

*Hijacking of Sikh Panth
(1994 to Today)*

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Some acronyms and terms explained

1. *Akhand Paath* = Continued/unbroken recitation of Guru Granth Sahib (which normally takes 48 honours)
2. B.S.F. / BSF = Border Security Force
3. B.J.P. /BJP = Bhartiya Janta Party
4. C.M. / CM = Chief Minister
5. C.P. (M.L.) = Communist Party (Marxist Leninist)
6. C.P.I / CPI = Communist Party of India
7. C.P.M. / CPM = Communist Party of India (Marxist)
8. C.R.P.F. /CRPF = Central Reserve Police Force
9. D.S.G.M.C = Delhi Sikh Gurdwaras Management Committee
10. D.S.P. = Deputy Superintendent of Police
11. Dasamgranth = A volume of translations of several Hindu fictional and erotic verses.
12. Dera = cult centre
13. Deredaar = chief/owner of a cult centre

14. E.U./ EU (European Union)
15. M. P. / MP = Madhya Pradesh
16. M. P. / MP = Member Parliament
17. R.S.S. /RSS = Rashtariya Sikh Sangat
18. R.S.S.S./ RSSS/RSS = Rashtariya Swayam Sewak Sangh
19. R.A.W. / RAW = Research & Analysis Wing
(It is the intelligence agency of the Indian Government; its functions are like those of the C.I.A. of the U.S.A. and the K.G.B. of Russia).
20. SHO (Station Head Office) also *Thanedar* in Punjabi
21. Shiromani Akali Dal has been written as Akali Dal and S.A.D. / SAD also
22. S.G.P.C. / SGPC = Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee / Shiromani Committee.
23. SP/ S.P. = Superintendent of Police
24. SSP/ S.S.P. = Senior Superintendent of Police
25. U. P. / UP = Uttar/Uttra Pradesh
26. V.H.P. / VHP = Vishav Hindu Prishad

Hijacking of Sikh Panth

By the summer of 1993, almost all the major leaders of the Khalistan movement had been killed, most of them in fake encounters; only those who were stationed abroad (including Pakistan) survived; these included Paramjit Singh Panjwar, Mehal Singh and Wadhawa Singh Babar, Wassan Singh Zaffarwal, Ranjit Singh Neeta, Lakhbir Singh Rode and their associates; besides Daljeet Singh Bittu and his friend Gursharanjit Singh Gama confined themselves to their sanctuary in Ropar district. On the 31st of August 1995 Dilawar Singh and Balwant Singh Rajoana eliminated Beant Singh, the killer C.M. of the Punjab; and, with this came an end to blood-bath in the Punjab.¹ Though terrorist police chief K.P. Gill

¹ After the murder of Beant, Harcharan Singh Brar became the chief minister of the Punjab. Brar had a short term as the C.M.; after just less than

(also known as butcher Gill) and several other killer police officials were still alive; they too, however, got scared and the horror of the end of Beant hovered on their minds hence they too almost stopped killing, extorting and using terrorising tactics. Now, though there was (so-called) peace in the Punjab it was in reality the silence of the graveyard; there were question marks in the air and signs of horror, fear and uncertainty were written in people's minds and could be read in their eyes and on their gloomy, pale and scared faces; nobody could predict what was there in the future.

During his reign Beant not only killed thousands of Sikh youth in fake encounters, he also stopped peaceful political opposition against him and his atrocities; he and his cruel police chief K.P. Gill even stopped holding of rallies, *dharnas* (sit in protests) and protest marches; so much so that the newspapers too were put under complete censure; it began on the 28th of May 1992 when Beant's police confiscated one hundred thousand copies of daily *Ajit* simply on the plea that it had published a news about the militants (however, the same news had been published in other papers too; by such acts he wanted to create terror in the mind of the public. Just a week earlier he had issued orders to the police not to allow activities of the Akali Party; the first act to ban the Akalis began on the 22nd of April 1992 when Simranjeet Singh Maan, Gurcharan Singh Tohra and Parkash Singh Badal and their associates were arrested when they were preparing to present a memorandum about an independent Sikh state (Khalistan) to the U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali who was then on a visit to India. Again, when the Akali leaders announced holding of a protest gathering against the police atrocities in Behla village (in Tarn Taran district) where the police had got killed some people whom it had used as shield to save themselves from firing by the militants on the 24th of June

five months he was replaced by Rajinder Bhattal on the 21st of January 1996 who remained in this office for about thirteen months and after the new elections Parkash Singh Badal became the C.M.

1992, or when they (Akalis) decided to hold prayers for Gurjant Singh (a militant General who had been killed in a fake encounter) on the 8th of August 1992, or to hold prayers for Harjinder Singh Jinda and Sukhdev Singh Sukha on the 13th of October 1992 they (Akalis) were arrested and not allowed to hold gatherings. So much so that when the Akali Dal was holding a meeting of its party workers in Gurdwara Aalamgir (near Ludhiana) on the 30th of August 1992, the police forcibly entered the Gurdwara premises and stopped them from having a gathering even inside the Gurdwara; the police damaged the loud speaker of the Gurdwara and dragged Gurcharan Singh Tohra, Kuldeep Singh Wadala, Kamikkar Singh and other Akalis and put them into police vans. Thus, during the reign of Beant it was a period of totalitarian, autocratic, tyrannous and despotic rule in the Punjab; a new phenomenon in the history of the Punjab since Martial Law of the English in 1919;² there was no rule, no law, in the Punjab; even human rights' activists were snubbed, harassed, arrested and even eliminated; the police even terrorised the lawyers and judges; on the 3rd of April 1992, a person like Justice Ajit Singh Bains was arrested on fake charges; he was even handcuffed (a false case was registered against him and he remained in jail for a long time till he was acquitted); several lawyers who were defence councils of the arrested Sikh youths were not only harassed in many ways but some of them were even kidnapped and killed by the Punjab police; these included Kulwant Singh Saini Ropar, (his wife and son too were killed), Sukhwinder Singh Bhatti (Sangrur), Ranbir Singh Mansahia (Bathinda), Jagwinder Singh alias Happy (Kapurthala), Satnam Singh (Jammu), Dharamvir Singh (Amritsar, Advocate Mavi (Ludhiana) and others; Advocate Ranjan Lakhnupal's son was

² The Sikhs had braved the atrocities committed by Abdus Samad Khan (1713-1726), Zakaria Khan (1726-45), Yahiya Khan, Lakhpat Rai and Shah Nawaz Khan (1745-47), Mir Mannu (1748-1753) so, for them, it was not a new phenomenon.

killed by the police.³ Several journalists who reported crimes of the police were also killed (including Avtar Singh Mander and Ram Singh Billing) and several others were arrested and charged under draconian laws.

Akali Scenario between 1992 and 1995

It was an atmosphere of terror and horror; cruelty was at its apex; though all the voices, of the opposition to the regime, had been stopped, Beant could not stop his own Party's leaders from protesting; Jagmeet Singh Brar raised his voice against oppression, the C.P. (M.L.) activists, though very few, lodged their protest. Oppression of the Akalis made them take radical stand; they began making secessionist statements. On the 5th of May 1992 Parkash Singh Badal issued a statement saying that the Sikhs have lost faith in Indian Constitution; on the 16th of May Simranjeet Singh Maan and Gurcharan Singh Tohra demanded that the Sikhs did not want to live in India, the Government should make a declaration of a Sikh State; on the 15th of August 1992 the executive of the Akal Dal passed a resolution for the creation of an independent Sikh State; this resolution created a great hue and cry; some circles close to Badal tried to make him retreat from this demand, but he did not bother and in a statement, issued on the 27th of August 1992, he declared: *'we stand firm on the resolution of an independent Sikh State'*; on the 9th of November Badal said: *"Now the Sikhs have no option but for a public war against the regime."*

³ Though Beant had been killed on the 31st of August, some terrorist police officials like Sumesh Saini, Izhar Aalam, Ajit Sandhu still continued clandestine killings and extortions; the last major terrorist action by the police was the murder of **Jaswant Singh Khalra** who had revealed horrified details of cremation of thousands of Sikh youths (killed in fake encounters) in the name of unidentified bodies, the police picked him up from his house, tortured him and killed him in a fake encounter on the 6th of September 1995; this murder had been committed by the police under orders from Ajit Sandhu SSP Amritsar and K. P. Gill, the terrorist police chief.

Gujjarwal *akhand paath* incident

Year 1992-93 was the worst for the Sikhs; not a day passed by without fake encounter killings by the police; the Beant Government had forcibly stopped activities of Akalis; repression of the Akalis disheartened the Akalis too and they, now, reduced their activities; Beant had gagged the media too; hence the newspapers did not publish much news against the government; this state continued for more than one year; and, after this major aggression came to a halt. In this state the police, on the 15th of September 1993, disturbed an *akhand path* (continued recitation)⁴ of Guru Granth Sahib, which was being held at Gujjarwal (in Ludhiana district); and during the police attack on the Gurdwara, Gurbachan Singh, a 75 years old man, was brutally beaten by the police (and he succumbed to these injuries). Like the famous *akhand path* of 1923 which gave birth to Jaito Agitation, there was strong condemnation of this high-handedness by the police; the Akalis decided to use this incident to attack the regime; hence the Akali Dal demanded an unqualified apology from the Beant regime; as the latter did not want Akali Dal to cash this incident he went to Gujjarwal on the 25th of September and apologized for the police excesses; he also announced that the guilty police official would be punished. After the chief minister's apology the Akalis had no programme hence they announced holding of an *akhand path* of Guru Granth Sahib to make prayers for Gurbachan Singh who had been killed by the police; after the *akhand path* was performed a big congregation was held in the Gurdwara in Gujjarwal; it was addressed by Gurcharan Singh Tohra (president SGPC), Simranjeet Singh Maan, Parkash Singh Badal, Jagdev Singh Talwandi and several others; the congregation demanded dismissal of the two police officials

⁴ In Sikhism there is no concept of continued recitation of hymns (Guru Granth Sahib) because Sikh hymns are no so-called *mantra* (incantation) which, if not recited continuously/unbroken lose their impact; so-called *akhand path* is Brahminic intrusion in Sikhism and this practice became popular only in the 20th century.

who had attacked the Gurdwara and killed one person; the four Akali factions (Tohra-Badal, Maan, Kartar Singh Narang Delhi and Manjit Singh) issued a joint warning that if the guilty policemen were not punished by the regime an agitation would be launched, besides a protest procession would be held in Delhi on the 1st of November; and a joint committee was formed for this purpose.

The Beant regime, however, did not bother for the Akali threat nor did he take any action against the police officials hence the joint action committee announced holding of an agitation; now regular *jathas* began courting arrests in Amritsar; they would make prayers at Akal Takht and offer themselves for arrests. Now, the police began not only arresting the *jathas* but also began mercilessly beating the members of the *jathas*; this frightened the Akalis; as a result on the 14th of November 1993, Akali Dal (Tohra –Badal) decided to suspend (in fact stop) the agitation; the Tohra-Badal faction had not consulted with other members of the action committee hence Simranjeet Singh Maan's Akali Dal announced that they would continue sending *jathas*. When on the 15th of November, a *jatha* appeared at Akal Takht, the caretakers of the Takht refused to perform prayers for them and did not present them with traditional *siropaos*; it was an indirect declaration which meant that the caretakers of Akal Takht would allow only those agitations which had been blessed by the group ruling the SGPC; it was an insult to the neutrality of the Takht.

High-handedness of the police in front of Akal Takht

In between the period of this agitation, the SGPC had announced holding of a congregation to commemorate the martyrdom of Beant Singh, Satwant Singh and Kehar Singh on the 31st of October 1993; the Beant regime had announced that it would not allow this function to be held even in the premises of Darbar Sahib; that day the police had put barricades to stop people from entering Darbar Sahib; in spite of this a few hundred people reached in front of Akal Takht to join the congregation; finding so many people there Gurinder Dhillon,

a terrorist police official, crossed all the limits of sacrilege. At that time Manjit Singh, acting caretaker of Akal Takht (who was present on the dais of the building of Akal Takht), addressing Gurinder Dhillon, the police officer, he said: '*Leave Darbar Sahib or I shall have to sanction some programme (plan of action) to the Sikh nation*'; at this Gurinder Dhillon answered: '*Who bothers for your programmes*'; and, Gurinder Dhillon, immediately talked to the police control room and asked: '*This Jathedar talks too much, what should I do with him?*'; the control room, however, asked Gurinder to ignore Manjit Singh; on the other hand Manjit Singh went inside as a helpless person; he did not announce any 'programme' to the Sikhs; even after this the police continued its occupation of the *parkarma* but no 'action' was taken by Manjit Singh against this police official; the police remained there till noon and when the *akhand path* and *ardas* was finished inside the building of Akal Takht, the police left; the Sikhs did hold *akhand path* and prayers but no congregation could be held except in the main room of the building of Takht. Gurinder Dhillon had insulted Manjit Singh, had committed sacrilege of Darbar Sahib but Manjit Singh was so scared that he dared not take any action against the guilty police official; he (Gurinder Dhillon) was not even declared *tankhaiya* (guilty of religious misconduct).

Such an incident was not the first act of sacrilege of Darbar Sahib; even earlier on the 7th of January 1924, the British regime had tried to do the same and the caretaker of Akal Takht has issued a warning to the British regime.⁵

⁵ On the 7th of January 1924, a meeting of this Executive was being held at Akal Takht Sahib. A large number of police force raided the Darbar Sahib complex to arrest the Sikh leaders; the police even tried to enter the premises of Akal Takht from the clock tower gate of Darbar Sahib; the Sikhs present there made a human cordon and did not allow the police entry to Akal Takht. At this the police moved towards the gate near Gurdwara Thara Sahib and tried to force entry from that gate; there too the Sikhs blocked the entry of the police; the Sikh leaders told the police that uniformed police were not allowed to enter the premises of the Gurdwaras.;

Diwali celebrations re-started in Darbar Sahib

The Hindus were celebrating their festival of Diwali on the 14th of November 1993. Since 1984, the Sikhs had stopped celebration of Diwali festival at Darbar Sahib; Diwali is a Hindu festival and has nothing to do with the Sikhs⁶ but when the Udasi and Nirmala *mahants* (after the death of Akali Phula

when the police tried to enter Akal Takht forcibly, the Sikhs pushed the police back and it had to retreat; the Sikhs did not allow the police to move forward even an inch; this state continued for about two hours; hundreds of leaders and active workers of different organisations gathered there. Finally it was decided that the police should submit a list of the persons it wanted to arrest; the list was submitted; those who were present at Akal Takht offered themselves for arrest; sixty-two Sikh leaders were arrested. In view of the police attempt to enter a Gurdwara, a *hukamnama* was issued to condemn it; it (*hukamnama*) warned the Government that the Sikhs shall sacrifice their lives to defend their shrines; the police attempt to enter the Takht was an act of sacrilege; and the Sikhs shall never tolerate such acts. It also warned that if the authorities ever tried again, the responsibility for the consequences shall be that of the government as such an act will be considered an attack on the Sikh shrines. This ‘hukamnama’ was signed by Jathedar Udham Singh Nagoke, the caretaker of Akal Takht (as a result Udham Singh was arrested on the 8th of February 1924. Jathedar Achhar Singh succeeded him on the 10th of February 1924; he too was arrested on the 7th of May 1924). Udham Singh Nagoke, the caretaker of Akal Takht, had issued a *hukamnama* to condemn the police action and had warned the police of the dire consequences in case of repetition of such an act; but, here, Manjit Singh was silent (in fact Manjit Singh had never read Sikh history, except for his course books, and had no knowledge of the event of 1924, nor was he aware of the status of Akal Takht; he was just a simple *granthi*; Tohra had appointed him as ‘acting’ caretaker because, in the past, he had exhibited extreme loyalty to Tohra and the latter had always promoted those who were ‘loyal’ to his person; this weakness of Tohra had been observed by some of his supporters and the employees of the SGPC and they had been posing as loyal to him simply to gain his confidence and enjoy the fruits of this fake loyalty).

⁶ Diwali has nothing to do with the Sikhs; even with the claim that Guru Hargobind Sahib had returned to Amritsar on this day when the Hindus were celebrating Diwali is no reason for the Sikhs to observe this Hindu day; this date too is wrong as Guru Hargobind Sahib had reached Amritsar from Gwalior on the 1st of **Magh** 1677 Bk. (corresponding to the 28th of December 1620) and **not Katak**.

Singh in 1823) gained control of Darbar Sahib, they began celebrating it; but, again, since 1981 onwards there had been no such celebrations at Darbar Sahib due to persecution of the Sikhs by the Indian regime; the Sikh nation had been passing through the darkest period of its history; in June 1984, thousands of Sikhs had been killed in Darbar Sahib itself and during Black November 1984 thousands more had been mercilessly killed; further, just recently, in 1992 and 1993 several thousand innocent Sikhs had been butchered to death; thousands were languishing in jails; sacrilege of the Sikh shrines was a routine by the forces; moreover, just 13 days earlier, the police forces, headed by Gurinder Dhillon, had committed the sacrilege of barging into Darbar Sahib and Akal Takht and had even gravely insulted Manjit Singh himself; hence, there was no sense in re-starting such celebrations; it was shocking that the caretaker of Akal Takht, instead of advising and instructing the Sikh nation for an action, was asking them to have festivities amid killings and insults (there was massive display of fireworks in Darbar Sahib on the 14th of November 1993).

Akalis' *dharnas* suppression by Beant regime

By the summer of 1993, the Akalis had almost stopped supporting or felicitating the militants; most of the militant leaders had been killed in fake encounters and the rest had been running from one post to another to find asylum for their safety; hence when the Akalis realised that the militants were no danger to them and would not be capable of dictating their terms, they began ignoring them. But, in this scenario the Akalis did make another mistake; after the 1992 elections to the Punjab Assembly they had been demanding annulment of the election results and abrogation of the newly elected Assembly as 80% of the voters had boycotted the poles but after just a few weeks the Akalis almost stopped demanding new elections and indirectly accepted the elections; had the Akalis begun an agitation on this issue there were deliberations in the Central cabinet that new elections should be held; when

Narsimha Rao (the Prime Minister) and Beant (Chief Minister) realised that the Akalis had almost surrendered on this issue, they, having already broken the back-bone of the militants, now, decided to suppress the Akalis too. The Congress did not have any terror of the militants and the Akalis had been using the militant power for their benefit too.

In this scenario, Beant and K.P. Gill decided to suppress and terrorise the Akalis too. On the other hand, by December 1993 there was no militant leader left in the Punjab; now the Akalis resolved to re-emerge in Sikh politics; on the 4th of December 1993 the Akali leaders planned to hold *dharnas* (picketing) in different parts of the Punjab to press for their demands; which were:

1. Punish the guilty persons of November 1984 massacre of the Sikhs in Delhi and other places.
2. Stop murder of human rights in the Punjab.
3. Reduce the rates of supply of electricity; pay proper rates for the crops of paddy and cotton; pay compensation to the farmers whose crops have been affected by floods in the Punjab.
4. Withdraw increase in rates of octroi, supply of water and house tax in the cities.
5. Solve the problems of the students, patwaris and teachers.
6. Bring an end to corruption and privatisation.

Among these 'demands' the first two were concerned with the Sikhs, the third related to the farmers i.e. the vote bank of the Akalis; the last two, concerned with the towns and the employees and students, were meant at winning the support of these sections.

As per programme these *dharnas* were to be held at all the district headquarters; it was to begin in Jalandhar on the 7th of December, to be followed by *dharnas* in Ropar on the 8th of December, in Fatehgarh on the 9th, in Sangrur on the 10th, in Gurdaspur on the 11th, in Ludhiana on the 13th, in Amritsar on the 14th, in Batala and Mansa on the 15th, in Firozpur and Faridkot on the 16th of December. The Akalis had expected

huge public support for these *dharnas* as the public in general was angry with the Beant regime due to perpetration of atrocities on common folk; Beant and K.P. Gill knew this hence they decided to disallow even peaceful demonstration; the regime declared that these *dharnas* would not be allowed.

The first *dharna* was to be held in Jalandhar on the 7th of December; in the evening of the 6th of December 47 senior Akalis of the district, who were to organise the *dharna*, were arrested by the police; on the following day when the Akalis gathered in front of the office of the Deputy Commissioner in Jalandhar where they were to hold *dharna*, hundreds of policemen who were already present there arrested all the 125 Akali activists hence the *dharna* could not be held. On the 8th of December the police arrested Gurcharan Singh Tohra and about 150 Akalis in Patiala and did not allow *dharna* there too; the same was repeated in Fatehgarh on the 9th of December, in Sangrur on the 10th of December, in Gurdaspur on the 11th of December, in Ludhiana on the 13th of December (here Thekedar Surjan Singh was arrested along with more than one hundred Akalis), in Amritsar on the 14th of December, in Bathinda and Mansa on the 15th of December and in Firozpur and Faridkot on the 16th of December. The Akalis had also announced that they would hold a *dharna* in front of the Parliament House on the 20th of December to press their five demands (punishing the persons accused of pogrom of November 1984, an end to persecution of the Sikhs in the Punjab, punishing the policemen responsible for fake encounter killings in the Punjab, abrogation of all the 'black laws' promulgated in the Punjab, restoration of the religious rights of the Sikhs) but due to their arrests they could not reach Delhi.

'Invasion' of Beant Singh in 'Akali villages'

Beant, the C.M., not only stopped the Akalis from holding peaceful *dharnas* but he also carried on another high-handed undemocratic practice; he held rallies in the villages belonging to prominent Akali leaders; his first invasion was in

Tohra village (belonging to Gurcharan Singh Tohra) where he addressed an official 'rally' and spitted venom on the Akali leaders; it is remarkable that not a single resident of village Tohra attended this rally; this demoralised Beant and he decided to stop this and he also released Tohra, Badal, Talwandi, Thekedar Surjan Singh and other Akalis from jails on the 22nd and the 23rd of December 1993.

Mammoth gathering of the Sikhs condemns Beant regime

Though Beant regime had not allowed the Akalis to hold *dharnas* in the beginning of this month, they got an opportunity to avenge this when, on the 25th of December, the Sikhs observed martyrdom day of the younger Sahibzadas and Mata Gujri in Fatehgarh Sahib; this function was attended by about 4 lakh Sikhs; in this functions the Akali leaders condemned atrocities committed by the Beant regime. On the 29th of December the Akalis announced that if democratic rights of the Sikhs were not restored the Dal would launch an agitation from the next month. But, the Akalis could not launch any agitation because they had observed that most of the Akali activists were not interested in any agitation due to various reasons: first they did not trust the Akalis and considered them 'traitors', people had sympathy for the militants; secondly, Beant and K.P. Gill had interned several Akali activists in jails; besides, several of them had even been killed in faked encounters; children and other relatives of some Akali activists too had been killed in fake encounters, thus there was widespread fear and terror among the minds of the Akali activists and due to this too they wanted to avoid to participate in an agitation by the Akalis; so for the next three months there was no major activity in the Akali circles.

Parkash Singh Badal joins the R.S.S.

Badal decides to barter religion for power

In the month of February 1994, one of the most dangerous developments of the Sikh history took place which became the starting point of fall of Sikhism. A senior *adhi-kari*⁷ of the R.S.S. had a meeting with Parkash Singh Badal; in this meeting the *adhi-kari* offered Badal a deal that he and his successors would always be the rulers of the Punjab if they joined the Hindu mainstream; he swore that the R.S.S. would obey this solemn assurance as command of *Bhagwad Gita* (a book considered as holy by many Hindus); he also assured him (Badal) that his membership of the R.S.S. would always remain secret and nobody will even slightly refer to this clandestine deal. By this time Badal had been posing as a rebel; he had been vocally rejecting Indian constitution and talking of an independent Sikh State⁸ and had been behaving as one of the most ardent supporter of the militants. Before this the R.S.S. had already tested Tohra; their Tohra Mission⁹ was a failure as he had not consented to such an extreme step (in fact he had been an associate of the Communists like Harkishan Surjeet, hence he could not have been wooed just by an offer of Chief Minister ship at the cost of treason) and they (RSS) did not try to approach Talwandi as they considered him unreliable because even after making an agreement with the RSS he could turn emotional any time and expose the whole game; hence Badal was their only resort and they had tested

⁷ In R.S.S. an *adhi-kari* is an official whose orders are obligatory, like the command of the “king’s council”, for all the activists of the Sangh (a short name for the R.S.S.); such a status is given to senior persons of very long standing and very hard core fundamentalist Sangh workers; they are the ‘apex body’ of the Sangh; all the senior officials are selected from this core; they are the brain cell, the cream, the hub of the organisation.

⁸ Statements dated 25.5.1992 (we don’t have any faith in Indian constitution); 26.8.1992 (we stand firm on the resolution of independent Sikh State’); 9.11.1992 (Now the Sikhs have no option but for public war against the regime).

