledge and attacked them.

At that time Sirsa rivulet was cresting in turbulent flooding. In crossing the flood waters while being chased by a massive Mughal army, a large number of Sikhs lost their lives. Precious and irreplaceable manuscripts of poetry in praise of Akaalpurkh and Sikh History hand written by Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji were swept away. Some Sikhs able to cross over lost contacts with the group. Guru Gobind Singh Ji, Ajit Singh, Jujhar Singh, and some Sikh soldiers were in one group. Guru Gobind Singh Ji entailed *Bhai* Udai Singh with fifty Singhs to check chasing forces of hill Rajas. *Bhai* Bachitter Singh with about 100 Singhs was sent towards Ropar to hold the advancing Mughal forces. Guru arrived at the house of Nihang Khan, whose son Alam Khan escorted Guru Ji to Chamkaur.

At Chamkaur Guru Gobind Singh with his remaining 40 Sikhs fortified their positions in a crumbling mud fortress belonging to Chaudhary Budhi Chand. Enemy forces of Nawab Malerkotla encircled the ruinous fortress.

Unique battle of unequals was fought on December 05, 1705. Ranghars and Goojars also joined the enemy forces. Guru Ji himself took position at a higher place and caused heavy damage to enemy forces with his arrows. He also decided to send his men in small groups during the day to fight the enemy.



Figure 21: Sahibzada Ajit Singh Ji and Sahibzada Jujhar Singh Ji (learning martial arts)
Drawing by: Raj Singh Tattal (the Pen-Tacular-Artist)

Seventeen years old Ajit Singh asked his Guru father to let him go out into the battlefield. Only a Divine force could allow a father to send his youthful son to fight his last battle and watch him gallantly die, without shedding a tear. With Guru's blessings, Ajit Singh, *Bhai* Mohkam Singh and a small team of eight Sikhs shouted a thundering salutation, "Waheguru ji ka Khalsa, Waheguru ji ki Fateh" and "Bole So Nihal, Sat Sri Akal" and charged the enemy. Each of them killed many enemy soldiers until overpowered by the hordes to martyrdom. Guru Gobind Singh Ji thanked *Akaalpurkh* to have given his son the courage to lay down his life for righteousness.

Principal Satbir Singh writes the feelings of Jujhar Singh, at the fall of Ajit Singh, "O brother! Wait a while, I am also coming." Jujhar Singh enthusiastic sought permission from his father to follow the footsteps of his

brother. Father Guru kissed his son's forehead and handed him a sword and shield to proceed to the battlefield. *Bhai Himmat Singh Ji, Bhai Sahib Singh Ji* and three more Singhs, accompanied Jujhar Singh. Fifteen years old Jujhar Singh also thundered the salutation “Waheguru ji ka Khalsa, Waheguru ji ki Fateh” and “Bole So Nihal, Sat Sri Akal” and charged the enemy territory, killing many soldiers before attaining martyrdom. Guru Gobind Singh Ji watching the *resolute* bravery of his sons and his Sikh soldiers, thanked God conforming to SGGS verse on page 1375,

ਕਬੀਰ ਮੇਰਾ ਮੁਝ ਮਹਿ ਕਿਛੁ ਨਹੀ ਜੋ ਕਿਛੁ ਹੈ ਸੋ ਤੇਰਾ ॥

ਤੇਰਾ ਤੁਝ ਕਉ ਸਉਪਤੇ ਕਿਆ ਲਾਗੈ ਮੇਰਾ ॥੨੦੩॥

**"Kabir, mera mujh mein kichh nahin, jo kichh hai so tera,
Tera tujh ko saumpte kya lage mera"**

Translation: As a trustee, I return to you what you placed in my custodianship.

Resolute Sikhs like these sacrificed their all in fighting for principles, win or not was immaterial. Their legacy and spirit has allowed Sikhs to survive three genocides and continue to thrive despite relentless efforts by those in power to suppress us or subordinate us.

From inside the feeble fortress of Chamkaur, forty Sikh soldiers kept thousands of Malerkotla forces at Bay. At dusk, only six Sikhs besides Guru Gobind Singh were left. Sahibzadas Ajit Singh and Jujhar Singh and thirty four Sikh soldiers had earned martyrdom. At that point five Sikhs, as *Panj Pyarey*, adopted a resolution as Panth Khalsa, for the first time in Sikh History and dictated to Guru Gobind Singh Ji to leave for a safer place, in the wider interest of the Panth. Guru Ji accepting the order from the five loved ones, left Chamkaur and spent a night in Machhiwarha. Ghani Khan and Nabi Khan two brothers, also belonging to the Malerkotla troops, played a key role in the escape of Guru and Sikhs. Before leaving the fortress Guru Ji announced loudly that the “Guru of Sikhs is escaping. Catch him if you can.” Nabi Khan and Ghani Khan accompanied Guru Ji to Machhiwarha. After making arrangements for his stay at night at the residence of Gulaba (Gulab Singh), a former emissary (*Masand*), they proceeded to join their forces. Gulab Singh arranged Guru Ji to reach the house of *Kazi Mir Mohammad*, believed to be Guru Ji's childhood Persian teacher.

In *Machhiwara*, on advice of *Kazi Mir Mohammad*, a group of five took over. Guru replaced the *Sipah Salar's* blue dress with loose blue robes and

advised his four Sikhs to move on to Malwa in a separate group. On December 11, 1705, Guru Ji dressed as a *Uch Da Pir* (Uch Sharif in Multan), travelled in the traditional palanquin carried by five Muslim devotees-Qazi (*Haji*) Chirag Ali Shah Ajneria, who had his murids (Disciples) in Malwa, Inayat Ali Noorpuria, *Kazi* Peer Mohmd Salowala, Subeg Shah Halwaria, and Hassan Ali Mannu Majria. Thus Guru Ji was carried safely to Malwa. On December 16, 1705 Guru Ji arrived at Rai Kalha's place at Rai Kot. At this place Guru Ji learnt the martyrdom of his younger sons and revered mother. Rai Kalha sent his special messenger to Sirhind, who rushed back with the first hand information from *Diwan* Todar Mal Kapoor, who had made arrangements of their cremation. Guru Gobind Singh thanked *Akaalpurkh* that his younger sons also faced the ordeal bravely.

After thanking and blessing Rai Kalha, Guru Gobind Singh Ji proceeded to Takhtupura, where he relieved *Haji* Chirag Ali and others and cast off his dress at Dhilmi. From here Guru Gobind Singh Ji decided to move to Sabo ki Talwandi, now Damdama Sahib near Bhatinda. Guru Gobind Singh Ji was at Rohi when a group of 40 Sikhs from Majha accompanied by *Mata* Bhago Ji, visited him to convey their condolences on the martyrdom of guru's four sons. They also offered mediation to arrange a compromise with the Mughals. Guru Sahib reminded them of Mughal atrocities since Guru Arjan's martyrdom to the siege of Anandpur. Bhag Singh Jhabalia at that point, expressed his inability to continue with the Sikh faith and wrote a disclaimer or *bedawa* that was signed by only four of his companions and returned to their village.

Chali Muktay

After leaving Anandpur fort, Guru Gobind Singh Ji reached Rohi via Machhiwara, when a group of 40 Sikhs from Majha accompanied by *Mata* Bhago Ji, visited him to convey their condolences on the martyrdom of guru's four sons. They also offered mediation to arrange a compromise with the Mughals. Guru Sahib reminded them of Mughal atrocities since Guru Arjan's martyrdom to the siege of Anandpur. Bhag Singh Jhabalia expressed his inability to continue with the Sikh faith and wrote a disclaimer or *bedawa*, which was signed by four of his companions and returned to their village. In the meantime *Nawab* of Sirhind with his huge army attacked the handful of Sikh soldiers. *Mata* Bhag Kaur dared the forty Sikhs to join her in fighting along with the Guru Ji. The sleeping lions awoken by the courageous lady returned

to face the Mughal army at *Khidrane di Dhaab* (Pool) on December 29, 1705. After a bloody battle, due to settling of cold and mist, the Mughals retreated, but Sikhs also suffered heavy losses. *Mata Bhag Kaur* was seriously injured. While most of the Singhs had attained martyrdom in the battlefield, Rai Singh, Sunder Singh and Mahan Singh were gravely injured and taking their last breaths. Guru Ji asked them if they had any wish. They requested Guru Ji to tear off the disclaimer (*Bedawa*) they wrote earlier, and pardon them. Guru Ji tore up the paper and blessed all the **forty as *Muktas* or emancipated ones** at Muktsar. To honor them, Ishar Sar was renamed as *Muktsar*. Today, a grand *Gurudwara* is constructed here. The forty immortals are remembered in the daily *Ardaas* by Sikhs all over the world as *Chali Mukta*y

Pandit Kirpa (Ram) Singh

Pandit Kirpa Ram Dutt was son of Pandit Aru Ram, a Saraswati Brahmin of Town Matan, about 65 km east of Srinagar. During Guru Hari Rai's visit to Kashmir in 1660 Pandit Aru Ram visited the Guru to seek his blessing.

Iftikhar Khan was posted as Governor of Kashmir (1671-75). On instructions from Aurangzeb, he resorted to forced conversion of Hindus to Islam. Disappointed with lack of help from other sources, in May 1675 Pandit Kirpa Ram led a delegation of Kashmiri Brahmins to meet Guru Teg Bahadur Ji at Anadpur Sahib to seek protection against atrocities of State persecution.

Pandit Kirpa Ram Dutt was very moved by Guru Teg Bahadur Ji's sacrifice for Kashmiri *Pandits'* cause. At the time of initiation of Khalsa by Guru Gobind Singh Ji at Anandpur Sahib, he took baptism and received a new name, Kirpa Singh. Thereafter, he also joined the brigade of Sikh Warriors. He was among the last 40 Sikh Warriors to enter the Chamkaur Fort alongwith Guru Gobind Singh and Sahibzada Ajit Singh and Sahibzada Jujhar Singh. Kirpa Singh was one of the valiant Singhs who fought alongside with the Sahibzadas and attained martyrdom at Chamkaur.

Guru Ji's Move to Talwandi

From here Guru Gobind Singh Ji moved to Sabo ki Talwandi where Guru Ji had scribed to produce numerous replicas of Adi Granth. Guru Ji remained there for about nine months. Due to Guru Gobind Singh Ji presence, Baisakhi of 1706 was a grand affair. 125,000 Sikhs from Kabul, Pothohar, Majaha and Malwa gathered there were baptized. Sarup Singh (1790) mentions Guru

Gobind Singh's holding an Akhand Path there. As per Sarup Singh n87 pp177, the story that Guru Gobind Singh orally dictated the whole of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* to *Bhai Mani Singh* at Sabo ki Talwandi is fictitious and born out of ignorance.

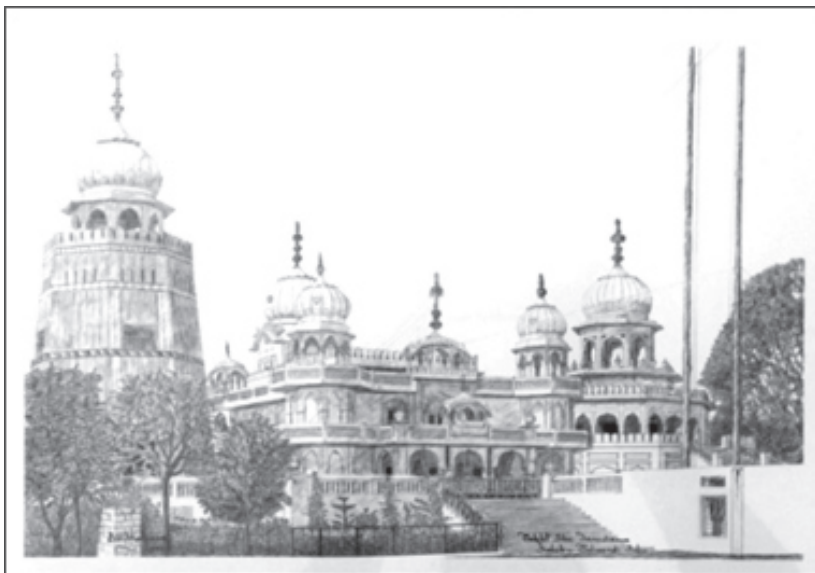


Figure 22: Takht Damdama Sahib, Sabo Ki Talwandi
Courtesy Harjit and Manjeet S. Jolly

Above view is also supported by Dr Sangat Singh, when he says it is also clear that “Granth Sahib was complete with the insertion of Guru Teg Bahadur’s compositions, as directed by him (Guru Teg Bahadur himself), and the new volume was ready 17 days after Guru Teg Bahadur’s martyrdom, with last slokas of Guru Tegh Bahadur being provided by Guru Gobind Singh himself” (The Sikhs in History).

Never, the Sikh struggle was with another faith. Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs of secular thought enjoyed cozy friendship, and lived harmoniously, and helped each other. Sikh Gurus challenged the tyrant rulers of their time to relent on their oppressive treatment of people because of their variant religious preference. Persuasion through dialogue and discourse was ignored, and intolerance rose to new heights. When persecution through incarcerations, dehumanizing treatment, death by torture and beheadings continued unabated for more than a century, Sikhs armed themselves to fight the unequal treatment.

The persecution of Hindus and Sikhs during the Mughals defies description. Aurangzeb filled their religious water tanks with dirt. He outlawed Hindu practice of pilgrimage to their religious places and celebration of their special days. In 1669 he ordered demolition of Hindu temples and religious educational buildings. He fired most of his Hindu senior employees. In 1679 He instituted Jeziya, a special tax on non-Muslims. Producing works of arts, literature, paintings, and sculptures was prohibited. Possessing instruments of martial arts and addressing congregation was a taboo. Sikhs' defiance of these dehumanizing practices was the cause of all wars.

In early 1706, while camping at Village Dina, Guru Gobind Singh Ji wrote a poetic letter containing 111 couplets in Persian, titled *Zafarnama*, or letter of victory, to Aurangzeb. Guru Ji indicts Aurangzeb for his crimes against humanity. You are not a man of GOD, as you claim; instead you have betrayed Godly principles and you shall be punished in GOD's court. Differences of opinions could have been resolved through talks, but you are not a trustworthy individual. Swearing on holy Quran, you do not abide by your word. I was forced to take up arms against you,

**"Chu kaar az hama heelte dargasht,
Hallasi burdaan baa shamsheer dast."**

Zafarnama

Translation: when all other means to settle issues amicably fail, it is justifiable to take up a sword to self respect.

Bhai Daya Singh and *Bhai* Dharam Singh brought the *Zafarnama* to Aurangzeb, in person, which was read over to him (Aurangzeb) by his Munshi. After the letter was read over to him, Aurangzeb assured a safe return journey of the two messengers. In his last letters to his sons, Aurangzeb appears to have felt guilty about his deeds and expressed his desire to see Guru Gobind Singh Ji, but he died before a meeting could be arranged with Guru Sahib.

After Aurangzeb's death, a war of succession broke out amongst his sons. Sikhs had once again increased in numbers and gained power. Bahadur Shah requested and received, Guru Gobind Singh Ji's help in gaining the throne. Guru Gobind Singh camped at the present site of *Gurudwara Moti Bagh* (previously known as *Mochhi Bagh*). To announce his arrival, Guru Gobind Singh shot two arrows from this sitewhich hit the *Diwan* of Prince Muazzamat Red Fort. Upon gaining kingdom, Bahadur Shah invited Guru Ji to Delhi and Agra. Bahadur Shah, recognizing the wisdom and power of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, asked him to be the

Commander-in-Chief of his army in his battle against Marhathas. Guru Gobind Singh was frank enough to tell him that the purpose of his birth and life was to uphold righteousness, even at the cost of sacrificing his family. Guru Jialso mentioned he helped Bahadur Shah become King because he believed that Bahadur Shah had a right to the throne. However, now that Bahadur Shah's aims were different, Guru Ji could not be his ally to fight against his own people. Therefore, Guru Ji flatly declined King's offer as his purpose was not to gain elevation of status or expand his territory.

Guru Ji parted his ways with Bahadur Shah and moving through Sabo ki Talwandi, reached Nanded, Maharashtra, where he met Madho Das Vairagi, who changed his ways after getting baptized by Guru Gobind Singh (personally, *Bhai* Daya Singh and three other Sikhs on September 03, 1708 to become the *Jathedar* (Sikh General) Banda Singh Bahadur on October, 05, 1708. According to *Bhat* Vehi Multani Sindhi, Guru Gobind Singh attached to him five leading Sikhs, Bawa Binod Singh and Bawa Kahan Singh, *Bhai* Bhagwant Singh, *Bhai* Koer Singh and *Bhai* Baz Singh to provide the corporate leadership to the Khalsa.

Same evening (October 05, 1708) while Guru Ji was sleeping in his tent, Wazir Khan's hired assassin, Jamshed Khan, stabbed Guru Ji, while Beshal Beg kept the vigil outside. Although Wazir Khan had a long running animosity towards Sikhs and Gurus, Bahadur Shah also seems to have conspired in the attack (for refusal of Guru Ji to accept his offer of becoming commander-in chief to fight Marhattas). The attacker was killed by Guru Ji himself in one stroke while the other was killed by the people who ran to hear the loud voices. Entries dated October 28, 1708 in Akhbarat Darbar-i-Mualla narrate a robe of honor presented to Jamshed Khan (killer). Though Guru Gobind Singh Ji's family was also honored with a robe, honoring the assassin suggests Bahadur Shah's support in hatching the conspiracy.

On October 6, 1708, Guru Gobind Singh Ji transferred the eternal Guruship to Guru Granth Sahib. In his final moments, *Mata* Sahib Kaur, *Bhai* Daya Singh Ji, *Bhai* Dharam Singh Ji, *Bhai* Nand Lal Singh Ji, *Bhat* Narbad Singh Ji and Dhadi Nath Mal were present by the side of Guru Gobind Singh Ji. The time for human Gurus had ended and Sikhs shall be guided by the teachings of SGGS in the future. He transferred the corporate leadership to Khalsa represented by Panj Pyaray. Guru Ji departed for his divine abode during the night of October 7/8, 1708.

Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh, for two hundred & thirty-nine years, challenged the society gripped by caste segregation, pointless rituals, religious bigotry, tyranny, and devoid of justice, human rights, and courage to fight the oppressive forces. Through discourse, divine poetry, exemplary deeds, cajoling, sacrifice, and service, they enlightened, encouraged, and emboldened the poor, the exploited, the subservient, the subdued, and the subjugated yearning for freedom with a message of love;

ਸਾਚੁ ਕਹੋਂ ਸੁਨ ਲੇਹੁ ਸਭੈ ਜਿਨ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਕੀਓ ਤਿਨ ਹੀ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਪਾਇਓ ॥

"Sach kahon sun leho sabai jin prem kio tin hee prabh paio"

Translation: Listen all, the truth; Love is the only pathway to the Divine union.

Creation of the Khalsa was the labor of love. A universal brotherhood of mankind that excludes no one; a brotherhood that neither fears nor scares anyone. Divisions of hate replaced with join in joy, if you so desire. Desecrate scriptures, demolish places of worship and proselytize, we do not. Instead, we build their temples and mosques so they may worship in freedom. The Sikh Gurus amalgamated the stratified traits of Indian society in the unified Khalsa spirit; to be educated like a Brahmin, to be physically fit and courageous like a Khatri, to be entrepreneurs like a Vaish, and to be ever ready to serve like a Shudra.

Sahibzada Zorawar Singh and Sahibzada Fateh Singh and Mata Goojri Ji

While crossing the swollen river Sirsa on December 05, 1705, Guru Gobind Singh Ji's family leaving Anandpur was accidentally separated. *Mata Goojri Ji*, holding on to her seven and nine year old grandsons, lost her way. Their once domestic help, Kumma Mashki (waterman) spotted the three and took them home for the night. Ganga Ram Kaul (Gangu), one time cook in Guru's home learned about Guru Ji's family from Kumma. Ganga Ram Kaul took the three of them to his village Saheri. Seeing a substantial amount of cash and jewelry on *Mata Goojri*, Gangu became greedy. He stole their wealth, and then in anticipation of a cash reward from the Mughal officials, he reported the presence of *Mata Goojri Ji*, *Sahibzada Zorawar Singh* (b 1696), and *Sahibzada Fateh Singh* (b 1699) to the Khan of Morinda. The grandmother and two children were taken in custody and brought to the District official of Sirhind, an antagonist of the Guru's family.



Figure 23: Mata Goojri Ji preparing Sahibzadas for the supreme sacrifice Drawing by: Raj Singh Tattal (the Pen-Tacular-Artist)

The aged mother and young sons of Guru Gobind Singh were made to spend the night in a minaret tower, without any warm clothing, under bitter cold conditions. The wise and intensely brave grandmother anticipating the inevitable, comforted her grandsons, and strengthened the children's mind by narrating the tales of supreme sacrifices made by their grandfather and great grandfather at the hands of barbaric rulers of their time.

While being escorted to the court of Governor Wazir Khan in the morning, the children assured the grandmother that they shall neither buckle under the bullies nor bring disrespect to the family.

Entering the court of Wazir Khan, Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh courageously thundered the salutation “Waheguru ji ka Khalsa, Waheguru ji ki Fateh” and “Bole So Nihal, Sat Sri Akal” to the annoyance of Wazir Khan. The Sahibzadas were told to either accept Islam and get rewards or face death in refusal. They refused to convert. The Nawab of Maler Kotla, Sher Mohd Khan also present in the court, spoke against the court ruling due to children's age, despite his personal grudge against Guru Gobind Singh Ji. However, his protest voice remained unheard. *Diwan* Sucha Nand Bhandari spoke venomously against the Guru; consequently, a decree was passed to torture the children for Four days to see if they would breakdown, and if they don't, then bury them alive in a brick wall, for death through suffocation.

For four days, officials tried to convert them with worldly temptations and hostile threats and tortures, but, in vain. Meanwhile, fully aware of torture and death of her grandsons at the hands of Wazir Khan, *Mata Goojri Ji* breathed her last. Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh steadfastly declined all temptations offered

to them and disregarded all threats and tortures inflicted towards them. Finally, on the fateful day of December 12, 1705 masons built a firm footing for building the wall, stood the children on the platform, and constructed a wall brick by brick around the children. Until the last brick was plugged in, the brutal butchers asked the children to convert. Hearing the final unwavering no, the masons, slit their throat and plugged in the last brick for a completely sealed enclosure to suffocate the young lives. The siblings remain shining examples of fearless heroism in the battle against subjugation, regardless of one's age.