⁹ Tohra revealed this fact to this author in August 1998 in a private meeting in the ministerial residence of Harmel Singh Tohra, his son-in-law in sector 39 at Chandigarh.

him when he had consented safe exit of Gurbachan Nirankari after killings of 13 Sikhs in Amritsar on the 13th of April 1978. In the said meeting Badal did not make any commitment but promised to discuss the same with his family. Badal discussed the offer with his wife Surinder Kaur, the latter, in spite of having a university qualification, like most of the Hindu women folk, did not think beyond money, gold and power and she had nothing to do with religion or ideology hence she immediately supported, rather she encouraged him to say 'yes' to the RSS offer. Badal himself has nothing to do with religion; he has always remained just a political careerist and has a greed for wealth; and, as a man he is perverse, mulish, wicked, crook, corrupt, mean, greedy, dishonest, conspirator, revengeful, unethical, unprincipled; he can go to the lowest extend to capture/keep power or for amassing wealth; hence he decided to accept the offer of the RSS.

From the very next day, though Badal had not yet talked to the RSS *adhihari*, Badal stopped issuing statements on the Sikh situation; he even began avoiding media and posed himself as physically sick; the shrewd RSS high command immediately observed that their offer had made its impact on Badal; hence, after this, another meeting was held in which more than one *adhihari* were present, prominent among these was Sudershan, Advani and Vajpayee. In this meeting Badal performed Hindu *havan* ceremony for the first time in his life.

Uniting the Akali Dals

As Tohra had been approached first, he could smell the rat from Badal's absence from the political scene hence he began having a dialogue with Simranjeet Singh Maan and leaders of other Akali factions;¹⁰ and having observed their willingness for a united Akali force he decided to use Akal

¹⁰ At that time there were five main Akali groups: Tohra-Badal Akali Dal, Samyukat Akali Dal headed by Simranjeet Singh Maan, Akali Dal headed by Manjit Singh (brother of Bhai Amrik Singh), Akali Dal headed by Surjit Barnala, Babar Akali Dal (headed by Kartar Singh Narang); besides there were some one-man Akali Dals too.

Takht for his purpose. To translate his planning into action Tohra asked Manjit Singh, acting caretaker of Akal Takht, to make an appeal to all the Akali Dals to unite under one platform, as one organisation; on the 20th of March 1994, Manjit Singh issued a statement asking them to unite their factions into one Akali Dal; he also warned them that in case they failed to do so he shall have to take strict action. As Badal had already joined the RSS mainstream he had been told by his friends (RSS) not to have union with Simranjeet Singh Maan and other Khalistani groups or the Congress Party's stooge Surjit Barnala.

On the 13th of the April 1994, on the 1st of Visakh month of Bikrami Calendar, a big gathering was going to be held at Damdama Sahib Gurdwara in Talwandi Sabo and Tohra planned to use it for his unity move. The celebrations of this event began with a 'Khalsa March' on the 10th of April; all the Akali Dals participated in this 'March' which reached Talwandi Sabo on the 12th of April. On the 13th of April a congregation was held; in this gathering Manjit Singh, in the name of Akal Takht, 'ordered' all the Akali factions to unite into one Dal and demanded resignations of the Presidents of all the factions; but, on the very second day he told the media that he had not demanded resignations and had asked them to submit letters from their parties "expressing their loyalty to Akal Takht and also that they would obey the decisions of Akal Takht sincerely and fully."

In the meanwhile Beant regime (it had no information about Badal and RSS meeting), fearing the unity move of the Akalis, released Jasbir Singh Rode from jail on the 12th of April;¹¹ but as Jasbir had already lost his respect among the

¹¹ At that time Jasbir Singh Rode was in jail; he had been arrested under Arms Act on the charges of supply of smuggled weapons. According to Hardeep Singh Dibdiba, Jasbir Singh used to buy weapons from an arms dealer Piare Lal of Nakodar and sell them to the militants at a very high price, thus earning a lot of money, and, by doing this he had also been earning goodwill of the militants who would get arms without any risk; Amolak Singh (grandson of Giani Gurbachan Singh Bhindran, the founder

Sikhs, when he reached there nobody even greeted him; thus Beant failed in his mission to create disturbances in the congregation of the 13th of April 1994.

Manjit Singh priest's order asking the chiefs of the Dals to submit their resignations to him created commotion; while all other Akali groups submitted their resignations Badal refused to obey, instead, on the 17th of April he wrote a letter to Manjit Singh asking him not to interfere on this issue (uniting the Akali Dals); (later, on the 6th of May, Badal sent him another letter instead of this one).

On the 18th of April three former Advocate-Generals of the Punjab (Ajit Singh Sarhadi, Harcharan Singh Mattewal and Gurdarshan Singh Grewal) issued a statement to defend Badal (this statement had been commissioned by Badal himself); in this statement they warned that in view of the decision of the Supreme Court Manjit Singh should not unite the Akalis because an Akali Dal formed at Akal Takht will not be allowed to participate in the legislative and other elections.¹² Again, on the 18th of April 1994, Surinder Singh, a supporter of Badal (of no importance), filed a petition in the court of Additional District Judge Ajnala, seeking injunction to stop priest Manjit

of Bhindran Jatha, now Bhindran-Mehta Jatha) too was a partner in this business of supply of weapons. S.S.P. Swaran Ghotna received information about this and he arrested Jasbir Singh; Ghotna produced Jasbir Singh before the Magistrate and demanded his police remand as the latter was to recover arms stocks in U.P. but the Magistrate refused to grant police remand; Dibdiba believes that Swaran Ghotna wanted to kill Jasbir Singh under the plea that Jasbir Singh had tried to escape from the police custody on way to U.P. According to Dibdiba, later, the militants too received information that Jasbir had been earning a lot from supply of weapons and they too wanted to teach him a lesson (Hardeep Singh Dibdiba, *Saaka Neelataara Ton Baad Tabaahi Ki Twareekh*, (2005, Dibdiba, U.P.) pp. 104-105 (of the 2nd edition).

¹² Some times back, the Supreme Court had decided an election petition in which it had annulled the election of an Akali M.L.A. on the plea that an appeal to vote for him had been made by Akal Takht; and according to law (passed by Lok Sabha on the 11th of August 1988) role of religion had been banned.

Singh from forming a united Akali Dal; the Judge issued summons to Manjit Singh asking him to appear in the court on the 3rd of May. Surinder Singh's action was widely condemned and he withdrew his petition on the 26th of April and the possible conflict on the issue whether the caretaker of Akal Takht would appear in a court¹³ or not was avoided.

On the other hand, though Badal had indirectly refused to 'obey' Manjit Singh's order, he was still afraid of being condemned as 'rebel' of Akal Takht; in fact he and his companions themselves had done the same with Surjit Barnala when the latter had refused to obey Professor Darshan Singh's like order of 3rd of February 1987 when the latter had tried to unite all the Akali factions. So, Badal played another trick; on the 21st of April he resigned as president of the Dal and formed a five member 'Presidium' comprising of Kuldeep Singh Wadala, Parkash Singh Majitha, Ranjit Singh Brahampura, Gurdev Singh Badal and Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa; and, this 'Presidium' declared that its Dal had suspended all political activities for an indefinite period.

Formation of Akali Dal (Amritsar)

After this Manjit Singh priest 'summoned' all the senior leaders of the different Akali factions at Akal Takht for the 25th of April; all the leaders, except for the Badal group, 'appeared' at the Takht; here Manjit Singh priest staged another drama; he 'ordered' all the Akali leaders to 'purify their souls' by listening to *keertan* (singing of hymns), cleaning dishes in *langar*, cleaning dust from shoes of the

¹³ But almost during the same period, on the 29th of April 1994, Professor Darshan Singh (a former caretaker of Akal Takht) had already appeared as a witness in the case of 'Sikh Foundation of Virginia vs. Narinder Singh'; and had rejected the notion that the caretaker of Akal Takht would not appear in any court of law;¹³ Professor Darshan Singh, not only appeared in a court, but also stood witness against the 'command' of the caretaker of Akal Takht; it is interesting to note that Manjit Singh was duly informed about this but he dared not say a word. He did not summon Darshan Singh to reprimand him for appearing in a court of law violating the presumed discipline of Akal Takht; in fact he had no guts for that.

visitors to Darbar Sahib, cleaning the *parkarama* (periphery) of Darbar Sahib for five days; the Akali leaders made a show of such religious *sewa* (voluntary selfless service) for some hours on the first day and some even on the second day, and the media published pictures of this exhibition (of performance of *sewa*); only Simranjeet Singh Maan ‘obeyed’ this ‘order’ and performed *sewa* for full five days.¹⁴ In fact Manjit Singh still wanted to wait for the response of Badal; Badal had, in a way, deluded Manjit Singh by surrendering his authority to a ‘Presidium’; now, Manjit Singh re-summoned Badal to present himself, on the 2nd of May 1994 (later, the date was postponed to May 6).

In the meanwhile Manjit Singh priest and Tohra had received information that Badal would not be ‘obeying’ joining the new united Akali Dal; hence they decided to go further for formation of the new Dal, and, on the 2nd of May 1994, the new ‘united’ Akali Dal in the name of Akali Dal (Amritsar) was announced; the new Dal was to be headed by a 7 member Presidium comprised of Simranjeet Singh Maan, Jagdev Singh Talwandi, Jasmer Singh Bala, Manjit Singh (brother Bhai Amrik Singh), Amarinder Singh, Surjit Barnala; the seventh person’s name was not announced as that had been reserved for Parkash Singh Badal (a week later, when Badal totally refused to join the new Dal Sukhjinder Singh was given this place).¹⁵ A manifesto of this Dal was also announced from

¹⁴ On the 30th of April 1994, John L. Painter, High Commissioner of Canada in India, visited Darbar Sahib and Akal Takht; John Painter met Akali leaders and the caretaker of Akal Takht; and, he too joined Simranjeet Singh Maan in cleaning the shoes of the pilgrims.

¹⁵ It was a strange unity; Surjit Barnala was the one who had attacked Darbar Sahib without any reason, just to justify Indira Gandhi’s 1984 attack on Darbar Sahib and during his tenure as the C.M. he had killed hundreds of Sikh youths in fake encounters and had imprisoned thousands others; his acts were like those of Zakaria Khan and Mir Mannu, and, still he was bracketed with Maan, Amarinder Singh and Talwandi who had suffered a lot for the Sikh nation; it was also alleged that Jasmer Singh Bala was also a part of the Indian Army when the latter had attacked Darbar Sahib on the 4th of June 1984.

Akal Takht; its central point was to *'establish a Confederation between India and the Sikhs'*; it also said that *'if such a confederal reorganization is made impossible by the rulers of the Indian sub-continent, the Shiromani Akali Dal has no other option but to ask and fight for a sovereign state'*; in other words it was an indirect declaration of an independent country like the Confederation of 'Republics' in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). Along with this a '*Pran Pattar*' (literally: a document of vow) was also signed and read out by all the members of the Presidium; this document of vow said: *"we have given up all our differences and now onwards we shall launch a united struggle for national interests; we shall not be affected by conspiracies of the enemies of the Panth aimed at dividing us; we are dedicated to Akal Takht; our body, mind and wealth is dedicated to the Panth; we shall always struggle for the national cause and we shall never betray the nation and shall function as a sewak (servant) of the nation (here nation means Sikh nation)."*

Though a new Akali Dal was born and it had a common manifesto, it was all vague and confusing; secondly, the very next day, Baba Joginder Singh group, which was not represented in the new Dal, resented that Maan had joined hands with the enemies of Panth and had renounced the goal of the freedom of the Sikh nation; Atinderpal Singh, who too was not given any representation, called this manifesto 'self-contradictory and confusing'; Amrinder Singh said that the manifesto was almost the 'Anandpur Sahib resolution' and nothing more; Simranjeet Singh Maan said that the manifesto was for Khalistan; whereas, Surjit Barnala (later) said that the resolution had nothing to do with Khalistan.

Badal's men insult Manjit Singh

Manjit Singh, the acting caretaker of Akal Takht, had 'summoned' Badal at the Takht and on the fixed day, on 6th of May 1994, Badal along with hundreds of his followers, reached Darbar Sahib; Badal's supporters used filthy abuses for Manjit Singh; they even manhandled him and in this scuffle

his turban fell down; Manjit Singh got so scared that he ran into a room and locked himself inside. After some time Badal too appeared and met Manjit Singh; he behaved as if nothing had happened; and, he (Badal) also pretended that he had no knowledge of what his supporters had done with him (Manjit Singh); both of them had a meeting of two and a half hours and during this meeting Badal refused to make any commitment and rather asserted that he was not interested in 'unity' with the other Akali factions. After this meeting Manjit Singh did not issue any statement; he just 'left it all to the verdict of the Sikh Panth' by saying: *niberha Panth karegaa* (literally: Panth will settle it). It was the same that had been desired and demanded by Badal. After this, Badal told the media that Manjit Singh had allowed him to maintain his separate organisation. The truth is that Badal had brought even the father and a few other relatives of Manjit Singh to tell the latter that he should not interfere and be careful of the consequences if he tried to force him (Badal) for anything; as Manjit was a weak man, a coward, had no moral courage; he was an embodiment of several weaknesses and due to abuses and manhandling by Badals' *goondas* (hoodlum high-handed, yobbo rascals) he had been badly scared; hence it was expected that he would not be able to dictate his terms to Badal. The next day, Manjit Singh, however, denied that he had allowed Badal Akali Dal to function independently; he (Manjit Singh), however, took no clear stand on the issue and tried to avoid it; hence no actions were taken against Badal.

Rachhpal Singh's drama

Though Manjit Singh had not met with any success in the case of Badal, he tried to assert his 'authority' in Delhi; on the 11th of May 1994, the members of the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (D.S.G.M.C.) passed a unanimous resolution giving authority to him (Manjit Singh) to select (in fact, to nominate) the new executive; it was here that Rachhpal Singh, who had, earlier, been 'excommunicated' by Professor Darshan Singh, handed over a formal letter to him (Manjit

Singh) seeking ‘permission’ to present his case at Akal Takht (in fact Manjit and Rachhpal had already held a secret meeting); on the 15th of May, Manjit Singh held talks with the members of the D.S.G.M.C. at Gurdwara Rakab Ganj; on the 17th of May, Rachhpal Singh appeared before Manjit Singh and the latter asked him to appear at Akal Takht on the 24th of May 1994).

On the 21st of May 1994, Manjit Singh nominated Manjit Singh Calcutta as the president of the D.S.G.M.C.; other office bearers were: Dr. Jaspal Singh Senior vice-president, Surjit Singh Junior vice-president, Nirwair Singh general secretary and Kulmohan Singh as joint secretary. [These elections (in fact nominations) were challenged in the Delhi High Court;¹⁶ and, on the 5th of January 1995 the Court annulled this election and accepted the authority of Kirpal Singh Sangatpuri, the former President, and ordered formal elections for the office of President and the rest of the Executive which were held on the 30th of January 1995].

On the 25th of May 1994 Rachhpal Singh appeared at Akal Takht to formally apologise; he was told to perform religious services for 21 days in Gurdwaras; Rachhpal Singh accepted the ‘verdict’ and performed services for five days, but on the 1st of June 1994, under the instructions of Delhi regime, he issued a very strong statement against Manjit Singh and went back to Delhi; at this, the next day Manjit Singh issued a ‘*hukamnama*’ asking the Sikhs for a social boycott of Rachhpal Singh; reacting to this, Rachhpal said that Manjit Singh priest was just an employee of the S.G.P.C. and his so-called *hukamnama* was just a ‘fraud’; at this, the Sikh Students Federation (Mehta-Chawla group) asked Manjit Singh not to indulge in dirty politics and rather resign his office (by this time Mehta and Chawla had joined hands with Badal).

Badal Hinduised his party as the R.S.S. directed him

¹⁶ Gurdeep Singh Dau and others versus Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee.

Having avoided confrontation with the Sikh clergy, Badal decided to go his way as per the directions of the R.S.S.; his first assignment was to transform his party into a Hindu mainstream party i.e. bringing an end to its Sikh character; though totally declaring it a Punjabi Dal or Punjabi Party would have meant losing Sikh votes so it was decided that the skeleton and image should give a look of a Sikh party but it should be slowly transformed into a Punjabi Party; and the first step towards this direction was to allow the party's membership for the Hindus.

Badal's drama of the 'Sikh Intellectuals Mission'

Badal played another trick so that his association with the R.S.S. would not get revealed immediately; he called a meeting of some Sikh intellectuals at his residence in sector 9; prominent who attended it included J.S. Grewal, Jasbir Singh Ahluwalia, Prithipal Kapur, and Dr. Darshan Singh. In this meeting Badal discussed the issue of capturing power in the Punjab and under this point he asked the guests to suggest what policy should be adopted; he further elaborated it and said that the Akalis would never be able to form government in Punjab of their own; they would need the support either of the Congress or the B.J.P.; before any of the intellectuals could suggest something he again limited the scope of debate by saying that the Congress Party had let loose the reign of terror, it has killed thousands of Sikhs between 1984 and 1993 hence an alliance with the Congress might not be acceptable to the Panth. Now the guests had not much to suggest; in fact Badal had already agreed all the terms with the RSS and this meeting was just an eye wash to propagate that he had chosen to collaborate with the B.J.P. only on the suggestion of the Sikh intellectuals. In spite of limiting the scope of suggesting anything, Dr Darshan Singh suggested that the Dal should not collaborate with any one of these and should remain totally independent; Prithipal Kapur who was in direct liaison with Arjan Singh (former Governor of the Punjab) suggested that he could talk to the Congress Party to accept Akalis' hegemony in

the Punjab in return for total support for Congress Party in the Centre; reacting to it Ahluwalia suggested that the Congress could not be trusted; it had betrayed Surjit Barnala in spite of the fact that he worked as a tout of Rajiv, hence the B.J.P. should be preferred. Grewal (who is known for his cunning behaviour), having observed that Badal was inclined to go for the B.J.P., said, 'though I am in favour of an Akali-Congress alliance, but, in present circumstances it does not seem possible' (in fact he was in a fix; it was Badal who had granted him Headship of History Department in the Guru Nanak University in 1969 and he was also indebted to Darbara Singh former C.M. Punjab for appointing him V.C. of the same university in 1981; hence he was indebted to the Congress too). Now, Ahluwalia and Grewal had supported alliance with B.J.P. and the suggestion by the Congress supporter Prithipal Kapur had been turned down, Badal, as per his nature, said softly, 'then we shall begin negotiations with the B.J.P.' and before anyone could comment he ordered his servant to serve fish and other refreshments which was an indication to the beginning of the winding up of the meeting; this is how he declared that it were the 'Sikh intellectuals' who had suggested an alliance with the B.J.P.

Badal's Moga Conference changes Akali Dal Constitution

After 'accomplishing' his 'Sikh intellectual Mission' Badal announced holding of a session of his Akali Dal on the 24th of July 1994 in Moga. By this time Akali Dal Amritsar had already been launched (on the 2nd of May 1994) and several traditional Akali leaders had joined the new organisation; however, those who sided fully with Badal included Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa, Balwinder Singh Bhunder, Gurdev Singh Badal, Parkash Singh Majitha (Badal's three loyal followers) as well as Kuldeep Singh Wadala (Jalandhar-Doaba) and Ranjit Singh Brahmputra (Amritsar-Majha) the two leaders who had been displeased with Simranjeet Singh Maan due to personality clash; the rest were activists of B and C class; there were some others too who were in secret

understanding with the B.J.P.; some feudal too joined Badal as they did not want to suffer by joining struggle for Sikhs' rights.

On the 24th of July 1994 the Moga Convention amended the constitution of the Akali Dal (Badal) and inserted a clause that 'non-Sikhs too could join the organisation' (earlier it was open only to the Sikhs; and by passing this resolution Badal earned permanent good will of the B.J.P. and the R.S.S. But, now, the Akali Dal (Badal) was no longer a Panthic organisation and it had become a Punjabi Party with no interest in Sikh affairs, in fact, it was now a party which had one point agenda i.e. to capture power in the Punjab it had even renounced not only the Sikh agenda but also the Punjab agenda; besides it was secretly agreed with the R.S.S. that the Akali Dal (Badal) will not launch any agitation even for the rights of the Punjab (including Chandigarh, Punjab Waters, power projects or other demands). In this Convention Badal Dal announced that it would contest the forthcoming election of the office bearers of the SGPC in November 1994.

Akali Dal (Amritsar) forms its Executive

The Akali Dal (Amritsar), formed at Akal Takht, now selected its Executive; in fact the leaders of the new organisation had been waiting for the outcome of the Moga Convention of Badal; now they knew who had joined hands with Badal hence on the 26th of July, the Executive of the new organisation was announced; it included: Kartar Singh Narang (Delhi), Amar Singh Nalini (Haryana), Surjan Singh Thekedar, Ravi Inder Singh, Basant Singh Khalsa, Harinder Singh Tarn Taran, Raja Narinder Singh Nabha, Jagmohan Singh Toni, Nirmal Singh Kahlon, Tota Singh, Inderjeet Singh Zira, Jagir Kaur Begowal, Sucha Singh Chhotepur, Suba Singh Muktsar, Swaran Singh Punj Girain, Manjit Khehra Advocate, Ram Singh Bhai, Teja Singh Dardi, Jarnail Singh Narangwal, Gopal Singh Mansa, Bahal Singh Patti, Joginder Singh Bajwa, Kulwinder Singh Khojkipur, Gurdev Singh Batalvi, Balwant Singh Tohra, Jaswinder Singh Daroli, Gursev Singh Harpalpur,

Sarbjit Singh Jammu, Sarbjit Singh Sohal and 10 more (in all 39 plus seven members of the Presidium).

Akali Dal Badal's Executive

On the 31st of July Badal too announced Executive of his Dal; it included mostly his loyal followers viz.: Atma Singh (Patron), Badal (President), Kuldeep Singh Wadala (Senior Vice President), Gurdev Singh Badal (Junior Vice President), Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa (Secretary General), Balwinder Singh Bhundar and Captain Kanwaljeet Singh (Secretary), Sujan Singh (Office Secretary); the following were selected as members of the 'Working Committee': Mohinder Singh Romana, Charanjit Singh Walia, Sarup Singh Jalandhar, Major Singh Uboke, Natha Singh Dalam, Hari Singh Zira, Mohan Singh Matia, Talab Singh Sandhu, Charanjit Singh Atwal, Rajinder Singh Dhaliwal, Jatinder Singh Kariha, Pritam Singh Sharinh, Baldev Singh Khiala, Kuldeep Singh Bhatia and Harinder Singh (former First Secretary in the Indian Embassy in Norway) and more.

Divisions among the Akali Dal (Amritsar) leadership

Now there were two Akali Dal; one announced from Akal Takht comprised of Khalistanis like Simranjeet Singh Maan on one hand and the loyalist of Rajiv Gandhi like Surjit Barnala on the other hand, thus persons with totally opposite ideologies and loyalties. On the 1st of August this organisation announced that it will observe the 15th of August (India's Independence Day) as 'Black Day' to protest against the persecution of the Sikhs. Surjeet Barnala, who was still in secret liaison with to the Congress Party and had hoped to become Governor of some state, issued a statement opposing this; reacting to this several members of the Executive of this organisation demanded an apology from Surjit Barnala and threatened that they would resign from the Executive if he did not submit an unqualified apology; these included Jagmohan Singh Toni, Jagir Kaur, Sucha Singh Chhotepur, Swaran Singh

Panjgarain, Ram Singh Bhai and others.¹⁷ On the 13th of August a meeting of the Executive of this organisation was held in Fatehgarh Sahib and it confirmed its decision to observe the 15th of August as 'Black Day'. On the 20th of August the Akali Dal (Amritsar) held a conference in Longowal village; it was held on the eve of the murder of Harchand Singh Longowal who had signed a treaty (in fact document of surrender) with Rajiv Gandhi; in this Conference the Dal leaders repeated the demand for an independent Khalistan; on the 21st of August a congregation was held in the name of Rakhar Puniya (a holy day for the Hindus); in this gathering too Simranjeet Singh Maan again asserted that Khalistan was the only solution to the Sikh problems. During this period the Akali Dal (Amritsar) suffered a major loss when Col. Harbant Singh, one of the senior supporters of militants, joined the Akali Dal (Badal).

On the 18th of September 1994 B.N. Chhiber became the Governor of the Punjab; Chhiber was a part of the India army battalions which had attacked Darbar Sahib on the 4th of June 1984; Tohra and Maan condemned this appointment in strongest words; after a couple of days Chhiber made a formal visit to Darbar Sahib where he was not presented even ceremonial *siropao*.

Akali Dal (Amritsar) emerges as a powerful group

On the 27th of September 1994, elections were held to the Panchayats and the Block Samitis; in spite of large scale use of Government machinery the Congress could win only 402 of the 976 Panchayat Samitis; Badal Akali Dal won 188 and the Akali Dal (Amritsar) wrested 88 of them; similarly, from amongst 272 Zila Prishad constituencies Congress could win only 119, Badal got 59 and Akali Dal (Amritsar) won 43 units. Several seats had been lost by the Akalis due to division of votes; had both the Dals contested unitedly the Congress would have lost still many more seats; all this had happened in

¹⁷ Ajit Jalandhar, dated 9.7.1994

spite of the fact that the Akali Dal (Amritsar) had not even formed its units in most of the *tehsils* (sub divisions) and the districts of the Punjab; hence it meant that in near future the new Dal could capture power in the Punjab. But this did not happen; soon, the leaders of the new Dal began leaving this organisation due to internal bickering; many of them joined hands with Badal. During this time too another attempt at uniting both the Dals was made by some neutral groups; but these attempts failed because some leaders, in both the groups, had been trying to win over the other faction's activists. Besides the most of the senior leaders of both the groups were not much interested in unity; they were interested in power and any unity if achieved would have meant nothing but just sharing power with the others.

The election to the President-ship of the S.G.P.C. was to be held on the 25th of November 1994; in between Badal was able to win over two senior leaders of the Akali Dal (Amritsar); Onkar Singh Mattenangal, the senior vice president of the SGPC joined Badal Dal on the 16th of October and Randhir Singh Cheema, one of the most loyal friends of Jagdev Singh Talwandi jumped to Badal's boat on the 23rd of October; this boosted the morale of the leaders of Badal Dal. In the Panchayat elections some activists had even tried to defeat candidates of their own Dal simply because of personal prejudices; Cheema had left the Dal due to this; even Simranjeet Singh Maan resigned from the organisation levelling alike allegations against some activists accusing them of causing defeat of his candidate from Fatehgarh Sahib district's Zila Parishad; after hard persuasions Maan agreed to withdraw his resignation after several senior leaders of Akali Dal (Amritsar) submitted unqualified apology to Maan.

Badal fails to capture the S.G.P.C.

In between the mediators again tried for unity of both Dals; a meeting of Badal Dal was held at the residence of Kuldeep Singh Wadala; on the 27th of October which resolved that the Badal Dal would stick to its position on the question of

unity of both the Dals (it referred to permitting non-Sikhs to become members of the Dal), hence again, there was a deadlock. On the other hand, with a hope for more defections from Akali Dal (Amritsar) Badal announced that his Party would contest the election for President-ship of the SGPC (which was going to be held on the 25th of November); on the 6th of November Badal offered that his group would not contest elections if Tohra was out of race for Presidency. On the 8th of November Badal threatened that he would use all means to defeat Tohra; this frightened Tohra and a scared Tohra again tried to use Manjit Singh priest; and the latter wrote a new letter to Badal on the 10th of November asking him to give up vanity of power and come forward for unity; Badal, however, did not bother for this letter and announced that Prem Singh Lalpura would be the candidate of his Dal. This again led to renewed unity efforts by some Sikh elite but Badal did not encourage the new unity move because by that time the R.S.S. headquarters had warned him against changing his stand. In spite of this, on the 23rd of November, just two days before the election for presidency, Manjit Singh priest wrote another letter; it was more of a supplication than an appeal or suggestion but Badal rebuffed this letter too; in fact he was bound by his assurance to the R.S.S. hence there was no question of unity. Tohra tried to use Akal Takht, through Manjit Singh, to pressurise Badal to join the new Dal; Manjit Singh wrote to Badal on the 10th of November 1994 and again on the 23rd of November 1994 but Badal did not bother;

Though Tohra had been manoeuvring for his unity move but he and the other leaders of the Akali Dal (Amritsar) had been acting diligently; they had taken away most of the members of the S.G.P.C. to an undisclosed place so that Badal might not be able to approach them; and on the day of election all of them were taken to Teja Singh Samundari Hall, the venue of the S.G.P.C. elections, in a bus, hence, when the election was held Lalpura could get only 28 votes as compared to 66 of Tohra; the latter became president of the S.G.P.C. for the 20th term; this, however, was a rebuff to Badal.

Tohra again manoeuvres for unity

Though Tohra had won presidency but he was still afraid of Badal; he knew that Badal could plan for no-confidence motion against him; as he had a weakness for power, he did not want to lose the S.G.P.C.; he had observed that the Akali Dal (Amritsar), being a combination of extremely opposite groups, as well as due to personality clash, would not become a success in the long run where as he was interested in a permanent status and to achieve this he could go to any extent and even stoop to any level; hence he restarted unity move.

Keeping in view his personal interest for presidency of the S.G.P.C. Tohra planned another unity move by involving the Sikh intelligentsia. Under his instructions, Manjit Singh priest called a gathering of the Sikh 'intellectual' at Akal Takht on the 10th of December 1994; even after deliberations and debates for six hours this gathering could not reach any consensus; on the following day Manjit Singh priest formed a Committee of five members to usher unity move; this 'Committee' comprised of Major General Narinder Singh, Ashok Singh Bagarian, Dr Darshan Singh, Amar Singh Ambalvi and Dr Kehar Singh Patiala (a personal friend of Manjit Singh priest). This Committee met Badal on the 30th of December but Badal did not make any promises and rather repeated his former stand; he was firm on the issue of the new constitution of the Dali .e. to end the Sikh character of the Akali Dal and make it a Punjabi party and a part of the Indian (in fact Hindu) mainstream.

After this meeting the five member committee 'submitted' its report to Manjit Singh priest; as a follow up the latter 'summoned' all the leaders of Akali Dal (Amritsar) and Akali Dal (Badal) for the 10th of January 1995; the meeting had to be postponed to the 11th of January and on this day most of the senior leaders of both Dals reached Amritsar and held a meeting at Akal Takht; in this meeting these 14 leaders did not find any common point of agreement hence they did not make

any agreement for unity but promised to stop verbal war against each other; these 14 persons included Parkash Singh Badal, Kuldeep Singh Wadala, Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa, Balwinder Singh Bhunder, Ranjit Singh Brahampura, Parkash Singh Majitha, Gurdev Singh Badal, Gurcharan Singh Tohra, Manjit Singh (Bhai), Surjit Barnala; at that time Simranjeet Singh Maan was in jail¹⁸ and Captain Amarinder Singh did not attend the meeting.

Though Badal had attended the meeting at Akal Takht but he had made no commitment but the RSS headquarters felt concerned and they directed him to clarify his stand; hence, on the 20th of January 1995 Badal issued a statement that his party had rejected the 'Amritsar Declaration' issued from Akal Takht on the 2nd of May 1994 and any unity talk would not discuss this 'Declaration'; he also formed a Committee of six members to deal with the unity move; this Committee comprised of Kuldeep Singh Wadala, Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa, Balwinder Singh Bhunder, Ranjit Singh Brahampura, Parkash Singh Majitha, Gurdev Singh Badal.

On the 23rd of January 1995 Manjit Singh priest formed a 'Unity Committee' comprising of Kuldeep Singh Wadala, Ranjit Singh Brahmpura, Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa, Sucha Singh Chhotepur, Surjit Barnala, Manjit Singh (Bhai) and Ashok Singh Bagarian; among these seven each group had three members and Ashok Singh was 'neutral'; a meeting of this seven member committee was held on the 5th of February 1995 but no consensus could be reached. During this period, again, some lawyers again tried to create bogey of the new law which banned role of religion in politics but this warning could not distract the members of this Committee.

The activity for 'unity' among both the Akali factions was in a dilly dallying state but Tohra was extremely impatient to accomplish it; in fact he was nervous as he felt scared about the uncertainty of his presidency of the S.G.P.C.; hence he was

¹⁸ He had been arrested on the 5th of January 1995 (he remained in jail for more than six months; he was released on bail on the 18th of July)

ready to go to any extent, and willing to pay any price, for having union with Badal; he was so much out of control that on the 11th of February he declared on his own that 'come what may the Akali factions will be united.' In fact Tohra did not have confidence in himself or his comrades-in-arms; regardless of the fact that the Akali Dal (Amritsar) had achieved remarkable success in Panchayat elections in spite of being a newly formed organisation and he had badly defeated Badal's candidate in election to the presidency of the S.G.P.C., he (Tohra) considered himself in a miserable, weak and helpless position. On the other hand Simranjeet Singh Maan declared that he would not allow changing of even one word of the 'Amritsar Declaration'. On the 17th of February Manjit Singh 'summoned' all the Akali leaders to attend a meeting at Akal Takht on the 22nd of February; on the 21st of February Badal asked Manjit Singh not to move so fast; in spite of this the 7 member Committee did attend a meeting on the 22nd of February; they had a seven hour long debate but could not reach any consensus; finally it was decided that Tohra and Badal too should be added to the 7 member Committee so that points of agreement and disagreement could be discussed properly; now it became a 9 member Committee.

The next few days were a period of negotiations and conspiracies; Tohra and Badal had decided to have a union even if the other members of the Akali Dal Amritsar would not join them. First indication of this secret agreement was given by Badal when he did not hold a separate function on the eve of Hola Mahalla in Anandpur Sahib on the 17th of March 1995; and on this day Tohra declared that 'unity will definitely be achieved by the 13th of April.'

The next meeting of the 9 member Committee was held on the 3rd of April 1995 at the Chandigarh residence of Ashok Singh Bagarian; in this meeting the main point of discussion was the constitution of Akali Dal; Badal group advocated enrolment of the non-Sikhs (in fact Hindus) whereas Akali Dal Amritsar's representatives stuck to Dal's Sikh character hence the meeting remained inconclusive; this Committee held

another meeting on the 4th of April; in this meeting Tohra presented a new draft in which the issue of enrolment of Hindus was not referred to but the outline of Party's policy programme almost like that of Anandpur Sahib Resolution. Sucha Singh Chhotepur, a representative of Simranjeet Singh Maan (who was still in jail) refused to accept any change in Amritsar Declaration but Badal gave his consent to this draft and supported federal structure under which just four departments should remain with the Central Government and the rest should be under the authority of the states; this draft also demanded abrogation of section 356 and 365 of the Indian Constitution which empowered the Central Government to dismiss any province's Government and dissolve Assembly of any province under certain provisions, and, all the provinces (like the Senate in the USA) should have equal number of seats in Rajya Sabha (Upper House of Indian Parliament); the draft also demanded an end to police atrocities in the Punjab and release of all the Sikhs.

In fact during all this period Tohra had made a secret deal with Badal and this draft had been prepared by both of them jointly. As per their agreement Badal had agreed to concede the president-ship of the S.G.P.C. to Tohra for life. These secret negotiations had been finalised on the night of the 3rd of April 1995 and on the following day Tohra presented the draft in the meeting of the 9 member Committee. Though the meeting of the 4th of April had ended without achieving any unanimous decision but on the 6th of April Tohra again asserted that both Dals shall definitely be united and the declaration of this unity will be made on the 13th of April in Talwandi Sabo. Another meeting of the 9 member Committee was held on the 10th and the 12th of April; and in the last meeting it was resolved that both the groups accept in principle the 'Anandpur Sahib Resolution' as Akali Dal's policy. As planned, on the 13th of April, in the Visakhi day congregation in Talwandi Sabo, Manjit Singh priest announced unity of both Dals and also announced that the 1973 manifesto of the Akali Dal will be the policy programme of the united organisation.

Though formal declaration of 'unity' had been made on the 13th of April still both groups could not reach an agreement about the infra-structure of the Party; on the 14th of April leaders of both groups held another meeting; this meeting too could not reach any consensus; finally on the 22nd of April Badal was chosen president and it was resolved that other office bearers will be finalised after the mid-term poll for Giddarbaha constituency (which was going to be held on the 3rd of June 1995) for which Badal himself was a candidate; besides, a three member 'High Powered Committee' comprised of Ashok Singh Bagarian, Gurcharan Singh Tohra and Kuldeep Singh Wadala was formed and it was authorised to draft infra-structure of the united Akali Dal.

Dramatic announcement by Ashok Singh Bagarian

Giddarbaha election was won by Badal, though with a margin of just 2115 votes but a day before the result of the election could be announced by the Election Commission, Ashok Singh Bagarian, claiming himself as the 'Convener' of the 3 member 'High Powered Committee', convened a press conference and announced infra-structure of the united Akali Dal; this press conference was not attended by any of the other two members (Tohra and Wadala); Bagarian declared that as the 'High Powered Committee' did not receive any suggestion he himself had to declare the Executive; this Executive included: Patrons: Ajit Singh Sarhadi, Atma Singh and Amar Singh Ambalvi, President: Parkash Singh Badal, Senior Vice President: Simranjeet Singh Maan, Vice Presidents: Sukhjinder Singh, Gurdev Singh Badal and Manjit Singh (Bhai), General Secretaries: Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa, Sucha Singh Chhotepur and Bharpur Singh, Secretary: Bhag Singh M.L.A., Treasurer: Manjit Singh Calcutta and the 55 member Executive members included: Gurcharan Singh Tohra, Kabal Singh, Parkash Singh Majitha, Gurdas Singh Badal, Nirmal Singh Kahlon, Kuldeep Singh Wadala, Capt Kanwaljeet Singh, Gurdarshan Singh Grewal (former Advocate General), Prem Singh Lalpura, Charanjit Singh Atwal, Thekedar Surjan Singh, Ravi Inder

Singh, Dr Ratan Singh, Balwinder Singh Bhunder, Amarjit Singh Bhatia, Charanjit Singh Walia, Sujan Singh, Major Singh Uboke, Rajinder Singh Dhaliwal, Ranjit Singh Brahampura, Captain Amarinder Singh, Jasdev Singh Sandhu, Raja Narinder Singh Nabha, Sukhdev Singh Dhillon, Jasbir Singh, Ajit Singh 'Parwar Vichhora', Inderjeet Singh, Kirpal Singh Libra, Prem Singh Chandumajra, Jagdev Singh Talwandi, Randhir Singh Cheema, Tota Singh, Baldev Singh, Jagmohan Singh Toni, Major General Narinder Singh, Sewa Singh Sekhwan, Rajinder Kaur Bulara, Satwant Singh, Satwant Kaur Sandhu, Basant Singh Khalsa; Bagarian also announced a 'Parliamentary Board' comprising of Badal, Tohra, Sukhjinder Singh, Surjit Barnala, Parkash Singh Majitha, Kuldeep Singh Wadala, Simranjeet Singh Maan, Captain Amarinder Singh and Bagarian himself (as Chairman). The very next day Tohra and Wadala the other two members of the 'High Powered Committee' rejected the list released by Ashok Singh Bagarian;¹⁹ later Badal, Jagdev Singh Talwandi and Manjit Singh (Bhai) too rejected it.

Amarinder Singh and Ravi Inder Singh 'shut out' by Badal

On the 15th of July the Badal-Tohra alliance disbanded the 3 member 'High Powered Committee and authorised Badal to form the Executive of the Dal. On the 1st of August 1995, Badal announced new Executive of his Dal and the names of Simranjeet Singh Maan and Captain Amrinder Singh were missing from it. Now, Manjit Singh priest, the caretaker of Akal Takht, did not react and quietly disappeared from the scene; actually he had been acting as per the needs and interests of Tohra and when Tohra got assurance of his presidency of the S.G.P.C. from Badal everything was fine with the world and 'now, the Panth had no problem'. The new

¹⁹ During this period another revelation created a great hue and cry; the media revealed that Ashok Singh Bagarian had family relations with K.P. Gill, the chief of Punjab Police, known as 'butcher'; replying to this Bagarian accepted said that he had personal relationship with Gill but he did not agree with all of his actions.

Executive of Badal-Tohra Dal comprised of: Gurcharan Singh Tohra, Jagdev Singh Talwandi, Kuldeep Singh Wadala,²⁰ Surjan Singh Thekedar, Manjit Singh (Bhai), Ranjit Singh Brahampura, Gurdev Singh Badal, Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa, Balwinder Singh Bhunder, Kabal Singh, Captain Kanwaljit Singh, Surjit Barnala, Parkash Singh Majitha, Prem Singh Chandumajra, Charanjit Singh Walia, Amarjit Singh Bhatia. Atma Singh was elevated to the status of Patron. Captain Amarinder Singh's name was missing from this list whereas Simranjeet Singh Maan had already openly rejected this unity. Amarinder Singh was excluded under command from the R.S.S. for latter's two successive pro-Sikh actions of protesting against attacks on Darbar Sahib (in June 1984 and May 1986).

Again two Akali Dals

When the unity news was released in April Simranjeet Singh Maan²¹ had immediately rejected it and announced that "the manifesto of the Akal Dal (Amritsar) will remain the same that had been announced from Akal Takht and that is 'the freedom of the Sikh nation'" and Akali Dal (Amritsar) would not give up this goal; he also declared that the so-called unity of the Akali Dals was in fact a compromise between Badal and Tohra and it was not Panthic unity. Now it was certain that there would be two Dals again; on the 5th of June he rejected even the Executive announced by Bagarian and declared that he had nothing to do with Badal-Tohra Dal; besides he declared that he would preserve the independent identity of Akali Dal (Amritsar); now again there were two Akali Dals

²⁰ Just a few months later, Kuldeep Singh Wadala, who was almost number 2 in the Badal's Party, rebelled on the issue of Badal's collaboration with the BJP; he resigned but he did not join hands with Simranjeet Singh Maan and formed his own Akali Dal (Democratic). In 2001 when a unity move was launched Wadala demanded that Badal should break off with the BJP (*Times of India*, dated 5.9.2001); however, in January 2007 he unconditionally joined Badal Akali Dal. (*The Indian Express*, dated 9.1.2007).

²¹ Simranjeet Singh Maan was still in jail.

one popularly known as Badal Akali Dal and the other popularly known as Maan Akali Dal.²²

R.S.S. and BJP reward Badal in Delhi

As Badal had proved himself loyal to the R.S.S. and had obeyed all commands including changing the constitution of the Dal to make it non-Panthic and the recent unity move with Tohra and other Akalis the R.S.S. too decided to reward him. The elections to the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Managing Committee, which had not been held for the past 17 years,²³ were held in 1995; at that time Madan Lal Khurana was the chief minister of Delhi;²⁴ under directives from the R.S.S. as well as B.J.P. Khurana lent all possible governmental and political support to Badal and the latter won 35 of the 46 seats

²² There was only one Akali Dal in 1962; in July 1962 the Dal was divided into Akali Dal (Master) and Akali Dal (Fateh Singh); in 1968 both united again; in 1985 a Samyukat Akali Dal was formed with Simranjeet Singh Maan as President (Baba Joginder Singh headed up to 1989 till Maan was in jail); in 1991 Jasbir Rode parted from Maan and formed his own Akali Dal, Babars formed 'Babar Akali Dal' with Kartar Singh Narang as President and Captain Amarinder Singh formed Akali Dal (Panthic); during this period Manjit Singh (brother of Bhai Amrik Singh) and Sukhjinder Singh too headed minor Akali Dals; in 1994 Barnala, Manjit Singh, Captain Amarinder Singh, Tohra, Sukhjinder Singh, Talwandi united themselves in the name of Akali Dal Amritsar. In April 1995, Badal, Tohra, Talwandi united under one banner but Maan refused to join them and again there were two Akali Dals.

²³ As per the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Act 1971, the elections to the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Managing Committee are to be held every four years; the first general elections were held in 1974 and the second in 1978 but after this there was a gap of 17 years and elections were held in 1995, the next elections were held in 2002 after a gap of 7 years; again there was a gap of 10 years and the latest elections were arranged to be held in 2012.

²⁴ He remained the Chief Minister from 1993 to 1996; Khurana was one of the founders of Jan Sangh (now B.J.P.) in Delhi and it was he who revived the B.J.P. after suffering heavy losses in 1984 at the hands of Congress which swept election; Khurana's brother Ravinder Singh (of the R.S.S.), later, served as General Secretary of the D.S.G.M.; the Sikhs too helped Khurana and B.J.P. in Delhi elections just to teach a lesson to the Congress for pogrom of the Sikhs during Black November 1984.

of the D.S.G.M.C.;²⁵ on the other hand Akali Dal (Amritsar) led by Simranjeet Singh Maan and some companions of Ranjit Singh (Bhai) won eight seats, three went to independents; Rachhpal Singh, a yes-man of Congress Party in those days too had fielded more than forty candidates; he could not win any seats and most of his men lost security deposits.

World Sikh Convention and the World Sikh Council

Having secured his position in the Akali Dal as well as the S.G.P.C. Gurcharan Singh Tohra decided to cash it into great pomp and show;²⁶ on the 25th of May 1995 he announced holding of a World Sikh Convention at Amritsar from the 21st to the 25th of September 1995. The idea for this Convention

²⁵ During these elections there were 3.26 lakh Sikhs on the voters' list (later the number dwindled, in 1999 there were 2.67 lakh and in 2002 it again rose to 3.07 lakh and in 2007 the number was about 4 lakh; however in 2007 only 35% chose to cast their votes; the lowest number of voters who registered themselves was in 2012; in fact people had lost interest in these elections).

²⁶ By this time another event had changed the whole of the political scenario in the Punjab and in the Sikh world; on the 31st of August 1995, a Sikh named Dilawar Singh²⁶ tied a bomb to his body and killed the Punjab C.M.; 12 more persons lost their lives in this bomb explosion; the action was so powerful that Beant's body was flown into hundreds of pieces scattered here and there; what he had done with countless Sikh men, women and children was avenged; his body parts could not be identified (as it had happened with 'unidentified bodies');²⁶ he met the same end he had chosen for thousands of innocent Sikhs; it is desired and expected that every tyrant meets such a death either physically or socially; and, with this came an end to indiscriminate, large scale killing of the Sikhs; now it was certain that peace will return to the Punjab, there will be no 'more new mourning's' though people would never forget horrendous night of 17 years of butchery and horror; every year people will observe martyrdom days of their relatives, friends, heroes and will remember the butcher C.M.s, Governors, police chiefs with disdain; the Sikhs have not forgotten their martyrs in the past more than 400 years (since 1606); they remember them twice a day in their national prayer; besides history too will preserve the memories of the awful nausea caused by perverse persons like K.P. Gill and Beant Singh (their heinous crimes will always haunt the land of the Punjab, and also the Sikhs wherever they live, and, people would always abhor their loathsome, despicable and repugnant acts).

had sprung from the event of *dera* of Sucha Singh Jawaddi who had arranged a *Vishav Sikh Sammelan* (World Sikh Conference), to be held from the 26th to the 30th of October 1994 which Manjit Singh priest and Tohra had tried to hijack after the publication of a controversial article by Amarjit Grewal.²⁷

The World Sikh Convention was nothing more than publicity and drama for Tohra as well as an exhibition of ego by Manjit Singh priest; the former comforted himself with the jubilation and splendour and latter behaved as if he was the ‘king’ or ‘Pope’ of the Sikh nation; towards the end of this Conference, the formation of a ‘World Sikh Council’²⁸ was announced.

On 30 December 1995, a ‘Memorandum of Association’ of World Sikh Council was drawn up; it was signed by Manjit Singh priest, Gurcharan Singh Tohra, Justice Ranjit Singh Narula, Dr. H.K. Manmohan Singh, Dr. Khem Singh Gill, Manmohan Singh (Chairman Frick India Ltd) and Manjit Singh Calcutta. It also selected an Executive Committee consisting of Manjit Singh priest, Gurcharan Singh Tohra, and Dr. H.K. Manmohan Singh. The Council was to exist in perpetuity and was not subject to dissolution by any action of the Council. The Rules and Regulations listed fourteen founder members and three ex-officio members. They were: (Founder members): Caretaker Akal Takht, Caretakers of other four Takhts, President SGPC, Manjit Singh priest (in his personal capacity), Gurcharan Singh Tohra, Justice Ranjit Singh Narula, Dr. H. K. Manmohan Singh, Dr. Khem Singh Gill, Manmohan Singh (Frick India), Manjit Singh Calcutta, Dr. Santokh Singh, Bhopal; and Ex-Officio Members were: President Delhi

²⁷ For details see: Harjinder Singh Dilgeer, *Akal Takht Sahib (Concept and Role)*, pp. 207-209 (2011 edition).

²⁸ In this Conference, a paper, written by this author, was read by Professor Davinder Singh of Chandigarh; in this paper the author had suggested formation of a ‘World Sikh Parliament’; Manjit Singh (Acting Caretaker Akal Takht) tried to hijack this idea but he turned it into creation of a bogus organisation.