Todar Mall Kapoor, the Revenue Minister under Governor of Sirhind, was



Figure 24: Younger Sahibzadas Being Bricked Alive In a Wall
Drawing by: Raj Singh Tattal (the Pen-Tacular-Artist)

a devotee of the Guru. While none other could dare, he came forward to perform the final rites for the three members of the Guru's family. One Atta Khan Choudhary, agreed to trade his land for cremations in exchange for gold

coins to be laid over the required piece of property. As Todar Mal was laying down the gold coins flat, Atta Khan demanded the coins be stood vertically. Todar Mal, with great reverence for the Guru, complied using 7800 gold coins to cover the piece of land. Principal Satbir Singh, in his 1994 book "Pooran Sach Bhare" wrote, "Todar Mall in the year 1705, paid in gold coins, worth one crore and eighty hundred thousand rupees." Todar Mall was sacked by the governor for showing his sincerity to Guru. The Sikh Nation, though, remains ever grateful to Todar Mall. *Gurudwara* Jyoti Saroop was built on that land in 1765, by Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia. The road leading to the *Gurudwara* Sahib has been named *Diwan* Todar Mall Road. Guru Gobind Singh Ji was at Rai Kalha's place on December 16, 1705. Rai Kalha sent his son-in-law, Alam Khan to Sirhind to bring the firsthand account of the treatment meted out to the young children from Wazir Khan and last rites being performed by Todar Mal Kapoor. Guru Ji offered a thankful prayer to the almighty for his children's fortitude and faith.

Successes and Struggles

Champions of 18th century

For more than two centuries, Sikh Gurus from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh, reformed Indian society, incrementally, through a message of unity, love, service, courage, and hope. Their mission was to eliminate political oppression, religious bigotry, social stratification, and to empower ordinary people towards a life of dignity. The Gurus implanted self-respect, freedom, righteousness, equality, discipline, self-reliance, compassion, service, contentment, patience, courage, and eternal optimism or *Chardi Kala*.

The Gurus challenged the ruthless rulers to dispense equal rights and justice to all citizens. Forced conversions, desecration of temples and scriptures was not acceptable. Sikh Gurus' message to the opponents of equality was that their lives will not be any lesser if others are uplifted. They challenged the religious bigotry. Even in disagreement with religious practices of other faiths, Sikhs respected their scriptures, did not demolish places of worship, and did not proselytize. Instead, we built their temples and mosques so they may worship in freedom.

Some writers have portrayed the picture of Sikh struggles as a religious conflict with Muslims or Brahmins. Nothing could be farther from the truth. If Sikh struggles were due to conflicts with other religions, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* would not have included the spiritual verses of Muslim and Hindu saints. Sikhs simply were demanding equality. For these defiant men, dignity was non-negotiable.

The Gurus united the stratified Indian society in Sikhs. Instead of being divided by caste, each Sikh would assimilate their best attributes; be educated like a Brahmin, be courageous like a Khatri, be financially self-reliant like a Vaish, and be humbly ready to serve like a Shudra.

For "Freedom of Religion" Sikhs sacrificed innumerable lives. And when persecution continued unabated, Sikhs armed themselves to fight. "*Nirbhau*"

or fearless, and “*Nirvair*” free from animosity in character, the core values of a progressive society, had been woven into Sikh minds and hearts.

The Mughal rulers in India frequently grabbed power by overthrowing their own father, and/or killing their siblings. Maintaining power by any means, and forced conversions to Islam, were their primary goals. They had love-hate relationships with Hindu chieftains and small territory Rajas. If the chieftains accepted the subordination of Mughals, they would negotiate friendly treaties; otherwise they would go to war. In a similar fashion, they had love-hate relationship with Hindu clergy. They would become allies to manipulate the masses for financial gains and power-grab.

Sikhs and most Mughal emperors remained in conflict because of clashing objectives. Emperors were interested in keeping their power at all costs, and Sikhs were concentrating on social, economic, and political empowerment of regular folks. Sikhs enjoyed only short periods of respite from battlefield, either when a ruler was more moderate personality, or his attention was diverted elsewhere.

Eighteenth century began with coming together of Sikhs as Khalsa. Guru Gobind Singh Ji dedicated to uplifting the meek, sacrificed his all to raise a brotherhood of people with unshakeable commitment to fight tyranny and oppression. It was this determination that helped Banda Singh Bahadur establish the first Khalsa Raj.

Post Banda Singh Bahadur period (1716 onwards) was a very difficult time for Sikhs as Zakaria Khan, the Governor of Lahore, and several of his successors, intending to exterminate Sikhs, announced cash rewards for killing them. Surrounded by opportunists and reward greedy predators, Sikhs took refuge in hills, jungles, and marshes. Having abandoned their homes, they domiciled on the horsebacks to keep moving and dodge their hunters. Still, they pursued their religious freedom, and armed struggles with guerrilla warfare tactics. During this period of struggles arose heroes like Banda Singh Bahadur, *Bhai* Mani Singh, Nawab Kapoor Singh, *Bhai* Taru Singh, *Bhai* Subeg Singh, *Bhai* Shahbaz Singh, and many more. Brief heroics of selected few lion-hearted Sikhs of the eighteenth century are portrayed here.

Baba Banda Singh Bahadur

The metamorphosis of Madho Das Vairagi, a practitioner of magical supernatural powers to impress ordinary people, began the day he met Guru Gobind Singh Ji in Nander, Maharashtra. Guru Ji brought to his attention how the cruel and oppressive rulers of Delhi were exploiting and abusing the common folks across the country, and how he was wasting away his energies on self-centered gimmickry. Guru Ji made him realize the plight of his fellow countrymen and inspired him to fight for them, instead.

Madho Das took Amrit from Guru Gobind Singh Ji on September 3, 1708, and was transformed into a *Khalsa*. Gurbux Singh was the name given to him, but he preferred to be addressed as Banda Singh or Guru's devotee (Banda). Banda Singh was born on October 27, 1670 in the house of Ramdev, a farmer in Rajouri, Kashmir Valley. He was fond of hunting, however, killing of a buck/fawn had an emotional effect on him, and he took to renunciation. He became a disciple of Janki Das Vairagi and acquired the name Madho Das. Through his meditations and *Yogic* practices, he gained some supernatural powers. In Nander, when he met Guru Gobind Singh Ji, his powers failed him, and he became Guru Ji's disciple.

On October 05, 1708 Guru Gobind Singh Ji appointed Banda Singh as the *Jathedar* or Commander-in-Chief of the Sikh Army and sent him towards Punjab on a mission. He was accompanied by five leading Sikhs; Bawa Binod Singh, Bawa Kahan Singh, *Bhai* Bhagwan Singh, Koer Singh and Baz Singh, and a small force of twenty-five soldiers. Guru Gobind Singh Ji gave his blessings by giving personal sword to Banda Singh. He also gave him many Hukamnamas (dictate letters) in the names of leading Sikhs across the country to join hands with Banda Singh and accept him as their Commander. Banda Singh's mission was to free the people of Punjab from the oppressive yoke of the Mughals, and restore human rights for the ill-treated peasants.

Banda Singh and his forces were in high spirits, even with his limited



Figure 25: Banda Singh Bahadur

Drawing by: Raj Singh Tattal (the Pen-Tacular-Artist)

means and resources, and facing an uphill task of fighting the Mughal Empire. He called upon all those who had suffered for generations under the villainous tormentors to join him in the fight for freedom. The pent-up scorn for the unjust rulers evoked an overwhelming response from people of all faiths. Within a year he was able to raise a large enough army to take on the instruments of Mughal Empire. Coming together for a common cause in haste, the volunteer soldiers did not have time to receive disciplined training, but, the recruits were highly motivated and committed. In the first uprising Sikh forces ransacked the state treasury and houses of wealthy social parasites in Panipat near Delhi. Encouraged by their success, on November 26, 1709, Banda Singh stormed Samana (a prosperous town built like a fortress), home of Jalaludin, the assassin of Guru Teg Bahadur. In three days time the town fell to Sikhs, Jala-ud-din, Shashal Beg abd Bashal Beg, all the three executioners of Guru Teg Bahadur and the younger sons of Guru Gobind Singh were punished besides 10,000 Mughal soldiers. On a career of conquest, they dislodged Mughal power from many territories surrounding Sutlej. Samana, Shahbad, and Sadhaura were first important places to fall to Banda Singh. Sadhaura's chief, Usman Khan, had earned the ire of Guru Gobind Singh, because of his torturing *Pir* Badrudin alias Budhu Shah and his disciples to death).

A few months later, he came to Sirhind, a place deeply detested in the Sikh psyche, for the executions of Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh, and the home of murders like Wazir Khan and *Diwan* Sucha Nand. In a fierce battle in the plains of Chhaprchiri on May 12, 1710, Sikhs routed the mighty Mughal army, despite the large scale desertion from Banda's forces. Those who had joined him to benefit from plundering only left him. Wazir Khan was killed and on the third day of the battle Sikhs occupied Sirhind. Those who had enriched themselves under the Mughals were plundered for three days. Emperor Bahadur Shah was apprised about advancement by Banda Bahadur on May 30, 1710 while he was at Ajmer. He reconciled with Rajputs to jointly fight against the Sikhs. In the meantime, Banda mobilized more Sikhs and appealed them to join him at Kiratpur. According to Ghulam Mohyuddin (Fataht Namah-i-Samadi, 1722-23) "people as far as Iran, Turan, Kandhar, Multan and neighboring climes and countries" started pouring into the Punjab in large numbers in disguise or even openly by the beat of drum. Ghulam Mohyuddin author of Fataht Namah-i-Samadi, 1722-23, who fought the Banda's forces and call them "devil incarnate" and "a calamity on earth" testifies that Banda ruthlessly annihilated social inequalities born out of caste prejudices, enforced rigid abstinence of the Sikhs from adultery, and otherwise adopted codes of conduct for the forces "to present themselves as embodiment of moral values."

He conquered Raja Ajmer Chand of Bilaspur, following which other hill chiefs surrendered. The ruler of Chamba offered his daughter in marriage to Banda. Banda overran Saharanpur, Behar, Ambheta and Nanauta by July, 1710. The Sikh uprising in Jalandhar Doab brought fruit when Sikh forces successfully drove out the Faujdar Shams Khan out of Rahon and his men on October 03, 1710.

Banda Singh during his conquest of Malerkotla, learned about *Bibi* Anoop Kaur, daughter of *Bhai* Lachhman Das Sodhi, who was with Guru Gobind Singh Ji as they were leaving Anandpur. While crossing the River Sirsa, Anoop Kaur's horse tumbled. She broke her arm in the fall, was captured, and taken to the Nawab of Malerkotla. Charmed by her beauty, he decided to marry her, after her treatment. When she had fully recovered, the Nawab called a *Kazi* to solemnize his marriage. Instead of submitting to the Nawab's lust, Anoop Kaur pierced her sword in her chest. The Nawab arranged her burial in Muslim tradition. When Banda Singh Bahadur reached Malerkotla, the Nawab fled away. Banda Bahadur's forces, came to know of this incident, they dug up the grave and cremated her body with final rites per Sikh tradition.

Within seven short years, Banda Singh had quashed the Mughal hold on Punjab and controlled the vast area from Karnal to Ludhiana. He renamed the Fort of Mukhlispur near Sadhaura, as Lohgarh, and established his headquarters there. Baz Singh was appointed Governor of Sirhind. Fateh Singh, son of Baz Singh, was appointed to head the administration of Samana. Binod Singh got the joint charge of Thanesar and surrounding areas. Khalsa Raj, a political system based on social equality and secular principles had replaced the oppressive imperialistic rule.

Banda Singh relieved peasants' suffering at the hands of Zamindars by abolishing the Zamindari system or absentee landlordism. He transferred the ownership rights of the land to the tillers, irrespective of whether they were Hindus, Muslims or Sikhs. The move brought prosperity to the peasants and raised revenues for his treasury. Vinova Bhawe's much acclaimed movement after Indian independence was based on Banda Singh's policy of people empowerment.

Banda Singh introduced a new calendar dating from capture of Sirhind. He also introduced new currency coins as a mark of Sikh sovereignty, in the name of Guru with the following Persian engravings: Sikka zad har do alam tegh-i-Nanak wahib ast, Fateh Gobind Singh Shah-i-shahan fazl-i-sacha sahib ast; meaning-coin stuck for the two worlds with the sword of Nanak, and victory granted by the grace of Gobind Singh, king of kings, and the true Emperor. The inscription on Banda's seal written below, became a model for future inscription on Sikh coins and seal: "Degho Tegho Fateh Nusrat Bedirung, Yaaft az Nanak Guru Gobind Singh."

Banda Singh was well known for his unmatched bravery. He was so fearless and courageous that he confronted his enemies face to face, instead of sneaking up on them from behind. He had ordered his men/soldiers neither to demolish any mosque or any place of worship belonging to any faith nor desecrate any holy scriptures. In the fiercest of battles, sacred Islamic places like the Mausoleum of Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi and mosques were untouched by Sikh forces. While Bahadur Shah's provocative orders warranted outright extirpation of Sikhs, Banda proclaimed from Kalanaur in April, 1711 that we do not oppress Muslims or oppose Islam, we are only against atrocious and barbaric people or regime. Muslim employees recited Kutba and Namaaz fearlessly in Khalsa Raj. Prefix *Baba* or wise-man, and suffix Bahadur or braveheart, were attached to his name by Sikhs to reflect his personality; thus he is famed as *Baba* Banda Singh Bahadur.

Bahadur Shah's death in February, 1712 gave *Baba Banda Singh* Bahadur a short respite. Bahadur Shah's successor Farrukhsiyar campaigned with more vigor against Sikhs. Unable to win over the Sikhs in direct confrontation, Farrukhsiyar tricked Banda Singh Bahadur into a meeting with Koranic oath, and took him prisoner along with over seven hundred Sikh soldiers on Dec 17, 1715, from the Gurdas Nangal. (Sikhs had set up a camp in the Haveli or residence of Duni Chand, a small place about six miles from Gurdaspur).

Emperor's army, scared that Banda Singh Bahadur may escape their custody, strapped his neck, hands, and feet in iron chains as he and his followers were brought to Delhi. In Delhi they tortured the Sikhs for three months in the emperor's effort to convert them. In the book "Sikh Shahadat da Sankalp te prampara" published in 2013, Dr Sukh Dayal Singh says, "Besides some Muslim reporters, two independent witnesses John Surman and Edward Stephenson of East India Company wrote a letter on March 10, 1716 to their Boss Robert Hedges, about inhuman treatment and tortures of Banda and his men at Delhi." Unable to persuade Sikhs to renounce their faith through torture, the Muslim clergy or *Kazis* asked each Sikh soldier to either convert or face death. *Resolute Sikhs* affirmed the principle of freedom of religion and replied in resounding no to conversion in unison. The *Kazis* ordered execution of Sikhs in batches of one hundred, every day. This was done for frightening those awaiting executions to surrender, but, in vain.

To terrify those still alive, heads of the martyred Sikhs were stacked on spears. Their dead bodies were scattered filling the air with foul smell. Believers of

ਕਾਲ ਕਲਪਨਾ ਕਦੇ ਨ ਖਾਇ ॥

ਅੰਗ ੩੪੩, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾ

"Kaal kalpna kade na khaey"

Page 343, SGGS

Translation: "Death will never scare them"

Sikhs stood firm and not one of the captives accepted Islam. Desperate *Kazis* and *Maulvis* ordered to cut open Banda Singh's four years old son. The child's pulsating heart was put in Banda Singh Bahadur's mouth, in their desperate attempt to convert him to Islam. Failing, they ordered his son's intestines be put around his neck. Banda Singh Bahadur, the "braveheart" told the tyrants that the empire had accepted defeat and were garlanding him in victory.

Unable to shake up *Baba* Banda Singh Bahadur through inhumane torture the king asked Banda Singh Bahadur about his last wish, as to how he would like to be killed. Banda answered, “The way King would like to die himself.” Banda Singh’s eyes were carved out with the butcher’s knife. His skin was pulled with burning hot pliers. His left foot and both hands were severed. His body was pierced with burning hot rods, and finally his body was hacked to pieces on June 9, 1716. The courage and spirit Banda Bahadur exhibited in the battlefield, he maintained during his gruesome death. His martyrdom infused a fresh soul into Sikhism. Another brave-heart *Bhai* Baj Singh, killed seven Mughal soldiers, when his cuffs were opened, before he was killed.

Recognizing that Sikhs shall never accept anything less than equality and shall never stop fighting for freedom, Farrukhsiyar implemented new policies to contain Sikhs. To stop Hindus from becoming Sikhs, he took to their appeasement. He appointed numerous Hindu administrators in his dominion. He faulted Wazir Khan of Sirhind in confiscating ornaments and coins that Gangu Kaul had stolen from *Mata* Goojri Ji. The emperor compensated Gangu’s son Raj Kaul in the form of land in Andha Mughal of Delhi on a canal or Nehar. Raj Kaul changed his last name from Kaul to Nehru. To obliterate Sikhs, Farrukhsiyar declared cash rewards for Sikhs’ heads. For years Sikhs lived on horsebacks and continued their fight with guerilla tactics. In 1719 Farrukhsiyar, at the age of 33, was arrested by Sayyid brothers, who tortured him in a fashion similar to he had done to *Baba* Banda Singh Bahadur before killing him. On the night of April 27, 1719, pins were poked into Farrukhsiyar’s eyes to blind him, before his body was cut into pieces. Only Farrukhsiyar would know if in his last moments he remembered Banda Singh Bahadur’s last words to him?

Very few non-Sikh historians have written about Banda Singh’s contributions, his sacrifices, and his courageous transformation into Khalsa. Daulat Rai is an exception in this regard and he wrote, “*Sahibe Kamal Guru Gobind Singh*” with some pages dedicated to the life of Banda Singh Bahadur. A few presumptions in the book, though, appear to be biased or ill-researched. The author, without any evidence, suggests that though accepted in Sikh fold, Banda Singh was not baptized by Guru Gobind Singh Ji to halt any claim to Guruship. Contradicting the assertion, the publisher has quoted historians Ganda Singh, Ali-u-din Mifti, and Kanhaiya Lal to authenticate that Madho Das was baptized. Another conjecture by Daulat Rai is Banda Singh’s vow to remain “*Jatee*” or unmarried, a contradiction to Sikh tenets since Guru Nanak.

Sikhs were so occupied with the mission to liberate Indian population from the chains of slavery they did not have time to write their own history. Some non-Sikh writers of Sikh history could not resist distorting the truth to shade their work with their personal biases. It is time for Sikhs to establish a “Think-tank” of reputed scholars and historians, Sikhs and non-Sikhs, to continuously research the history and provide accurate accounts for future generations.

Baba Banda Singh Bahadur, a courageous commander, succeeded in his mission to liberate Punjab. Exhibiting the same tenacity in compassion for uplifting the masses, he established an open and just political system under Khalsa Raj, even though it was short-lived. And in facing death, he remained *as resolute as* he was the day he left Nander, Maharashtra with the blessings of his Guru. After centuries of slavery and subordination of Indians at the hands of foreign tyrants, he brought to fruition the vision of Guru Nanak for a life of freedom for India’s suppressed citizenry. *Baba* Banda Singh Bahadur will remain a towering personality of Indian history.

Bhai Mani Singh Ji

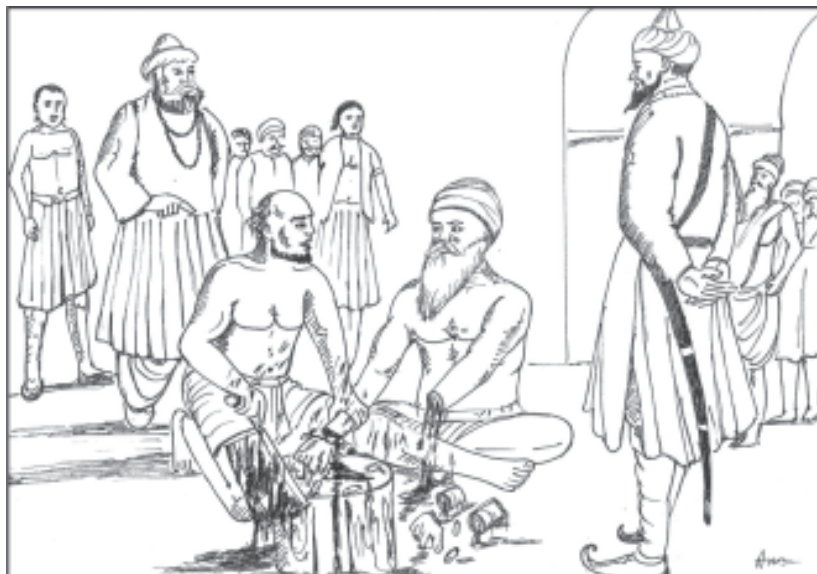


Figure 26: Bhai Mani Singh ji's body being cut limb by limb
at Nakhas, Horse Market, Lahore

Bhai Mani Singh Ji was a great scholar, a great poet, and a great Sikh soldier who lived to be ninety-four. He had the fortune and distinction of living in the company of five Sikh Gurus. He was born during Guru Hargobind Ji's time. His grandfather *Bhai Balu Ji* was a soldier in Guru Hargobind Ji's cavalry and sacrificed his life in a battle with emperor Shahjahan. His father, *Bhai Mati Das Ji* and *Bhai Dayal Das Ji* were brothers who sacrificed their lives at the hands of Aurangzeb, days before beheading of Guru Teg Bahadur Ji. In early childhood, Mani Ram (later Mani Singh) served in Guru Hargobind Ji's sangat and at age thirteen he submitted himself in the service of Sri Guru Hari Rai Ji at Kiratpur Sahib. At fifteen, he got married to *Bibi Seeto Bai*. *Bhai Mani Ram*

went to Delhi with Guru Hari Krishan Ji, and after Guru Ji's cremation at Bala Sahib, he went to Bakala to be in service of Guru Teg Bahadur Ji. *Bhai* Sahib showed his soldierly valor in the battle of Bhangani and the battle of Nadaun. On Vaisakhi day of 1699, he also took *Pahul* and became *Bhai* Mani Singh.

Bhai Mani Singh became a close confidant of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, and was admitted to the circle of his fifty-two scholarly poets. *Bhai* Mani Singh and *Baba* Deep Singh were two scholars who scribed the final edition of SGGS by adding Guru Teg Bahadur Ji's verses in the Adi Granth. They scribed additional replicas of SGGS that were sent to separate locations by Guru Gobind Singh Ji. After Guru Gobind Singh Ji's passing away, *Bhai* Mani Singh escorted *Mata* Sahib Kaur to Delhi. Guru Gobind Singh Ji had appointed him as *Jathedar* of Akaal Takht Sahib. The most significant contribution of *Bhai* Mani Singh Ji to Sikh Community is modern day Ardaas that recites the entire history of Sikhs. He exerted to bring Amritsar as politico-religious headquarters of Sikhism.

At the behest of Zakaria Khan, who sought to have peace with Sikhs, offered them Nawabi in the deal. *Bhai* Subeg Singh contacted the Khalsa in their hideouts in *Shivalik Hills* sometime end of March 1733. After deliberation in great deal, Khalsa accepted the offer. Sikhs organized themselves in "*Taruna Dal*" and "*Buddha Dal*", Delhi Durbar became anxious at the consolidation of Sikhs and they questioned Zakaria Khan's reconciliation moves and made enquiries about new developments. Zakaria Khan to please his bosses expropriated the Nawabi robe and the associated estate in 1735, before the harvesting period.

Sikhs wanted to celebrate Bandi Chhor Divas of year 1734 (a festival for a period of 10 days) at Amritsar. Zakaria Khan Governor, demanded rupees five thousands as tribute to Lahore Government, for permitting the celebration. *Bhai* Mani Singh Ji, Head *Granthi* of *Darbar Sahib*, confident about a large amount of offerings from a huge gathering agreed. Harbhagat Niranjania of Jandiala, Karma of Chhina, *Diwan* Lakhpat Rai in association with Zakaria Khan hatched a conspiracy to exterminate Sikhs gather in Amritsar. The Governor posted his forces outside the city to liquidate the pilgrims. *Bhai* Mani Singh got the inkling of the conspiracy from the Sikhs of Lahore; he urgently dispatched messages to Sikhs not to come to Amritsar. Due to limited participation, offerings were meager too, thus *Bhai* Mani Singh could not raise five thousand Rupees.

Bhai Mani Singh was arrested for nonpayment of tribute, and taken to

Lahore where Zakaria Khan demanded the full amount of rupees 5,000 payment. Exposing the official conniving, *Bhai* Mani Singh refused to pay the amount. *Bhai* Mani Singh was given the option to pay the full amount of 5,000 or convert to Islam or be ready to face death *Bhai* Mani Singh refused to pay the unethical demand. Upon his refusal to pay or convert, Zakaria Khan ordered death of *Bhai* Mani Singh by chopping his body limb by limb. On June 14, 1734 (page 93- The Sikhs in History) Mani Singh Ji, ninety-four years old priest of Harimandir Sahib, was hacked to pieces at Nakhas horse market, near Delhi Gate at Lahore. *Gurudwara* Shahid Gunj stands at that place now.

Zakaria Khan once again deployed patrols against Sikh Community, declared them offenders of government, and once more, in a bid to liquidate them, put a price on their heads. Anyone helping them would be punished too. Author Satbir Singh of “Atharvin sadi vich Bir Prampura da vikas, (1987) wrote, “Head hunting became a gainful occupation. The prominent persons who conducted organized raids for Sikh heads were Karma of Chhina, Ram Niranjania and Sain Das of Jandiala and Dharma Topi of Jodh Nagar (all Hindus), who incidentally provided sniffers to *Kazis* if required and Massa Rangar of Mandiala, a Muslim. They brought cart loads of Sikh heads for rewards.” Once again Sikhs took to jungles, hills and marshes surviving off the land. *Bhai* Mani Singh’s martyrdom caused widespread resentment, and aroused political ambition of the Sikhs.

Nawab Kapoor Singh

NAWAB KAPOOR SINGH took to encouraging uprising against the Mughals and he declared that Khalsa would rule over Punjab, instead of accepting a petty endowment. Uplifted by the thoughts of self-governance, large number of youth took “*Pahul*” and joined the Khalsa brotherhood. Sikhs, led by Kapoor Singh, successfully trampled the chiefs of Dujana, Dadri, Jhajjar, Bahadurgarh, Faridabad, and Mehrauli, on the outskirts of Delhi, the center of the government.

Kapoor Singh was born in 1697, the house of Sardar Dalip Singh Virk, in village Kahlon District Shekhupura, now in Pakistan. In his childhood, under the care of his mother he learnt Gurbani and his father taught him horsemanship. At the age of 24 he was initiated in Khalsa brotherhood by *Bhai* Mani Singh Ji at Amritsar. In 1726, *Bhai* Tara Singh and some of his colleagues were martyred by the Mughals, on flimsy grounds. In protest, Sikhs declared an open



Figure 27: Nawab Kapoor caring for the horses

revolt against the government and passed a resolution, proposed by *Diwan* Darbara Singh, to loot government treasuries. Despite a price on Sikh heads, government failed to stop the looting by Sikhs, therefore, all Sikh families living in villages and towns also became target of government reprisals. To escape the official wrath, people left their homes and joined the Sikhs *Jathas* or brigades in hiding. Young Kapoor Singh also joined the squad of *Diwan* Darbara Singh. Kapoor Singh was assigned the duties of looking after the horses, feeding them, and clearing the horse turd. Occasionally, he would also go on expeditions to snatch from the government treasuries. His sincerity and hard work made him a favorite personality.

Unable to exterminate Sikhs and to halt their attacks on royal treasuries, the Governor of Lahore, in the year 1733, decided to buy peace with Sikhs. Subeg Singh, a government contractor mediated the treaty with the hideouts in the Shivalik Hills. Sikhs were offered a robe of *Nawabi*, conferring a title of official honor, and an estate consisting of parganas of Dipalpur, Kanganwal and Jhabal, producing estimated annual income of One Hundred thousand rupees. The offer was considered at the Khalsa gathering on Vaisakhi of 1733 at Akal Takht. After initial reluctance, Sikhs accepted the offer as peace would be good for prosperity and welfare of the community. After deliberations, Kapoor Singh's name was proposed for the title "Nawab." Kapoor Singh consented with a condition that he would still be taking care of the horses in the stable.

With peace at hand, Nawab Kapoor Singh messaged the exiles to return to their homes. To engage the large number of Sikhs in productive work, Nawab Kapoor Singh created two groups based on age with appropriate responsibilities. Forty and above group was labeled "*Budha Dal*" or the group of elderly. Their tasks included looking after the *Gurudwaras* and spreading the message of Sikhism. The younger group named "*Taruna Dal*" was to be the vigilantes and protection of the community. In a short time, the younger group grew to more than 12,000 in strength. For efficient management, the group was sub-divided into five units with each having its own central control. In 1748 when Sikhs regrouped under the twelve *Misals*, Kapoor Singh was requested to lead the confederation of *Misals*, but, due to his age, Nawab Kapoor Singh opted to retire from leadership role, but, he continued to serve the Khalsa until his death on October 7, 1753.

During the invasion of Nader Shah of Afghanistan in 1738, Zakaria Khan surrendered to him. Nader Shah allowed Zakaria Khan to remain Administrator

of Lahore, but marching towards Delhi, took his forces along. He defeated king Mohamad Shah near Karnal, reached Delhi on March 9, 1739 and ransacked Delhi for about two months. With a loot of thousands of horses, elephants, many thousand young Hindu and Muslim girls and boys, Kohinoor diamond, Takht-e-taus or bejeweled Peacock throne, and gold worth millions he started to march back for Kabul On May 5, 1739. To avoid the heat of Indian summer, he decided to travel along the Himalayan foothills.

When Nader Shah and his forces reached Akhnoor, as planned, Kapoor Singh's men attacked them at night and grabbed his loot booty, and freed all hostages. They restored the women folk to their families. Nadir Shah in desperation reprimanded Zakaria Khan and told him that the day is not far when these rebels will take over the country from you. In a rage, he left for Kabul. Zakaria Khan initiated genocidal campaign against Khalsa. "A graded scale of rewards was offered to the people, a blanket for cutting of hair of a Sikh, ten rupees for providing information of whereabouts of a Sikh, fifty rupees for Sikh's scalp. Plunder of Sikh home was made lawful. Giving shelter to Sikhs or withholding information of their movement was made a capital offence" (The Sikhs in History-pages 94, 95). Singhs started to leave Lahore to settle in other safe areas. Zakaria Khan died in July of 1745.

Ahmad Shah Durrani also known as Ahmad Shah Abdali, (1722 –October 16, 1772) was founder of Durrani Empire and is regarded as the founder of modern state of Afghanistan. On the death of Nader Shah in 1747, Ahmad Shah Abdali was chosen as the king of Afghanistan. From Dec 1747 to 1767 he invaded India seven times. In December 1747 Ahmad Shah Abdali of Afghanistan attacked India for the first time entangling the Government at Lahore in the struggle. Plundering the city of Lahore, he advanced to Manupur near Sirhind. Mughal forces led by Wazir Qamarrudin and his son Muinuddin checked his advance on March 11, 1748 but failed to pursue the retreating forces. (Muinuddin, better known as Mir Mannu, killed his father). Sikhs, seeing the weakness of Mughals, saw an opportunity to liberate Amritsar. Under the leadership of Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, defeated Adina beg, who on Abdali's invasion and advances, had retired to Hoshiarpur. The Sikhs also split the 25 organized regiments into over 60 bands (Jathas). They deprived the retreating Afghans of their stores and horses. On Vaisakhi, March 29, 1748 Sikh Community passed a *Gurmatta* (Guru's resolution) to re-organize themselves by merging the 60 armed *Jathas* or brigades into twelve associations to be known as *Misals* (meaning equals) or regiments. Phulkian *Misal* with its leader

Ala Singh decided not to join the confederation. The confederation of the following eleven *Misals* would be known as **Dal Khalsa**;

Confederation of Sikh *Misals*/Dal Khalsa

1. Ahluwalia *Misal* (Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia- Leader)
2. Bhangi *Misal* (Sardar Hari Singh Bhangi of Village Panjwarh - Leader)
3. Dallewalia *Misal* (Sardar Gulab Singh Dallewalia of village Dallewal–Leader)
4. Faizalpuria *Misal* (Nawab Kapoor Singh Virk-Leader)
5. Kanaihya *Misal* (Sardar Jai Singh Kanaihya of village Kanha Leader)
6. Karore Singhia *Misal* (Sardar Karora Singh Dhaliwal of village Piajwal –Leader)
7. Nakkai *Misal* (Sardar Hira Singh of village Baharwal near Lahore called Nakka- Leader)
8. Nishanwalia *Misal* (Sardar Dasaundha Singh – Leader)
9. Ramgarhia *Misal* (Sardar Nand Singh and later Jassa Singh Ramgarhia Leader)
10. Sukherchakia *Misal* (Sardar Naudh Singh of village Sukherchak–Leader)
11. Shaheed *Misal*(The named for *Baba Deep Singh Ji* after his martyrdom).

Sardar JASSA SINGH AHLUWALIA was declared the joint chief of the confederation, and others leaders became heads of their respective *Misals*. Ten *Misal* leaders formed an advisory committee to assist and advise the Chief. The cumulative force of the *Misals* was termed Sarbat Khalsa or Sikh nation. Nawab Kapoor Singh due to his age opted to retire.

In April 1748 Mir Mannu took over Lahore Governorship under Mughal Empire and sought to establish a strong government. In the meantime the Sikh *Misals*, had captured the areas between Chanab and Ravi, Ravi and Beas and Beas and Sutlej; however, Multan was still held by the Afghans. After third Abdali attack of 1751-52, Lahore and Multan became part of Afghan Empire. Mir Mannu was allowed to remain Governor at Lahore.

After Mir Mannu’s death in November, 1753, Sikhs began to exert control and started offering *rakhi/hiffazatt* or protection to the farmers against Mughal plunders for one-fifth of the harvest. After Abdali’s invasion of 1756-57, the rakhi protection (areas) was recognized by Sarbat Khalsa to constitute the territorial possessions of the *Misals*. (“The Sikhs had mastered the upper

plains from Karnal and Hansi to the banks of the Jhelum. The necessity of the union was no longer paramount.”- J.D.Cunningham-History of the Sikhs p.101). The Sikhs cooperated with Adina Beg and Marathhas to oust the Afghans in 1758. They also disrupted Abdali’s advance during his invasion of 1759-61 when he arrived to crush the Marathhas.

Bhai Taru Singh

Bhai TARU SINGH is a revered personality and champion of Sikh struggles who left the mortal world on July 1, 1745 at a young age of twenty-five. In daily prayers, Sikhs recall their history in brief, and evoke the memory of numerous personalities who gave their all fighting for freedom and in service to humanity. When they utter the words, “*jinha singhan ney khopriyan utarvayeean*”, the name of *Bhai* Taru Singh Ji comes to mind of each Sikh.

He was born on Oct 06, 1720 in the home of *Bhai* Jodh Singh and *Bibi* Dharam Kaur, in village Pahoola of Amritsar District. He and his sister Taro Kaur were raised by their widowed mother. She taught them reverence of Guru Granth Sahib, and helping the needy from one's honest earning.

True to his faith, he worked hard and helped the needy. *Bhai* Taru Singh was initiated in Khalsa order by *Bhai* Mani Singh Ji. *Bhai* Taru Singh and his sister would often bring

food to Sikh soldiers living on horsebacks and on the run.

Mid-eighteenth century was the difficult period of Sikh History when the

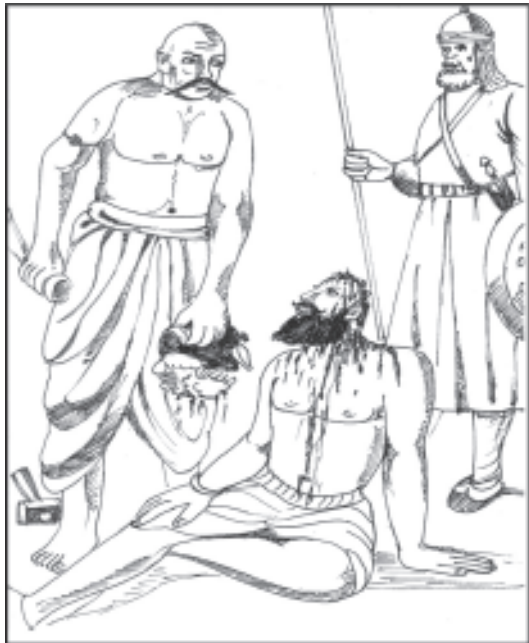


Figure 28: *Bhai* Taru Singh's skull being removed by the butcher

Zakaria Khan had announced cash rewards for Sikh heads, solely because Sikhs rebelled for freedom, and would not accept political and social subservience. Sikh soldiers still pursued their struggles against the ruling class with gorilla warfare tactics. Having abandoned their homes, their domicile was on the horsebacks. This way, they could keep moving to dodge their hunters. Bhai Taru Singh and his sister would often bring food to Sikh soldiers in hiding.

The administrator of Patti had forcibly taken away daughter of Khushala a fisherman, who told his plight to *Bhai Taru Singh*. At the urging of *Bhai Taru Singh*, Khalsa soldiers raided Patti and rescued the fisherman's daughter. Besides the Mughal rulers, many caste-conscious people also were not happy with Sikh principle of equality and justice. They were always looking for opportunities to get Sikhs in trouble. One such person Harbhagat Niranjania complained to the authorities that Taru Singh was helping the rebels. Security forces of the administration arrested *Bhai Taru Singh*.

Bhai Taru Singh accepted the charges that he was in contact with rebel Sikh soldiers. After torturing *Bhai Taru Singh*, the *Kazi* gave him the choice of cutting his hair and conversion to Islam, or death. *Bhai Taru Ji* refused to convert. He told the *Kazi* that he rather be scalped than cut his hair. Zakaria Khan directed his executioner to remove the twenty-five year old Taru Singh's scalp. Staying true to his faith, *Bhai Taru Singh* stayed firm on his decision. His scalp was removed at Nakhas.

History records say that on the same day Zakaria Khan suffered from a severe pain due to urinary track blockage. Zakaria Khan was told by one Subeg Singh, a Persian speaking Sikh contractor in Lahore Government, that hitting Zakaria Khan's head with *Bhai Taru Singh*'s shoe could help him pass the urine. Suffering from an unbearable pain, he told his assistants to follow the prescription. With every shoe beating though he passed some urine, but his suffering did not end. Four days later, on July 1, 1745 Zakaria Khan died. With his death, one of the most difficult period for Sikhs also came to end. It is believed that *Bhai Taru Singh* also passed away after 22 days of his skull removal, on 23 ASOO, sambat 1802- Mahan Kosh page 440 (corresponding July 1, 1745 A.D.).

Bhai Subeg Singh and Bhai Shahbaz Singh

Bhai SUBEG SINGH and *Bhai* SHAHBAZ SINGH (father and son) are amongst the Sikh heroes we commemorate with pride. *Bhai* Subeg Singh was son of *Bhai* Rai Bhaga Sandhoo, a landlord of village Jambar of Lahore. Because of his father's riches, Subeg Singh received good education and learned Persian and Arabic languages. Great language skills and high education landed him a good job in Mughal government at Lahore. Due to his kind nature, Subeg Singh was popular among his friends and social acquaintances.

Zakaria Khan, the Governor of Lahore, through most of his tenure pursued the policy of Sikh genocide, except for two years between 1733-1735. Thousands upon thousands of Sikhs were killed in cold blood during this period. Sikhs, on the run for survival, took to looting the exchequer. Big losses at the treasury convinced Zakaria Khan that the policy of persecution was not effective. In consultation with Delhi Government, he offered Sikhs a peace endowment with the "Nawab" title for their chosen leader. Zakaria Khan asked Subeg Singh to mediate the deal. Subeg Singh contacted Khalsa in marshes and arranged a meeting at Akal Takht. Facing strong opposition from *Jathedar* Darbara Singh, Subeg Singh managed to convince enough Sikhs to accept the offer as an opportunity to rebuild for future. Kapoor Singh was bestowed the title of Nawab. The deal made Zakaria Khan happy and he appointed Subeg Singh as the Kotwal or Police commander of Lahore.

The peace lasted only about two years. The Mughals wanting to keep Sikhs under their control were unhappy over Sikhs regrouping and gaining stature. Zakaria Khan sent a message to Nawab Kapoor Singh suggesting that Sikh youth be urged to join royal force. Upon Nawab Kapoor Singh's refusal to the suggestion, the endowment was withdrawn before harvesting in 1735, and persecution of Sikhs began with a vengeance. Lahore government took to killing of Sikhs through unfathomable tactics. *Bhai* Mani Singh Ji and *Bhai* Taru Singh Ji sacrificed their lives after undergoing extreme torture.



Figure 29: Subeg Singh and Shahbaz Singh were martyred by crushing in the wheels

Subeg Singh's handsome young son Shahbaz Singh was learning Persian from a *Kazi*. Impressed by the boy's intelligence, the *Kazi* planned to convert him to Islam and get him married to his daughter. The *Kazi* tried to indoctrinate the young man, but, Shahbaz Singh,

very conversant with Sikh teachings, would counter the *Kazi*. Shahbaz kept his parents informed of the situation. One day, *Kazi* told Shahbaz to accept Islam or face the consequences. On Shahbaz's refusal, *Kazi* registered a false complaint that he had insulted Hazrat Mohamad Sahib. Zakaria Khan ordered for arrest of both father and son. Before they could be punished Zakaria Khan died and his son Yahya Khan took over the regime on July 01, 1745.

Yahya Khan asked the *Kazi* to pronounce the punishment for father and son. Enraged *Kazi* specified death on wheels of torture, and Yahya Khan issued the orders. Both father and son were tied to separate wheels on March 10, 1746 and were asked for last time to accept Islam or face sure death by torture. We are Sikhs of Guru Gobind Singh who sacrificed his entire family for us; and we shall not change our decision.

Father and son were tied to wheels fitted with sharp knives and as the rotating wheels were brought tighter together, the knives slowly pierced their bodies and shredded the bleeding flesh into pieces. The brave father and son embraced death without a frown. The same day (10th day of March 1746), Yahya Khan issued a proclamation for general massacre of Sikhs, at the urging of *Diwan* Lakhpat Rai, resulting in infamous Vadda Ghalughara or the second holocaust of Sikhs (all the Sikhs of Lahore were beheaded at Nakhas on the day of *Amavas* on March 10, 1746).

Bhai Sukha Singh and Bhai Mehtab Singh

Bhai SUKHA SINGH and *Bhai* MEHTAB SINGH residents of Mari Kamboki and Mirankot respectively, near Bikaner, when heard about the blasphemies being carried out in *Harimandir Sahib* premises by Massa Ranghar, they were outraged. After brutally butchering *Bhai* Mani Singh Ji, Zakaria Khan escalated his atrocities against Sikhs. Massa Ranghar, Zakaria Khan's police chief of Amritsar, took possession of the Darbar Sahib after killing the Sikh guards, plundered its assets, and filled the sacred water tank with debris. He desecrated the holy shrine, its scriptures, consumed alcohol, smoked, and had dancing girls perform for him inside the sanctum sanctorum. A Sikh named Bulaka Singh of Bikaner, while visiting Amritsar, personally witnessed these disrespectful acts. On returning to Bikaner, he shared the harrowing tale to Sardar Sham Singh, a local Sikh leader. Sham Singh summoned his Sikh brothers to rise to the challenge of killing Massa Ranghar to end his sacrilegious acts.

Bhai Mehtab Singh and *Bhai* Sukha Singh took up the task in August 1740. Guised as Pathan employees bringing tax collections, they entered Darbar Sahib carrying sacks filled with broken pottery pieces. Duped by their attire, the security guards let them enter. Massa Ranghar was drinking, smoking, and watching girls perform for his pleasure, when the two incognito Singhs brought the sacs to him. As Massa Ranghar bent to see what offering has come to him, Mehtab Singh chopped off his head with his sword. They placed the police Chief's head in one of their bags and quickly escaped beyond the reach of security and back in Bikaner.

Harbhagat Niranjania a government informer, informed Zakaria Khan about Sukha Singh and Mehtab Singh. In the meantime Mehtab Singh leaving his seven year old son Rai Singh to the care of his friend Natha Khera, fled his village but later arrested and tortured to death on wheels in 1744 at Hiramandi Lahore. Governor sent his soldiers and ordered the arrest of Natha Khera and

Rai Singh. In a bid to save Rai Singh Natha Khera lost his life. Assuming the child also dead in the struggle with the soldiers, they left. Subsequently, Rai Singh gained consciousness and slowly became healthy. Sukha Singh joined the Sikh squad. In January 1746, Sukha Singh, along with Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, was escorting the old, ladies and children to hills and stopped at Rohri Sahib for meals. Jaspat Rai and his army attacked them. Jaspat Rai was killed. To revenge the killing of his brother, Lakhat Rai killed Sikhs in Lahore and attacked the Sikhs hiding in jungle. Sukha Singh was injured in the battle, but, recovered. After treatment he again became active. In December, 1751 Abdali mounted another attack. Mir Manu, through *Diwan* Kaura Mal, asked for help of Khalsa. Sukha Singh attained martyrdom fighting with Abdali forces.