Gurdwara Management Committee, President management Committee Patna Sahib, President, Gurdwara Board, Hazur Sahib Nanded. 86 members were to be *co-opted by the founder members*. These were to include five each from USA, U.K., Canada, Central and South-West Asia, and South-East Asia; 2 each from Europe and the African countries of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda; and one from Oceania. In addition, membership was open to 'donor members' approved by the Chairman and willing to pay Rs. 10 lakh for individuals and Rs. 25 lakh for organizations. The term of the members was five years.²⁹ It was stipulated that Manjit Singh shall act as the Chairman of the World Sikh Council. It was not stated whether he would hold that office as an individual or ex-officio as Acting Caretaker Akal Takht. This doubt was caused by the fact that his name appeared as an individual founder member in addition to the ex-officio designation of Caretaker Akal Takht as a founder member. The Executive Committee consisted of eight persons including the seven signatories to the memorandum of Association and Sardar Santokh Singh.³⁰ Manjit Singh priest tried to keep it under his control; and, this conspiracy killed a great idea of establishment of an international platform for the Sikhs; and with this also began the downfall of Manjit Singh.³¹

²⁹The WSC was registered as a Society under the Societies Registration Act of 1860 on the 9th of January 1996.

³⁰ For details see: Ranbir Singh Sandhu, *History of World Sikh Council – America Region from inception to December 2006* and also see: www.worldsikhcouncil.org

³¹ As per Major General Narinder Singh (*The World Sikh Council—A Resume*): “In January 1996 Jaswant Singh Mann started functioning as Secretary General of the WSC. There is, however, no record to show as to how and by whom he was appointed. Jaswant Singh Mann set up the working office of the WSC at SCO 341-342, Sector 34-A, Chandigarh, which place was owned by him. The Registered office of the WSC is Akal Takht Sahib, Amritsar. Bhai Ranjit Singh was the duly appointed Caretaker of Akal Takht Sahib but since he was confined to Tihar Jail, Manjit Singh was functioning as working Caretaker. A revised constitution was issued on the 25th of April 1996; among other changes, the number of co-opted

Lok Sabha elections 1996

Elections to the Lok Sabha (Lower House of Indian Parliament) were due to be held in 1996; Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao came into the election on the back of several government scandals and accusations of mishandling; during the past five years seven cabinet members had resigned, and Rao himself faced charges of corruption; besides Congress

members was raised to 500; the new constitution provided for Caretaker Akal Takht Sahib to be Patron-in-Chief; Manjit Singh priest was to be Chairman for a period of five years; co-opted members of the World Sikh Council would be selected by the Governing Body and nominated members – up to ten in number – would be selected by the Chairman in consultation with the Governing Body. The Governing Body was to consist of up to 121 members including all the Founder members and other members co-opted from amongst the members of the Council by the Chairman on the advice of the Founder members.” Ranbir Singh Sandhu, *History of World Sikh Council – America Region from inception to December 2006*: “In December 1996 Ranjit Singh (Bhai), after his release from jail took charge as caretaker of Akal Takht; he called a meeting of WSC at Chandigarh on the 19th of February 1997 and suggested some changes in the constitution. He also questioned the way some members were selected in the governing body, etc. Since he is the Caretaker of Akal Takht, the ultimate responsibility falls on his shoulders. He suggested that the constitution of World Sikh Council be reviewed and modified accordingly to properly balance the power of its office bearers so that they do not misuse it. He suggested the names of three persons who should review the constitution: Dr. H.K. Manmohan Singh (former V.C. Punjabi University), Ranjit Singh Narula (Retired Judge) and Kuldip Singh (Retired Judge Supreme court of India).”

In the beginning Manjit Singh co-operated but when Ranjit Singh (Bhai) asked for handing over of the accounts of the WSC, Manjit Singh and Jaswant Singh Maan realised that Ranjit Singh’s action would end their authority and even role in the WSC hence they began finding ways to block this move; a legal case, to control its management and the accounts (now frozen in bank), was filed in a court of law (which is still pending). Later, in February 1999, Bhai Ranjit Singh, during his term as caretaker of Akal Takht, summoned Manjit Singh at Akal Takht and asked him to surrender the WSC to the authority of the Takht. During this period ‘battle’ between Tohra and Badal had begun and in this battle Ranjit Singh supported Tohra and in retaliation Badal got Ranjit Singh removed from the office of caretaker of Akal Takht; this led to freezing of all the activities of the WSC.

Party had suffered a series of splits, issues conflicts and factional disputes; in May 1995 Arjun Singh and Narayan Dutt Tiwari had formed a new party; the government was further weakened by a series of major scandals; in July 1995, Vinod Sharma, a Congress youth leader had murdered his wife and tried to destroy the evidence by stuffing her corpse into a *tandoor* (clay oven) again, in August 1995, Vohra Report had been released which alleged that a politician-criminal nexus was virtually running a parallel government; hence the Rao government was at the lowest ebb of public support; on the other hand the B.J.P. had begun using the slogan of 'Hindutava' (i.e. religious card) and it gathered a large crowd of the communal Hindu forces behind it; at the same time various groups had formed a united front, known as Third Force; Janta Dal, the Communists Parties and Telgu Desam Party were a part of this group.

The elections were held in April May 1996; the result was a hung Parliament: Congress 140, BJP 161 and its allies 26+ 8 Akalis, and the Third Front 79, the Left Front 52; among other Tamil Manila Congress had 20, DMK got 17, BSP won 11 and the Akalis had 8 seats); at first B.J.P. was asked to form Government and Atal Bihari Vajpayee was sworn in as P.M. on the 15th of May 1996 but he could not arrange support of more than 200 out of 545 members hence he resigned after just 13 days; after this the Third Front formed government with H.D. Devegauda as the P.M. on the 1st of June 1996.³²

1996 Lok Sabha elections & Akalis and B.J.P.

Though Badal had joined the R.S.S. but during the Lok Sabha elections the latter suggested Badal to contest independently even in the Punjab and let the B.J.P. contest

³² H.D. Devegauda remained in this office up to 21st of April 1997; he was succeeded by Inder Kumar Gujral who served as P.M. up to 19th of March 1998; in 1998 new elections were held and Atal Bihari Vajpayee was sworn as the new P.M. on the 19th of March 1998; he headed the coalition government up to the 19th of May 2004 handing over the reins to Congress Party leader Sonia Gandhi's yes-man Manmohan Singh.

elections of its own; in fact the B.J.P. had decided to use 'Hindutava' card and had it joined hands with the Akalis it would have affected their communal vote bank in other states. It is interesting that Badal had offered that he would address election rallies of the B.J.P. in Haryana, Delhi, U.P. and other areas where the Sikh voters were deciding factor but he was rebuffed by L.K. Advani who told Badal: "*You may ask the Sikhs to vote for the B.J.P. by presenting the Congress as the enemy of the Sikhs but don't dream of sharing any platform with us as your presence in our rallies would cost us a great number of Hindu votes.*" Hence, during 1996 Lok Sabha elections though the Badal group helped the B.J.P. in Delhi and other areas but did not form a united front with them even in the Punjab; in the Punjab the Akalis won 8 seats, the Congress 2 and the B.S.P of Kashi Ram won 3 seats; B.J.P. could not win any seat (it was runner up only in Gurdaspur).³³

The S.G.P.C. elections (1996)

Under the Gurdwara Act, the elections to the S.G.P.C. are supposed to be held every five years; but after 1965 the Government did not hold elections for 14 years till 1979; even after this no elections for more than 16 years and it was under the orders from the High Court that Rajinder Kaur Bathal had to hold elections in October 1996. In these elections, out of 170 seats 161 were won by them; from among the other groups which contested these elections Maan group won 8 seats and one went to an independent; Maan lost at least 12 seats with a very small margin; on the other hand Jasbir Singh Rode's

³³ Akalis won (victory margin of votes in brackets) Tarn Taran: Major Singh Uboke (33582), Jalandhar: Darbara Singh Malsian (18555), Ropar: Basant Singh Khalsa (71091), Patiala: Prem Singh (49066), Ludhiana: Amrik Singh (71250), Sangrur: Surjeet Barnala (75652), Bathinda: Harinder Khalsa (92229), Faridkot: Sukhbir Badal (37858); the Congress won Gurdaspur: Sukhbans Kaur (74547), Amritsar: Raghunandan Lal Bhatia (33672) and the B.S.P. won Hoshiarpur: Kashi Ram (10994), Phillaur: Harbhajan Lakha (49867) and Ferozpur: Mohan Singh (59912). Percentage of the polled votes received by each party was: Congress 35.10%, Akalis 28.72%, B.S.P. 9.35% and B.J.P. 6.48%.

Akali Dal (Rode group could not get even third position in more than five constituencies); Professor Darshan Singh supported Akali group, which had contested about one hundred seats, too could not win even a single one; the same was the fate of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) which too drew a blank; most of the candidates of Rode, B.S.P. and other groups even lost their security deposits.³⁴ This time another startling fact shocked the Sikh elite that the children of more than one third of the newly elected members of the SGPC (Badal-Tohra group) were *patit* (apostate); and more shocking it was that several members of the Badal-Tohra group were not even *pahuldhari*³⁵ (initiated into Sikh faith) which is a pre-condition to contest SGPC elections (some of these had become *pahuldhari* on the day of filing nominations). During these elections about 100 of the 161 elected members were Badal loyalists; during nominations Badal had his will and Tohra did not object; the latter had taken it for granted that Badal will never betray him.

The reasons for victory of Badal-Tohra group in these elections were: 1. This group had in their possession all the Gurdwaras; 2. All the Akali activists (workers) were with them; 3. They had enrolled most of the voters (in these elections every time voters have to fill forms to become eligible to vote); 4. Badal-Tohra group had enlisted a very large number of non-Sikhs, especially migrant labour from Bihar and U.P. as voters (of course illegal and bogus voters); 5. This group had also the support of the rich businessmen and landlords hence big funds for elections; 6. The B.J.P. and the Communists were on the side of Badal; 7. Akali Dal Amritsar was not even much in existence; hence, obviously, Badal-Tohra group was expected to win these elections.

Amarjit Kaur joins Badal Akali Dal

³⁴ One who gets less than 1/6 of the polled votes loses his security deposit.

³⁵ Also (though wrongly) called *amritdhari*.

Having re-captured the S.G.P.C., now the Badal group was also expected to win the forthcoming Punjab Assembly elections which were going to be held on the 7th of February 1997. Having observed this Amarajit Kaur, a former M.P.-Rajya Sabha (wife of Bhalinder Singh and aunt of Captain Amarinder Singh), joined Badal Akali Dal, on the 5th of January 1997, with a hope that she will be nominated to the Rajya Sabha; she had been a Congress Party M.P. for two terms but had been denied re-nomination in 1995; she had always been vocal not only against the Akalis but even against the Sikhs; she opposed whenever the Sikhs launched any agitation for their rights; she even edited a book supporting Indira Gandhi's invasion of Darbar Sahib in June 1984. Badal too had promised her nomination as he wanted to use her against Captain Amrinder Singh; and when this planning became public, her role during 1984 came under heavy criticism, and, she had to appear at Akal Takht. On the 9th of May 1998, Bhai Ranjit Singh (caretaker Akal Takht) declared her guilty and told her to undergo religious service for several days, but before she could complete religious services time for nomination to the Rajya Sabha had lapsed and the Rajya Sabha seat was granted to Tohra; after this she again joined the Congress Party.

Having observed possibility of victory of Badal Akali Dal in the Punjab Assembly Manjit Singh (brother of Bhai Amrik Singh) too decided to enjoy the warmth of power and on the 18th of January 1997 he betrayed Akali Dal Amritsar and joined Badal Akali Dal; on the 31st of January, due to efforts by Sarabjot Singh Bedi, several more senior activists of Akali Dal Amritsar joined hands with Badal; these included Atinderpal Singh (former M.P.) and Manjit Singh Tarn Tarani (S.G.P.C.) too.

On the 16th of January 1997 Badal announced his candidates for all the 94 seats it was going to contest; this list did not include the name of Captain Amarinder Singh (he had, earlier, won election from Dakala constituency); reacting to this Captain Amarinder Singh resigned the Badal Dal and

revived his Akali Dal (Panthic);³⁶ some senior Akali activists protested against Badal's action and on the 27th of January 1997 Badal 'expelled' all of them from his Akali Dal; these included Balbir Singh Brar (who was most instrumental in establishing Longowal as President of Akali Dal in 1980-81), Charanjit Singh Walia, Davinder Singh Garcha (former M.P. who had resigned Lok Sabha to protest against Indian Army's attack on Darbar Sahib), Randhir Singh Cheema (former minister), Giani Arjan Singh (former M.L.A.), Manjinder Singh Behla (former M.L.A.), Jasmal Singh Nathana (former M.L.A.), Satwant Singh Mohi (former M.L.A.) and several others; the announcement to 'expel' these leaders was just a farce because all of them had already resigned the Badal Dal.

On the other hand, as per the command of the R.S.S., Badal Akali Dal and B.J.P. fielded joint candidates; 23 of the 117 seats were allotted to B.J.P.; some of these seats were pure Akali seats and had earlier been won by the Akalis but obeying the command of the R.S.S. Badal had to allot these seats; some Akalis who wanted to contest from these constituencies expressed mild opposition but they had no choice except for declaring rebellion or swallowing down the bitter.

On the 22nd of January Badal Akali Dal and B.J.P. released a joint manifesto which did not deal much with the Punjab situation though it demanded return of Chandigarh and grant of more fiscal and political powers to the Punjab; but on the 27th of January Akali Dal Badal issued its own manifesto too; the Dal demand for return of Chandigarh and grant of more fiscal and political powers to the Punjab and bigger share in enrolment to the Indian Army as well as establishment of more industry and an international airport in the province; it also asserted exclusive right of Punjab on Punjab waters; besides it announced giving free power and grant of exemption from revenue to the farmers. While releasing this manifesto Gurcharan Singh Tohra declared that if the Akalis formed

³⁶ He had formed this Akali Dal in 1991 but had merged it in Akali Dal (Longowal) in 1992; which further merged in Akali Dal (Amritsar) in 1994.

government it would confiscate³⁷ the passports of those Congressmen who had plundered the Punjab wealth in the previous decade and the money deposited by them in foreign lands would be brought back. The Akali leaders declared that no innocent person would remain in jails; those police officials who had perpetrated atrocities on the people would be punished; a Commission would be established to identify the causes of, and the persons responsible for, terrorism in the Punjab; several more promises were made with the Punjabi and especially the Sikh voters.

The elections were held on the 7th of February; out of 1,52,25395 voters, a record 1,04,63868 (68.73%) people cast their votes; Percentage of the polled votes received by each party was: Akali Dal Badal 37.64% (in 1996 Lok Sabha elections 28%), Congress 26.38% (in 1996 Lok Sabha elections 35%), B.J.P. 8.33% (in 1996 Lok Sabha elections 6%), B.S.P. 6.37% (in 1996 Lok Sabha elections 9%); Akali Dal Badal had increased its vote bank in Majha area (16% increase) and Doaba area (12% increase) but in its own stronghold Malwa it was just 4% increase than the Lok Sabha elections of May 1996; Akali Dal (Amritsar) headed by Simranjeet Singh Maan received 319111 votes (3.1% of the polled votes).³⁸ Out of 117 seats Akali Dal Badal won 75, B.J.P. won 18, Congress got 14, C.P.I. won 2 (Nihalsinghwal and Budlada), B.S.P. got 1 (Garhshankar), Akali Dal (Amritsar-Maan) won 1 (Sardoolgarh) and independents got 6 seats (Amritsar, Fatehgarh, Nawanshahar, Dhuri, Barnala and Kotkapura).

³⁷ A provincial government has no right regarding passports.

³⁸ Akali Dal (Amritsar) contested 30 seats and won one (Sardulgarh);³⁸ however its candidate secured 2nd position in one constituency and 3rd position in 13 seats and 4th position in 6 seats.

Badal becomes ‘supremo’ in the Punjab and of ‘the Sikh World’

Removing Manjit Singh from Akal Takht

During the drama of unity among the Akali factions Manjit Singh had tried to humble Badal; though he had done the same as per the orders of Tohra but Badal wanted to punish Manjit Singh; he wanted to punish Tohra too but, first, he chose Manjit Singh³⁹ as he was an easy target; and with this aim in his mind he (Badal) began efforts for the release of Bhai Ranjit Singh (whom Manjit Singh had been officiating as caretaker of Akal Takht) so that he should come out of jail and replace Manjit Singh; Tohra did not understand Badal’s game. Badal lobbied a lot for Ranjit Singh’s release; he approached the Congress and the B.J.P. both; he contacted even the Nirankari chief so that he should not oppose the release; and, after a lot of manoeuvring and lobbying, Ranjit Singh was released on parole in the last week of December 1996; and, on the 31st of December 1996, he took over charge from Manjit Singh and the latter was sent back to Kesgarh Sahib.⁴⁰

³⁹ As a person, Manjit Singh was (is) a very weak being, incapable of taking independent decisions; his statements were generally of confused nature, his actions were vague, his treatment of the issues was evasive and his understanding of the concept of Akal Takht and the Sikh polity (*Miri-Piri*) was childish; all his actions regarding the unity of the Akali Dals were under directions from Gurcharan Singh Tohra; on the other issues, he has been acting as if he was an ‘arbitrator of petty industrial disputes’; it was because of his early tough life, a weak personality, as well as a case of nerves (best known to him or to WahGuru); over all, he was an awkward caretaker, in fact a poor *granthi* of Akal Takht.

⁴⁰ Though Bhai Ranjit Singh had taken charge as caretaker of Akal Takht but he was not a religious person and his knowledge of Sikhism was very poor; after his release he started studying Sikhism, but as he was not intelligent, he could not grasp much. On the other hand, soon, he too began developing a feeling that he was the ‘head’ of a throne and he started assuming himself as ‘the chief of a nation’; hence he began behaving as a boss, an autocrat and his behaviour and language also underwent a

Badal takes over as C.M.

Parkash Singh Badal became C.M. on the 12th of February 1997; he is basically a 'Jatt with tribal mentality' and he has never forgotten to take revenge from his enemies so right from the first day he began planning to punish his enemies; when he formed his cabinet and selected first nine ministers there were seven from Akali Party: Ranjit Singh Brahmputra, Captain Kanwaljeet Singh, Sarup Singh Jalandhar, Upinderjeet Kaur, Gurdev Singh Badal and Nirmal Singh Kahlon; Kahlon was loyal to Gurcharan Singh Tohra but Badal offered him berth in his cabinet subject to his shifting of loyalty, and he did not take time to deceive his mentor and friend; this was, in fact, the first act of Badal to take to settle scores with Tohra.

Vajpayee Government and the Sikhs

At that time Badal was a partner in the BJP led coalition government in the centre but the Vajpayee government did not accept even a single demand or the Punjab (what to talk of the Sikh demands); this government treated the Sikhs and the Punjab exactly as the Indira, Rajiv, Narsimha regimes treated them; there was not even slight change in central policy towards the Punjab; there was not even indirect reference to transfer of Chandigarh to the Punjab (the BJP itself had been propagating that Chandigarh belonged to Punjab; on the 8th of January 1997, Madan Lal Khurana while canvassing for Akali and BJP candidates in the Punjab had said in unequivocal words that 'Chandigarh belongs only to the Punjab'). Like Congress the BJP too refused to change policy on Punjab waters; the Delhi BJP regime refused to grant second language status to Punjabi (it was Congress government in Delhi which granted this status in 1999); the BJP led coalition government in the centre refused to increase quota of the Punjabis (not Sikhs) in the India Army (George Fernandez who owed a lot to the Sikhs was the Defence

major change. Ranjit Singh became so haughty that he began snubbing everyone; for him all others were not only junior or inferior but were like his subjects.

Minister); it refused to grant international airport status to Amritsar Airport; it did nothing to punish the persons guilty of the killers of the Sikhs during Black November 1984 (in spite of the fact that the killers belonged to Congress Party; this created doubts that some leaders of the BJP had sympathy for the killers); the BJP led coalition government did not even bring a resolution condemning the massacre of November 1984; the BJP led coalition government too did not release even a single Sikh even in the BJP ruled provinces (it did release Kashmiris who were actually involved in killings but the Sikhs were not released in spite of the facts that most of them were innocent). Badal did not ask the Vajpayee government to return the Sikh Reference Library which the Indian Army had carried away in June 1984 (and had been propagating that it had been destroyed by fire)⁴¹

⁴¹ Even the police and C.I.D. officials in the Punjab had confirmed in June 2000 that the Indian Army had carried the books, manuscripts and other relics in 200 boxes. In 2003, Ranjit Singh Nanda, a former inspector for the CBI, turned whistle-blower and revealed he was part of a five member team which scrutinized the documents at the CBI's makeshift office at Amritsar's Youth Club. He revealed that officials from his department were "desperately looking for a purported letter written by Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister, to Jarnail Singh Bhinderanwala" (in fact there was no such letter there), and reported seeing letters from the other leaders addressed to Jarnail Singh Bhinderanwala. Nanda further asserted the SGPC's version of events by describing how after inspecting each book and manuscript the CBI packed the documents into 165 numbered gummy sacks and bundled the material into waiting army vehicles because of a meeting of Sikh high priests taking place at the time. He also showed a letter from his superiors commending his work "during examination of documents from SGPC" (*The Tribune*, dated 7.6. 2003); Apar Singh, a DSP, too confirmed Nanda's version. On the 18th of December 1998 George Fernandes (vide letter no 4315/VIP/98) had written to Dr Harjinder Singh Dilgeer, the then Director Sikh History Research Board and Director Sikh Reference Library that he was personally looking into this material; again on May 23, 2000 George Fernandes wrote to the SGPC Secretary, Dr. Gurbachan Singh Bachan, and acknowledged that the Indian Army had taken the books and other documents from the Sikh Reference Library and handed them over to the CBI (*The Indian Express*, dated 25.5.2000). On the 25th of March 2003, A. P. J. Abdul Kalam (the President of India) gave

As mentioned above the BJP regime in Delhi was no different from the Congress regime in its policy towards Sikhs; on the 19th of August 2001 Lal Kishan Advani, a senior leader of BJP and Home Minister India revealed this his government was considering granting general amnesty to those police officials who had been indicted for crimes committed between 1984 and 1995; at that time more than 60 Punjab Police officials were being tried in different courts of law for perpetrating atrocities, fake encounter killings, abductions and extortions; and, all these cases had been filed during the Congress Party regime in the Punjab; Badal had not registered even a single case against any police official; it had rather given all possible facilities to those policemen who were under trial for crimes. It was in the air that Badal too had given consent for 'general amnesty' for the accused policemen; on the 23rd of August 2001 a meeting to discuss this issue was held in the office of A.B. Vajpayee; it was attended by Advani and Badal too. When information about this planning became public Simranjeet Singh Maan and other Sikh leaders condemned this move and warned of dangerous consequences if the government went further on that plan; fearing backlash Advani had to give up this scheme.

Punjab BJP's hatred for the Sikhs

In the Punjab the BJP had established almost complete control in the departments under its administration i.e. in the

assurances that the books, documents, and manuscripts would be returned, however he took no further action (*The Tribune* dated 26.3.2003). On the 26th of April 2004, the Punjab and Haryana High Court ordered the Central Government, Government of Punjab, and the CBI to return the "valuables, books, scriptures, paintings, etc, that were seized from the Darbar Sahib during "Operation Bluestar" in 1984" (*The Tribune*, dated 27.4.2004). In February and May 2009, A. K. Antony, Defence Minister of India, claimed in parliament that the Indian Army no longer had any material taken from the library. Various members of parliament and the SGPC criticized him for "misleading the Parliament".

ministerial departments, Corporations, Boards, Improvement Trusts, Municipal Committees etc the BJP and RSS workers were given employments; the BJP succeeded in getting employment to its activists and its party card-holder cadre even in the departments controlled by the Akali ministers and Chairmen of Trusts, Boards and Corporations; just one call from any RSS *adhikari* was considered as Divine Edicts and Badal would immediately give job to that RSS activist whose name was recommended. So much so that Badal appointed RSS activists even in the SGPC's educational institutions. Thus, in the state infra-structure and other state sectors thousands of BJP and RSS activists got jobs, especially senior and administrative jobs; the BJP-RSS circle was so spread and established in the state administration and other infra-structure that all the confidential information would now reach the RSS headquarters in Delhi immediately.

During this period the RSS, BJP, VHS (Vishav Hindu Parishad), Shiv Sena and other fanatic and fundamentalist Hindu groups established a very large number of temples in several areas of the Punjab; several temples were built near the Gurdwaras, not only on public land but even on Gurdwara lands.⁴²

The BJP did not stop here; as Badal had given the reigns of the administration of all the Punjab cities and towns, including the Sikh city of Amritsar, to the BJP, the latter began converting these cities and towns into Hindu cities; character of Amritsar was severely changed; it seemed that the city had nothing to do with the Sikhs. Amritsar city, the walled city with 13 gates, had been established on the land bought by Guru Ram Das and thousands of Sikhs had sacrificed their lives for defence of the city but the BJP regime did not set up any

⁴² The Hindus would place one small statue of any fictitious Hindu idol under some tree or even in open and then begin worshipping it; and after a few weeks small gatherings would be arranged; finally after a couple of months it will be declared that the place was an 'ancient temple'; dozens of such 'ancient' temples were built in the Punjab between 1997 and 2002 Badal regime.

memorial in the name of any Sikh; the city owed a lot to Bhai Gurdas, Bhai Mani Singh, Bhai Tara Singh Dal-Waan, Bhai Sukha Singh – Mehtab Singh, Bhai Gurbakhsh Singh (martyr of 1.12.1764), Akali Phula Singh, Nawab Kapur Singh, Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, Jassa Singh Ramgarhia, Hari Singh Nalwa, Rani Sada Kaur, Master Tara Singh, Bhagat Puran Singh, Darshan Singh Pheruman (who embraced martyrdom here on 27.10.1969) but the BJP had vowed that these names should not figure anywhere in the city; in fact even mention of a Sikh name was (is) a taboo in the BJP RSS world.