Baba Deep Singh

Baba DEEP SINGH was born in village Pahuwind in the District of Amritsar in the year 1682 A D. His father Bhagto Sandhoo and mother Jeoni Bai both were devoted Sikhs. He was also initiated in Khalsa at age 18, in the year 1700 along with his parents. There after he learnt the martial-arts and horse-riding. *Baba* Deep Singh received his education of Sikh life philosophy under the guidance of *Bhai* Mani Singh. He got married in the year 1704 in his village. After getting the news of martyrdom of Sahibzadas, *Bhai* Mani Singh rushed back to Talwandi Sabo. Guru Gobind Singh Ji was busy with *Bhai* Mani Singh in preparing copies of Granth Sahib. *Baba* Deep Singh Ji also became a scribe of GGS replicas. Because of his in-depth knowledge of Sikh philosophy and Sikh history, he was appointed as the Head Granthi of Sri Damdama Sahib in



Figure 30: At the age of 75 *Baba* Deep Singh Ji with his Khanda
Drawing by: Raj Singh Tattal (the Pen-Tacular-Artist)

the year 1706. Since he was a trained warrior, he too, participated in the battle of Sirhind alongside *Baba Banda Singh Bahadar* in the year 1709 and beheaded Wazir Khan for executing Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh, the two younger sons of Guru Gobind Singh.

In the year 1757, Jahan Khan, Abdali's general desecrated and demolished the holy Darbar Sahib building. Seventy-five years old *Baba Deep Singh* was at Damdama Sahib at that time. He gathered some brave Sikhs and proceeded towards Amritsar to avenge the desecration of Darbar Sahib. He prayed to Guru and vowed to punish the culprits and liberate Darbar Sahib. When he left Damdama Sahib, only eight Sikhs were in the group, but, volunteers kept joining his mission, and by the time they reached Taran-Taaran, their number had risen by thousands. The Imperial forces intercepted them near village Goharwal. In the battle, *Baba Deep Singh* got a severe blow on his neck and fell down. Determined to carry on, he managed to get up and kept fighting with his thirty-nine pound double-edged sword or Khanda. Though the brave-heart was badly injured, he reached the Parikarma of Darbar Sahib as per his vow, and then lay down for eternal sleep.

Sardar Baghel Singh

The life and achievements of *Sardar* BAGHEL SINGH have not been accurately documented by historians. Some historian trace his birth place to a village in Gurdaspur, some others to Moga, and yet some others to Jhabal Kalan of Taran-Taaran District. He is believed to have been born in 1730 and his ancestors are traced to be Sikhs since Guru Arjan Dev Ji's time, thus his birth in village Jhabal near Taran-Taaran is likely. Muslim historian Syed Ahmed Latif connects Sardar Baghel Singh to Karore Singhia *Misal* with a fighting force of twelve thousand soldiers.

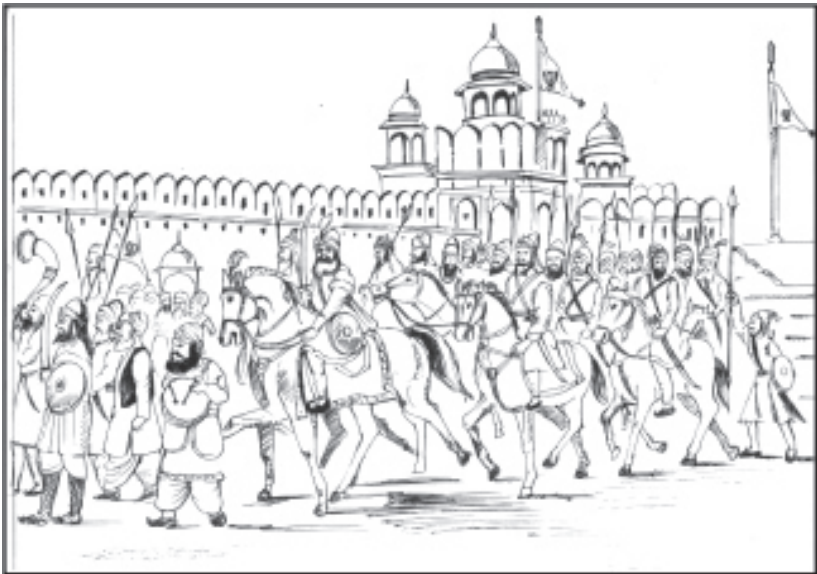


Figure 31: March 1783 Victory procession entering Lal Qila (Red Fort), Delhi.

Mughal oppression, and frequent invasions by Ahmed Shah Abdali during the second half of the eighteenth century, Sikhs were compelled to abandon their homes and live nomadic lives on horsebacks. They never

stopped fighting, but, took to guerrilla warfare combating including ambushes, hit-and-run tactics to attack governmental revenue collection places, or the rich henchmen and informants. They would also supplement their revenues by offering hiffazatt or protection to wealthy and small fiefs for a fee. With financial gains and strength in numbers, Sikh *Misals* considered it opportune time and started consolidating their areas of rule. Under the command of Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, Sikhs captured Sirhind on January 13, 1764. Zain Khan, the Governor, was killed in the battle and Khalsa divided the area of Sirhind among them. In Feb 1764 Karore Singhia *Misal* had a clash with the Jagirdar of Saharanpur, when *Misal's* leader Sardar Karora Singh died of bullet injury. He had no children; thus the command of the *Misal* was entrusted to Sardar Baghel Singh.

In 1768, head of Rohela Chiefdom, Najib-ud-daula accepted the protection of Khalsa for the area under his control. Thus Baghel Singh's *Misal* became power center with a steady income. This can be considered beginning of Sikh administration or governance. Another Chief, Hasan Khan of Jalalabad, had abducted a Brahmin's daughter. The Brahmin asked for help from Sardar Baghel Singh. Sardar Baghel Singh accompanied by Karam Singh attacked Jalalabad on December 11, 1773. In the skirmish, Hasan Khan was killed. Sardar Baghel Singh freed the girl and took possession of Hasan Khan's riches. Sardar Baghel Singh also arranged the marriage of the girl. He warned caste conscious people, if they insulted the girl, it be taken as insult to Khalsa and punishable. Zabita Khan of Gaunsgarh (Uttar Pradesh) also accepted the protection of Khalsa and paid protection money. Delhi rulers were not happy over Sikhs exercising autonomy once again. Abdul Ahmed Khan, Minister from Delhi, sent a force under his brother Amjid Khan's command to warn Zabita Khan. Khalsa forces aided Zabita Khan in a battle at Amir Nagar on March 11, 1776 in which its commandeer was killed. His forces retreated after heavy loss and Sikh forces beating the drums of victory took over their possessions and plundered Aligarh, Kausgung and some areas. With each victory, Khalsa forces established their superiority.

Sardar Baghel Singh, Sardar Karam Singh, and Sardar Sahib Singh were camping with their forces in Shalimar Area of Delhi, in September 1778. Hearing about the presence of Khalsa in Delhi, to avoid clash with Khalsa, Shah Alam sent his Minister Abdul Ahmed Khan with gifts and offer of friendship to Khalsa. The three Sikh *Misal* leaders sensed that the imperial Delhi was not up

to resisting the Sikh forces in a battlefield. Sikhs also took notice of the place where Guru HariKrishan Ji had visited in Delhi. The Sikhs took over the property to construct a *Gurudwara* there. Abdul Ahmed Khan, Shah Alam's emissary, had a selfish motto, therefore, he allowed the *Gurudwara* construction to proceed. Within days, he asked Sardar Baghel Singh for help to regain their lost territory of Malwa. Sardar Baghel Singh diplomatically agreed to help him. Abdul Ahmed Khan when arrived with his arsenal and forces to liberate his area, he found Amar Singh and Baghel Singh united. He returned to Delhi on October 14, 1779 leaving his entire arsenal for Sikhs. He also paid rupees seven lakhs ransom for his life. Fed up of losses to Khalsa, in June 1781 Sultan Shah Alam of Delhi agreed to pay one-eighth of its revenue to Khalsa towards protection of area between river Ganges and Yamuna. This arrangement did not last for long.

In March 1783, Khalsa invaded Delhi with a force of thirty-thousand. Khalsa captured the Delhi Red Fort and started taking over control of royal property. Shah Alam offered a peace treaty. Sardar Baghel Singh, instead of seeking riches for himself, asked for ownership transfer and control of all locations where Sikh Gurus had stepped, for construction of *Gurudwaras*. A peace treaty was agreed to, with the following conditions:

- 1) The royal treasury would pay rupees three lakhs to Khalsa.
- 2) Ownership of all lands where Sikhs Gurus had stayed would be transferred to Khalsa.
- 3) Out of every rupee octroi collected by royal treasury, six annas or 6/16 will go to Khalsa for construction of *Gurudwaras*. To oversee the construction, Sardar Baghel Singh with a force of 4000 horsemen would stay in Delhi and all their expenses would be borne by the royal treasury. Delhi Kotwali or Police Headquarters will remain under Khalsa control till Khalsa stays in Delhi.

Gurudwaras at Moti Bagh, Sis Gunj, Bangla Sahib, Rakab Gunj, *Gurudwara Mata Sundri*, *Gurudwara* at Majnu Ka Tila, and *Gurudwara Nanak Piao* were constructed under this agreement. A serious controversy arose for *Gurudwara Rakab Gunj* as a mosque had been constructed at the site and Muslim clergy did not wish to vacate the land. Sikh records indicated burial of an urn containing the cremated ashes of Guru Teg Bahadur Ji at the site. Sikhs offered to dig the site and if the urn was not found, they would re-construct the mosque. On digging the place, the urn was found. Shah Alam permitted the

construction of *Gurudwara* and issued government *Sanad* (*Patta-Registration*) ownership title to Sikhs. Under the treaty to vacate Red Fort, Shah Alam also issued another *Sanad* allotting total of 63 acres for construction of other historical *Gurudwaras*. At the time of departure of Sardar Baghel Singh, after construction of *Gurudwaras*, Shah Alam presented one elephant, five horses, and many more precious gift to Khalsa.

On February 11, 1785 Marhatta Raja Amba Ji captured Delhi. To avoid invasions and looting by Sikhs, he reached an understanding with Khalsa on March 30 1785, and agreed to pay ten lakh rupees yearly to Khalsa. Till the end of his life in 1802, Sardar Baghel Singh received his share of money, as per agreement.

The Sikh Diaspora will remain eternally grateful to these great Sikhs who recovered the historical sites associated with Sikh Gurus and built places of worship for Sikhs to visit in freedom.

Sultan Ul Kaum

Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia

(1718-1783)

Sultan ul Kaum (King of Nation) Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia was born On May 03rd, 1718 in the house of Sardar Badar Singh in village Ahluwal located between Lahore and Amritsar. His forefathers were engaged in business. His mother was very religious lady. When he was only four years of age in the year 1722, destiny snatched his father, leaving mother and son to comfort each other. In the company and influence of his mother Jassa Singh started to learn, reciting and singing Gurbani hymns.

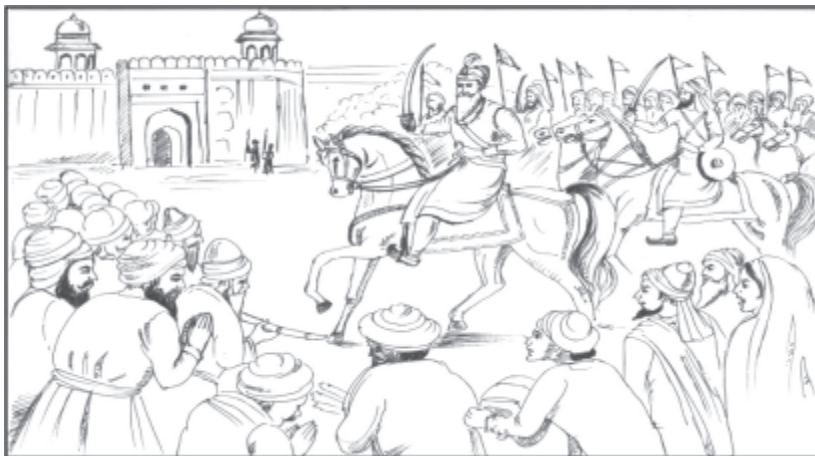


Figure 32: Victory procession at Lahore - January 1764

During 1723, residents of the village happened to visit *Mata Sundri Ji* (also known as *Mata Sunder Kaur Ji*) at Delhi. Jassa Singh accompanied by his mother joined the troupe to Delhi. During their stay at Delhi, child Jassa Singh and his mother happened to sing Gurbani which was enjoyed by both sangat

and *Mata Ji*. At the behest of *Mata ji*, his mother agreed to leave Jassa Singh in the care of *Mata Sundri Ji* for kirtan learning and education. He stayed for next six years with *Mata Ji* and learnt Kirtan and marshal arts education regarding war and peace from *Bhai Mani Singh*. He also learnt Persian language there. *Bhai*Bagh Singh, his maternal uncle, happened to visit Delhi in 1729 and brought back Jassa Singh with him to Panjab.

At that time Sardar Kapoor Singh was camping in Kartarpur. His uncle visited Kapoor Singh along with his nephew and sister. His sister and Jassa Singh recited *Asa Di Var* kirtan which delighted everybody including Kapoor Singh. Both mother and son agreed to stay with Kapoor Singh's squad for a month at the request of Jatha (squad). During their stay Kapoor Singh was charmed by soft talks of Jassa Singh. Kapoor Singh offered to adopt him as his son. Jassa Singh was also administered Amrit (Baptized) and learnt the discipline of Khalsa, further training in martial arts. He was assigned the duties to look after the fleet of horses and store of Khalsa. While looking after horses, Jassa Singh learned horse riding. Due to his nature of supreme devotion, commitment, service to humanity, destiny made him commander of a squadron of Khalsa Army on Diwali day of year 1745. From there Jassa Singh never looked back.

Resident of Marhi Kamboki village Sardar Sukha Singh joined squad of Sham Singh at the age of 15. It was the time when Kotwal of Amritsar *Kazi Abdul Razak* got killed by Sardar Agharh Singh (year 1738). Massa Rangarh a known criminal and cruel man succeeded him as Kotwal of Amritsar with a mission to annihilate Sikhs. With the backing of governmental forces he occupied Darbar Sahib and killed all the Sikh employees of Darbar Sahib. A Sikh can see his body cut into pieces but cannot tolerate disrespect or sacrilege of his *Gurudwara*. Sardar Mehtab Singh and Sardar Sukha Singh avenged the disrespect by killing Massa Rangarh in bright day light in Darbar Sahib and fleeing away with his head.

In January 1746 while Jassa Singh and Sukha Singh's squads were on way to the hills; they halted at Rohri Sahib for preparing Langar. Commander Jaspat Rai attacked them. Jaspat Rai was riding his elephant, Nibahu Singh cut off his head from his body. His forces retreated and the Sikh forces were able to enter the marshes for safety. When *Diwan* Lakhpat Rai got the news of his brother's death at the hands of Sikhs, he was furious and vowed to take revenge from them. He got a proclamation issued for massacre of Sikhs. On March 10th, 1746,

despite a petition by general body of Hindus that the execution should not take place on Amavas, he arranged to kill all the Sikh government employees and shopkeepers in Lahore on that day. He also desecrated and destroyed the Sikh scriptures. Incidence is discussed as *Chotta Ghallughara* in detail at page 210.

War of succession between the Yahya Khan and Shah Nawaz sons of Zakaria Khan, though gave some respite to Sikhs. They consolidated their position. On October 14, 1745 they assembled at Amritsar to celebrate Bandi Chhor Divas. They also passed a Gurmatta to increase their bands (Jathas). Shah Nawaz succeeded to his father's position. His *Diwan* Kaura Mal and another adviser Adina Beg advised Nawaz to relent harsh policy towards Sikhs in view of rising threat of Ahmed Shah Abdali who succeeded Nadir Shah.

In December, 1747 Ahmed Shah Abdali invaded Lahore. On January 12, 1748 he plundered the suburbs and extracted a heavy tribute. Devastating the towns on way he advanced to Manupur near Sirhind. Mughal forces lead by Wazir Qamarudin and his son Muinuddin (better known as Mir Mannu) checked his advances on March 11, 1748. Governor of Lahore Shah Nawaz fled. Khalsa also saw opportunity in the weakness of administration of Lahore as such they annexed Darbar Sahib, by killing Salabat Khan, the ruler of Amritsar City and occupied Amritsar and celebrated Vaisakhi on March 29, 1748, laid the foundation of Ram Rauni fort. Nawab Kapoor Singh desire to retire due to his age. Jassa Singh Ahluwalia was nominated joint chief Dal Khalsa and a 10 member committee (which later came to be known as *Misals*) under the leadership of Jassa Singh Ahluwalia. Sikhs also split the organized regiments into over 60 hands and deprived the retreating Afghans of their stores and horses.

Year of 1748 was another eventful year for Sikhs. On April 09th 1748, Mir Mannu became the Governor of Lahore and Multan. He appointed Kaura Mal as his *Diwan* replacing Diwan Lakhpat Rai. A fine of 30 lakhs was imposed on Lakhpat Rai. While a sum of 22 lakhs was recovered from Lakhpat Rai, Kaura Mal paid 8 lakhs of his personal money and handed over Lakhpat Rai to Sikhs. Instead of killing him at once, Jassa Singh Ahluwalia suggested to tie Lakhpat Rai with ropes and place in captivity in a lavatory for six months, where his destiny made him pay for his bad and cruel deeds.

Like previous Rulers, Mir Mannu after settling down, decided to annihilate Sikhs. Sikhs started to move to other areas. Adina Beg commander of Jullundur made an offer to Jassa Singh Ahluwalia and Jassa Singh Ramgarhia

to join his services along with their forces. While Jassa Singh Ramgarhia accepted the offer, Jassa Singh Ahluwalia turned down the offer.

Khalsa decided to celebrate Bandi Chhor Divas of 1748 at Amritsar as such they assembled there. Mir Mannu got the inkling. Mir Mannu dispatched his forces to encircle Singhs and ordered commander of Jullundur to help the forces sent by him. Some five hundred Sikhs took shelter in Ram Raoni fort and remaining rushed to jungles and marshes for shelter.

Abdali invaded India second time during this period. Jassa Singh Ramgarhia sent a message to Kaura Mal to lift siege of Ram Raoni. Accepting the council of Kaura Mal, Mir Manu ordered to lift the siege and offered a robe of estate to buy peace with the Sikhs. In 1749 Shah Nawaz annexed Multan. Mir Mannu visualizing the situation, thought of taking help of Khalsa. He offered to employ Jassa Singh Ahluwalia and his men to attack Multan. Shah Nawaz and his men could not match the bravery of Sikhs. Kaura Mal was able to recapture Multan for Mir Mannu. On the advice of Kaura Mal, Mir Manuu increased the estate given to Singhs. In 1751 A D once again Abdali attacked India. Mir Mannu called Khalsa for help this time also and Khalsa forces did arrive. For reason known to him and his men only, Mir Mannu's forces fired cannon at the Khalsa; as such Khalsa forces retreated to Amritsar. Mir Manu's forces were defeated by Abdali. Mir Manu, blamed Khalsa for his defeat, confiscated the estate and redeployed patrol to liquidate them.

On November 04th, 1753 after the death of Mir Manu, his widow assumed governorship of Lahore. Singhs, to take advantage of the situation, started to return from hideouts which increased the strength of Khalsa. This led to formation of Jathas into *Misals*. A ten member committee was formed to assist the joint chief of Sikhs. The committee members became the chiefs of Sikh organization called *Misals*. Each *Misal* was responsible to defend the villagers and areas under them and in return for the defense, *Misals* would get 20 percent of the produce of the village.

To keep the administration under their control, Lahore Governor found easy way. He would send a message to foreign invaders to attack. By the beginning of 1756 Lahore administration got deteriorated. To keep her control, widow of Mir Mannu (Mughlani Begum) sent a message to Abdali for yet another attack on India. During fourth attack in Nov, 1756, Abdali plundered areas including Delhi, Abdali was on way back with his booty of millions worth of precious items, thousand of slaves and sixteen Mughal princesses. As soon

as Abdali and his forces crossed Jamuna, as planned by Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, Singhs started looting and freeing the prisoners. Abdali was furious on his loss as such on reaching Lahore, Abdali appointed his 11 year old son Temur Shah as Governor. He also appointed an able and trusted Afghan General Jahan Khan as his deputy. Temur Shah under instructions from his father dispatched a force under Jahan Khan to finish the Sikhs. In May 1757 his outnumbered forces demolished Ram Rauni fort and many *Gurudwaras* of the area.

In the meantime Adina Beg asked for help of Singhs to gain his lost territory of Jullundur and to recapture Sirhind. Adina Beg recaptured Sirhind on March 21st, 1758 with the help of Khalsa and Marathas. On April 11, 1758 they snatched Lahore from Temur Shah for Adina Beg. After becoming a ruler with the help of Khalsa, Adina Beg became an enemy of Khalsa. Khalsa punished him by killing him on September 15th, 1758. His son Hasan Beg also suffered a blow from Sikhs and fled the field. Thus Khalsa took over the entire area which he was ruling.

In 1761 when Khalsa took control of Lahore, Harbhagat Niranjan of Jandiala sent a message to Ahmad Shah Durrani inviting him to attack once again. On February 03rd, 1762 Ahmad Shah Durani attacked India sixth time. Khalsa got the news of possible attack as such they decided to leave the families at a safer place in Malwa. While Dal Khalsa was on way to Malwa, Ahmad Shah and his Indian allies (Bhikhan Shah Nawab of Malerkotla and Zaian Khan of Sirhind) suddenly attacked Khalsa on Feb 05, 1762 from behind near village Kup (about 12km from Malerkotla). Sardar Charat Singh, Sardar Hari Singh Bhangi and Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia showed great bravery. During the course of battle Charat Singh changed five horses due to their exhaustion, yet kept on fighting. It is believed that Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia received 64 wounds on his body, yet caused no despondency and he kept on fighting.

This was unfortunate day of February 05th, 1762, when Khalsa forces lost heavily (more than 12000 soldiers and more 20,000 innocent children and ladies and old men were slaughtered with the intension of genocide(full scale butchery) by Afghan raider and his Indian allies. That day is remembered in Sikh History as Wada Ghalughara (greater holocaust). At night Ahmad Shah gave up pursuit and returned to Lahore via Sirhind. He reached Amritsar a day before Vaisakhi, deployed cannons and demolished *Hari-mandir* Sahib and filled the sarovar with debris.

Sikh Warriors waited for their wounds to heal, In May Khalsa invaded Sirhind. Ruler of Sirhind Zian Khan offered a robe of 50 thousand in an effort to buy a peace with Khalsa. October of 1762 Khalsa decided to celebrate Bandi Chhor Divas at Amritsar Sahib, Ahmad Shah sent his emissary to Khalsa with an offer of peace. After robbing the emissary, Singhs sent him back, rejecting his offer. On October 16th evening Ahmad Shah reached Amritsar with his force. Early in the morning of October 17th, Khalsa attacked on his forces. On that day Singhs inflicted heavy loss on him and his forces. Under the shadow of night Ahmad Shah escaped to Lahore, made Kabli Mal Governor of Lahore and returned to Afghanistan.

Singhs started to consolidate their territories and started to rebuild *Gurudwaras* after his return to Kabul. In 1763 Khalsa assembled to celebrate Vaisakhi, when a Brahmin of Kasoor approached Dal Khalsa and informed them that the ruler has abducted his wife by force. Dal Khalsa attacked the city of Kasoor by afternoon, inflicted heavy casualties on the ruler's force. They plundered the city for three days, liberated wife of the Brahmin, and punished Usman Khan, the ruler of Kasoor, for his misdeed. Abdali had tasted defeat at the hands of Khalsa and wanted to avenge. He sent a general with his force. Khalsa had an exchange with his forces near Wazirabad and gave him a crushing defeat.

On January 13th, 1764 Khalsa captured Lahore. Living up to their character, Khalsa did not destroy any masjid or killed a single Afghan prisoner in cold blood. In 1765 Sikhs divided Lahore between Gujjar Singh and Lehna Singh Bhangi and Sobha Singh of Kanhaiya *Misal*. They forbade plunder and established a just administration. They also struck coins as a mark of their sovereignty. However Abdali in the attack of 1766 again took over control of Lahore. People of Lahore suggested the name of Lehna Singh for Governorship, which Lehna Singh declined. People of Lahore were happy with Sikh rule, since Sikhs were considered sons of the soil, besides Ahmed Shah plundered the city, molested the women, in every invasion. They did not spare even the Muslims population. In contrast Khalsa looted the looter and got freed the prisoners the troops would take with it. Lastly Khalsa maintained the excellence in their character. They respected the chastity of women folk of all religions. Many Hindu and Muslim ladies were freed by Khalsa from their abductors. Syed Bulle Shah a *Sufi* saint openly advocated for Sikh rule. Qazi Noor Mohd, who arrived in India with Abdali troop in 1764, appreciated Khalsa character in his writings.

People of Lahore were not happy with the Governor appointed by Abdali, as such they were very sympathetic to Khalsa. Abdali planned his ninth invasion after making greater preparations. He reached Lahore without being challenged. All the Sikh *Misal* chiefs were out of Punjab leaving Sardar Hari Singh Bhangi. Abdali sent his emissary to Sardar Hari Singh and Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia for peace talk. Both of them refused to talk with him. Abdali handed over governorship to Dadan Khan as new Governor of Lahore and started for Delhi. At Ismailabad, Najib Uddaula requested Abdali to return and not to attack Delhi to which he agreed. On March 17th, 1767 Abdali decided to return. Fearing Sikh guerilla attacks, he changed his route this time also, to return to Kabul without waiting and resting in Lahore. Abdali avoiding clash with Sikhs was a clear sign to Khalsa that he has started fearing them. Khalsa took it as a blessing of the Guru and tireless efforts of sardars including Jassa Singh Ahluwalia. Bhangi *Misal* gained control of Lahore on April 16th 1765, without any resistance. After gaining control of the City, Khalsa also captured Government Mint. On this victory, the Sikhs not only honored Jassa Singh Ahluwalia with a title “Sultan ul Kaum” (King of the Nation) but also issued a coin at this historic occasion. He also inscribed the same Persian words as were inscribed by *Baba* Banda Singh Bahadur on the coins issued by him.

With the bravery and guidance of Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, his territory spread between Rivers Sutlej and Bias. In 1789 he captured Kapurthala as well to annex into his area. The brave heart died on October 20th, 1783 near Amritsar after guiding the destiny of Khalsa.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh

Sardar Maha Singh, Chief of Sukherchakia *Misal*, and his wife Sardarni Raj Kaur were blessed with a son on November 13, 1780 at Gujranwala, the capital of Sukherchakia *Misal*. The boy was named Buddh Singh. Maha Singh was fighting a battle with Chatta Chief Peer Mohd at the time. Maha Singh returned home a victor, and learned about the birth of his son. Exuding a victor's pride, he changed his son's name from Buddh Singh to Ranjit Singh, meaning war-victorious.



Figure 33: Maharaja Ranjit Singh
Drawing by: Raj Singh Tattal
(the Pen-Tacular-Artist)

In his childhood, Ranjit suffered from smallpox, and as a result he lost sight in his left eye and his face was pitted with pockmarks. Ranjit Singh was twelve years old in 1792 when his father died and he became the Chief of the Sukerchakia *Misal*, that controlled Gujranwala and a few surrounding villages. The affairs of the state were managed by his mother Raj Kaur, and a very ambitious would be mother-in-law Sada Kaur of Kanhaiya *Misal*. At sixteen, Ranjit Singh was married to Kanhaiya *Misal* Chief Sardar Gurbakhsh Singh's daughter Mehtab Kaur. At eighteen, he took a second wife Raj Kaur, daughter of

Sardar Ran Singh Nakkai of Nakkai *Misal*, thus gaining a stronghold amongst Confederate *Misal* Chiefs.

Before the British made India part of their vast empire in 1849, Mughals and Afghani invaders ruled India for many centuries. Mughals established a dynastic rule in India since Babar, whereas Afghani invaders came to plunder

India, often at the invitation of disenfranchised chieftains. Once again, Mughal king at Delhi, Tipu Sultan and Raja of Kangra and Rohilla chief of Rampur invited ruler of Afghanistan, this time Shah Zaman, grandson of Ahmad Shah Abdali who ascended the throne in 1793 at the age of 23 to invade Panjab. Though on face of it, Shah Zaman asked Sikhs (Rulers of Panjab) the way to Delhi, yet he had privately confirmed to Mughals and Rohillas that he would come to teach Sikhs a lesson. All the *Misal* chiefs except Ranjit Singh agreed to allow him passage. However, Shah Zaman had to make a retreat due to trouble at home. In his second attempt he did capture Lahore. Sikhs gathered at Amritsar to defend the city. Ranjit Singh with his 9,000 persons was responsible for security of the holy city. In the fierce hand to hand fight in Amritsar on January 12th, 1797, 15,000 Sikh forces killed 20,000 soldiers of Shah Zaman. Sikh forces pursued the retreating Afghans up to the out skirts of Lahore. Ranjit Singh's recovery of Shah Zaman's canons from Jhelum river and dispatching them to Kabul was another success. He received *Khilat* (Robe of honor) in return from Shah Zaman in regularizing his occupation of Lahore. This made the beginning of the rise of Ranjit Singh and increased his reputation among Sikhs and residents of Lahore. He made Lahore the capital of his kingdom. On Vaisakhi day, April 12, 1801, twenty-year old Ranjit Singh proclaimed himself as the Maharaja of the Punjab, a Sikh Commonwealth.

“Ranjit Singh was now the proud owner of the superb gardens and palaces of Lahore, built by the most aesthetically refined of the Mughals, the great



Figure 34: ‘The Shalimar Gardens, Lahore’, by W.G. Osborne from *The Court and Camp of Runjeet Sing*, Henry Colburn Publisher, London 1840, p. 141
(*Courtesy Kapany Collection*)

Jahangir. In these he now engaged in the pleasure of wines, women and song, yet retained in the deep devotion to the Sikh faith.”-Sikh Art & Literature. Published 1999 by Routledge, London, USA and Canada. Copy right The Sikh Foundation).

In commemorating his crowning as Maharaja, he issued Nanakshahi coins as symbols of his sovereignty, similar to coins issue by Banda Singh Bahadur. Ranjit Singh brought law and order and freedom of religion to all citizens in his empire. Hindus and Muslims had equal rights under the Sikh Empire. Ranjit Singh put an end to the centuries old non-secular governance of India and abolished the “Jizya” tax on Hindus and Sikhs imposed by various Muslim Emperors. Ranjit Singh was extremely reluctant to use the death penalty.

For his conquests, Ranjit Singh needed to have a strong army. To modernize his military, he appointed British, Italian, French, Russian, and American Generals. His Khalsa Army, the best in Asia was able to conquer the vast territory between the limits of British India to the East and the Kingdom of Kabul to the West that became known as the Sikh Empire, or Sarkar-i-Khalsa.

Ranjit Singh, the fearless warrior, expanded his territory year after year. In 1802 Ranjit Singh captured Amritsar from Bhangi *Misal* and became owner of famous gun zumzum, which was in possession of Mai Sukhan widow of Gulab Singh. His exchange of turban (solemn vow to become brothers) with Fateh Singh Ahluwalia, descendant of Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, was a masterly stroke to gain power house, which further elevated his standing in the region. In the following years he captured the entirety of central Punjab from the Sutlej to the Jhelum, and called it the Sikh Empire. Next, he subdued the smaller Sikh and Pashtun principalities of Punjab.

In 1807 Ranjit Singh trounced Afghan chief Qut-bu-din to win Kasur. In 1813 he appended Attock to his territory and in quick succession his forces conquered Peshawar, Dera Ghazi Khan, Dera Ismail Khan, Hazare, Kohat and Bannu. In 1818 he annexed Multan. In 1819 Ranjit Singh conquered Kashmir and freed Shah Shuja from captivity. In gratification, Shah Shuja’s wife gifted the Koh-i-Noor diamond to Maharaja Ranjit Singh. In 1838, Ranjit Singh and his troops took part in the victory parade along with the British, after restoring Shah Shuja to the Afghan throne at Kabul.

Sikhs and Afghans had their last confrontation in 1837 at Jamraud. Ranjit Singh’s commander-in-chief, Hari Singh Nalwa, kept the Afghan army at bay,

with a handful of soldiers while awaiting reinforcements from Lahore. J.D.Cunningham, narrated the bravery of Hari Singh Nalwa in his book - History of the Sikhs, writes, “Sirdar Hari Singh had occupied the entrance of the Khaiber Pass and entrenched a position at Jamraud, as the basis of his scheme for getting through the formidable defile. The Kabul troops marched and assembled on the eastern side of Khaiber, under the command of Muhammad Akbar Khan, most war like of the Amir’s sons. An attack was made on the post of Jamraud, on the 30th April 1837; but the Afghans could not carry it, although they threw the Sikhs in the disorder. Hari Singh, by feigning a retreat, drew the enemy more fully into the plains; the brave leader was present everywhere among his retiring and rallying masses.” Although the Afghans retreated to Kabul to deal with their internal fighting, Hari Singh Nalwa was killed.

Mughals and Afghani invaders plundered India, and they desecrated non-Muslim places of worship. Darbar Sahib Amritsar was demolished and the holy water tank filled with debris on numerous occasions. But, Sikhs rebuilt or restored the shrine every time. Maharaja Ranjit Singh restored, and renovated the Harimandir Sahib. The reconstruction work started in 1802 and continued through the year 1839. The renovation work added marble cladding to major portions of the temple complex. Walls above the plinth level, chhatris, and domes were all embellished with gold-leaf ornamentation. Ranjit Singh, true to his secular thought, also arranged for gold-lining at Kashi Vishwanath Temple at Varanasi, and offered six quintal gold for interior gold plating at Jawala Mukhi Temple at Kangra. Harimandir or Durbar Sahib at Amritsar, gained world-wide renown as “The Golden Temple” after the shrine and surrounding complex renovations, and gold-lining ornamentations were completed. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was also instrumental in construction of Sachkhand Takht Hazoor Sahib and Takht Patna Sahib, two historical *Gurudwaras* associated with Guru Gobind Singh Ji. The Maharaja’s services in the construction of Sikh *Gurudwaras* and other structures are visible signs of his reverence towards the Sikh Gurus and Sikh congregations; however, his personal life paints a picture of an individual either lacking knowledge of Sikh code of conduct or someone choosing to not conform to it.

Though Ranjit Singh built his empire on the foundations of the Sarbat Khalsa and the Confederation of Sikh *Misals*, and he called it Sarkar-i-Khalsa, his personal commitment to Sikh values and Sikh code of conduct remains questionable! Ranjit Singh built himself a reputation as “the Lion of Punjab.”

He also skillfully expanded his territory, and set-up a secular political system, but, he had a weakness for women and liquor; both traits contrary to the tenets of his faith. He is known to have married twenty women. At age sixteen, he married Maharani Mehtab Kaur and at eighteen he married Raj Kaur (renamed Datar Kaur), the daughter of Sardar Ran Singh Nakkai, of Nakkai *Misal*. Kharak Singh, his elder son and the heir apparent was born to the second wife. Both these marriages happened in his youth when he could have been easily influenced. But his wish for having more women in his life continued till his later years. Ratan Kaur and Daya Kaur were wives of Sahib Singh Bhangi of Gujrat. After Sahib Singh's death in 1811, Ranjit Singh married them both, in "*chadar-andazi*" rite. Ratan Kaur gave birth to Multana Singh in 1819, and Daya Kaur gave birth to Kashmira Singh in 1819 and to Pashaura Singh in 1821. Ranjit Singh even maintained relations with dancing girls, an absolute taboo in Sikh faith. Under the influence of liquor, he made a marriage proposal to a dancing girl named Moran. For this contemptuous act, Ranjit Singh was sanctioned by Akali Phoola Singh of Akaal Takht, in accordance with Sikh tradition. Respecting the authority of the Akaal Takht, Ranjit Singh accepted the punishment rendered to him, and presented himself (in 1802), as directed. The initial punishment of lashes was later converted to a substantial monetary fine.

The Maharaja in accepting the sanction and presenting himself before the Akaal Takht for punishment, displayed a reverential attitude towards Sikh religious institutions, and confirmed that every Sikh irrespective of his social status is subordinate to the authority vested in Akaal Takht. But Maharaja did not reform his polygamist stance. In 1833 he married Gul Begum coming from the same background as Moran. Jind Kaur of Gujranwala was the last wife of Ranjit Singh. Because Ranjit Singh was concerned about the failing health of his heir apparent Kharak Singh, at the prompting of Jind Kaur's father, Manna Singh Aulakh, fifty-five year old Maharaja married eighteen year old exquisite beauty in 1835 (The marriage was solemnized as per tradition Karewa (*Chadar Andazi*), normally followed for widow marriage). On 6 September 1838, she gave birth to Duleep Singh. Though he had many children, Ranjit Singh acknowledged only Kharak Singh and Dalip Singh as his sons. Writing about Ranjit Singh's character, J.D.Cunningham in his book History of the Sikhs says, "As regards his character, he was not altogether without faults. Temperance and chastity were not his conspicuous virtues." Happenings at Ranjit Singh's funeral

also affirm ignorance of Sikh principles, in his close associates. Despite forbidding of Sati tradition in Sikh faith, four Hindu queens and seven concubines self-immolated themselves on Ranjit Singh's cremation pyre. J D Cunningham in his "History of the Sikhs" comments about this event, "Mr. Clerk had been directed to explain to Kharak Singh the disapprobation with which the English viewed the practice of Sati, with reference to what had taken place at his father's funeral." The British outlawed the Sati practice after Punjab came under their rule. Such blatant violation of Sikh principles during Ranjit Singh's time was likely being carried out under Brahminical influence exercised by his courtiers and advisors. The book "Sikh Art & Literature" edited by Kerry Brown, published in 1999 by Rutledge, London, and copy righted by The Sikh Foundation, provides strong evidence of such influence in Maharaja Ranjit Singh's administration on page 41, "A further insight into the nature of Ranjit Singh's troops is a group of large silk war banners reputedly purchased by Lord Dalhousie at the sale of the Lahore toshakhana, or treasury, of Maharajas after fall of the Sikh imperium. These were according to Dalhousie family tradition, used at the battle of Gujarat, on February 21, 1849 when the Sikh army was finally defeated by the British. An engraving by the Russian Prince Alexis Soltykoff shows these large banners, or others similar to these, being borne into battle by Sikh riders (Figure 29). Upon close examination the banners provide evidence of the complex nature of religious belief and secularism intermingling in Ranjit Singh's army. The device on the banners is, in fact, Durga, the avenging goddess of the Hindus who symbolizes the victory of good over evil, a theme not inimical to later Sikh thought, the other side of the banner shows a solar disc. It is natural to wonder why a Sikh ruler's force would use banners with clearly Hindu symbols."

Besides his personal failings about women and liquor, and general laxity in conforming to Sikh moral principles, Ranjit Singh can also be held responsible for dismantling the traditional Sikh Shrine management. The transfer of management of the Golden Temple and other significant places of worship of Sikhs, from the congregation to the state, set a precedent for Britishers during their rule. One can only wonder as to what were the influences behind the actions of a secular Maharaja to take over of management of only the Sikh shrines. Ranjit Singh died on June 27, 1839 and his son Kharak Singh succeeded him as the Maharaja on September 1, 1839, after over two months of the death. This clearly shows that Ranjit Singh's Empire contained, within

itself, the seed of destruction. Ranjit Singh had placed Khushali Ram a Gaur Brahmin of Meerut, his brother Ram Lal and nephew Tej Ram, into high offices, without checking their background. In another blundering decision, Ranjit Singh appointed unscrupulous Dogra Rajput Dhian Singh as Prime Minister. Additionally He empowered Dhian Singh's brothers Gulab Singh and Suchet Singh, and nephew Hira Singh, with the title Raja(s) and allowed them to maintain their own private army. These conniving individuals in cahoots with the British dismantled the kingdom. J D Cunningham in his book History of the Sikhs writes, "Ranjit Singh found the Punjab a waning confederacy, prey to the factions of its chiefs."

Kharak Singh could not control the treachery of his administrative



Figure 35: 'Schir Singh [Sher Singh] revenant d'une revue de troupes aux environs d'Umritsar, Mars 1842' by Alexis Solytkoff, Voyages dans l'Inde, Paris, 1851
(Courtesy collection of Gursharan and Elvira Sidhu)

insiders. Barely 14 months after ascending to the throne, Kharak Singh died of slow poisoning, in prison, on November 5, 1840.

The deceitful advisers of the kingdom Gulab Singh, Teja Singh and Lal Singh fought a fake war with Britishers with the pre-negotiated surrender of all fertile land of Punjab and Kashmir, and dismantling of the Sikh Army. Maharaja Duleep Singh's kingdom was surrendered by saboteur Gulab Singh who negotiated ownership of partial assets for himself through the treaty between the British Government and the State of Lahore in 1846. Article 12 of the treaty read, "In consideration of the services rendered by Raja Gulab Singh of Jammu to the Lahore State, towards procuring the restoration of relations of amity

between the Lahore and British Governments, the Maharaja hereby agrees to recognize the independent sovereignty of Raja Gulab Singh, in such territories and districts in the hills as may be made over to the said Raja Gulab Singh by separate agreement between himself and British Government, with the dependencies thereof, which may have been in the Raja's possession since the time of the late Maharaja Kharak Singh; and the British Government in consideration of the good conduct of Raja Gulab Singh also agrees to recognize his independence in such territories and to admit him to the privileges of a separate treaty with the British Government."

Maharaja Duleep Singh was taken to England. In December 1846 Maharani Jindan surrendered political power to the council of ministers appointed by the British. She was dismissed and deposed to Shekhupura, with an annual pension of Rupees one hundred and fifty-thousand. In April 1849 she tried to escape, but, the British confiscated her property and pension. She still managed to escape to Nepal, where the Prime Minister Jung Bahadur, gave her asylum. For some time she lived a life of loneliness in Nepal. In 1860, the British arranged for Duleep Singh from England to visit Jind Kaur, in Calcutta. Ultimately, she was allowed to live with his son in England. She died on August 1, 1863 in Kenington.

With the annexation of Punjab by the British in 1849, the Sikh Kingdom came to an end. A memorial to this great Sikh warrior, clement administrator, and liberator of Punjab is located in Lahore, Pakistan.

Sardar Hari Singh Nalwa

HARI SINGH was born in the year 1791 at Gujranwala. His father Gurdial Singh was commander of Sukherchakia *Misal* and he died when Hari Singh was only seven years old. Thus his mother Dharam Kaur was responsible for his upbringing and education. In 1805, Maharaja Ranjit Singh impressed by Hari Singh's feats of bravery, recruited him as his personal attendant. During a hunting spree, Hari Singh killed a tiger with his bare hands, thus winning the title Nalwa meaning lion-killer. In admiration, Maharaja appointed him as commander of the "Sher-dil" regiment and Sardar Hari Singh Nalwa, a fearless Commander was honored with the title of Baghmaar for killing a leopard (Bagh) with his Sword and shield.



Figure 36: Fearless and brave commander-in Chief Sardar Hari Singh Nalwa

During the battle of Kasoor in 1807, when cannon fire failed to breach the fort walls, Hari Singh braving the shower of bullets, placed gunpowder at the base of the fort wall to blow open a hole. Successfully entering the fort, he captured Nawab Kutbudin Khan alive. As a reward for his bravery, Hari Singh was made commander of eight hundred horsemen.

In 1819 Maharaja Ranjit Singh annexed Kashmir and appointed Diwan Moti Ram the Governor. To aid the Governor in controlling a wide-spread disorder in the area, Hari Singh Nalwa was sent to Kashmir. Hari Singh grasped the reasons for the unrest, and implemented new policies to the liking of citizens. He reduced land tax, repealed indentured labor practices, abolished the marriage and childbirth tax, and ordered immediate financial relief to saffron farmers. Promoting equality, he extended the privilege of wearing shoes

and turbans to all citizens, a right hitherto denied to non Muslim population. After law and order situation stabilized, he handed over the responsibilities to Diwan Moti Ram, in November, 1821.

Hari Singh Nalwa remained governor of Peshawar from 1822 till his death in 1837. He arranged the construction of *Gurudwara* Panja Sahib, in Hasan Abdal, about 48 kilometers from Rawalpindi, in 1830. He was an able administrator and a skilled leader able to maintain law and order. During his stay at Peshawar, rowdy Pathans feared his presence and kept their militant and disorderly posture in check. Pathan women would say, “Haria Raghle” to quite their kids.