Statue of Dr Baldev Parksah in Amritsar

The BJP did not stop here; it raped the history of Amritsar by installing statue of a local BJP leader Dr Baldev Parksah in the city of Amritsar on the 17th of January 2010; unveiling the statue, Parkash Singh Badal stood shoulder to shoulder with Nitin Gadkari (chief of All India BJP) and Balbir Punj (chief of Punjab BJP). Installation of statue of such a minor but fanatic Hindu activist who had made no contribution to the city and ignoring the greatest Sikh heroes was watched by the Badal Akali leaders with shame and helplessness.

Badal's treason with the Panth & Punjab

Badal abandons Sikh Panth & Punjab from his agenda

Before 1997 elections the Badal Akali Dal had released a manifesto which declared that *“if the Akalis formed government it would confiscate the passports of those Congressmen who had plundered the Punjab wealth in the previous decade and the money deposited by them in foreign*

lands would be brought back. The Akali leaders had declared that no innocent person would remain in jails; cruel police officials who had perpetrated atrocities on the people would be punished; a Commission would be established to identify the causes of, and the persons responsible for, terrorism in the Punjab; several more promises were made with the people and especially the Sikh voters;” and the Akali BJP joint manifesto had demanded “return of Chandigarh and grant of more fiscal and political powers to the Punjab; again, on the 27th of January Akali Dal Badal had issued its own manifesto too; the Dal manifesto had demand return of Chandigarh and grant of more fiscal and political powers to the Punjab and bigger share in enrolment to the Indian Army as well as establishment of more industry and an international airport in the province; it had asserted exclusive right of Punjab on Punjab waters; besides it had promised giving free power and grant of exemption from revenue to the farmers.”

Both these manifestos had made tall promises with the Sikhs in particular and the Punjabis in general but when Badal became the chief minister he forgot all the promises he had made; in fact he had never thought of fulfilling any of them; he had a commitment with the RSS that he would not even touch any of the issues concerned with the Sikhs (punishing the guilty police officials, release of Sikh *détentes* and the Sikh demands of *dharm-yudh morcha*) or the demands of the Punjab (Chandigarh, Punjabi speaking areas, waters and hydel works); hence he sent all these issues to mortuary. The only commitment he fulfilled was free power and water to the farmers, petty amount of old age pension, free travel in the government buses for senior citizens, *shagan* (gift money) for the marriages of the daughters of the *dalits*; all these schemes were meant at winning vote banks, however, such grants and exemptions created a havoc for the state economy; the state exchequer was badly affected.

As far as the issues of the Sikhs were concerned, none of these were on the agenda of the Badal government; the cruel police officials who had perpetrated atrocities on innocent

Sikhs and had killed thousands of the Sikhs were not even identified, what to talk of punishing them; the Badal government not even released list of the Sikhs killed in fake encounters; on the other hand several terrorist police officials were given promotions; special facilities and special security was given to them and their families; complete state help was extended to those against whom cases had been filed in the courts of law for perpetrating atrocities on innocent Sikhs; not a single Sikh prisoner was released from jail (even Nachhattar Singh who had served his full term of imprisonment in Lal Jagat Narayan murder case too was not released); there were several Sikhs who had been languishing in Punjab jails (and in other provinces too) for several years;⁴³ on the other hand several more Sikhs were arrested on false charges; the police still continued having its control room in room no 206 of Guru Ram Das *Saran* (visitor's hostel) in the Darbar Sahib complex; more than fifty policemen were always on duty in the Darbar Sahib. Since 1984 the Indian government had prepared a list of the Sikhs living abroad who had been banned entry into India; the Badal government, instead of asking the Central regime to knock out this list, rather added 177 new names to it and it is remarkable to note that most of these were anti Badal Akalis (it is more interesting to note that no name had been added to this list during the I.K. Gujral/ VP Singh/ Chander Sheikhar/ Devegouda regimes).

⁴³ On the 30th of April 2001 (4 years after assuming the reigns of the Punjab) Badal Government accepted that in Punjab Amarjeet Singh Bagri, Resham Singh Malmori, Harbir Singh Sathiala, Hardial Singh Lopoke, Surjeet Singh Mehli Banga, Daljit Singh Bittu, Gursharan Singh Gama, Gurvinder Singh Tanehari, Kuldeep Singh Patran, Dilbagh Singh Batala, Manjinder Singh Dhuri, Jagtar Singh Ghanauri Kalan, Sahib Singh Daban Kheri (Haryana), Narinder Singh Ghuman Kalan, Bakhshish Singh Nizamiwal and Gurpreet Singh Dhadila Kalan, who had been arrested under Anti-Terrorist Activities Acts, were still in jail; the Government revealed that during the militancy period 14664 Sikhs had been arrested; it, however, did not reveal how many Sikhs had been killed between 1978 and 1995 (*Ajit Jalandhar*, dated 1.5.2001).

The Sikhs had voted Badal Akali Dal with a hope that innocent Sikh youth will be released and there will be an end to the terror spread by Indira, Rajiv, Surjit Barnala, Reibero, Beant and K.P. Gill and the Sikhs' human rights shall be preserved; they had voted Badal to power with a hope that the Akali regime will take steps for the fulfilment of the demands of the Sikhs; but, all their hopes were dashed to ground when Badal regime not only continued everything as it was during Beant-K.P. Gill time but began telling the Sikhs to 'forget past, forget 1984, forget atrocities, forget police terror and forget life of honour'; and, when non-government bodies established 'People's Commission' (on the patterns of such a Commission that had been established in South Africa after the fall of the Apartheid White regime) Badal did every effort to stop its activities; of course the Indian/Hindu judiciary too played its partisan and nasty role to stop this Commission. Badal did not even pass a resolution to condemn attack on Darbar Sahib in 1984 nor a simple condolence or sympathy resolution for the pogrom of the Sikhs during Black November 1984. Finally when the Sikhs elite from all walks of life began condemning Badal excessively then he agreed to bring a resolution; on the 22nd of March 2001 the Punjab Assembly discussed the attack on Darbar Sahib and condemned Indira Gandhi; but, under instructions from Advani, Badal absented himself from Assembly because he did not want to condemn the attack.

Chandigarh:

Badal not only gave up all agenda pertaining to the Sikhs but he became indifferent even to the Punjab demands; now Punjab's right on Chandigarh was forgotten, and, Badal rather began considering Chandigarh as territory of Haryana. As per Reorganisation Act the ratio of the employees in Chandigarh was to be in the ratio of 60% for the Punjab and 40% for the Haryana; but, as the Central Government were inimical to the Punjab and the Sikhs, it began appointing only Hindu (almost all, about 90%) officials for administration of Chandigarh; they were generally fanatic and full of hatred for

Sikhs, turbans and Punjab; they began appointing more and more Haryanvi staff and even from the Punjab quota they would discriminate against the Sikhs. With the passage of time the percentage of the Punjabi employees in the Chandigarh administration came down from 60 to 30% and in several departments it was less than even 20%; especially the police, transport, educational institutions and administration were transformed into Haryanvi affairs. Badal remained CM for ten years (1997-2002 and 2007 to 2012) but he never objected to this conspiracy.

Punjabi, which was the first language of Chandigarh up to 1966, was pushed not only to second but to third place; posts of Punjabi teachers were reduced and it was monitored that the children should not opt for study of Punjabi language. Punjabi language was exiled from offices; without any formal declaration English was adopted as official language and Hindi was given second status and Punjabi was totally eliminated; so much so that even the voter lists for the Lok Sabha and Municipal Corporation elections was published in English and Punjab; Angrez Singh of Badehari village and some others raised their voice against discrimination with Punjabi language but Badal never issued even a simple statement; he was not concerned with Chandigarh, Punjab or Punjabi; his sole agenda was amassing wealth and planning for forthcoming elections.

Chandigarh had about 30% Sikh population as per 1961 census; in 1966 Chandigarh became Union territory and with this the number of Hindu residents began swelling; since 1970s migrant labour from UP and Bihar began pouring into Chandigarh (in fact they were being transported to Chandigarh and Punjab with the intention to change its demography i.e. to reduce Sikhs' percentage in population);⁴⁴ the BJP leaders,

⁴⁴Chandigarh's total population in 1961 was 1,19,881; in 1971 (after creation of Haryana) it increased to 2,57,251 (about 125% increase); in 1981 it further increased by 80% and rose to 4,51,610; in 1991, in spite of militancy in the Punjab it rose to 6,42,015 (about 40%); in 2001 it still increased another more than 40% and stood at 9,00,635; in 2011 it stood at about 10,55,000 (about 12% increase).

especially Sat Pal Jain (BJP's MP) began a crusade to allot free government land/flats to these migrant labour who were only Hindus (some of them were Muslims too but none was a Sikh); and this began pushing the Sikh graph down and down; in 2011 census the Sikh population in Chandigarh was just 15%.

Udham Singh Nagar and BJP (and George Fernandez)

Udham Singh Nagar is a district in Kumaon zone; in October 1995 it was carved out by Maya Wati (then CM of Uttar Pradesh) as a news district out of Nainital district; then it was a part of Uttar Pradesh (UP) state. On the 9th of November 2000 Utra Khand, now Uttranchal, was carved out of UP as India's 27 province.

This district was inhabited by a sizable Sikh/Punjabi population and there was a move that this area, being mostly non-hilly zone, should not become a part of the Uttranchal state; most of the local population was against joining the new province⁴⁵ but the supporters of the Uttranchal move wanted to have it in the new province because this area was a rich source of food and other sources. Akali Dal, Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and some other parties were opposed to its inclusion in the Uttranchal; the Akalis tried to get support of Trinamul Congress (Mamta Banerjee)⁴⁶ and AIDMK (Jaylalitha). Akalis created much hue and cry on this issue; on the other hand the ruling BJP regime of A.B. Vajpayee, which was also a partner of the Akali led coalition in the Punjab, was interested in transferring Udham Singh Nagar to Uttranchal; to stop Akalis from paying attention to Udham Singh Nagar issue the Punjab BJP leaders had openly pointed their guns towards the Akalis; to quote *Frontline* (1 to 14 August 1998 issue) "*This sourness*

⁴⁵ As many as 280 of the 327 Gram Sabhas (Panchayats) in the district were in favour of excluding it from Uttaraanchal (*The Tribune*, dated 13.7.1998); as per Ramuwalia's statement in Rajya Sabha 305 Gram Sabhas had opposed inclusion of this district in Uttranchal Pradesh.

⁴⁶ Mamata Banerjee was also opposed to the inclusion of the prosperous district in the new state. She joined the issue when a memorandum was submitted by a Bengali Association of the Udham Singh Nagar district.

reflected a broader breakdown in relations between the two parties. On July 5, BJP State general secretary Jagmohan Kaura had openly complained that the SAD had sabotaged his party's prospects in the recent panchayat elections. Activists of the BJP, he claimed, were routinely mistreated by SAD Ministers. Kaura's extraordinary outburst reflected the resurgence of Hindu chauvinist sentiments against the SAD in recent months. In one peripheral but significant development on July 5, the Punjab Shiv Sena had demanded reservation in employment and education for Hindus in the State." On July 6, shortly after being appointed Punjab Congress president, Amarinder Singh announced that the future of Udham Singh Nagar would be one of his key concerns: "*this district has nothing in common with the hill people; in the hill area there is a land ceiling law which allows land holding up to one hectare only, and the farmers would be losing land.*"⁴⁷ With the Congress implicitly attacking the SAD's credentials as a genuine representative of Sikh interests, Badal took up the issue. In the wake of Amarinder Singh's press conference, an SAD-BJP delegation from Punjab met Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to press its case. The members of the delegation attacked Parliamentary Affairs Minister Madan Lal Khurana's earlier argument that constitutional regulations barred the exclusion of Udham Singh Nagar from the new State; there was a heated debate in the Punjab Assembly on the 9th of July 1998 in which Rajinder Bhattal (former CM Punjab) tried to steal agenda from the Akalis. When the Punjab Congress took tough stand the Akalis too became aggressive; a section of the party led by Gurcharan Singh Tohra threatened withdrawing support to the Vajpayee government over the issue. Even Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa declared his party will not compromise on the issue and reiterated the threat to withdraw support if their demand was not conceded to.⁴⁸ In July Simranjeet Singh Maan visited Udham Singh Nagar and

⁴⁷ *Frontline*, issue dated 1 to 14.8.1998.

⁴⁸ *Daily Business Standard*, Calcutta, 6.10.1998.

assured the Sikhs of the area his party's full support. In August Mulayam Singh Yadav too opposed inclusion of Udham Singh Nagar in Uttranchal. During this period Badal had a meeting with Vajpayee and Advani but it yielded no results; on the 2nd of October 1998 Badal said that his party was negotiating with other like-minded parties on the issue of Udham Singh Nagar district's future; If the BJP went ahead with its decision to include it in Uttaranchal state the Dal would withdraw support to the coalition government in New Delhi.⁴⁹

In the second week of October 1998 Vajpayee formed a 3 member Committee to decide the future of Udham Singh Nagar; this panel comprised of defence minister George Fernandez, Parkash Singh Badal and Kalyan Singh of BJP (the then UP Chief Minister); it was in fact delaying tactics; the BJP had decided not to change its stand.

On the 1st of August 2000 the Lok Sabha passed a bill to carve out the state of Uttranchal out of the UP but it did not clarify which areas would form part of the new state. In the meanwhile George Fernandez had been wooed by the BJP; soon he began playing like a show-boy of BJP; on the 2nd of August he said that he is in favour of a larger hill state of Uttaranchal in case Udham Singh Nagar is not retained in Uttar Pradesh;⁵⁰ he further said that the people of Udham Singh Nagar were not against joining the new state; this was a clear indication that Fernandez has succumbed to BJP's pressure and betrayed the Akali and this meant that 2 of the 3 members of Committee,⁵¹ formed to make recommendations about Udham Singh Nagar, were in favour of surrendering the district to Uttranchal. The Political Affairs Committee of the Akali Dal met in Chandigarh on August 6, five days after the passage of the Bill in the Lok Sabha, and accused Fernandez and the BJP of playing a trick on Udham Singh Nagar. In the other hand

⁴⁹ *The Tribune*, dated 3.10.1998

⁵⁰ *The Tribune*, dated 3.8.2000

⁵¹ Other two members were Kalyan Singh of the BJP and Parkash Singh Badal of the Akali Dal.

Fernandez had claimed that this was the finding of the three-member committee of the NDA - comprising U.P. Chief Minister Ram Prakash Gupta and Punjab Chief Minister and SAD president Prakash Singh Badal, besides Fernandez himself - which, he said, had undertaken a study tour of the district three days before the passage of the Bill. Badal denied having given his consent but reality is otherwise; he had sold all his land in that zone and after this he had agreed to betray the Sikhs of Udham Singh Nagar (Tarai zone).

On the 10th of August 2000 the Rajya Sabha passed Uttaranchal Bill and granted Udham Singh Nagar to the new state. The Congress Party, the principal opposition party, supported the Bill; in fact, it was the Congress's support that had enabled the government to push the Bill through despite opposition from parties such as the Samajwadi Party (S.P.), the Rashtritya Janata Dal (RJD), the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK).

Reacting to this Tohra, Maan and several other Sikh leaders condemned it but Badal, who had, earlier, threatened to withdraw itself from coalition with the BJP issued just a mild statement and withdrew itself from debate; in fact Badal had been acting as per instructions from the BJP.

Plundering the Punjab wealth

During all this period (in fact during all the five years, from 1997 to 2002) Badal plundered billions of rupees of Punjab wealth; colossal corruption in the state funds was his normal behaviour. The BJP recruited its party card-holders and RSS loyalists to the government jobs and offices, Badal sold almost each and every job; his wife Surinder Kaur was infamous for running a job-Mafia; she would openly demand the price of a job; from peon to Chairman all were appointed for a fixed price which ran from one lakh (for a peon) to crores of rupees for top jobs. Captain Amarinder Singh, in 2001, launched a campaign against Badal that they had amassed about 35 crore (35 billion) Indian rupees by means of

corruption and most of this money had been deposited in Swiss (European), American and other banks; Badal continued this job even during his next term as the CM (2007 to 2011).

Clash of Titans (Tohra versus Badal)

Tohra at Nirankari Congregation

In February 1998, the elections to the Lok Sabha were held; Prem Singh Chandumajra was Akali Dal's candidate from Patiala; to seek votes of the Nirankaris for him, Gurcharan Singh Tohra agreed to visit a congregation of the Nirankaris (in spite of Akal Takht's edict of the 10th of June 1978 for having no social relations with the Nirankaris); Tohra visited the Nirankari gathering on the 15th of February 1998.⁵² When Captain Amrinder Singh received information, he decided to take revenge from Tohra for ditching him during 'unity' proceedings hence he submitted a petition at Akal Takht demanding action against Tohra for defying *hukamnama* of the 10th of June 1978; at this Tohra wrote a letter to Akal Takht and accepted his 'mistake' (he was ready to undergo minor punishment). During this drama Badal's loyal group, especially Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa, Balwinder Singh Bhunder and Barjinder Singh Hamdard,⁵³ took keen interest; the latter

⁵² It seems that there was some understanding between Tohra and Nirankaris for withdrawal of the 1978 *hukamnama* of Akal Takht but later Tohra expressed his helplessness and the Nirankaris revealed the fact of Tohra's visit.

⁵³ Badal had developed close relationship with Barjinder Singh due to his newspaper *Ajit*; they came so close that Badal appointed Barjinder as

gave much publicity to the case in his newspaper; there were jubilations in this camp and they wanted to celebrate humiliation of Tohra. But, before the priests could punish Tohra he (in connivance with Ranjit Singh, the caretaker of Akal Takht) wrote a new letter denying having ever been to the Nirankari function;⁵⁴ at this, on the 25th of June 1998, the five priests exonerated Gurcharan Singh Tohra by accepting his plea that he had never visited the Nirankari gathering. Though, the Badal group could not humiliate Tohra much but the latter's credibility among the Sikh masses was partly affected; he was, however, re-elected President of the S.G.P.C. on the 22nd of October 1998.

Dispute with Barjinder Singh Hamdard

As mentioned earlier, Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa and Balwinder Singh Bhunder were Badal's yes-men; and during the previous few years Barjinder Singh Hamdard editor of daily *Ajit* too had established very close relationships with him; as a result, when Anandpur Sahib Foundation was formed Barjinder Singh was appointed its chairman. In November 1998, when the map of the Khalsa Heritage Complex (KHC) was being discussed Barjinder Singh suggested erection of a *khanda* (double-edged sword) in front of the Complex; he had opined that the edge should be at the top, but, at the suggestion of Mohinder Singh (of Nishkam Sewak Jatha, Birmingham, England), Tohra insisted that the edge should be shown in a bowl (to symbolise the initiation ceremony); when it was suggested to Barjinder Singh he became touchy and made it an issue of prestige, and with this relations between him and Tohra became tense and finally it led to enmity between the both. (Interesting, when the KHC was inaugurated on the 25th

Chairman of Anandpur Sahib Foundation and also got him elected MP (Rajya Sabha); on the other hand Barjinder refused to be considered as Badal Akali MP; later Barjinder resigned the Anandpur Sahib Foundation and even vacated Rajya Sabha seat.

⁵⁴ Statement by Giani Jagtar Singh Jachak who was present in the meeting of the priests held at Akal Takht on the 25th of June 1998.

of November 2011 the Khanda insignia was conspicuous by its absence.

On the 23rd of November 1998, the foundation stone of the KHC was to be formally laid and Badal had decided to get it done by Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the Prime Minister, but, before it could be done, Tohra announced that the inauguration will be performed by the *Punj Piaray* and the function will be presided over by Vajpayee; Badal and Barjinder Hamdard took it as their insult and, on the 23rd of November, the day of inauguration, Barjinder resigned as Chairman of Anandpur Sahib Foundation;⁵⁵ and, with this he (Barjinder) also began a war against Tohra. Two days later, on the 25th of November, mid-term poll to Adampur constituency of the Punjab Assembly was held; the Akali candidate lost just by six votes; reacting to this defeat Tohra blamed it on Barjinder Singh Hamdard's resignation; at this the latter became sworn enemy of Tohra.⁵⁶

During this period Tohra succeeded in winning over Bhai Ranjit Singh as well as Sarbjot Singh Bedi and other so-called 'sants' (functioning in the name of an umbrella organisation 'Sant Samaj'); Tohra tried to use them for his own support; on the 2nd of December Bhai Ranjit Singh issued a statement against the construction of Khalsa Heritage Complex and said that 'the Government is destroying heritage of Anandpur Sahib in the name of '*ajooba*' (Barjinder Hamdard had been propagating that the Khalsa Heritage Complex will be an *ajooba* (literally 'wonder', on the pattern of 'wonders of the world').; the very next day Badal called a meeting of the Jathedars (chiefs of the district units of the party) and got passed a resolution expressing faith in his (Badal's) leadership; in fact it was a resolution for confirmation of their loyalty for

⁵⁵ The Executive of the Anandpur Sahib Foundation, in its meeting of 4th of December 1998 rejected this resignation but Barjinder refused to withdraw his resignation.

⁵⁶ Tohra was annoyed with Barjinder due to latter's stand regarding the shape of the *khanda* to be erected in the Khalsa Heritage Complex and he wanted to avenge it.

Badal. This put Tohra on defensive and he, with the help of the ‘Sant Samaj’, organised a procession in the name of ‘Khalsa March’ from Anandpur to Talwandi Sabo on the 4th and the 5th of December 1998; several hundred thousands of Sikhs participated in this show.

Badal finally expels Tohra from his party

Badal and Barjinder Singh had been waiting for an opportunity to teach a lesson to Tohra; in these circumstances, on the 10th of December 1998, Tohra made a statement suggesting Badal to appoint someone else as President (or acting president) of Akali Dal as he (Badal) was very much busy in his duties as the chief minister. This was a mere suggestion and had nothing negative in it, but, as Badal needed just a minor opportunity, the very next day, on the 11th of December 1998, he called a meeting of Akali M.L.As⁵⁷, district heads and his other loyal followers in which he declared his resolve to kick Tohra out of the Sikh politics; and within a few hours his sycophants began issuing statements against Tohra. When this had continued for four days, on the 15th of December, five ministers loyal to Tohra, (Manjit Singh Calcutta, Harmel Singh, Inderjeet Singh Zira, Maheshinder Singh Grewal and Surjeet Singh Kohli) submitted their resignations in order to put pressure on Badal to stop anti-Tohra campaign; but, as it was all Badal’s own planning, he immediately accepted these resignations.

On the 16th of December 1998, a meeting of the executive of the S.G.P.C. was to be held at Amritsar; Badal asked all the members to reach Chandigarh; hence the meeting was attended only by Tohra and his 4 loyalists⁵⁸ (of the total

⁵⁷ Tohra loyalist M.L.As Manjit Singh Calcutta, Harmel Singh, Inderjeet Singh Zira, Maheshinder Singh Grewal and Surjeet Singh Kohli were not invited to attend this meeting.

⁵⁸ Sukhdev Singh Bhaur, Surjeet Singh Cheema, Gurvinder Singh Shampur and Kuldeep Kaur; as per rules a quorum of 5 members is must for a meeting; hence the meeting was legal. Those who reached Chandigarh obeying Badal’s orders included Balbir Singh Pannu, Hardalbir Singh Shah, Mall Singh Ghuman, Bhagwant Singh, Joga Singh Phagguwala, Gurpal

15) members. Badal had won ten members of the Executive of the SGPC but he failed to stop Tohra from presiding over the meetings of the Executive of the SGPC, but now he began punishing Tohra loyalists and supporters; he began removing Tohra's supporters from the key posts in the Government; his first action was to transfer Ranbir Singh Khatra, the SSP Ropar who was supervising tercentenary celebrations in Anandpur.