In October, 1831, during a meeting with Lord William Bentik, the British Governor General, Maharaja Ranjit Singh announced Prince Kharak Singh as his successor. Hari Singh Nalwa expressed his contrarian opinion and extended his sincere counsel publically to Maharaja Ranjit Singh in *The Sikhs in History*, “This State not belongs to one individual, but to Khalsa Commonwealth. It is the sacrifice of the whole people over a century, blessed by the guru’s grace, that we have won an empire. Let them choose who shall lead them by consensus (Gurmatta). Kharak Singh is my friend but not able to bear the burden. Let’s not fail our people when they need our passionate lead most.” Gopal Singh (n 34 p488) J.D.Cunningham in his book *History of the Sikhs* (page 172) in this connections also writes “The able chief, Hari Singh was one of those most averse to the recognition of the right of Prince Kharak Singh, and the heir apparent himself would seem to have aware of the feeling of the Sikh people.”

Hari Singh Nalwa’s judgment of Kharak Singh was on target. Kharak Singh’s own ineptness, and his ministers’ treachery killed him, a short time after coronation. Had Ranjit Singh heeded the warning by his loyal commander, and selected an able successor by consensus of Sikh scholars and intellectuals, history’s next chapter would have been definitely different. Historically, few subordinates have demonstrated the wisdom and courage to convey such sincere perspective to their superiors. Hari Singh’s reminder to Maharaja Ranjit Singh that the Empire belonged to the Khalsa, not Ranjit Singh reflects the honesty and sincerity to do the right thing. Ranjit Singh had perhaps forgotten that the foundation of the Khalsa Raj was built with the blood and sacrifices of innumerable eighteenth century Sikhs. This final failing of Sikh principles by Maharaja Ranjit Singh, led to an early curtain drop on India’s self-

governance. Once again India yielded her freedom to yet another foreign power, the British.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh trying to extend his territory up to Kabul captured Peshawar on May 06, 1834. Hari Singh transformed the earthen fortress of Jamraud into a strongly fortified structure to consolidate his gains. On April 27, 1837, thirty-thousand Pathans had surrounded the Jamraud fort. Mahan Singh immediately sent a message to the Maharaja asking for reinforcements. Raja Dhian Singh kept the Maharaja in dark about the grave situation. Hari Singh Nalwa, though not fully recovered from an illness, reached Jamraud with his forces, which made the Pathans flee in panic. Though Nalwa saved the fort of Jamraud from falling to Pathans, he himself fell to the bullet of a Pathan, on April 30, 1837. An honest community leader, a sincere friend, and a brave soldier laid down his life, in service.

The Resolute Sikh Women

Women relegated to social subservience for centuries, across the globe, were emancipated from the very beginning by the founders of the Sikh faith. Sikh women have fought, led revolts, ruled, taught and served actively, throughout the history of the Sikh endeavor. Considering these accomplishments took place in a male-dominated culture, makes them even more admirable. The heroics of many Sikh women have not been preserved in history books for numerous reasons; the foremost reason is that Sikhs were occupied in fighting the dark cloud of tyrannical rulers for so long, they did not have time to document all events as they occurred. Also historians paid by the subjugators were busy glorifying their masters. Blinded to the silver lining of unstoppable men and women fighting the atrocities, the historians did not pen their parables of bravery. They failed to share the stories of resistance - a power more potent than the power of terrorizing rulers. Women whose contributions to society remain obscure merit recognition as we share brief stories of selected great women of Sikh saga.

Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikh faith, questioned the social subordination of women, and then he proceeded to assign them absolute equality to man. Guru Nanak's ballad scribed on page 473 of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* says;

ਭੰਡਿ ਜੇਮੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਨਿਮੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਮੰਗਣੁ ਵੀਆਹੁ ॥ ਭੰਡਹੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਦੋਸਤੀ ਭੰਡਹੁ ਚਲੈ ਰਾਹੁ ॥
ਭੰਡੁ ਮੁਆ ਭੰਡੁ ਭਾਲੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਹੋਵੈ ਬੰਧਾਨੁ ॥ ਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਮੰਦਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਜਿਤੁ ਜੰਮਹਿ ਰਾਜਾਨ ॥
ਭੰਡਹੁ ਹੀ ਭੰਡੁ ਊਪਜੈ ਭੰਡੈ ਬਾਝੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਭੰਡੈ ਬਾਹਰਾ ਏਕੋ ਸਚਾ ਸੋਇ ॥

**"bhand jumiea bhand ninmiea bhand mungun viahu.
bhando hovai dosati bhando chalay rahu.
bhand muua bhand bhaliea bhand hovai bandhaan.
so kyo manda akhiea jit janmai rajaan.
bhando he bhand oopjai bhandai bajh na koe.
Nanak bhandai bahara aiko sacha soe."**

Translation: Of woman we are born, to woman engaged, to woman married. Woman we befriend, by woman life continues. Woman we seek when the first one dies, all relations are due to woman. Why call her evil, from whom great men are born. Without woman, no man would exist. O Nanak, only God depends not on woman.

Restrictions inflicted on female freedoms whether based on biology, creed, or chivalry, always resulted in denial of equality. Indian women, for centuries were restricted to domestic work and held back from receiving formal education. Even today, a girl child is seen as a parental liability until marriage because of the huge wedding expense, as compared to a son who will bring home a bride and dowry riches one day. The birth of a boy is celebrated with exuberance while newborn girls are received like unwelcome

gifts. Polygamy, child-marriage, *purdah*, ban on widow-marriage, and sati; all symbols of submissive status assigned to women, have been rightfully designated against the law. Women are battered, raped, and trafficked. In the workplaces everywhere, unequal pay for equal work prevails. Though, women today are far better off than in the centuries past; equality for women is still elusive.

Male chauvinism has infiltrated the spiritual realm also. A fatherly figure with beard and unshorn hair, is how GOD is depicted, in most faiths. In Sikh faith GOD is formless but, metaphorically it is addressed both as father and mother, emphasizing the gender equality. In man-woman spousal relationship too, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* reiterates equality, "Husband and wife are not those who merely live together; but, they become one soul in two bodies" (page 788) as equal partners.

ਧਨ ਪਿਰੁ ਏਹਿ ਨ ਆਖੀਅਨਿ ਬਹਨਿ ਇਕਠੇ ਹੋਇ ॥

ਏਕ ਜੋਤਿ ਦੁਇ ਮੂਰਤੀ ਧਨ ਪਿਰੁ ਕਹੀਐ ਸੋਇ ॥੩॥

**"dhan pir aeh n akhean behan ikathey hoe,
aik jot duae mooratee dhan pir keheeei soe."**

Translation: They are not said to be husband and wife, who merely sit together. They alone are called husband and wife, who have one light in two bodies.

Sikh Gurus rejected gender-biased traditions such as female infanticide, dowry, *purdah*, and *sati*. The Sikh Gurus promoted education for girls, and women's energetic participation in social, cultural, and religious activities, to match their contribution to family. Female initiates into the egalitarian order

“Khalsa” were given the surname Kaur, which means princess or lioness, just as men took the name Singh or lion. Women are sovereign individuals in their own right, and even upon marriage, Sikh women are not required to take the surname of their husbands.

The following brief life capsules of a few women, past and present, inspired by Guru Nanak’s message of social justice, gender equality, and uplifting of masses, continue to spread a message of hope with a fighting spirit. Sikh women not only enjoy equality in marriage, they have stood shoulder to shoulder with their menfolk in social and religious campaigns, in war, and in every walk of life. They have done so without neglecting their domestic role as housewives, as nurturing mothers, as inspiring teachers, and social reformers. Respectful epithet *Bibi* for unmarried young women and *Mata* for a married or older lady is commonly used.

Mata TRIPTA, divinely chosen to give birth to a special soul, holds an exalted place in Sikh history. Married to *Mehta* Kalyan Das Bedi, her son Nanak, was the greatest sage of all times who united the humanity and rejected the societal stratification and exploitation. Nanak’s elder sister lovingly known as Bebe NANAKI was the first one to recognize Nanak’s spiritual and socially revolutionary leanings. Playing an important role in Nanak’s upbringing, and his employment in Sultan Pur Lodhi, she also arranged eighteen-years old Nanak’s marriage to *Mata* SULAKHANI, in 1487. The loving elder sister of Nanak breathed her last in 1518. Nanak’s mother, Tripta passed away in 1522. *Mata* Sulakhni, spiritually elevated by her husband’s discourses, looked after the visitors making lodging and dining arrangements. She supported her husband in spreading the social revolution. *Mata* Sulakhani breathed her last in the village of Kartarpur, the final abode of Guru Nanak.

Mata KHEEVEE lived a life of comforts prior to *Bhai* Lehna’s ascension as the second Sikh Guru. The Sikh Gurus encouraged men, women, and children of faith to live righteously and perform selfless service (*seva*) of others. They encouraged this character building not just by words, but, by example. They anonymously partook in *seva* of pilgrims arriving after tiring journeys from faraway places. The transformation of Lehna Ji to Guru Angad, also transformed *Mata* Kheevee’s persona to one of humbleness and nurturing. Her dedication in community service is mentioned in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* in a verse by Bard Balvand on page 967;

ਬਲਵੰਡ ਖੀਵੀ ਨੇਕ ਜਨ ਜਿਸੁ ਬਹੁਤੀ ਛਾਉ ਪਤ੍ਰਾਲੀ ॥
ਲੰਗਰਿ ਦਉਲਤਿ ਵੰਡੀਐ ਰਸੁ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਖੀਰਿ ਘਿਆਲੀ ॥

**"Balwand Kheevē neik jan jis bahutī chhaao patraalee,
Langar dault vandiyaī ras Amrit kheer gheeli"**

Translation: Mata Kheevē, a noble soul, like a fruit tree with shade, she serves buttery sweet rice pudding in the kitchen.



Figure 37: Mata Kheevē preparing Langar for the Sangat

Mata Kheevē lived till 1582, thirty more years after Guru Angad Dev Ji. She persuaded her son Bhai Datu to acknowledge his misbehavior with Guru Amar Das and seek his pardon. She had the honor of meeting five Gurus in her lifetime. Guru Arjan attended Mata Kheevē's final rites.

*Mata MANSA DEVI also known as Ram Kaur was married into the affluent family of Baba Amar Das and lived a life of plenty. When Baba Amar Das entered the Sikh fold and went to Goindwal to develop the new town, Mata Mansa Devi gladly gave up the comfortable life to join in *kar-seva* duties. She gathered ladies from the nearby villages to join in the community service. From her own experience and feedback from village women, she recognized the *purdah* tradition as obtrusive one and a hindrance. So she brought it to the attention of Baba Amar Das and influenced him in rejecting both, the *purdah* and *sati* traditions. Mata Mansa Devi was a force for social reforms.*

Mata BHANI, born in the year 1534, is revered as the fountainhead of divine souls and reformers, who for humanity sacrificed their all. In the name



Figure 38: Mata Bhani with Guru Amar Das Ji, (Guru) Arjan and Bhai Jetha Ji (later Guru Ram Das Ji)

of “sacrifice” often an animal is killed, to please a deity. Sikhs sacrificed with their own lives. They did so for social justice and freedom of people from subjugation; not for pleasing a deity. *Mata Bhani* holds a distinct bearing in Sikh History as the daughter of Guru Amar Das (Nanak III), wife of Guru Ram Das (Nanak IV), mother of Guru Arjan Dev (Nanak V), and the matriarch of the subsequent Guru generations. *Mata Bhani*’s son, and *Mata GANGA JI*’s husband, Arjan was the first of a long line of Sikh martyrs. For freedom of religion, in challenging the Mughal Emperor Jahangir’s forced conversions, he gave his own life. Unfettered by the ruling tyrants, *Mata Ganga* also followed on the foot-steps of her predecessor Guru wives uplifting people socially and performing community service. *Mata Ganga* lived about 22 years after the martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev.

While Sikh Gurus led the fight against oppression offering of themselves in sacrifice, Sikh ladies stood shoulder to shoulder with the brave men, maintaining their high spirits. *Mata Ganga*’s husband Guru Arjan gave his life to protect freedom of religion. Their grandson Guru Teg Bahadur sacrificed his life to protect Hindu community’s right of religious freedom. Guru Teg Bahadur’s mother *Mata NANKI* and his wife *Mata GOJRI* received and

cremated his decapitated head in Anandpur Sahib, Courageously, and fully aware of the consequences. *Mata* GOOJRI stood by the principles as seven and nine years old grandsons Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh were bricked alive in a wall. Guru Gobind Rai was married to *Mata* JITO Ji (AJIT KAUR after baptism), daughter of *Bhai* Harjas Khatri of Lahore on 23 Harh, samat 1734 at Guru ke Lahore- Mahan Kosh page 393), corresponding year 1678 A.D. When Guru Gobind Singh created Khalsa, *Mata* Ajit Kaur had played a central part in the ceremony of Khalsa creation-famously adding sugar to the Amrit that the committed Sikhs were to drink. After death of *Mata* AJIT KAUR on Dec 05, 1700 *MATA* SUNDRI took over the responsibility to raise and educate all the four sons. She even mentally prepared the teenager sons Ajit Singh and Jujhar Singh to fight the massive Mughal army. *Mata* Sundri lived almost forty years after Guru Gobind Singh Ji, and guided the community through challenging times. She prompted *Bhai* Mani Singh to institute Damdami Taksal. She breathed her last in year 1747, and was cremated at *Gurudwara* Bala Sahib compound in Delhi. The house in Delhi where she stayed for many years is now *Mata* Sundri *Gurudwara*.

Mata SAHIB KAUR honored as the “Mother of Khalsa” had joined the court of Guru Gobind Singh as his spiritual-consort in the year 1701 A D after death of *Mata* Ajit Kaur on December 5, 1700 (Samat 1757 *Bikrami*- in article Dus Guru Mahal by Sukhjot Kaur) and lived a life devoted to social justice and community service. She was with Guru Ji at Nander in 1708 when he left for his heavenly abode. Guru Gobind Singh Ji at the time of his heavenly abode, handed over to her five weapons of Guru Hargobind Ji for safe custody, which are now being preserved in safe custody at *Gurudwara* Rakabgunj Sahib. She spent her remaining life until 1747 with *Mata* Sundri, in Delhi. She breathed her last in the year 1748 a year after *Mata* Sundri Ji. She was also cremated at *Gurudwara* Bala Sahib compound in Delhi (Dus Guru Mahal- Sukhjot Kaur).

Bibi SHARAN KAUR PABLA is one of the lesser known personalities in Sikh history who took on the daring responsibility to respectfully cremate the remains of thirty four martyrs of the Chamkaur compound including Ajit Singh and Jujhar Singh - Guru Gobind Singh Ji's sons, and her own husband *Bhai* Pritam Singh who also attained martyrdom in the battle. After leaving Anandpur on the night of December 5 and 6, 1704, Guru Gobind Singh and his forty Sikh soldiers stopped in Chamkaur to rest for the night. Reneging on their assurance of safe passage, the Mughals forces in thousands laid siege of the

compound. The forty Sikh warriors, Sahibzadas and Guru engaged the Mughal troops during the day. At fall of night only six Sikh warriors besides Guru remained, when the five warriors as Panj Pyarey ordered the Guru to leave the Chamkaur fortress, in the greater interest of Khalsa. Sharan Kaur was native of nearby village Raipur Rani. Guru Gobind Singh took a brief stop in Raipur Rani and entrusted her with the task of cremating the Sikhs who laid down their lives. With the help of one associate, during the night itself they prepared a large enough pyre, placed all the bodies on it, and lit the fire. Mughal soldiers seeing the fire flames rushed to the spot. It is believed that her companion, managed to escape. Sharan Kaur, is believed to have burned herself on the funeral pyre of the warriors to avoid being caught and dishonored by the Mughals. A *Gurudwara* was constructed in the village Raipur Rani in her memory 1945. Mai BHAGO (late 1600s–mid 1700s) was born in Punjab, India. She acquired a wide range of skills and traits in her childhood. Besides learning good homemaking skills from her mother, she learned martial arts, hand-to-hand combat, archery, swordsmanship, and horsemanship from her father. In 1705, after persuading the 40 soldiers who had just deserted the Guru, back into battle-field, she led them to fight against invading Mughals. This was the last battle of Guru Gobind Singh, at a place now famous as Muktsar. Mai Bhago later on went onto to become one of the bodyguards for Guru Gobind Singh. After Guru Gobind Singh Ji, she spent the rest of her life in Jinwada near Bidar.



Figure 39: Mai Bhago Ji (Mata Bhag Kaur Ji)
Drawing by: Raj Singh Tattal (the Pen-Tacular-Artist)

A *Gurudwara* commemorating her life and her contributions to freedom was constructed at the site of her home.

Bibi ANUP KAUR was daughter of *Bhai* Lachhman Das Sodhi of Jalolpur Khare village near Amritsar. She was about five years of age when her parents shifted to Anandpur Sahib, where she got baptized subsequently along with her father. She learnt Gurmukhi and martial arts and joined Guru's force along with her father. She was among the warriors at Anandpur fort, when Guru Gobind Singh agreed to vacate the fort after seven months siege by Mughal commanders, who took oath on Quran and Hindu Kings took an oath on cow for leaving safe passage to Guru's entourage. They hardly had covered a little distance when the forces of enemy attacked them from behind. River Sirsa was in surge, while crossing Anup Kaur's horse tumbled. She fell down and broke her arm. She was captured and produced before the Nawab of Malerkotla, who was charmed by her beauty. He intended to marry her. In the meantime he arranged for her treatment. As soon as she was fit, he called for the *Kazi* to perform his marriage. When his people went to bring her to *Kazi's* presence, they found her body in blood. To save her honor and religious sentiments, she pierced her sword in her chest. The Nawab got her buried in haste and quietly. When *Baba* Banda Bahadur invaded Malerkotla, the Nawab fled away in fear of his life. Banda's forces came to know of the story. They dug the grave and performed her last rites as per Sikh religious traditions.

Bibi BASANT KAUR was daughter of *Bhai* Lakhi Shah Vanjara, who lifted the beheaded body of Guru Teg Bahadur from Chandni Chowk, Delhi and cremated it in his own home by putting his house and cargo carriages on fire, to avoid detection. *Bibi* Basant Kaur was married to *Bhai* Mani Singh, the great devoted Sikh who scribed copies of Guru Granth Sahib. Basant Kaur also loved the freedoms idealized by Sikh faith. The family relocated to Amritsar after *Bhai* Mani Singh Ji was appointed head Granthi of Durbar Sahib. Zakaria Khan with a plan to massacre Sikhs gathered at Durbar Sahib used trumped up charges to arrest *Bhai* Mani Singh, his wife Basant Kaur, two sons *Bhai* Chitar Singh and *Bhai* Gurbax Singh, brother *Bhai* Jagat Singh, two cousins *Bhai* Sangat Singh and *Bhai* Gulzara Singh, nephew *Bhai* Bhoopat Singh and great-grand son Keerat Singh and numerous other members of the Sikh community and brought them to Lahore. *Bhai* Mani Singh was butchered limb by limb. Zakaria Khan told the women that their men had been killed and offered them a normal life if they converted to Islam. Upon their refusal to convert, their babies were cut

into pieces, threaded into garlands and placed around the mothers' necks. Unable to coerce them, Zakaria Khan ordered killing of every Sikh woman they had arrested. The streets of Nakhas, Lahore are a witness to this massacre.

Bibi BHAG BHARI was appointed by Guru Amar Das (Nanak III) to lead the Sikh community of Kashmir. She was amongst the first women to occupy a seat in the Sikh administrative system (Manji system) in the pre-British India. Under the order of Sikh Gurus, the Manji system was tasked with keeping the Sikh community across India strong and cohesive. *Bibi Bhag Bhari* was chosen for the role because she was fully conversant with the doctrines of the Sikh faith. In her leadership role, she was responsible for the economic, religious, and social affairs of the Sikhs of Kashmir.



Figure 40: Commander Sada Kaur

Commander SADA KAUR (1762–1832) was born in a ruling family of Punjab, and she came to assume the leadership of the *Kanhaiya Misal* and its 8,000 cavalry members during the Confederacy of Sikh *Misal* system. As a strategic leader aiming to unite Punjab into one nation-state, she joined forces with twelve years old Ranjit Singh when he became head of the *Sukerchakia Misal*, upon his father's death. Sada Kaur led armies into battle and negotiated at diplomatic tables. Through her efforts, Ranjit Singh came to be Maharaja of Punjab and she served as the Administrator of the kingdom. Sada Kaur arranged the marriage to her daughter Mehtab Kaur to sixteen years old Ranjit Singh. At eighteen years of age, Ranjit Singh took charge and began to expand his territory into the empire he built on the footings Sada Kaur laid down.

Maharani JIND KAUR, wife of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, served as the Regent for the kingdom when Ranjit Singh died as Maharaja Duleep Singh was only five years of age at the time. She ruled Punjab on his behalf. She reconstituted the Supreme Council of the Khalsa and restored a balance between the army and the civil administration. However, she was not able to win loyalty of her advisors and lost the kingdom to the British who annexed Punjab, imprisoned and exiled Jind Kaur, believing that she was trying to revive the Sikh Raj. She escaped prison by disguising herself as a servant and took sanctuary in Nepal. Eventually she was reunited with her son Duleep Singh in England, but, could not regain the kingdom.

Numerous modern day women are continuing similar heroic deeds across the world and deserve a mention in this chapter. Dr. ANARKALI KAUR Honaryar, became the first non-Muslim woman member of Afghanistan's lower house of parliament after the 2010 elections. She has managed to achieve outstanding level of education in the troubled nation to become a dentist. In the last two decades, a sizable part of the Indian community has fled this war-torn country. She is one of only about 3,000 Sikhs and Hindus who remain in Afghanistan today. She is now a leading campaigner for the rights of Afghan women. Being chosen by Radio Free Europe's Afghan chapter as their "Person of the Year" in May 2009 made her a household name in Kabul. Dr. Kaur also received UNESCO-Madanjeet Singh Prize for the Promotion of Tolerance and Non-Violence, in December 2011. She was chosen as "Person of the Year" by human rights groups and journalists' unions in Afghanistan. In 2010 Dr. Kaur received UNESCO Award for her work helping Afghan women, and for her commitment to promote the ideals of human dignity, human rights, mutual respect and tolerance in her country.

Dr.INDERJIT KAUR is the Patron-President of All India Pingalwara Charitable Society, Amritsar since 1992. Born in 1942, Dr. Kaur obtained her medical degree in 1967. Pingalwara was founded in 1924 by 19-year-old Ramji Das who later became famous as Bhagat Puran Singh. Dr. Inderjit Kaur was influenced by Bhagat Puran Singh, who spent his entire life serving the abandoned, orphaned, mentally retarded and poor children. In 1986, Bhagat Puran Singh nominated Dr. Inderjit Kaur as his successor. Pingalwara facilities have the capacity for 1080 patients who are fed, housed and served, every day. It has broadened its activities under the leadership of Dr. Kaur and established new centers in Sangrur and Palsora. Besides providing education and health

care for needy, Dr. Kaur reaches out with deep sense of compassion to the victims of natural disasters. Under her guidance, Pingalwara has rushed relief to areas affected by earthquake, floods, tsunami and other calamities. Dr. Kaur also holds seminars and lectures regarding environment, preservation of natural resources, and pollution control. Dr. Kaur has been honored and recognized with awards for her social and charitable work.

Since 1993, *Bibi* PRAKASH KAUR has dedicated her life to the noble cause of rescuing unwanted newborn girls. She herself was left on the streets as an unwanted child, years ago. She gives the abandoned baby girls a home in a place called “Unique Home for Girls” in Jalandhar, Punjab. Approximately sixty girls, ages four to nineteen, living in the home call Prakash Kaur their mother. Unique Home is run by a trust named after a great Sikh *Bhai* Kanhaiya Ji. The trust aims to raise the children as self-reliant individuals armed with education and skills to make success of their lives. April 24 is collectively celebrated as the children’s birthday with a huge cake and fun activities. The children are aware of the fact that their real parents have abandoned them. This knowledge motivated them to be successful. Sheeba, studying in Mussoorie wants to be a successful neurosurgeon and wants her real mother to know about her successes. With Prakash Kaur by their side, they will build happy healthy homes for themselves, and help others too.

The selected few Resolute Sikh Women mentioned above have helped forge the Sikh nation, and continue to do so with its principled spirit and a state of Chardi Kala, or relentless optimism. The optimism to dream of human rights for all, freedom, and ability to pursue personal happiness. Through their actions and achievements, they continue to inspire countless more. They continue to reach out to those hurting, and encouraging those who dare to strive.

Sri Guru Granth Sahib

(1708 - Eternity)

Sri Guru Granth Sahib containing ballads of love, devotion, thankfulness, courage, and social responsibility is the spiritual guide for the Sikhs. Its focus is on spirituality as the scrutinizing force for each of us. It is a unique scripture bestowed to the youngest of the six great religions of the world. Akin to a great king presiding over his court, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* is the focal point of all Sikh places of worship called *Gurudwara*. The presence of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* makes a place a *Gurudwara*; otherwise, it is just a building. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* as sovereign authority over Sikh matters sits atop a throne or *Takht*, has a canopy or *Chhatar* overhead, and an attendant with *Chavar* (*Chaur*) in service; the three symbols of Indian royalty. When Sikhs enter any space with *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* in presence, they bow their head in reverence: a gesture in humility seeking Guru's wisdom.



Figure 41: Sri Guru Granth Sahib in state

Embracing spiritual poetic compositions of great sages of numerous religious traditions, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* is uniquely inclusive. The thirty-

five great souls that dwell in the *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* lived over a span of more than five centuries; from the birth of Brahmin *Bhagat* Jaidev (1172) and *Sufi* Muslim Sheikh Farid (1173) to the martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur in (1675). Six Sikh Gurus, thirteen Brahmins, ten outcasts of Hindu faith, one Sikh disciple, and five Muslim sages grace the pages of *Guru Granth Sahib*. The great sages of *Granth Sahib* beget equal reverence, regardless of their caste or creed. The entire collection of ballads in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* is meant to be sung, rendering it easy to memorize and internalize.

Because *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*'s written origin was concurrent with the lifetime of its authors, it remains unadulterated. Guru Nanak recorded his compositions in a book he carried on his person. He also collected the writings of saintly souls who subscribed to the idea of one universal God, and a classless society. He passed on his collection, along with his own writings, to successor Gurus. Guru Arjan scribed them all in the *Adi Granth* in 1604. The hand written original *Adi Granth* with Guru Arjan Dev Ji's signature is preserved at Kartarpur. Attempts at apocryphal insertions were apparent to Guru Arjan Dev Ji. He, therefore, to prevent such insertions ever, arranged the verses systematically with calligraphic words joined together, and all stanzas numbered. Each verse was given a serial number and total of all verses was given at the end of each section.

Every hymn of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* identifies its author in the title of the hymn and in the traditional Indian signature within the ballad. Thus the reader is able to relate each hymn to the sage who wrote it. Of the ten Sikh human Gurus, Nanak VI, VII, and VIII did not compose any poetry. Guru Gobind Singh Ji (Nanak X) was a prolific poet and wrote volumes, but, he chose not to include his own verses in *Guru Granth Sahib*. Thus, only six Gurus' writings are in *Guru Granth Sahib*. The Sikh Gurus were one soul metamorphosing through ten bodies; thus, they all used "Nanak" signature in their ballads. The notion of one soul migrating to different bodies is reinforced when we realize that Guru Nanak's successors wrote poetry only after ascending to *Guruship*. The verses of each Guru can be associated by the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 9 after the word, "Mahala" in the title of each verse. Guru Gobind Singh Ji added Guru Teg Bahadur's Ji's verses only and called it *Granth Sahib*. There are a total of 5,894 ballads in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* of which 938 belong to Hindu and Muslim saints. Even though the *Gurmukhi* script had evolved since *Adi Granth* was written, Guru Gobind Singh Ji made no change in the form or format dictated

by Guru Arjan Dev Ji. He bestowed *Guruship* to Granth Sahib prior to his heavenly departure in 1708 with the following verse, “*Aagya bhaee Akaal ki tabhe chalaao panth, Sabh Sikhan ko hukam hai Guru manyo Granth.*” Four additional replicas of the completed *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* were scribed in Guru Gobind Singh’s presence and are preserved at various Sikh shrines. After machine printing was invented, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* was standardized into a volume of one thousand, four hundred, and thirty pages and every copy printed is certified by authorized individuals. Sikhs guard the authenticity of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* with the utmost of passion.

The poetry of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* consists of hymns or *padas*, containing from two up to sixteen stanzas. Poetry in folklore style related to important events in life (*Chhants*) is included. Also included are acrostics associated with alphabets, seasons, lunar months, lunar days, week days etceteras. It is not a history book or collection of sermons, thus it is not arranged in chronological chapters. References to past events are only contextual; the message is timeless. The scripture is sectioned by classical Indian musical Ragas. Each ballad’s title informs the reader about the musical Raga, associated rhythmic beat, and specific guidelines for singing. The balladry of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* encompasses discourses with the divine, with congregations, some judicious inter-faith dialogues, and mostly verses about self-reflection, providing a roadmap for living in peace.

Religious exclusiveness is not recognized in Guru Granth. Conversions, either forced or coerced, are objectionable, because they strain interfaith harmony, and contradict the freedom of religion principle. The divisions of caste, creed, color, race, gender, languages, and geography are man-made; thus invalid in the divine realm, says Guru Granth Sahib. *Gurudwara*, the Sikh place of worship, is open to all. Restricting access to a place of worship is distasteful and taboo in Sikh faith. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* unites mankind in one Divine thread, as equals.

The GOD of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* is the eternal and infinite Creator; Unborn, Undying, Self-Existent, Fearless, Revenge-less, and manifest in its creation. The GOD of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* is not confined to mountain tops, or jungles, or special places of pilgrimage; it is omnipresent. Seeking the Divine through bathing in holy rivers, wandering in the wilderness, climbing mountain tops, shaving-off heads, wearing religious garbs, body painting with ashes, roaming naked, or renouncing the world are, but, meaningless rituals for show, if the mind is not cleansed of polluting dark thoughts.

Sri Guru Granth Sahib is not the object of worship like a deity or idol; it is the source of prayer. The Divine musical poetry is meant to be listened to, recited, understood, and with Guru's grace assimilated in our character. Listening, reciting, and comprehending, but not acting on the wisdom dispensed to us, would be like someone going to a great medical school, listening to professors' lectures, reading great medical books, conversing in disease-treatment relationship, but never practicing what has been learned, as scribed on page 565 of *Guru Granth Sahib*:

ਮੁਖਹੁ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਸਭੁ ਕੋ ਕਰੈ ਵਿਰਲੈ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਵਸਾਇਆ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਜਿਨ ਕੈ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਵਸਿਆ ਮੋਖ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਤਿਨ੍ ਪਾਇਆ ॥

**"Mukhu har har sabh ko karai viralai hirdai vasaia,
Nanak jin kai hirdai vasiaa mokh mukat tin paia"**

Translation: Preaching everyone does; only a few practice, Nanak says, practice what you preach, for spiritual experience.

As children, we do the right thing, not out of fear of our parents, but to show our love for them. Instead of scare of punishment, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* raises awareness about the Karmic principle of cause and effect. We shall reap what we sow. Cultivating righteousness, honest living, compassion, and kindness in brotherly love, our mind remains at ease. We feel contented, and experience peace in life. Doing good deeds is good karma and brings happiness. Bad deeds unhinge the mind. Wickedness of lust, greed, materialism, arrogance, anger, immoral enrichment, jealousy, back-biting, dishonesty, may provide temporary physical pleasure, but these dark vices steal the peace of mind. Karma in the present affects one's future in the current life, as well as the nature and quality of future lives. GOD of *Guru Granth Sahib*, as depicted in the ballad from page 624 of SGGS, is compassionate and forgiving father who after reprimanding a child for foolishness guides him towards meaningful life of peace.

ਜੈਸਾ ਬਾਲਕੁ ਭਾਇ ਸੁਭਾਈ ਲਖ ਅਪਰਾਧ ਕਮਾਵੈ ॥

ਕਰਿ ਉਪਦੇਸੁ ਝਿੜਕੇ ਬਹੁ ਭਾਤੀ ਬਹੁੜਿ ਪਿਤਾ ਗਲਿ ਲਾਵੈ ॥

ਪਿਛਲੇ ਅਉਗੁਣ ਬਖਸਿ ਲਏ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਆਗੈ ਮਾਰਗਿ ਪਾਵੈ ॥੨॥

**"Jaisa balak bhae subhae lakh aparadh kamavai,
Kar updhaes jhirakae bahu bhati batur pita gal lavai,
Pichalae augun bakhas lae prabh agai marag pavai."**

Translation: Like the child, innocently making thousands of mistakes, his father teaches him, and scolds him; but still, he hugs him close in his

embrace. Please forgive my past actions, God, and place me on your path for the future.

The human mind is full of fears. Fears about health, finances, failures, safety, crime, war, terrorism, and above all fear of death. *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* wants us to be “*Nirbhau*” or fearless and eternally optimistic; Maintain good health via eating right and exercise; Be financially self-reliant through education and enterprising spirit; Face good and bad times with courage, like natural cycles of day and night. A beautiful bright dawn deposes every dark night. Death is not to be feared. It is not the end, but, a relocation of soul into another realm, for Rest In Peace!

History has forged Sikh community with this kind of courage and fearlessness. It is a community of people, undaunted in the face of death. Personal sacrifices made by Sikhs in fighting centuries of tyranny against the Mughals, and wrestling their *Gurudwaras* from the stranglehold of unscrupulous priests during the British Raj, is an honorable saga in the history of religions.

Narrating the message of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* in these pages feels like a fish trying to explain the vastness of the ocean. The author has attempted to convey the essence from his viewpoint, as follower of the Sikh faith. A western scholar’s perspective printed in the English translation of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* by Professor Dr. Gopal Singh is included here. These words were penned down by Nobel Laureate Mrs. Pearl S. Buck;

“Shri Guru-Granth Sahib is a source book, an expression of man’s loneliness, his aspirations, his longings, his cry to God and his hunger for communication with that Being. I have studied the scriptures of other great religions, but I do not find elsewhere the same power of appeal to the heart and mind as I find here in these volumes. They are compact in spite of their length, and are a revelation of the vast reach of the human heart, varying from the noblest concept of God, to the recognition and indeed the insistence upon the practical needs of the human body. There is something strangely modern about these scriptures and this puzzled me until I learned that they are in fact comparatively modern, compiled as late as the 16th century, when explorers were beginning to discover that the globe upon which we all live is a single entity divided only by arbitrary lines of our own making. Perhaps this sense of unity is the source of power I find in these volumes. They speak to persons of any religion or of none. They speak for the human heart and the searching mind.”

The universal message of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* is aimed at helping human beings live righteously and in peace through good deeds. All material things are utilities for our short sojourn on the planet earth. So why engage in corrupt behavior to accumulate things we shall leave here. To the politically powerful, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* advocates; provide peace, prosperity, and equal justice to people. To the religious leaders, *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* advocates; abolish bigotry, coercive conversions, social stratification, and stop using religion to line your own pockets. To the *Yogis* and other renouncers of the world *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* advocates; return to your family responsibilities, and serve the humanity. To the cons and swindlers of the world *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* advocates; acknowledge your deception and choose honesty. To the masses *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* advocates: neither an oppressor, nor an oppressed be; displace the victim mentality with self-esteem, become self-reliant through education, employment, and entrepreneurship, and treat everyone with the respect and dignity you seek for yourself. It is not for us to judge others. Delve within yourself everyday for self-evaluation.

The easy to learn message of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* is written in common language and explained with symbolism from nature. An attractive analogy from the scriptures counsels human life to be lived like a lotus flower. It lives in a marshy landscape representing the material world. The lotus gleans its sustenance from the murky marshland, but does not grow roots in it. Standing tall above the muddy waters, and unpolluted by it, the lotus blooms, pleases the onlookers, and scatters its fragrance in its surroundings.

Sikh Genocides

1746, 1762, and 1984

Sikhs were sculpted by our Gurus to worship One universal GOD, to stand for equality, for dignity, and service of others, even in the face of death and destruction. Since the beginning, Sikh people have suffered at the hands of bigoted and powerful, yet we live and thrive with our heads held high. In daily Sikh *Ardaas* or supplication, we invoke people who have lived and died walking this path. We invoke those who were dismembered, scalped, crushed on the wheels, and sawn in pieces, but did not relinquish their faith. We remember those men, women, and children murdered by the Mughals, by the British and by India's own discriminate rulers. We fear no one, and scare no one, and stand up to tyrants of all shades. We pick up the sword for justice, not revenge. We pray for strength and courage to fight oppression. With a mind-set and discipline of a saint-soldier; Sikhs are ever-ready to defend and protect the rights of all.

Remembering our martyrs and heroes, we do not wail or beat our chests; instead in their memory, we pray, we easily forgive, and we serve cold and sweet drinks to passersby in hot summer days. We serve the humanity in humility, offering a meal, washing dirty dishes, or polishing their shoes. Finally, we pray for humanity every day, "*Nanak naam chardi kalaa, tere bhaanai sarbat da bhalla.*" "In the name of God, we find everlasting optimism, and wish grace for all of humanity."

Though under assault for most of our history, three attempts to wipe out Sikhs by the rulers of the time, shall remain imprinted in Sikh hearts, forever, as *Ghallugharas (Holocausts)*. Those who tried to obliterate Sikhs, failed to understand the indestructible spirit of revolutionary love and resoluteness residing within the Sikh community; thus their demonic deeds also failed.

Ghallughara in Punjabi has the same meaning as genocide, holocaust, or ethnic-cleansing; the intentional action to systematically eliminate an

ethnic, national, racial, or religious group. The United Nations defines genocide as “acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group.” Holocaust, a Greek word, means “sacrifice by fire” has been associated more specifically for the systematic, murder of six million Jews by the Nazis. Ethnic-cleansing examples are found throughout human history. Recent well known examples include the Jewish Holocaust, Armenian Genocide, Cambodian Genocide, Kurdish Genocide, Bosnian Genocide, and Rwandan Genocide. The perpetrators of such acts of violence believe that they are “racially” or “religiously” superior to the targeted communities and with a desire to maintain their superiority, design pogroms to eliminate the targeted group.

Sikhs have suffered three separate Genocides; two under the eighteenth century foreign rulers, and one in the twentieth century’s secular and democratic India. To understand the genesis of the *Ghallugharas*, a historical perspective is essential. Sikhs have been targeted by the political and religious ruling class since Guru Nanak raised the slogan of One GOD, equality, and human rights. *Resolute* in their ideology and exercising freedom of religion, Sikhs’ sacrificed their lives in peaceful resistance to Mughal oppression. During Jahangir’s rule, Guru Arjan Dev Ji was martyred in Lahore. Fighting Aurangzeb’s atrocities against Kashmiri Hindu Brahmins, Guru Teg Bahadur Ji along with *Bhai* Sati Das, *Bhai* Mati Das and *Bhai* Dayala Ji sacrificed their lives, in Delhi in 1675. Suppressive Mughal rule of more than two centuries had convinced Guru Gobind Singh Ji that time for metamorphosis of Sikhs had come. In 1699, he transformed Sikhs into a brotherhood of Saint-Soldiers called Khalsa.

Guru Gobind Singh Ji picked Banda Singh Bahaduras *Jathedar* (Commander) of Sikh forces on October 05, 1708 and sent him with five prominent Sikhs and twenty-five additional soldiers to Punjab. Within a year he had gathered a force of 30,000-40,000 troopers and by 1710 he had established a Sikh Raj. But in 1715, he was captured and executed six months later in Delhi. After the loss of this unified force, Sikhs were hunted out of their homes and were scattered in small units of guerrilla groups. Unable to finish Sikhs by force, Zakaria Khan, Governor of Lahore, in 1733, offered a Fiefdom to Sikhs, with the title of Nawab for their leader Kapoor Singh. But only two years later, the Mughals ended the compact and renewed persecution of Sikhs. 1739 invasion by Nadir Shah, weakened the Mughals, and Sikhs began to reorganize themselves.

Early in 1746, Jaspat Rai, Commander of Mughal forces in Eminabad was killed in an encounter with a roving band of Sikhs. Jaspat Rai's brother Lakhpat Rai, revenue minister in Lahore, with the concurrence of Governor Yahiya Khan, vowed to exterminate Sikhs. Massive Mughal army at his command, Lakhpat Rai, got issued a proclamation for general massacre of Sikhs, rounded up Sikh inhabitants of Lahore and ordered their execution. Several Hindu nobles including Diwan Kaura Mal pleaded against such a decision, but to no avail. On March 10, 1746, all civilian Sikh residents of Lahore were beheaded at Nakhas or Horse Market- now known as Shaheed Gunj. Sikh scriptures were desecrated and destroyed. Diwan Lakhpat Rai, with the assistance of provincial forces, attacked innocent men, women and children concentrated in the marshes of Kahnawal on river Beas. In the fierce battle, more than 7000 Sikhs were killed and another 3000 were taken prisoners and later beheaded in Lahore. This was the first Sikh Genocide or *Ghallughara*. After the still greater killings of second *Ghallughara* on February 5, 1762, the first one began to be called the *Chotta* or minor *Ghallughara as compared to Vadda Ghallughara or major carnage*.

Ahmad Shah Abdali of Afghanistan invaded India, seven times between 1748 and 1765. However his three invasions from 1766 to 1769 were predetermined incursions. He retook Lahore in 1766 which the Sikhs had captured in 1764. Sikhs did not plunder the city; however, they divided the area amongst Gujjar Singh, Lehna Singh Bhangi and Sobha Singh of Kanahaiya *Misal*. Sikhs also struck coins as mark of their rule over the area. On local population's advice offered governorship to Lehna Singh, who declined the offer. In his first attack on January 12, 1748, he plundered the *suburb of Lahore* and commanded heavy tributes devastating the countryside he proceeded towards Manupur near Sirhind. Mughal forces led by Wazir Qamaruddin and his son Moinuddin (later known as Mir Mannu) checked his advances, on March 11, 1748. Mir Mannu killed his father in the battlefield. Abdali, decided to return to his country from here. The failure of the Mughal forces to pursue the returning Abdali forces reflected their weakness. However, Sikhs under the leadership of Jassa Singh Ahluwalia moved in and deprived Abdali's forces of their looted stores and horses. They also defeated Adina Beg, who due to Abdali's advances ran to Hoshiarpur. Khalsa, in great spirit, gathered at Amritsar to celebrated 1748 Vaisakhi Divas at Darbar Sahib, where they, by Gurmatta (guru's resolve) decided to form Dal Khalsa, a confederate of the Sikh *Misals*.

Mir Mannu took over as Lahore Governor in April, 1748 and remained strong for a period of over five years. In a bid to establish a strong government Mir Mannu let loose oppression against Sikhs, forcing them out of their towns and villages, to take shelter in Hills and marshes. After third invasion by Abdali, in 1751-1752, Lahore and Multan became part of Afghan Empire. After Abdali's attack in 1755, Marathas moved in to Delhi. Sikhs again deprived him of his booty in guerilla attacks on his return in 1755. Ahmad Shah again invaded India in 1757. This time he reached Amritsar, demolished the holy shrine and plundered the city (The Golden Temple History, Art and Architecture- by Dr P.S.Arshi). Soon after he left, Sikhs actively rebuilt and restored the Darbar Sahib building. During his sixth attack of India in 1761, he defeated the Marathas at Panipat (3rd battle of Panipat) on January 14, 1761 plundered area up to Delhi. On March 22, 1761, he began his return march to Afghanistan with his booty of loot. Besides the stolen wealth, he was taking with him 2200 young women, & 4000 young men to be sold as slaves (Tarikh-E-Punjab (Urdu- 1881 by Kanhaiya Lal)) Sikhs on getting the news of this episode, while crossing Sutlej they attacked Ahmad Shah's army; recovered the robbed wealth, and freed the captured young men and women. Sikhs escorted the freed women to their respective homes. This enraged him. He vowed to take revenge from Sikhs. On October 22nd 1761 Sikhs under the leadership of Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia seized Lahore. Harbhagat Niranjania, an opportunist, in league with Faujdar of Sirhind Zain Khan, sent message requesting Ahmad Shah to attack Sikhs one more time. He was already full of hate revenge against Sikhs, due to his losses at their hands in 1761, as such he agreed. On February 04, 1762 Zain Khan, commander of Sirhind was informed that Ahmad Shah has crossed Sutlej and that he should be ready with his men. Sikhs also got the news of his possible attack. They decided to escort their families to safety in village Raipur and Gujerwal. Zain Khan, the Faujdar of Sirhind with a contingent of his 15000 men camped at Maler Kotla. Bhikhan Khan Nawab Maler Kotla also gathered his men to surround Sikhs from all sides. Sham Singh Karore Singhia was rushed to help the Sikh Caravan for reaching to safety. On February 15th 1762, near village Kupp, in war of unequals, Afghan and ally forces killed about 30000 Sikhs, mostly old men, women and children, who were being escorted to a safer place. Though invader and his allies also suffered heavily, history is mum on their losses for reasons best known to historians of that time. However, Sikhs also

lost heavily. This mass-killing of Sikhs is known as *Vadda Ghallughara* in the Sikh history.