On the 17th of December a formal show cause notice was issued to Tohra to explain his statement; the same day Badal visited Ranjit Singh, the caretaker of Akal Takht, and asked him to support him in case of his action against Tohra but the latter refused to collaborate with him. On the other hand, though Tohra's statement had nothing serious, in spite of this, on the 26th of December 1998, in Fatehgarh Sahib, Tohra submitted unconditional public apology; but, as Badal and his sycophants were bent upon kicking Tohra out of the presidency of the S.G.P.C. they did not accept it; in fact it was like the legendary fiction of '*Wolf and lamb*'; the wolf wanted to kill lamb on one or another pretext, no, logic, law or apology would have any meaning; Badal was so adamant, in fact, mad for revenge. At this, Tohra approached Bhai Ranjit Singh who decided to help him for the second time. On the 31st of December Ranjit Singh issued a *hukamnama* in the name of Akal Takht ordering that no action will be taken against Tohra up to the 15th of April 1999 (i.e. till the completion of celebrations of the tercentenary of the revelation of Khalsa). This 'hukamnama' was signed by Ranjit Singh, Mohan Singh (head *granthi* Darbar Sahib), Bhagwan Singh (head *granthi* Akal Takht), Charan Singh (*granthi* Darbar Sahib) and Gurbachan Singh (*granthi* Darbar Sahib; later in 2008 Gurbachan Singh was appointed caretaker of Akal Takht).⁵⁹

Singh Gora, Satnam Singh Bhai Rupa, Raghujit Singh Virk, Kewal Singh Badal and Suba Singh Dabwala; the last one had been won over by Badal just on the day of the meeting.

⁵⁹ During this period (between 17th and 22nd December) even A.B. Vajpayee, the Prime Minister, tried to intervene; on one evening Vajpayee phoned Tohra, when the latter was in Amritsar, and had conversation for

Now, as Badal's move had been scuttled, he decided to replace Ranjit Singh too; he made an offer to Professor Darshan Singh (Ragi) but he declined. After this Badal contacted the members of the S.G.P.C. and succeeded in getting signatures of 130 members on a letter asking Ranjit Singh to withdraw the *hukamnama* of the 31st of December so that Badal may be able to expel Tohra. Ranjit Singh reacted to this by calling a meeting of his supporters on 2nd of February 1999, to seek support of the Sikhs for him.

By this time, Manjit Singh, *granthi* of Kesgarh (a former Tohra loyalist who had been won over by Badal) and Kewal Singh (*granthi* Damdama Sahib, Talwandi Sabo), in a joint statement issued on the 3rd of January 1999, opposed issuance of 'hukamnama' by Ranjit Singh and asked him not to interfere in political affairs; this Manjit Singh, when he was the acting caretaker of Akal Takht, had manoeuvred the 'unity' move among the different factions of Akali Dal in 1994 and then again in 1995 and had issued '*fatwas*' (edicts), and, when Badal had tried to keep away from the unity move he (Manjit Singh) even rebuked Badal; now he had labelled Ranjit Singh's move as political interference. Kewal Singh went to this extent that he revealed that Ranjit Singh had changed Tohra's letter in the case of his visit to a Nirankari function at Patiala in 1998 (but that time Kewal Singh and Manjit Singh, had not objected to this and had signed the decision acquitting Tohra; hence both of them too were guilty of insulting Akal Takht.). On the 3rd of January Dr Kehar Singh, Kulwant Singh Grewal and Dr Gurtaran Singh (professors of the Punjabi University Patiala) too issued statements against the '*hukamnama*' of Ranjit Singh; Kehar Singh went to the extent of calling Ranjit Singh

more than half an hour; per chance this author was among the three persons present with Tohra at that time; Tohra told Vajpayee that Badal wanted to remove all the senior leaders from the Dal in order to clear way for elevating his son Sukhbir to the office of C.M.; at this Vajpayee said: 'I am sorry for this scenario but this would lead to serious consequences'.

‘a mad man’ (in fact he was aspiring to become the Vice Chancellor of the Punjabi University Patiala).

On the 7th of January Badal called a meeting of Akali M.L.As, members of the SGPC, office bearers of the Akali Party and chiefs of the district units and in this meeting he got passed a resolution authorising him to control all the functions of the celebration of the tercentenary; through this resolution Badal killed two birds with one stone: firstly, he had side-lined Tohra and secondly, now he could oblige the RSS and BJP leaders by presenting them robes of honour in all the functions (which he did). Now Badal made another coercive order; he asked all the Akali leaders to remain neutral on Tohra issue; he threatened that whosoever tried to help or even express sympathy for Tohra would also meet the same fate; this silenced all the Akali activists; Jagdev Singh Talwandi, Ravi Inder Singh, Kuldeep Singh Wadala, Surjit Barnala, Captain Kanwaljeet Singh, Manjit Singh (Bhai), Atinderpal Singh all remained silent; they did not realise that whenever a like situation arose Badal would treat them too in the same manner; they forgot what Pastor Niemoller had said about the Nazis in 1940s: *“First they came for the Jews and I did not speak out because I was not a Jew. Then they came for the Communists and I did not speak out because I was not a Communist. Then they came for the trade unionists and I did not speak out because I was not a trade unionist. Then they came for me and there was no one left to speak out for me.”*

Gurdwara Judicial Commission captured/truncated

Having found himself bound under several legal limitations Badal began removing them one by one; on the 7th of January 1999 he removed Kashmir Singh, Dara Singh and Raghbir Singh, all the three members of the Gurdwara Judicial Commission and appointed Manmohan Singh, Amrik Singh Randhawa and Ajwant Sigh Maan in their place. The following day, a statement issued by 92 members of the SGPC, opposed the removal of the old members of the Commission; this statement had been issued by Tohra group without the consent

of the members and at least 47 of these members had already expressed their loyalty for Badal. On the 10th of January 1999 Parkash Singh Badal held a press conference at Chandigarh in which he paraded the above mentioned 47 members of the SGPC (whose name had appeared in the statement issued by Tohra group on the 8th of January); besides 68 more members of the SGPC were present in that press conference; thus 115 of the 185 members were definitely with Badal; Badal claimed that Tohra had the support of just 45 members.

Badal warns Talwandi and Surjit Barnala

On the 11th of January 1999 Badal held meeting with Jathedar Jagdev Singh Talwandi and on the 15th of January he met Surjit Barnala and told both of them that he will definitely remove Tohra from the SGPC and expel him from the Akali Dal; he also warned them not to sympathise with Tohra; and, in case they did not do so they too would get the same treatment as Tohra was being given. Then, Badal was behaving as an autocrat, a dictator that he dared issue a statement that Akali Dal was supreme and the SGPC was a wing of the Dal; reacting to this the intellectuals said that the SGPC was a statutory body constituted and elected under an Indian law and the Dal has no legal authority to dictate the SGPC; of course he had right to issue whip to his Party's members.

In the meanwhile Ranjit Singh had found new excuses and on the basis of those he summoned even Barjinder Singh, Manjit Singh and Kewal Singh for the 11th of February; in the meanwhile, Badal group summoned a meeting of the executive of the S.G.P.C. for the 10th of February and removed Ranjit Singh from his post as caretaker of Akal Takht. This meeting appointed Giani Mohan Singh in place of Ranjit Singh; but, under pressure from his son Mohan Singh refused to accept it; and the Executive, which was still sitting in Circuit House Amritsar, changed the proceedings of the Executive and appointed Giani Puran Singh as caretaker of Akal Takht who 'withdrew the *'hukamnama'* issued by Ranjit Singh banning

removal of Tohra from the presidency of the SGPC till the 15th of April 1999.

After the exist of Ranjit Singh Badal was now free to take further action and, on the 17th of March the Badal group passed a resolution of non-confidence against Tohra and removed him from office; Jagir Kaur was brought in as new president of the SGPC.

With this volcanic action, the Dal was divided into two groups and the celebration of tercentenary of Khalsa was marred by hatred, jealousy, conspiracies and civil war, and, though big crowds of the Sikhs thronged to Anandpur Sahib from the 8th to the 14th of April 1999, but the Sikh nation could not get any message or inspiration from these celebrations. What the R.S.S. wanted was achieved without much effort; the Sikhs were now a divided nation with no hope for good days.

Akali Dal supports dissolution of Bihar Assembly

The Akali Dal had always opposed dissolution of the Assemblies of the states under section 356 of the Indian Constitution because the Dal's government had been victims of this section of the Constitution several times (Akali Government in Pepsu in 1952, Akali Governments in Punjab, in 1971, 1980 and 1987). In 1999, BJP led Central regime, headed by Atal Bihari Vajpayee, wanted to dislodge Lalu Parsad from the reign in Bihar; Lalu's wife Rabri Devi was the CM of Bihar; the Central Government issued Presidential proclamation on the 12th of February 1999 and put Bihar under Governor rule; as per law this proclamation had to be ratified by the Lok Sabha as well as Rajya Sabha but the BJP led coalition did not have majority in the Rajya Sabha; at that time the Akalis had 5 MPs including Gurcharan Singh Tohra and Sukhdev Singh Libra; by that time Tohra had been expelled by Badal but he was still an MP; Badal issued a whip to all the members (including Tohra and Libra) to vote in favour of the motion (to dismiss Bihar Government). This was completely against the policy of Akali Dal but as Badal was acting under orders from the R.S.S. there was no question of following its

own constitution, principles or ethics. However, the BJP led coalition government chose not to move further and withdrew the Presidential proclamation and Rabri Devi was sworn CM of Bihar again on the 9th of March 1999.

Badal pays high price for expelling Tohra

Tohra forms his own Akali Dal

Though Badal had expelled Tohra from the SGPC and his Akali Dal but Tohra had still been expecting his return to the party; however, when even after the closing of the functions of tercentenary celebrations Badal did not bother for requests and mediations, Gurcharan Singh Tohra decided to form his own Akali Dal. On the 31st of May He held a conference in Aalamgir village and announced formation of a new party in the name of Sarb Hind Akali Dal; in this meeting a drama of 'dismissing' Parkash Singh Badal was held; a charge sheet was read out and 'impeachment' proceedings were held and finally it was resolved that Badal be 'dismissed' from Shiromani Akali Dal. After this 'drama' a new Akali Dal was announced. This gathering was attended by 11 MLAs who had won as Akali candidates; they were loyal to Gurcharan Singh Tohra but Badal had not taken any action against them; hence they did not sit on the dais and took place among the audience in order to avoid being dismissed under the Law of Floor-crossing; these MLAs included, Manjit Singh Calcutta, Harmel Singh Tohra, Surjit Singh Kohli, Maheshinder Singh Grewal and Inderjeet Singh Zira etc; besides these MLAs Prem Singh Lalpura, Sukhjinder Singh, Sucha Singh Chhotapur and some activists of Simranjeet Singh Maan Akali Dal were also present as observers.

Badal loses Lok Sabha elections of 1999

In September-October 1999 elections to the Lok Sabha were held; in the Punjab Congress, Akali Dal Badal, Sarb Hind Akali Dal (Tohra), Akali Dal Amritsar (Maan), BJP, CPI, BSP, CPM had fielded their candidates; of the 13 seats (in brackets are the 1998 seats) Congress won 8 (0), Badal Akali Dal 2

(8),⁶⁰ Maan Akali Dal 1 (0), BJP 1 (3)⁶¹ and CPI 1 (0) and the share of different parties in the votes polled was seats (in brackets is the 1998 percentage): Congress 38.44% (25.85%), Akali Dal Badal 28.59% (32.93% it included Tohra's votes also, *but if Badal Tohra votes of 1999 are combined it goes up to 33.23% i.e. still more than 1998 share*), Akali Dal Tohra 4.64%, Akali Dal Maan 3.41% (2.73%), BJP 9.16% (11.67%), BSP 5.75% (12.65%). The election results were a great setback for Badal and all this was a result of his parting from Tohra; the latter had sizable votes in each constituency. Though Badal suffered heavy losses but the BJP was successful in forming government in the centre; Atal Bihari Vajpayee became the PM; as there were only 2 Lok Sabha members of Badal Akali Dal and both were juniors so Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa, a member of Rajya Sabha was inducted in cabinet, though with an unimportant ministry.

Killing of 36 Sikhs in Chittisinghpura (Kashmir)

On the 20th of March 2000, 36 Sikhs were killed in the village of Chittisinghpura, in the Anantnag district of the State of Jammu and Kashmir; wearing Indian Army uniforms the killers came into the village in two groups at separate ends of the village where the two Gurdwaras were located; they first lined up all the male Sikhs of the village, who had been celebrating Hola Mahalla festival, in front of their Gurdwaras and opened fire; of the 37 Sikhs 36 were killed;⁶² one who had

⁶⁰ Badal Akali Dal won Firozpur and Tarn Taran; 'Tarn Taran was won by Tarlochan Singh Tur because his father and brother had made great contribution to the Sikh cause and Firozpur seat was won by Zora Singh by booth capturing and other tactics' (statement by Kuldeep Singh Wadala, a former ally of Badal). Simranjeet Singh Maan won Sangrur seat because Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa of Badal Akali Dal helped him a lot in order to defeat Surjit Barnala from that seat.

⁶¹ BJP won Gurdaspur seat by a margin of 1399 votes whereas in 1998 the margin was 106833.

⁶² These were: Rajinder Singh (42), Kirpal Singh (35), Rajan Singh (40), Niranjan Singh (50), Gurdeep Singh (25), Ajitpal Singh (22), Joginder Singh (26), Gurbakhsh Singh (35), Uttam Singh (30), Surjit Singh (22),

fallen under the dead escaped; he revealed that after killings the killer laughed over their action while sending a 'mission accomplished' message over their walkie-talkie. The killers knew the residents as the Sikhs were singled out for the massacre, the village also had many Muslim and Hindus; some of the Sikh widows spoke of their husbands being called out by name. The village did not have a telephone, some boys who came on the scene had to run 7 km, over a mud road, to reach a phone and summon help. In the hours immediately after the massacre in March 2000, the US Government had condemned the killings but refused to accept the Indian government's accusation that it was the work of Pakistani Islamist groups.

The Indian government asserted that the killings had been conducted by the militant group *Lashkar-e-Taiba*, based in village Muridke in Pakistan. The massacre coincided with the visit of US president Bill Clinton to India. In an introduction to a book written by Madeleine Albright titled *The Mighty and the Almighty: Reflections on America, God, and World Affairs (2006)*, Bill Clinton accused the Hindu Militants of perpetrating the act. When Indian Government tried to present its position Clinton's office did not return calls seeking comment or clarification.

Death of Jagir Kaur's daughter

In April 2000 Badal suffered another setback; Harpreet Kaur, the daughter of Jagir Kaur (president of the SGPC) died in mysterious circumstances on the night between 20th and 21st of April. Jagir Kaur claimed that Harpreet had died of "severe food poisoning", while others insisted that she had been afflicted by "extreme dehydration owing to a sunstroke"; in

Manjit Singh (30), Davinder Singh (18), Rajinder Singh (35), Rachhpal Singh (40), Gurnek Singh (35), Sukha Singh (53), Ravi Singh (38), Jangbahadur Singh (36), Rajdeep Singh (18), Naseeb Singh (50), Kulbir Singh (25), Darbari Singh (28), Didar Singh (50), Gurmit Singh (22), Ujjal Singh (28), Charan Singh (50), Sartaj Singh (30), Rajnath Singh (45), Faqir Singh (65), Karnail Singh (45), Sheetal Singh (30), Ravinder Singh (22), Jagdish Singh (25), Jagir Singh (60) and Sartaj Singh (26).

still another version Jagir Kaur said that her daughter had died *en route* from Phagwara to Ludhiana's Christian Medical College Hospital; this explanation was bizarre, for there was no reason why a critically ill Harpreet Kaur should have been driven all the way to Ludhiana, given that first-rate medical facilities were available less than 20 km away, in Jalandhar. Harpreet was cremated within a few hours, on the 21st of April, at 11.30 a.m. (CM Badal was personally present on this occasion) and again within just a few more hours her ashes were immersed in river; this bringing an end to all evidence of the cause of death.

Local authorities, however, did not to resolve any of these mysteries; no inquest, no post-mortem was carried out, both of which are legal imperatives in all cases of suspicious deaths. Kapurthala SSP Iqbal Singh, who was present at the early morning funeral, told media that "since there was no suspicion of any foul play, there was no necessity for a post-mortem or an inquest". Despite a series of public protests, notably by Punjab-based women's organisations, no FIR was filed by the police. Badal, for his part, stuck by Jagir Kaur; on April 26, unmindful of the controversy that had begun to build up; he attended ceremonial *bhog* rites in Begowal.

On April 27, Kamaljit Singh filed a petition in the Punjab and Haryana High Court, claiming that he had been secretly married to Harpreet Kaur. That marriage, Kamaljit claimed, had been the reason for Harpreet's death. Their unborn child, he said, had been forcibly aborted just a month before his wife was murdered. The man insisted that he had "irrefutable documentary and photographic evidence" of Harpreet's pregnancy and their wedding. The next day, the High Court directed Jagir Kaur, the State of Punjab and four individuals "to show cause as to why the matter should not be entrusted to the CBI when high ups in the State of Punjab holding power are said to be involved in suppressing the truth".

Under pressure, the Punjab government responded by ordering a police inquiry, led by the IG of Police in charge of crime, K.K. Attri; no FIR was filed, but Attri's Special

Investigative Team (SIT) appears to have done the best it could under the circumstances. Leaks from the SIT made clear that traces of a pesticide had been found on the carpet on the floor of the room where Harpreet had died, suggesting at least suicide. Even more damning, Kamaljit's family produced videotape images of an engagement ceremony they had held for the young couple late last year. The video images show a joyful Harpreet in full bridal finery, obviously excited at the event. These new disclosures provoked outrage, and on the 10th of May, Women's Rights activists from all over Punjab blocked traffic in Chandigarh, demanding Jagir Kaur's arrest.

But, still, no real action was taken, and many people believed that the issue had, like Harpreet Kaur, been disposed of for good. Then, on the 9th of June, the High Court ordered a CBI probe into the affair. The court directed the central agency to complete its investigation within four months, and told the Punjab Police to hand over all the documents and materials it had collected. The CBI began a preliminary inquiry in June. Apparently restless over the delay, Kamaljit Singh again petitioned the High Court, now demanding that the CBI be ordered to register an FIR. On the morning of the 4th of October, when this fresh petition was scheduled for hearing, counsel for the CBI handed over to Justice V.M. Jain a copy of the FIR it had registered. Outside the courtroom, the arrests began. On the 4th and the 5th of October, CBI arrested Dalwinder Kaur Dhesi and Paramjit Singh Raipur, a Phagwara-based couple, on charges of forcing Harpreet to have an abortion against her will, conspiring to murder the young woman, culpable homicide and destruction of evidence. The couple's driver, Harminder Singh, and their domestic helpers, Satya Kumari and Sanjeev Kumar, were also arrested on similar charges. There is no doubt where the CBI was heading, for the FIR listed the SGPC president herself as the principal accused in the case of her own daughter's murder.

The trial continued for several years; in 2002 Badal lost power and Captain Amarinder Singh became the CM; in 2007 Badal again came into power; during this period Jagir Kaur was able to win some witnesses

by bribery, coercion and other means; so much so that Kamaljit Singh ('husband' of Harpreet Kaur)⁶³ too was won over by Jagir Kaur and on the 25th of February 2010, Kamaljit wrote to the court that his earlier statements were false as those had been made by him under coercion from Sukhpal Singh Khehra (local MLA); he requested that he did not want to proceed with the case; at this the CBI decided that he be tried for perjury; hence, fearing his arrest, Kamaljit moved an application in the court, on the 21st of March 2011, stating that he had changed his statements under pressure and mental duress from various quarters (the case was still continuing at the time of writing this chapter, in December 2011).

During this period elections to the Panchayats were held; in the Begowal area Badal Akali Dal lost most of the seats due to Jagir Kaur's trial in the case of the death (or murder) of her daughter; as a result in November 2000, Badal did not nominate Jagir Kaur for president-ship of the SGPC; Jagdev Singh Talwandi replaced her on the 30th of November 2000.⁶⁴

Ravi Inder Singh leaves Badal Akali Dal

After heavy losses in the Lok Sabha elections Badal's aggressive attitude and his illusion of being invincible and infallible was shaken; earlier he had been planning to dismiss the 13 MLAs who were loyal to Tohra; these members had, however, been acting very cautiously; though there was no whip still they did not exhibit any activity which would bring them liable for action under the Indian Law for Floor-crossing. When Tohra formed his Akali Dal Badal made a formal complaint against these MLAs and asked the Speaker (Ravi Inder Singh) to summon them and enquire about their loyalty

⁶³It was alleged that Kamaljit was given a lot of money by Jagir Kaur; after this he began living like a prince; he purchased an Innova SUV worth Rs 11.5 lakh; his mother purchased a plot in Begowal, at the cost of about Rs 12.5 lakh (*The Tribune* 28.5.2011).

⁶⁴ On 27th of November 2001 Kirpal Singh Badungar was given the presidency of SGPC (at the time of voting Talwandi tore his ballot paper saying: "I won't vote for a *chela* of Bhaniara"; in fact he was angry because Badungar had replaced him). Later, Badungar had to surrender this office to Tohra on the 27th of July 2003, after 7 months, when Badal and Tohra were reunited. However, on the 23rd of September 2004 Jagir Kaur again became president of the SGPC but remained in this office just for one year, to be replaced by Awtar Singh Makkar on the 23rd of November 2005.

to the Party; at that time Ravi Inder Singh was loyal to Badal; hence he summoned these MLAs several times but every time, either of his own or due to Badal's wish, he postponed decision to dismiss them from the Punjab Assembly. By April 2000 relations between Badal and Ravi Inder Singh too had strained and in May he joined Akali Dal Tohra.

In June 2000 the issue of dismissal of 13 Tohra loyalist MLAs came up again; at this Ravi Inder Singh revealed that Badal had asked him to dismiss these MLAs; now Badal was in a fix, and had he asked the new Speaker to dismiss Tohra loyalist MLAs the case would have gone to the High Court and revelations made by Ravi Inder Singh would have affected the decision hence Badal postponed the dismissal of these MLAs. However in July 2000 Gurdev Singh Shutrana rejoined Badal's camp and the number of the Tohra loyalist MLAs was reduced to 12. During this period Ravi Inder Singh planned to topple the Badal Government with the help of Congress Party; he tried to win over some MLAs of Badal group; he did succeed in contacting some of them but, as per law, if less than one third of the total MLAs of any party rebel and form a new party they could be dismissed under the Law for Floor-crossing but Ravi Inder could not achieve this number because (out of 75 MLAs) Badal had given cabinet berths to 45 MLAs (as ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries), and rest had been adjusted as Chairmen of different Corporations or other concerns and only 13 were with Tohra; it was in the air that Badal had given one crore rupees each to those MLAs who had not been given any office of profit.

Weak position of Badal in the Punjab Assembly

During all this time Badal had to remain under the mercy of the BJP which had 18 MLAs in the Punjab Assembly; Badal had to surrender a big share in power to the BJP; major ministerial departments, chairmanships of several corporations and other concerns and Chairmanships of the all the four metropolitan Improvement Trusts had to be given to the BJP; and when Mohinder Kumar Rinva became president

of Punjab BJP he began frequently rebuking, condemning and dictating Badal on various issues. Expelling Tohra cost Badal a lot that he could even dream of; he had to pay heavy cost for taking revenge from Tohra and for appeasing his sycophants like Dhindsa, Bhunder, Barjinder Hamdard; Tohra lost just president-ship of the SGPC (he was still an MP); but Badal lost 8 seats in Lok Sabha seats (including his own son's seat whom Jagmeet Singh Brar had defeated), one seat in Rajya Sabha; and now he had no say in the Central Government (with just 2 MPs); he lost 13 MLAs and had to live on mercy of 18 BJP MLAs; he lost billions of rupees (of corruption funds), lost several sincere companions, damaged honour of the Party, lost peace of mind; at that time he was a very big loser.

Jagdev Singh Talwandi becomes the president of the SGPC

The annual elections of the executive of the SGPC were due in November 2000; during this time Badal had been passing through difficult times; he had suffered heavy losses on various counts and he feared rebellion in the SGPC too; the election for the office bearers of the SGPC was going to be held on the 30th of November 2000; Tohra and Ravi Inder Singh had planned to allure Jagdev Singh Talwandi to aspire for president-ship of the SGPC; the latter had support of only a few members but sudden proposal of his name was likely to confuse the members resulting into possible defeat of Badal's official candidate. By the evening of the 29th of November 2000 nobody knew about this planning by Tohra group but that day late in the evening Badal got intelligence and he decided to propose the name of Talwandi as his own candidate so that Tohra group may not gain from this election; he had to swallow bitter pill to save himself from another possible loss.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ Later, Badal used Talwandi; he compelled him to release big grants for Badal's school and college and other projects. On the 27th of May 2001 Tohra alleged that Talwandi had sanctioned 22 lakh rupees from the SGPC funds for Badal's institutions. Further Badal did not extend term of Talwandi's presidency more than an year and he elevated another sycophant (Kirpal Singh Badungar) in November 2001 to this office; later,

SGPC General Secretary Balbir Pannu dies in car accident in shameful scenario

On the 16th of February 2001, Balbir Singh Pannu, the General Secretary of the S.G.P.C. died in a car accident (the car belonged to the SGPC and it was an 'official' visit) in Madhya Pradesh along with a young unmarried 18 years old girl Nirmaljit Kaur Neetu (who was pregnant at that time); bottles of whiskey too were found in his vehicle. A function was held in his village on the 21st of March 2001 to perform his last prayers; it was attended among others by Vedanti, Badal, Talwandi, Jagir Kaur, Manjit Singh Kesgarh, Kewal Singh, Bhagwan Singh, Puran Singh, Kiranjot Kaur, Kirpal Singh (Chief Khalsa Diwan); all these persons paid rich tribute to Balbir Pannu for his great contribution to the Panth (and for his high moral character); besides, all the expenses for this function were paid by the SGPC.