The third Ghallughara took place in 1984 in post independence, constitutionally democratic and secular India. The violent culmination of this nefarious political gamesmanship had its roots planted in 1975. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi after an unfavorable ruling by Allahabad High Court, declared a state of emergency on the night of June 25, 1975. Severe press censorship and extreme punitive powers grabbed by the Prime Minister, although shocked the nation, people and political parties capitulated. Amnesty International reported the arrest of 140,000 persons without trial during the emergency, 60,000 of whom were Sikhs. At only two percent of India's population and a huge resistance force, Indira Gandhi began to see Sikhs as the only threat to her dynastic rule. She decided to dispense deadly blows to the Sikhs. Details of what happened between 1975 and 1984 are beyond the scope of this work. Many books have been written to elaborate the political cunning that consumed many innocent Hindu and Sikh lives. However, a brief summary is warranted.

To punish Sikhs, draconian powers were used to divert river water from Punjab to adjoining states and to reduce the Sikhs in armed forces a quota based on state population was established, for the first time. In 1977 election Congress party was thrown out of power; however, lacking competition from a strong national party, (as also press publicity due to Shah Commission proceedings, kept Mrs. Gandhi in news which ultimately invoked public sympathy for her), it came back to power in 1980. Indira Gandhi strategized to create controlled violence as a cover to punish Sikhs. She tried to manipulate Sant Bhindrawale as a conflicting force against *Akali* Party. She used *Nirankari* sect to instigate an armed conflict, and she bolstered latent *Naxals* in Punjab to cause discord between Hindus and Sikhs in Punjab. From 1980 to 1984 webs were woven, and events were manipulated through authoritarian police force to make villains of innocents, while devils roamed in saintly garbs. Naive and innocent were sucked into a conflict so complex that common people often had difficulty differentiating good guys from gangsters.

The unimaginable happened in the first week of June 1984. The full force of Indian Army, soldiers with guns, tanks, and helicopters simultaneously attacked the Sikh holiest shrine, *Hari-Mandir* Sahib, *Akaal*

Takht Sahib and forty other *Gurudwaras*, under code name Operation Blue Star. The Sikhs in History by Dr. Sangat Singh, page 406, referring to calculations by Chand Joshi as “nearer the truth” says “..., between 100,000 to 120,000 Sikhs died in five days, June 3-7, in the Operation Bluestar.” Prior to the army attack, Punjab was subjected to curfew and isolated from the rest of India. A blanket ban on uncensored reporting in media and curfew was in effect. Dr. Sangat Singh writes, “The armed forces killed in cold blood a large body of peaceful Sikhs in the Golden Temple complex and outside, during the operations, in violation of all norms of national or international laws including the Hague, and Geneva Conventions.” He quotes words of G.K.C.Reddy, “Thus the Operation Bluestar will go down in history as one of the biggest massacres of unarmed civilians by the organized military force of a nation.” Further that, “The word unarmed is used deliberately as the disparity in arms on the two sides was so great that those resisting army invasion of the Temple could hardly be termed armed.” “In short, General Dyer was out-Dyred, and he must be turning in his grave.”

Mrs. Gandhi’s rage against Sikhs was not yet satisfied. She had planned another massacre of Sikhs under code named Operation Shanti to be carried out in November 1984 when Sikhs would assemble in *Gurudwaras* throughout the country to celebrate Guru Nanak’s birthday. In “The Sikhs in History” Dr. Sangat Singh says, “Beant Singh, Sub-Inspector in Indira’s security, got the contours of Indira’s Sikh-genocidal plan from R.K.Dhawan, Special Assistant to Prime Minister, and decided to act to thwart it. He commissioned Satwant Singh to assist him.” On October 31, 1984 at 9:00 a.m Beant Singh shot Indira Gandhi, who later died in the hospital. Her son, Rajiv Gandhi, was sworn in as the next Prime Minister.

For three days after Indira Gandhi’s assassination, all hell broke loose. Guided by senior Congress leaders, and protected by law enforcement agencies, mobs of hoodlums were deployed to kill Sikh men, rape Sikh women, maim Sikh children, loot Sikh homes and businesses, desecrate Sikh places of worship, and do everything not expected from a civilized society. Numerous reports place total number of Sikhs killed throughout India in the aftermath of Indira’s killing between 12,000 to 20,000. With a loss of between 112,000 to 140,000 Sikh lives, 1984 goes down as the bloodiest year in Sikh history to be commemorated as the third *Ghallughara*.

Ten (embodied) Gurus who had one eternal light in them and that eternal light vests in Shabad Guru, which is contained in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji* (eternal Guru of Sikhism).

Sikh Guru	Prakash (Year of Birth)	Period of Gurgaddi
Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji	1469	1469-1539
Sri Guru Angad Dev Ji	1504	1539-1552
Sri Guru Amar Das Ji	1501	1552-1574
Sri Guru Ram Das Ji	1534	1574-1581
Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji	1563	1581-1606
Sri Guru Har Gobind Ji	1590	1606-1644
Sri Guru Hari Rai Ji	1630	1644-1661
Sri Guru Hari Krishan Ji	1656	1661-1664
Sri Guru Tegh Bahadar Ji	1621	1664-1675
Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji	1661	1675-1708
Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji	1604	1708- Eternal

Inter-family Relationship of Sikh Gurus Starting from Sri Guru Amar Das Ji

- 1) **Guru Ram Das Ji:**
Son-in-law of Guru Amar Das Ji
- 2) **Guru Arjan Dev Ji:**
Son of Guru Ram Das Ji, & Maternal Grandson of Guru Amar Das Ji.
- 3) **Guru Hargobind Ji:**
Son of Guru Arjan Dev Ji, & Grandson of Guru Ram Das Ji.
- 4) **Guru Hari Rai Ji:**
Grandson of Guru Hargobind Ji, & Great Grandson of Guru Arjan Dev Ji.
- 5) **Guru Hari Krishan Ji:**
Son of Guru Hari Rai Ji & Great Grandson of Guru Hargobind Ji.
- 6) **Guru Teg Bahadur Ji:**
Son of Guru Har Gobind Ji & grandson of Guru Arjan Dev Ji.
- 7) **Guru Gobind Singh Ji:**
Son of Guru Teg Bahadur Ji & Grandson of Guru Hargobind Ji & Great Grandson of Guru Arjan Dev Ji

Glossary

- **Akaalpurkh:** God, the timeless creator of the universe that is omnipresent in all creations.
- **Akhand Path:** A non-stop recitation of Guru Granth Sahib (Sikh Holy Scripture) from the beginning to the last page is called Akhand Path (unbroken recitation). Fluent readers, taking turns (generally up to two hours at a time), can complete the Akhand Path in approximately in forty-eight hours.
- **Ardaas:** Persian word “arz” means plea or invocation. Sikh(s) make this oral petition seeking blessings and thank God for divine grace, upon awakening and before going to sleep, in joy and in sorrow, before initiating any new task or journey and upon its completion. In Ardaas, Sikhs invoke all those who lived with God’s name in their hearts, shared willingly, and sought justice for all. We recall our struggle for equality, and our sufferings at the hands of cruel tyrants. Yet we lift our head high, forgiving freely. We pray for divine consciousness to enter all people, and bring joy to them. The concluding line of Sikh Ardaas is:
“Nanak naam charhdi kala, Tere bhane sarbat da bhala”
means “in the name of God, may there be grace and everlasting optimism for all the humanity.” Ardaas is the spirit of our people that sustains us in celebrations as well as in sorrows. Sikhs stand with folded hands to recite this prayer. In the presence of Sri Guru Granth Sahib, one stands facing the scripture, otherwise, one may face any direction.
- **Shabad Guru:** Ten (embodied) Gurus who had one eternal light in them. Now that eternal light vests in Shabad Guru which is contained in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji.
- **A.D.:** Anno Domini (In the Year of the Lord)
- **Baba:** A respectable wise or elderly male.
- **Bandi Chhor:** One who helps the release of political detainees

- **Bani/Baani:** Verses of holy persons included in Sri Guru Granth Sahib
- **Bhagat:** Devotees of God (Akaalpurkh)
- **Bhog:** Singing of hymns, reciting of Ardaas, and last reading from Guru Granth, to close the congregation service/completion or ending of religious ceremony is called Bhog.
- **Bibi:** unmarried young woman
- **Birth and Name ceremony:** In Sikh faith, birth and deaths are accepted as dictates of Akaalpurkh (“Jaman marna hukam hai bhane aawe jahey”). Therefore, birth of girl or boy should be greeted with equal joy. After a thankful prayer, reading Guru Granth Sahib at random, the opening verse’s first letter is used to give the first name to the child. Boys are given second name “Singh” (lion) while girls are given second name as “Kaur” (princess). Please refer Sikh Rehat Maryada for more details.
- **Dastar Bandi:** Sikh boys are initiated into self-discipline with a turban tying (dastar bandi) ceremony during teen years. An elder family member or a priest (Granthi) performs this rite. During childhood, parents or an elder wraps a small dastar on their kid’s head.
- **Dasvand/Dasvandh:** Literal translation of Dasvand is “a tenth part”. Offering a part of one’s earnings for community service is a fundamental Sikh tenet. Like the Christians tithe, Sikhs are urged to share/offer (donate) ten percent of their earning towards charity. This tenet is known as Dasvandh.
- **Death ceremony/Last rites:** As explained above, births and deaths are accepted as dictates of Akaalpurkh. As such family and friends of the departed soul are advised to refrain from wailing aloud. Muted mourning, while reciting from scriptures is urged, instead. Cremated remains of the departed soul may be dispersed in a river or ocean. A final prayer for the departed soul includes full reading of Guru Granth Sahib followed by scriptural discourse and supplication. Please refer Sikh Rehat Maryada for more details.
- **Granthi:** A priest or a person who is well versed with the Granth (Holy Scripture) and is capable of performing all daily services at the Gurudwara.
- **Greeting of the Sikhs:** “Wahegure Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji ki Fateh
- **Gurmukhi:** Punjabi is widely spoken language of north India and Pakistan, is written in several scripts including Urdu, Sindhi and

Devnagri. The Sikh Holy Scriptures, including Guru Granth Sahib, are scribed in Gurmukhi alphabets. Although in existence for long time, the formal present alphabet for Gurmukhi was corroborated by Guru Angad Dev Ji at the instance of Guru Nanak Sahib. Alphabet Rarha (V) Rarha alphabet was also inducted at the instance of Guru Nanak Sahib as it did not exist in the alphabet before his time.

- **Gurdwara/Gurudwara:** The Sikh place of worship is known as Gurudwara; literal meaning the door to the Guru's abode. Historical Gurudwaras associated with the Sikh Gurus' lives, such as Golden temple in Amritsar are sometimes also called "Hari -Mandir". One does not have to profess to be a Sikh to enter Gurudwara. All persons regardless of their cast, creed, gender or nationality can enter the Gurudwara and join the congregation (Sadh Sangat) to participate in spiritual proceedings. A typical Gurdwara design includes doorways on all four sides of its congregation hall, signifying openness to all. Sikhs do not proselytize; thus no one will prompt one to become a Sikh. Before entering the congregation hall and affiliated facilities of a Gurudwara, all entrants, must remove their shoes and place them in a space designed for the purpose, and cover their heads with a scarf. Use of drugs, tobacco, or alcohol is taboo for Sikhs; therefore, such items must not be brought within the Gurudwara compound.
- **Hukamnama (Mukhwak):** At the time of Prakash (Sri Guru Granth Sahib in state) the first read Shabad is called Hukamnama (Mukhwak). On the left hand side of the random opened page, the first Shabad from the top, may be read as Hukamnama or Mukhwak. However, if the Shabad has its origin from a prior page, the page should be turned to read the Hukamnama (Mukhwak) from the prior page.
- **Jaikara:** Bole So Nihal, Sat Sri Akaal
(Blessed is the one who recites God is truth, such a person is entitled to happiness and success)
- **Ji:** a suffix denoting respect in the Indian subcontinent
- **Kazi/Qazi:** A Muslim learned in religious law and theology
- **Karah Parshad:** Sikh congregations are spiritual schools that provide nourishment for mind, and body. Singing of hymns and discourses enrich the mind, and food nurtures the body. Every worship ceremony whether in happiness or sorrow, concludes with distribution of Karah

Parshad, followed by community meal named Langar. Sweet Karah Parshad made from equal amount of flour, sugar and pure ghee indicates that the Sikhs accepting God's will with a smile.

- **Katha:** The religious exposition of Sikh scripture in a congregation is called Katha.
- **Khalsa:** Brotherhood of the pure in Sikhism
- **Kirtan/Keertan:** Singing of hymns from Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, in classical musical compositions, in the Holy Congregation is known as Kirtan. Any one may sing Gurbani Kirtan at home or in private functions, however, only conforming Sikhs may perform Kirtan for Sadh Sangat in a Gurudwara.
- **Kirat:** Righteous earning.
- **Langar:** The food prepared in the common kitchen and served free by sitting in Pangat (row) without discriminating on the basis of caste, creed, religion, or status in the society is known as Langar.
- **Lawan or Anand Karaj:** Literally, a blissful act is the name of the marriage ceremony in Sikh faith. Both individuals must be adults to get married, as child marriage is a taboo in Sikh faith. Sikhs do not subscribe to astrology, numerology or similar superstitious beliefs seeking auspicious times for special events of life. Marriage can take place on any day suitable to the families. The marriage generally takes place in Gurudwara. It starts with special prayer seeking God's blessings to initiate the rite. A specific hymn of four stanzas, from page 773 of Guru Granth Sahib is recited to carry out the ceremony. The couple circumbates Guru Granth Sahib, as each of the four stanzas, are sung by the choir (Raagi Singhs). Afterward, a scholar explains the hymn containing the pathway forward, to the newlyweds, for a happy and blissful life together. In case of death of a spouse, the widow or the widower may remarry, if they so desire. Read "Sikh Rehat Maryada" for more details.
- **Mata:** Married/elderly woman
- **Matta:** A decision made by the Sikh Sangat, or management body for common good is termed as Matta.
- **Miri:** Temporal authority
- **Misal:** Band of Equals
- **Nishan Sahib:** All nations and many institutions, opt an emblem and is

generally hoisted as a flag. Sikh nation too has espoused a flag that is hoisted at all Gurudwaras. Triangular in shape, it is made of cotton or silk cloth in deep blue-grey or saffron color, with a tassel at its end. The Sikh insignia (Khanda) is imprinted on it. The word Nishan means identification, and its purpose is to guide the visitors. Circumambulating the flag, as some visitors do has no spiritual significance and Sikhs are advised not to engage in such meaningless rituals.

- **Paath:** Reciting Gurbani from Sri Guru Granth Sahib or from Gutka is known as Paath.
- **Pahul (Amrit):** A rite of passage, equivalent to baptism in Christian tradition or mitzvah in Jewish tradition, is conducted to induct a young Sikh girl or boy formally into the Sikh fold. It is an important milestone solemnized only in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib by five Amritdhari (inducted) Singhs. It is also a tremendously joyous occasion that is celebrated with family and friends. For a Sikh to live by the prescribed code of conduct is automatic whether or not he/she has gone through this coming of age ceremony. Read “Sikh Rehat Maryada” for more details.
- **Pandit:** A learned of religious teachings, usually a Brahmin
- **Panj Pyarey:** Five beloved ones
- **Piri:** Spiritual authority
- **Prakash (In state) of Sri Guru Granth Sahib:** For Sikhs learning the divine commands and personal code of conduct enumerated in Sri Guru Granth Sahib is the objective of the congregation. Sikh prayers are conducted with Sri Guru Granth Sahib in the presiding site in the congregation. As head of Sikh nation, and embodiment of Sikh Gurus, Sri Guru Granth Sahib is conferred the same status as royalty: thus it is seated with three symbols of Indian royalty, Chaur (Attendant) Chatter (canopy) and Takht (throne). Like a royal presiding over court, Guru Granth Sahib sits atop a throne, with a canopy and an attendant with a Chaur. No idols are placed in Sikh places of worship. When Sikhs enter any space with Guru Granth Sahib in presence (state), they bow their head in reverence: a gesture in humility seeking Guru’s wisdom.

At the end of the day, or when no one is going to be in attendance in Gurudwara, Guru Granth Sahib should be closed and respectfully taken to a room (called Sukhasan Asthan) designed for the purpose, where additional copies of the Guru may also be present.

- **Raagi Singhs:** The Gurbani (hymns) is meant to be sung in Indian classical music known as Raagas. The musicians who sing the Gurbani in the Raags are known as Raagis.
- **Rehat Maryada:** Sikh code of conduct, published in 1945 after eighteen years of concerted efforts by Sikh intellectuals, scholars, historians, professors and Sikhs from all walks of life is called Rehat Maryada.
- **Sadh Sangat:** A group of people engaging in spiritual singing or discourse is called Sadh Sangat or holy congregation. In a Gurudwara, with Guru Granth Sahib presiding the congregation usually sits on a carpeted floor in a lotus position, but elderly or disabled unable to do so, may be seated on chairs.
- **Sehaj Path:** In comparison to Akhand Path, Sehaj Path is complete reading of Guru Granth Sahib with no time limit. Most Sikhs recite Sehaj Path at their homes and complete the reading at their individual pace.
- **Sahib:** A suffix to show reverence for a person, place and object.
- **Sahibzada:** Son of an esteemed individual.
- **Salok/Shalok:** Form of verse.
- **Sati:** Old Indian Custom (now outlawed), requiring a widow to self-immolate on her husband's funeral pyre.
- **Sarovar (Sacred Pool):** Five centuries ago, spiritual seekers travelled from faraway places, on rugged roads by foot, on horses, or bullock carts, for days or weeks. They would arrive extremely exhausted. For the comforts and relaxation of tired pilgrims, Gurudwara designs began incorporating lodging accommodations and water tanks for washing and bathing. Guru Amar Das Ji initiated this tradition by constructing a Baoli (well) at Goindwal Sahib. The already established community kitchen tradition and addition of new common facilities greatly mitigated social distinctions and prejudices. Water as a symbol of cleanliness promoted hygiene, and its natural downward flow inspired people to be humble and keep one's ego in check.
- **Sewa:** A selfless service to humanity is called Sewa in the Sikh Religion. Service performed in Gurudwaras with devotion and feeling is considered peace rewarding. It imparts humility, helps arrest our ego and helps us connect with our spirituality.
- **Sikh Garb:** Sikh men and women are ordained to maintain unshorn hair. The hair must be washed regularly and combed daily to keep them from

becoming dreadlocks. Sikh men tie their hair in a bun and wear a turban; thus turban (Dastar) and beard are visible signs of Sikh men folk. Sikh women generally braid their hair and cover them with a scarf, but must not hide their face with a veil. Some women also choose to wear turban.

- **Sikh way of life:** Sikh way of life may be summarized by three basic principles: Naam Japna (Righteous living) Kirat Karna (Earning money through honest means) and Wand Chhakna (Community service) Guru Ram Das in his hymn scribed on page 305 of Guru Granth Sahib

Gur Satgur ka Jo sikh akhvaveyh,

So bhalke uthi hari naam dhiyaveh

(a Sikh starts his day with a prayer)

Sikhs respect all religions, are encouraged to study their scriptures, but pray only to “One formless universal God”. With a strong belief in equality of all people regardless of religion, race or gender, a Sikh always treats unrelated females as sister, daughter or mother.

“Par beti ko beti janneh par istri ko maat bakhaney

Apni’stri mein raat hoyi rahatwant sikh hai soi”

A Sikh must greet each other by saying “Waheguru ji ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji ki Fateh” an expression of humility and acceptance of God’s will in all matters.

- **Sri/Shri:** Used in the Indian subcontinent to address a person to show respect; equivalent to “Mr.” or “Ms.”
- **Takht /Takhat:** A seat of Temporal and spiritual authority in Sikh Community.
- **Udaasi:** The term is used to depict travels/pilgrimages of Guru Nanak.

Reference Books

- The Sikhs in History (Dr Sangat Singh)
- Mahan Shabd Kosh (Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha)
- Sikh Art & Literature (Edited by Kerry Brown)
- Varan (Bhai Gurdas Ji)
- Guru Nanak Chamatkar (Bhai Sahib Vir Singh)
- Life of Guru Hari Krishan (Trilochan Singh)
- Sikh Heritage in Painting (Punjab & Sind Bank- 1995)
- History of Kashmir (PNK Bomzai)
- A History of the Sikhs (Khushwant Singh)
- History of India (A.L.Srivastava)
- A New History of India (Stanley Wolpert)
- The Sikhs in the New Century (Harchand Singh Bedi)
- History of the Sikhs (J.D.Cunningham)
- The Sikh Religion: M.A.Macauliffe
- Sahibe Kamal (Daulat Rai)
- Freedom at Midnight (Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre)
- Sikh Bulletin May 2015



Rajinder Singh Jolly

MILESTONES OF SIKH HISTORY

The series of attacks purported by Al-Qaeda in New York, Washington D.C., USA on 9/11/2001 significantly changed the world. These incidents were painful for the whole world and especially for the Americans. In the aftermath of these attacks there were several retaliatory responses targeting the Sikh Community in America, primarily due to misconceptions about their identity (looks/appearances). The wounds of the dreaded and deplorable memories of 1984 Sikh genocide in India were yet to heal, when my family along with Sikhs in America came to face another daunting challenge related to their religious identity.

The continued sufferings are so acute that I am motivated to portray the factually correct image of SIKHS in an attempt to clear the obscure picture of the Sikh Community.

With their message of Inter-faith brotherhood, the founders of Sikh Religion preached equality of humans irrespective of creed, cast, color, gender, ethnicity or nationality. Each human is endowed with equal divinity and can connect with the source of all creation-the form less creator, through introspection, instead of following the religiously garbed exploiters, they proclaimed. For promoting freedom of religion and democratic reforms, Sikh Gurus and their faith were persecuted, hunted, tortured and martyred during seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

A Principle of "Fear no one; Scare no one" guided Sikhs to confront the atrocities committed by the rulers of early Sikh Era. With the purity of thoughts and staying strong in the face of adversity, Sikhs laid the foundation of the community entrenched in bravery, justice and equality. While Sikhs were busy fighting for the oppressed masses, historians were busy pleasing their wealthy and powerful patrons and failed to write the accurate narrative of Sikhism and did not give Sikhs their due place in history.

Purpose of this book is to familiarize its readers of all faiths including young Sikhs with glorious Sikh Heritage.

Price : Please read & inspire others to read