Tohra defeats Badal group in Hazur Sahib Board election

During this period election to two nominees for the Hazur Sahib Management Board, to be elected by Sikh MPs, was held on the 21st of March 2001; Congress and Communist MPs voted in favour of Tohra group and Tohra and Sukhdev Singh Libra were elected and both the candidates of Badal were defeated; this too demoralised Badal; this was his second major defeat since the Lok Sabha elections. Even during this period the Badal group tried to have unity with Tohra; in February Sukhbir Badal personally made an attempt to woo Tohra but, on the 3rd of March 2001 the latter declared that 'if we have unity with Badal it will be based on principles'; at this Sukhbir withdrew himself from this move. In November 2001 Badal group restarted negotiations for unity but Tohra again demanded that 'Badal should first act upon the '*hukamnama*' of Akal Takht' (which had prohibited removal of Tohra from

after his defeat in 2002 Punjab Assembly elections, Badal expelled Talwandi from his Akali Dal.

the SGPC's presidency).⁶⁶ This move came to an end when on the 27th of November Kirpal Singh Badungar was elected the president of the SGPC defeating Sukhdev Singh Bhaur (112 against 56 votes).

Badal loses reign of Punjab too

The new elections to the Punjab Assembly were due in February 2002; to give a united fight to Badal, Tohra, Jasbir Rode, Sant Samaj (headed by Sarbjot Singh Bedi) and other Akali groups formed a united front; on the 15th of November 2001 a 74 member Panthic Council was formed. They decided to field candidates in more than 85 Sikh constituencies; on the 15th of January 2002 Randhir Singh Cheema too joined them because Badal had refused to nominate him to the Punjab Assembly.

Elections to the Punjab Assembly were held on the 13th of February 2002; the Congress party, under the command of Captain Amarinder Singh, achieved tremendous success increasing its seats from 14 to 62; of the 117 seats (seats in 1997 in brackets) Congress won 62 (14) seats,⁶⁷ Akali Dal won 41 (75), BJP won 3 (18), CPI won 2 (2) and 9 (7) went to independents and other groups (BSP, of Kashi Ram, which contested independently could not win even a single seat); vote percentage of each party was (1997 votes in brackets): Congress 36.13% (26.59%), Akali Dal 30.62% (37.64%), Panthic Morcha (Tohra) 4.69%, Akali Dal Maan 4.65% (3.10%), BJP 5.72% (8.33%), CPI 5.72% (2.98%), independents and others (including BSP) 11.27% (10.87%).⁶⁸ Captain Amarinder Singh was sworn in as CM on the 27th of February 2002. After taking over the reins of the province when Amarinder Singh visited Darbar Sahib to make

⁶⁶ *The Tribune*, dated 24.11.2001

⁶⁷ Congress and CPI had entered poll alliance; the Congress Party contested 106 seats; 11 had been allotted to the CPI.

⁶⁸ In 2007 Congress captured 37 of the 65 seats in the Malwa zone; the Akalis and the BJP won 20 of 25 seats in the Doaba zone and 23 out of 27 seats in the Majha zone.

obeisance, the SGPC authorities did not present him ceremonial *siropao*.⁶⁹

After pushing Badal out of power, the Panthic Council of Tohra and Ravi Inder Singh resolved to organise themselves under a new Akali Dal (later, on the 6th of August 2002, Ravi Inder Singh took *khanday-di-pahul* (Sikh initiation rites) with the intention of heading the new Akali Dal).

Badal expels Talwandi from Akali Dal

On the 27th of November 2001 Kirpal Singh Badungar was given the presidency of SGPC; he replaced Jagir Kaur, who was involved in a case regarding the death/murder of her daughter; at the time of voting Jagdev Singh Talwandi tore his ballot paper saying: “I won’t vote for a *chela* of Piara Bhaniara”; in fact he was angry because Badal had replaced

⁶⁹ SGPC had drawn flak from the Sikh *sangat* on the denial of due honour to Captain Amarinder Singh; it was Badal’s jealousy for him which resulted into this partiality; however, about one year later, when Tohra became the President of the SGPC, and Amarinder Singh visited Darbar Sahib on the 29th of March 2004, to participate in *kaar sewa* of the Amritsar *sarovar* (tank), Manjit Singh Calcutta, the Secretary of the SGPC ‘corrected’ the SGPC’s mistake by presenting him (Amarinder Singh) *siropa* and said that “not presenting a *siropa* to the Chief Minister in the past was a mistake which stood corrected now”; as a goodwill gesture, Capt Amarinder Singh accepted the demands put forward by Mr Calcutta, including the exemption of sales tax on purchase of ration and material to be used for Darbar Sahib. He directed officials concerned not to create any hurdle in the way of smooth supply of ‘*ghee*’ for preparing ‘*parshad*’. Captain Amarinder Singh also promised that after Lok Sabha elections, his government would endeavour to construct a helipad near the Darbar Sahib so that devotees were not to put to any inconvenience in case of the visit of VVIPs; he said his government would make all efforts to construct an underground passage from Burj Akali Phula Singh to the Darbar Sahib for smooth flow of rush of devotees. When SGPC mooted a point of constructing a multi-storey parking, Captain Amarinder Singh readily accepted the demand and said parking slot would be created by demolishing Senior Secondary School, Town Hall. When Mr Calcutta pointed out that the C.M. should not touch political issues during his press conference in the SGPC’s Information Office, Captain Amarinder Singh immediately accepted the suggestion (*The Tribune*, dated 30.3.2004).

him with Badungar; even after this Talwandi continued criticising Badal; reacting to this Badal formed a 'disciplinary Committee' which expelled Talwandi from Badal Akali Dal on the 11th of December 2002 for his 'anti-party activities'; at that time Talwandi himself was the Chairman of Dal's Disciplinary Action Committee; along with Talwandi Veer Singh Madoke (who had contested election against Kirpal Singh Badungar as a candidate of Tohra group) too was expelled from Badal Akali Dal; both of them were also the members of the SGPC from Raikot and Badhni Kalan respectively.

Paramjit Singh Sarna captures Delhi DSGMC

During this period general elections to the Delhi Gurdwara Management Committee (DSGMC) were held on the 30th of June 2002; in these elections Paramjit Singh Sarna, a supporter of Gurcharan Singh Tohra, won 27 of 46 seats; Badal group could win just 14 seats and 5 went to independents (Bhai Ranjit Singh group); on the 16th of July 5 persons were elected in 'nominated member' category; by this time Ranjit Singh had developed differences with Sarna hence he joined hands with local Badal group; thus Badal group gained one extra seat; now Sarna had 29, Badal 16 and Ranjit Singh 6 members; on the 24th of July 2002 Paramjit Singh Sarna was elected president of the Delhi DSGMC. This was another major defeat (fourth since Lok Sabha elections) of Parkash Singh Badal. Tohra had no role in Delhi nor he had made any contribution for the victory of Sarna but the latter invited Tohra all the functions and promoted him thus boosted the morale of a despondent Tohra and his group.

Sarabjit Singh DC's book on *Black Thunder Operation*

In July 2002 Sarabjit Singh (who was the deputy Commissioner of Amritsar during Black Thunder Operation in May 1988) published a book '*Operation Black thunder*'; in this book he alleged that Tohra had knowledge of June 1984 attack on Darbar Sahib beforehand. Sarbjit further stated that in 1986 Tohra had appointed radical priests on suggestions by Buta Singh and the latter had helped him (Tohra) to defeat Surjit

Barnala's candidate in November 1986 during SGPC's presidential elections. (All the three allegations were false: it is wrong that Tohra knew about the June 1984 attack on Darbar Sahib; he did appoint radical priests in 1986 on the suggestions of Buta Singh but he had to accept radical priest just to gain the sympathy of the militants; further Buta helping Tohra during SGPC elections too was false propaganda; in fact this book was just another official propaganda work because Sarabjit's main purpose was to justify the Government's actions.

When the book was published Badal thought it as golden opportunity to attack Tohra and condemn him as an associate or at least a collaborator of Congress Party; on the 17th of July 2002 Badal said: "*Tohra had always used religious places in collaboration with the Intelligence Agencies and the Congress Party;*" further, on the 3rd of August he said: "*Tohra and Ravi Inder are tools of the Congress Party's atrocities.*" Reacting to Badal's statement some Tohra loyalists threatened to *gherao* (picket against) Badal; at this newly turned 'Badal loyalists' Rajinder Singh Mehta and Amarjit Singh Chawla challenged that they would never allow such a move.

Tohra fails in attempt to capture the SGPC

In November 2002 the annual elections to the office bearers were due; this time Captain Amarinder Singh had agreed to help Tohra; Inderjeet Singh Zira, a Tohra loyalist, with the help of (his relative) DGP Mehal Singh Bhullar, tried to arrest, whisk away, bribe and/or coerce some members of the SGPC. Reacting to this Badal declared: "we shall not allow fulfilment of Tohra's dream to be the president of the SGPC" and he transported 98 members of the SGPC out of Punjab and kept them in his grand mansion at Balasar Farm in Haryana. Badal then approached Sonia Gandhi and requested her to help; the latter obliged Badal and asked Captain Amarinder Singh to keep away from the SGPC elections; Badal, however, confessed this in a statement, issued on the 13th of November 2002, when he said: "had Sonia Gandhi not rebuked Captain he would not have allowed us even to enter Amritsar."

On the 12th of November Badal escorted 98 members to Amritsar in a chartered plane; however when the voting was held Badal's candidate Kirpal Singh Badungar polled 91 votes against 68 of Veer Singh Maddoke (of Tohra group); 12 members of the SGPC were not allowed to vote because cases against them were pending in different cases. This, however, meant that Tohra group had been successful in getting 12 more votes (in 2001 Tohra group had 56 members) but, on the other hand it also meant that Badal still had the support of 113 (91+12) SGPC members. A despondent Tohra, in a statement issued on the 12th of November 2002, bewailed that he had been defeated by three feudal (Badal, Amarinder and Simranjeet Singh Mann) and four governments (Punjab, Haryana, Himanchal and Delhi).

Slandering and abusive campaign by Tohra and Badal groups continued for three more months; however, during this period, on the 25th of February 2003, Badal, Tohra and Maan, the three major leaders of different Akali factions, formed a joint delegation and met Lal Kishan Advani and made a petition to commute death sentence of Professor Davinder Singh Bhullar. Reacting to this mercy appeal Balwant Singh Rajoana, who was under trial for killing Beant Singh, the terrorist CM of the Punjab, got published an advertisement in daily *Ajit* (dated 26.2.2003) chiding Bhullar for making mercy petitions and asked him to gladly embrace martyrdom.⁷⁰

Tohra and Badal Akali Dals unite

Parkash Singh Badal, having lost four battles earlier, had won any election for the first time in November 2002 (SGPC elections), but in spite of this he was scared of his political future; he feared that he would definitely loose the

⁷⁰ It is remarkable to note that Balwant Singh Rajoana had refused to defend himself in Beant murder case; he openly confessed in the court that he and Shaheed Dilawar Singh had killed the terrorist CM; later, when he was given death sentence he refused to make an appeal against the court decision; the other accused in the same case filed appeals and their death sentences were commuted by the Punjab High Court.

control of the SGPC sooner or later; besides Badal had realised that loosing Tohra meant loosing political power in the Punjab; in the meanwhile Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa, Balwinder Singh Bhunder and Barjinder Singh Hamdard too had realised this truth and had softened their hatred for Tohra, hence, just after three months of his victory Badal began fresh efforts for unity with Tohra; besides Manjit Singh Calcutta, Tohra's son-in-law Harmel Singh, and Maheshinder Singh Grewal too had been trying for unity of both the leaders; though the state power was lost but still they could share the power in the SGPC; among these Manjit Singh Calcutta campaigned very hard.

During this period Gurcharan Singh Tohra had been seriously ill; when he recovered from illness he arranged a function the 8th of March 2003, to thank God for his recovery. On this day Manjit Singh Calcutta secretly invited Badal, Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa and a few others Badal loyalists; Tohra, however, thanked uninvited guests and this became the starting point of unity talks between both the leaders. Unity talks were formally held in the third week of April; on the 24th of April 2003 Jathedar Jagdev Singh Talwandi, Ravi Inder Singh, Kuldeep Singh Wadala and Jasbir Singh Rode condemned this and called it 'an unprincipled unity'. Even after this Tohra made some bluffing statements but he himself had made up his mind for unity; on the 17th of May Badal declared that 'come what may we shall achieve unity'; after this Tohra and Badal used Vedanti (caretaker of Akal Takht) who 'summoned' both the leaders on the 5th of June 2003; and, on the following day Tohra who had been making very bold statements declared that "unity has been achieved with the appearance of Badal at Akal Takht." On the 13th of June 2003 both the leaders were formally united⁷¹ (and 44 days later, on the 26th of July 2003, Tohra was again given reigns of the SGPC).

⁷¹ The 'Sarab Hind Shiromani Akali Dal' (headed by Gurcharan Singh Tohra) was merged into Badal Akali Dal.

It is an irony that both these leaders had been calling each other traitors of the Panth; for Tohra Badal was a rebel against Akal Takht and Badal used to condemn Tohra as an agent of Congress Party; and this allegation mongering and blaming game had continued for more than 4 years (from February 1999 to May 2003).

Ravi Inder form ‘Akali Dal (1920)’

When Tohra merged his Akali Dal in the Badal Akali Dal Ravi Inder Singh and others got annoyed; all the anti-Badal groups had been co-operating with Tohra sincerely but when Tohra united with Badal group he did not consult any other anti-Badal group; he was so desperate to become the president of the SGPC that he did not bother even for his most loyal friends and supporters. At that time there were several Akali Dals in the field e.g. Shiromani Akali Dal (headed by Badal), Akali Dal Amritsar (headed by Simranjeet Singh Maan), Akali Dal Panthic ((headed by Jasbir Singh Rode), Akali Dal Democratic (headed by Kuldeep Singh Wadala), an Akali group headed by Sarbjot Singh Bedi; on the 20th of July 2003 all these Akali Dals (except Maan and Wadala) as well as some other senior Akali leaders including Jagdev Singh Talwandi,⁷² Mall Singh Ghuman (a former vice president of the SGPC), Sucha Singh Chhotepur MLA and Sarbjot Singh Bedi (chairman Sant Samaj), held a ‘Convention’ at Jalandhar on the 19th of July 2003 and formed a new united Akali Dal in the name of ‘Akali Dal (1920)’; Ravi Inder Singh was elected president.

In a unanimous resolution adopted at this convention, the Akali Dal criticised Mr Badal for promoting his family interests and ignoring dedicated workers. *“Badal promoted corruption during his stint as Chief Minister and now he is trying to project the registration of a case against him and family members by the Congress government as a war against Sikh community, which is highly deplorable. Badal should face*

⁷² By this time Jagdev Singh Talwandi too had been expelled by Badal.

the trial in a court instead of creating confusion among the masses to gain sympathy,” the resolution said. Lashing out at Mr Badal and former SGPC Chief Gurcharan Singh Tohra for forging an “unholy” alliance recently; Ravi Inder Singh alleged that both Badal and Tohra had betrayed the people and promoted their kins by sacrificing the interests of the state. Sarbjot Singh Bedi said that an 11-member Shiromani Akal Council would be constituted, to act as a “watchdog”/ “think tank” to monitor the functioning of the Akali Dal.

Political scenario of the Punjab (2002-2011)

Arrest of Parkash Singh Badal and Sukhbir Badal in corruption case

If Badal had never forgotten taking revenge from his enemies so did Captain Amarinder Singh; the latter well remembered how Badal had disgraced him by keeping him out of the Executive when both the Dals had been united in April 1995 and had refused to nominate him as a party candidate during Assembly elections of February 1997. Since then he had been waiting for an opportunity to punish Badal but he had no issue under which he could take action against Badal; now, when Tohra and Badal again joined hands in June 2003 he asked all his officials and friends to find some issue where Badal could be indicted; finally it was decided that a case on the charges of corruption and disproportionate assets be filed against Badal family. The case was filed in July 2003 and Badal's Orbit Resorts (in Haryana) was raided on the 9th of July (on his son Sukhbir's birthday) and his residence in Delhi was raided on the 25th of July (his wife Surinder's birthday); finally Parkash Singh and his son Sukhbir Badal were summoned to present themselves in the court of Ropar's Special Judge on the 1st of December 2003. When they appeared in the court the Judge ordered that they should be remanded in judicial custody till December 13. Never before had a former Chief Minister of the state been sent to jail even for a single day. Declining the prayer for interim bail, the Judge created history by remanding Punjab's former C.M.-cum-Shiromani Akali Dal president and his M.P. son Sukhbir Badal into custody. Badal and his son remained in Patiala Jail till 9th of December; they were released on bail on the 10th.

Tohra squanders SGPC money to celebrate Badal's birthday

The 8th of December was Parkash Badal's birthday; Tohra announced that his birthday would be observed as '*Jabar Virodhi day*' (literally: anti repression day); on this day

a rally was held at Patiala; for that day Tohra had arranged a lavish *langar* (lunch and dinner) at Gurdwara Dukh Niwaran Patiala (at the cost of the SGPC money); he had expected a gathering between 50 thousand and one lakh but no more than ten thousand people attended it; a lot of *langar* had to be distributed among the beggars. The father and the son were released on the 11th of December; that day Joginder Singh Vedanti presented them *siropaos* (for arrest in a corruption case) in the name of Akal Takht.

Rajinder Kaur Bhattal collaborates with Badal

When Captain Amarinder Singh was taking action against Badal, Rajinder Kaur Bhattal (an MLA and a former CM) who was aspirant to replace Amarinder Singh as CM began creating trouble for the latter; in fact she had been in touch with Badal.⁷³ In the second week of December 2003 she began wooing back-bencher MLAs; she managed to get support of 33 MLAs of the Congress party; all of them were interested in Cabinet berths. Having gathered their support she escorted them to Delhi in order to parade them before Sonia Gandhi, the Congress Party chief, and assert her right to CM-ship; she reached Delhi on the 17th of December; there Sukhbans Kaur Bhinder (former MP) too joined her camp. Bhattal and the 32 MLAs spent several days at Delhi but she could not impress upon Sonia to replace Amarinder Singh;⁷⁴ finally she agreed to become Deputy CM (a designation that Amarinder Singh had offered her two months earlier) and on the 7th of January 2004 she took oath of the new office.

⁷³ Rajinder Kaur Bhattal had secret understanding with Badal and the latter too helped her in many a way. During 2007 elections Badal blessed an Akali rebel Naranjan Singh to contest as independent who was able to fetch more than 12380 votes and the Akali candidate Prem Chandumajra lost the election by a margin of just 250 votes (47515 votes against 47267 votes of Prem Chandumajra).

⁷⁴ Sonia knew that the Congress Party in the Punjab could not get more than 20% votes unless Captain Amarinder Singh led the Party; besides, without him the Party would be condemned as anti-Sikh Party and it would not be able to fetch Sikh votes

Punjab terminates all agreement on Punjab Waters⁷⁵

As per the Rajiv-Longowal Agreement Satluj-Yamuna Link (SYL) Canal was to be completed by 1986; the said 'Agreement' was totally anti-Punjab in nature as it gave nothing to the Punjab or the Sikhs and rather snatched still more from the Punjab; one of these anti-Punjab clauses was the construction of SYL Canal. Though Saurjit Barnala as CM had begun construction work for the Canal but it had to be stopped when the militants had killed workers digging the Canal and had also declared that the same would happen to anyone trying to construct the Canal. After this no one dared to go further on this project; in 2006 Haryana moved to Supreme Court (S.C.) to get this Canal constructed and the S.C.⁷⁶ ordered on the 4th of June 2004 that the work for the construction of the SYL Canal must be completed (*to complete the "unfinished" task of denying waters of the three rivers passing through Punjab to Haryana and Rajasthan*) and if the Punjab Government was not willing then the Central Government should complete it. The S.C. had given 13th of July 2004 as date for compliance of its order; this was a great crisis for the Amarinder Singh Government; compliance of this order meant great injustice to the Punjab and it would also have harmed the interests of the Punjab Congress probably for ever; hence on the 12th of July Amarinder Singh brought and got unanimously passed a Bill in the Punjab Assembly in the name of the Punjab Termination of Agreement Act (PTAA) under which the Punjab terminated all agreements with the neighbouring States (but keeping the provision of supply to Haryana and Rajasthan intact under

⁷⁵ It was during the time of Partap Singh Kairon that the Punjab Waters were plundered by the Central Government; under the latter's instructions Kairon allotted 8 MAF waters out of 15.8 MAF waters of the Punjab rivers to Rajasthan; of the remaining 7.8 MAF, 3.6 was allotted to Haryana; Chandigarh too was given some share of the Punjab Waters; hence out of its 15.8 MAF the Punjab got just 3.5 i.e. less than 23% of its own Waters.

⁷⁶ The Indian Supreme Court is known for its partisan (especially anti-Sikh and anti-Punjab) mentality.

section 5 of the Act).⁷⁷ The same day Amarinder Singh took the Akali and the BJP MLAs with him and went to the Punjab Governor and got his signatures on the Bill so as to make it Act. This act by Amarinder Singh pulled Punjab out of crisis and people called him *Messiah of the Punjab Waters*.⁷⁸ The very next day Lal Kishan Advani, Sushma Swaraj and several MPs of the BJP created pandemonium in Parliament and condemned the Punjab action; some Congress MPs too joined them. It is remarkable to note that this was a dispute between the two states and was not a national issue; the Punjab had done everything under the Constitutional provisions and the real course was to move to the Courts but the BJP leaders openly stood against the Punjab demonstrating their enmity for the Punjab (and the Sikhs); Advani was known for his anti-Punjab and anti-Sikh stance and he had exhibited it several times before (and even after) this.

Captain Amarinder Singh celebrates Sikh centenaries

During his reign Captain Amarinder Singh celebrated several Sikh centenaries including quad-centenary of compilation of Guru Granth Sahib (at Amritsar in September 2004), ter-centenary of the martyrdom days of elder sons (at Chamkaur) and younger sons and the mother of Guru Gobind Singh (in Fatehgarh in December 2004), martyrdom day of 40 *Muktay* in Muktsar (in May 2005);⁷⁹ during all these functions the Government launched projects and established memorials;

⁷⁷ On Feb 3, 2007 the Parkash Singh Badal declared that his government would scrap Section 5 of the Punjab Termination of Agreement Act (PTAA), which safeguards the usage of waters of the Ravi, the Beas and the Sutlej for Haryana and Rajasthan (but he never did it because the RSS ordered him that he should not even mention this in future; and Badal fully obeyed orders of the RSS).

⁷⁸ Had Captain Amarinder Singh not done so then more than 9 lakh acre land of Punjab would have been turned barren and more than 1.6 million people would have lost their livelihood.

⁷⁹ These centenaries had been celebrated on wrong dates; the martyrdoms in Chamkaur and Fatehgarh took place in December 2005 (not 2004) and the Muktsar Battle was fought on the 29th of December 1705 and not in May.

it is remarkable that when celebration of these events was discussed in the meeting of the Punjab Cabinet, Surinder Singla, the Finance Minister, objected to spending money on Sikhs' religious functions but he was snubbed by the C.M.

Punjab Assembly debates terrorism in Punjab

Though Badal had made several promises before the Punjab Assembly elections of 1997, which included appointment of a Commission to identify the reasons behind and the persons responsible for terrorism in the Punjab especially during the period between 1984 and 1995, but when he became the C.M. he declared that discussing this would mean creating problems hence this issue should be deep buried; in fact he was just obeying the orders of the RSS which did not allow him to do so. Badal lost power in 2002 and Captain Amarinder Singh became the C.M.; the latter, probably with an intention to expose Badal, fixed the 18th of October 2005 for discussing the problem of terrorism in the Punjab between 1984 and 1995.

On the fixed day, during the just 189 minute 'debate', nothing concrete was discussed; it was all 'blame game'; both the Akalis and the Congress tried to run each other down by quoting from books and reports from media and government agencies, especially the intelligence. Badal and Tikshan Sood (of BJP) questioned the wisdom of holding this discussion saying that it would revive old wounds; Amarinder Singh countered him holding that 'younger generation was not aware of what tragedy the state had undergone; and they must know as to who were responsible for this biggest turmoil since 1947'.

Badal, quoting from various books, including certain by ex-bureaucrats, intelligence officials and journalists, blamed that since Indira Gandhi felt slighted at the Akali Dal's agitation against Internal Emergency in 1975, she wanted to teach a lesson to the Akalis and the Sikhs. He said that it was the Akali Dal that had suffered the maximum because of terrorism in Punjab; the Party lost a number of senior leaders and the entire community got branded as terrorists; and, what

happened to the Sikhs in November 1984 is known to everyone. He blamed that it was the Congress which brought its men, gave them money and arms to create trouble in the Punjab; the Dal Khalsa was the creation of the Congress, leaders like Dr Jagjit Singh Chauhan were all creation of the Congress, money and arms were given to Bhindranwala and other militant organisations. He further said that a former deputy Director of Intelligence Bureau⁸⁰ had written that Bhai Gurjit Singh was given Rs 20 lakhs.

Replying to Badals allegations Captain Amarinder Singh blamed him (Badal) and other Akali leaders for the turbulence and huge loss of life and property in the Punjab. The C.M. quoted more from his personal experiences and his association with the Akalis; he alleged that *“had the Akali leadership shown courage and acted judiciously, the situation would have been different today; they always tried to buy peace by evading issues;”* and *“had the government acted firmly in April, 1978, by promulgating prohibitory orders on the eve of the Visakhi function, the history of Punjab would have been different”*.

Making scathing attacks on the Dal leadership, he said that the modus operandi of Badal had been to court arrest on the eve of any major development; it was how he spent seven of the ten years of turbulence in Punjab in various jails; and, he would come out of the jail at an opportune moment, claim price for his ‘sacrifice’ in the shape of power, and keep himself and his family protected; that is why he had sent his son Sukhbir and nephew Manpreet abroad on the pretext of studies while the state was burning. The C.M. also revealed that said that although official figures suggested that 21,700 people were killed in violence during the period of turmoil, the number was much more than that. He proudly declared that he quit the Congress Party in protest against attack on Darbar Sahib in 1984 and again rejected Surjit Barnala when the latter

⁸⁰ He was referring to M.K. Dhar’s book *Open Secrets* which mentioned this amount; Dhar has also said that the said money was never paid.

attacked Darbar Sahib in 1986 it was because of conviction; on the other hand, the Akali leadership lacked this conviction. The debate that lasted just three hours, came to an end without any concrete results; thus, the debate served nothing except giving chance to Amarinder Singh and Badal to blame the other party for the colossal loss and tragedy in the Punjab.

Congress Party loses 2007 elections

New elections to the Punjab Assembly were held in February 2007. The Congress party won 44 seats, the Akali Dal Badal won 48 seats, BJP got 19 seats and 5 seats went to the independents; Akali Dal Amritsar (Maan), CPI, CPM contested 37, 25, 14 seats respectively but failed to win any seat; another alliance of Panthic Morcha comprising of Akali Dal 1920 (Ravi Inder Singh), Majha Akali Dal (Raghubir Singh Rajasansi) and Delhi Akali Dal (Parmjit Singh Sarna) too had fielded several candidates; they too failed to win any seat; the biggest loss was that of the BSP which had contested 115 seats and its candidates lost deposits in 113 seats; second big losers was the Panthic Morcha which had been boasting of winning more than dozen seats got blank; so much so that its major candidate were pushed to third to fifth place; Raghubir Singh Rajasansi (just 3582 out of total polled 1,01,515 votes) and Harinder Singh Norway (Dakha constituency) secured 5th position with just 3218 of the total polled 1,92,696 votes; from among Akali Dal Amritsar candidates Simranjeet Singh Maan came third in Dhanaula constituency where he secured 16303 out of 1,07,838 polled votes and his son Emaan Singh came third in Sarhind constituency securing 9286 out of 1,14,870 polled votes; the share in votes was (2002 percentage in brackets): Congress 51,70,546 i.e. 40.9% (35.81%), Akali Dal Badal 46,89,018 i.e. 37.09% (31.08%), BJP 10,46,451 i.e. 8.28% (5.67%), CPI 95,704 i.e. 0.76% (2.15%), CPM 35,147 i.e. 0.28% (0.36%), BSP 5,21,972 i.e. 4.13% (%), Akali Dal Amritsar 65,248 i.e. 0.52% (4.65%). The Congress achieved grand success in traditionally Akali stronghold Malwa where it

bagged 37 of the 65 seats but in Majha the Akali-BJP alliance won 23 of 27 and in Doaba they bagged 20 out of 25 seats.

The Congress Party lost elections to due to three reasons 1. Allotting Jalandhar Central, a pure Hindu seat, to a Sikh (Tejinder Singh Bittu)⁸¹ which turned most of the Hindu voters against Congress and the BJP won all the Hindu majority urban seats 2. Use of excessive force against demonstrators, several times, just 15 days before the elections (DGP Sarbdip Virk was responsible for this). 3. Poor publicity campaign by the Congress against impressive Akali publicity in media (Bharatinder Chahal was responsible for this).

Badal takes revenge from Amarinder Singh

After taking over reigns from Captain Amarinder Singh on the 1st of March 2007, Parkash Singh Badal began planning to take revenge from the former for sending him and his son to jail in August 2003. Within a week he (Badal) appointed Sumedh Saini,⁸² a terrorist police official as the chief of Vigilance Bureau because the latter too wanted to take revenge from Amarinder Singh; and, within the next two weeks the Punjab Vigilance registered the first case of against the previous Congress regime; former Punjab C. M. Amarinder Singh and 18 others were charges for graft in connection with the Ludhiana City Centre scam; the Vigilance Bureau in its

⁸¹ Bittu secured 28,212 votes out of polled 89,759 votes.

⁸² At that time Sumedh Saini was an under trial accused; even charges had been framed against him in a court of law; in spite of this Badal defended Saini; addressing the media Badal said that “a person is **innocent** as long as he is not convicted; he further said the appointment of Saini, who was charge sheeted by CBI in a murder case in Ludhiana, would not bring disrepute to the state government. Mere framing of charges does not mean a person is guilty. Moreover, there is a case pending against me in a court of law, but it does not mean I am guilty” (*The Tribune*, dated 9.3.2007). On the 6th of July 2008 The Punjab and Haryana High Court directed the CBI to register a case against Saini for his alleged involvement in the torture of two persons, a “proclaimed offender” Balwant Singh Multani and a “missing person” Balwant Singh Bhullar in connection with the 1991 bomb attack on him.

FIR accused Amarinder Singh of violating all norms in patronising and abetting the dilution of terms and conditions for favouring a particular party in executing the project;⁸³ Amarinder Singh was, however, quick in getting anticipatory bail.

Again, in 2008 Badal Government indicted Captain Amarinder Singh for alleged irregularities in exempting 32.10 acres of land for private development in Amritsar during his tenure as chief minister; Badal formed a special 9 committee of the Punjab Assembly under the chairmanship of Harish Rai Dhanda MLA of Badal Akali Dal; this Committee declared Amarinder Singh guilty and on the 10th of September 2008 expelled the latter from the Punjab Assembly.⁸⁴ Later, on the 26th of April 2010, a five-judge constitution Bench of the Supreme Court of India, headed by CJI K.G. Balakrishnan, dealt a sharp rap on the knuckles of the Akali-BJP coalition government headed by Prakash Singh Badal by unanimously ruling that the decision of the House to revoke Amarinder Singh's membership was excessive, constitutionally impermissible, undemocratic and smacked of political vindictiveness.⁸⁵

Badal appoints his son as Deputy Chief Minister

On the 10th of August 2009 Parkash Singh Badal appointed his son Sukhbir as Deputy Chief Minister; Sukhbir was given portfolios of Home Affairs, Information and Public Relations, Water Supply and Sanitation, NRI Affairs, Sports and Youth Welfare and Non-Conventional Energy etc. The Punjab BJP leaders tried to get Deputy C.M. post for their Party; they actually manoeuvred for this and some of the leaders expressed their intentions through the media too but as Badal had joined the R.S.S. with a promise that the rule of the Punjab will always be monopoly of his family, the Central

⁸³ *The Tribune* and *The Times of India*, dated 26.3.2007

⁸⁴ *The Tribune*, dated 11.9.2008

⁸⁵ *Times of India*, dated 27.4.2010

leadership of the RSS and the BJP asked their Punjab unit to ‘shut up’ and soon all became quiet.

Honouring terrorist police officials

During second term of his CM-ship (2007-2011) Badal crossed all limits of injustice to the Punjab and treason with the Sikh Panth. Within a week of his taking oath (in March 2007) he had appointed Sumedh Saini as chief of Vigilance department; Badal had elevated one of the ferocious butchers to such a high office with an intention to harass Amarinder Singh; again, in October 2011 Badal appointed Izhar Alam, another killer of hundreds of innocent Sikhs, as constituency in charge of his party for Malerkotla seat; in November 2011 Badal and Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa even honoured him (for killing Sikhs). By doing so Badal has proved that he has nothing to do with Sikh interests or Sikhism and his total behaviour showed as if he was a fanatic RSS activist; but it is amazing that no Akali activist of Badal’s Party has ever objected to this; in fact the members of Badal Akali Dal have become utterly shameless and honourless.

Arresting Sikhs in false cases, persecution and killings

Like his predecessor terrorist chief minister Beant Singh, Badal too persecuted several Sikhs who were opposed to him; several Sikhs were arrested on fake charges of terrorism; weapons and explosives were planted on them; they were tortured; notable among these were Bakhshish Singh Baba, Bagicha Singh, Amarjit Singh Marori and Gobind Kaur (alias Parveen Kaur alias Gurpreet Kaur), who were arrested on the 9th of October 2009, on charges of planning to kill Sirsa Dera chief; again, on the 23rd of July 2010, Pal Singh of France,⁸⁶ Gurmukh Singh, Kulwant Singh Varpal, Jagtar

⁸⁶ Pal Singh was kept in illegal confinement for three days (the police registred his arrest on the 27th of July) and he was brutally tortured; as per his statement before the court: “The moment they brought me into Mal Mandhi, they threw me down and beat me up. I was subjected to electric shocks on many occasions. They pulled my hair and my beard. They also deprived me of sleep. All day the police officers would interrogate me and

Singh, Darshan Singh Dhadi were arrested; the police planted one AK 47, 420 cartridge, 15 kg RDX, detonators, one machine gun on them; warrants were issued for arrest of sixth person Narain Singh Chaura and an award of rupees 5 lakh award was announced for affecting his arrested (he was already on bail in connection with January 2004 Burail Jail break case); another person Sohanjit Singh was arrested on the 7th of March 2011, he was tortured to death in police custody; he succumbed to torture on the 14th of March 2011.

Manpreet Badal parts from Badal

In October 2010 Manpreet Badal,⁸⁷ nephew of Parkash Singh Badal revealed that there was a debt of rupees 35000 crores on the Punjab and his uncle had been telling lies that I.K. Gujral had waived off this debt. When this statement was published there was a great commotion and after a drama of reconciliation and issuance of show cause notice Manpreet was expelled from Akali Dal Badal. Later Manpreet formed Punjab People's Party (PPP); his relative Jagbir Singh (MLA from Jalandhar Cantt), Kushaldeep Singh Dhillon (MLA), Manjinder Singh Kang (MLA from Beas)⁸⁸ and several others joined him; at this Sukhbir Badal began registering criminal cases against the supporters of Manpreet; as a result many of them were compelled to leave him just to save themselves from prosecution and harassment. Manpreet had been able to draw crowds to his gatherings but, as it is usual with people that they do attend such gatherings but don't cast their votes for such persons; hence Manpreet factor is not likely to achieve

at night one or two officers would stay with me to ensure that I did not fall asleep. Whenever I did fall asleep, they would beat me with sticks.”

⁸⁷ Manpreet Badal parted from Parkash Singh Badal due to clash of personal interests; in fact the former himself is not 'Mr Clean'; he too has amassed a lot of wealth though much less than his uncle; he too had been misusing his authority and Government machinery for his vested interests.

⁸⁸ In December 2011, Jagbir and Kang left manpreet and joined Congress Party.

any major success except defeating Badal's candidates in some of the constituencies of the Punjab Assembly.

Plundering the Punjab wealth

Parkash Singh Badal is known for amassing wealth and minting money; as a C.M. his only business was to collect as much money as it was possible for him; he had set prices for getting jobs; he did oblige some of his 'friends' while giving good offices and positions (in fact he did not consider any one as his friend; this was all give and take and pure selfishness and business like; if he found that someone can be used then he would extend hand of friendship to him and when he found that that person would never be capable of facilitating him he would discard him). Similarly he had set prices for getting passed orders on projects; i.e. he should be given a share in the project or a lion's share should be given from profits or a fixed sum must be paid before getting official approval. Thus he had minted billions of rupees from all this. His wife Surinder Kaur helped him in accomplishing this 'duty' and when she was alive she was known as the real C.M.

Badal, and especially his son Sukhbir, had been acting as State Mafia; they plundered all the resources of the state income; they were *de facto* owners of the transport (when Badal became CM for the first time he had just six busses but in 2011 he had more than 175 busses); his busses would get the prime timings in the time table thus reducing the income of the State's Roadways; Sukhbir earned billions of rupees by selling sand and stones from the banks of the Punjab rivers; he would acquire land from farmers, pay billions (hundreds of crores) as price of the land from the State exchequer and then he would give this land on nominal lease to some business concerns getting big-big sum as bribe.

From 2007 to 2012 Sukhbir was sole master of the cable business in the Punjab (he amassed a lot of money from it and banned relay of those TV channels which would criticise his government thus causing full blackout of all anti Badal news).

Badal's property (*there must be much more*):

1. A big house, no 256 in Sector 9 of Chandigarh
2. A big house, no 31 in Sector 5 of Chandigarh
3. 112 acre land in village Badal (Faridkot, Punjab) and a big mansion
4. 300 acre land in Sirsa district (Haryana) with a 25 room mansion
5. 350 acre land in village Chakk Badal (district Ganganagar, Rajasthan)
6. 250 acre land in village Balasar (district Gurgaon, Haryana) and a five-star hotel Orbit Resort.
7. A big house 'Faridkot House' in Chankyapuri, Delhi
8. 175 buses in the name of Orbit Travel. Through this transport Badal has cheated the State Transport for billions of rupees; the revenue which shall flow into the state exchequer went to Badal family.⁸⁹ A petition alleging that several illegal buses were being run by Badal's transport was filed before Lokpal Punjab; on the 15th of September 2011 the Lokpal ordered a probe; the petition is still pending.⁹⁰
10. A big villa in England
11. Shares in many business concerns in various parts of India
12. Several hundred acres of land, mansions and other property in the USA and Australia.
13. Billions of dollars in Swiss banks

Badal has never bothered for the interest of the Punjab; he has only one interest i.e. minting money and (mis)using power for personal interests; once the P.M. openly declared that Badal had never talked to him about any issue of the Punjab and whenever he visited him (P.M.) it was invariable for some personal/family interests.

The elections are due on the 30th of January 2012 and Badal is sure to suffer a crushing defeat.

⁸⁹<http://punjabsarkar.blogspot.com/2011/02/amarinder-blames-badal-for-capturing.html>

⁹⁰ *The Tribune* and *The Indian Express*, dated 16.9.2011

Badal and the SGPC

The SGPC was created to manage the historical Sikh Gurdwaras; later it established some educational institutions, hospitals and other concerns too. Between 1920 and 1925 (selection of the members was held in 1920 and 1923)⁹¹ it was elected by the Sikhs themselves; there was no voting system; and, the criteria of election-cum-selection was a person's character as well as his religious credentials; only those would come forward who were genuine '*sewadars*' (servants) of the Sikh Panth and they would devote time for *sewa* in the Gurdwara: body, mind and spirit and would contribute their *daswandh* (tithe). The 1925 Gurdwara Act was a good step but the system of election of the members on the basis of votes was totally anti-Sikh because it encouraged and promoted group-ism, ilaqa-ism and caste-ism; and, since 1979 use of alcohol, intoxicants, bribe as well as casting of illegal votes, capturing of booths, use of government machinery for unlawful purposes and several other unfair means has become a way of life; and all this has been launched by Parkash Singh Badal who first used it during his power in 1979 and in 2011 it reached its climax.

Earlier, even under Gurdwara Act, only genuine, honest and practicing Sikhs used to come forward to contest elections but since 1996 Badal created another class; he nominated only those who were personally loyal to him and/or would contribute to his purse; so much so that many candidates were not even *pahuldhari* (initiated) Sikhs; some of them got initiation on the day of filing nomination papers and some did it still later; and even after getting *pahul* they continued their

⁹¹ For details see: *Sikh History*, volume 4.

atheist and hedonistic way of life; they were Sikhs of no degree; and, except uncut hair they had nothing of Sikhism in their being.

During 2011 SGPC elections Badal crossed all limits; he enlisted more than 35 lakh illegal votes and assured that on the day of polling all those votes should be polled in favour of his candidates; the media published photographs of non-Sikhs casting their votes; the number of illegal voters was about 60% of the total votes. This time the RSS, Indian Intelligence Agencies and the RSS section controlling the Congress Party of the Centre too collaborated with him and allowed him to make clean sweep of the SGPC elections⁹² because all these anti-Sikh sections were interested that the SGPC should remain in the hands of Badal as it was he only who could embezzle Gurdwara funds, turn the Gurdwaras into centres of profane activities and introduce anti-Sikh practices there.

Badal's choice of the office-bearers of the SGPC

Badal not only nominated irreligious persons to the SGPC he was also very careful in selecting the President and the other office-bearers and his criteria was personally loyalty and commitment to offer SGPC funds for the personal interest of Badal.

For the president-ship of the SGPC his first choice was Jagir Kaur; at that time she was a cabinet minister and he nominated her because she was loyal to him and secondly he had noted that she had been a vocal opponent of Tohra; Jagir Kaur was a school teacher when she became a widow, a young widow with two daughter to look after; luckily she became the 'owner' of a *dera* at Begowal (she inherited it after the death of her father-in-law; had she not been widowed then this *dera*

⁹² Badal bribed several candidates of his opponents; he used all the foul means and 'won' 161 of the 170 seats; later he won back seven rebel winners, thus leaving just three members of opposition in a house of 170 (plus 15 nominations which were all Badal nominees). It is mystifying that anti Badal groups did not create any storm over these fraud elections; nor did they file cases in a court of law; they, in fact, surrendered to fate.

would have been run by her husband). Now she had funds and a good following of Lubana community and this made her participate in politics too; her father-in-law too had had a very active political life; during the period of militancy she sided with the militants and Simranjeet Singh Maan but in 1995 she was allured to power and she joined Badal group and Badal group nominated her to the SGPC and also for the Punjab Assembly, and still further, she was given berth in cabinet. In 1998 she had some minor clashes with Tohra but during these incidents she had exhibited her unembarrassed loquacity and aggressive attitude; she irritated Tohra and this pleased Badal; and, in 1999 when Badal removed Tohra from the presidency of the SGPC he nominated Jagir Kaur to this office.

During her presidency she behaved as an in-charge of a bigger *dera* and misused this office like anything; she illegally appointed 450 new employees⁹³ (most of them were either Lubanas or from her own constituency or had been recommended by Badal); further she promoted several employees to senior posts; and within a month there were 16 employees who and the status of Secretary, Additional Secretary or Assistant Secretary. In fact Jagir Kaur did not have any knowledge of the day-to-day functioning of the SGPC; she was all dependants upon her PA Harjit Singh (who belonged to her Lubana *biradari*/brotherhood) as well as Secretary Kulwant Singh⁹⁴ who had revealed all loopholes to Badal which made removal of Tohra easier; hence Kulwant

⁹³In July 2000 the Gurdwara Judicial Commission stopped salaries of these employees and ordered that new employees should be appointed through proper procedure (advertising the post, holding interview and keeping all records).

⁹⁴ Later Kulwant Singh wrote a book '*1984 Shiromani Committee nun Grehan*' (literally: SGPC – an eclipse on the SGPC); this book is full of miss-statements and narration of many events are an expression of his anger, hatred and prejudices.

Singh⁹⁵ had a bigger say; besides these two, Harbeant Singh⁹⁶ Secretary of the Dharam Parchar Committee, too was her favourite.

Jagir Kaur used the funds of the SGPC lavishly; when she took over, the SGPC had millions of rupees in fixed deposits; she squandered all this money for useless grants and aids; soon all the funds of the SGPC stood exhausted and at one stage there was not enough money to pay salaries of the staff. During this period there was also a lot of corruption in the SGPC funds; earlier period between 1962 and 1972 (period of Fateh Singh Channan Singh) was known as the worst period but Jagir Kaur put that into shame and shade;⁹⁷ the SGPC employees used to call her ‘mother of corruption’. Jagir Kaur remained in this office up to 29th of November 2000; during this period she had to pass through major crisis twice: once from January to March 2000 when she had to fight a battle against Giani Puran Singh (caretaker Akal Takht) and second time in April 2000 when her daughter Harpreet Kaur died in mysterious circumstances. In 2000, Badal did not nominate her because she had been charged with the crime of ‘causing death of her daughter.’⁹⁸

In November 2000 Badal had to nominate Jagdev Singh Talwandi in order to thwart Tohra group’s intention to field him (Talwandi) as their candidate against Badal’s nominee. Talwandi did not use even a single penny for himself

⁹⁵ After the retirement of Kulwant Singh Jagir Kaur appointed Dr Gurbachan Singh Bachan, who was a friend of her brother Nirmal Singh, as the Secretary of the SGPC.

⁹⁶ Harbeant was a corrupt person; he had not passed even 10th grade and he had got job in the SGPC by submitting fake certificate; when Tohra became president again in 2003 he charge-sheeted him for getting appointment by submitting fake documents and dismissed him; later, after the death of Tohra Jagir Kaur re-instated him towards the end of 2004; this is how unlawful activities are being carried on in the SGPC.

⁹⁷ Later, Jagir Kaur’s mismanagement and corruption was surpassed by Awtar Singh Makkar who remained in this office from 23rd of November 2005 to 2011 (he is still holding this office).

⁹⁸ For details see pages 87-90 of this book).

but he allowed Badal to misuse the SGPC funds; on the 27th of May Tohra alleged that Talwandi had given 2.2 million rupees to Badal from the SGPC funds; in fact Talwandi had no choice; at that time his son Ranjit Singh was under trial in a murder case and he wanted Badal's help in influencing the Judge for his son's acquittal.

The next choice of Badal for SGPC presidency was Kirpal Singh Badungar who got this office on the 27th of November 2001; he remained in this office till 20th of July 2003 when he had to hand over the power to Tohra. Badungar was a weak person; he had no backbone; he belonged to Ghumiar *biradari*, a backward class, and had no public following; his only qualification was extreme loyalty for Badal; hence the latter replaced Jagir Kaur with Badungar with a hope that he (Badal) will run the SGPC with a remote control; and the same happened. Badungar was so weak that he would succumb to any pressure; once when he decided to appoint Harjinder Singh Dilgeer as the Secretary of the SGPC in April 2002, Harbeant Singh brought eight members of the SGPC and got himself appointed as Secretary; once when he needed the help of Paramraj Umranangal SSP Patiala, he (Badungar) went to Umranangal's house and handed over appointment letter for the job of a teacher to his brother's wife; Badungar spent the whole of his term as such and he could take no decision of himself; hence he was just a formal president of the SGPC. On the 13th of June 2003 Tohra and Badal were united again and under this agreement the presidency of the SGPC had to be handed over to Tohra; this time Badungar tried to be smart; he used dilly-dallying tactics and prolonged the process of shifting of the guards for 43 days thus annoying Tohra and Badal both; it was one of the reasons that Badal did not nominate Badungar for the presidency of the SGPC after the death of Tohra.

After the death of Tohra Alwinderpal Singh Pakhoke became officiating president of the SGPC; he remained in this seat from 1st of April 2004 to 22nd of September; during this period he surpassed every predecessor in corruption and

mismanagement; he too appointed several relatives and acquaintances to different posts in the SGPC (Gurdwara Judicial Commission had to interfere again to cancel these appointments). Jagir Kaur became the president of the SGPC again on the 23rd of September 2004 and remained in this office up to 22nd of November 2005, to be replaced by Awtar Singh Makkar.

Awtar Singh Makkar surpassed all the presidents in mismanagement of the affairs of the SGPC; he had no guts, no backbone and he had been given this office to counteract the propaganda that the Badal group discriminated against the non-Jatts and especially the Khatri-Arora *biradari*; Badal wanted to get support of this *biradari* to wrest control of Delhi Gurdwaras from Paramjit Singh Sarna who belonged this *biradari*. Makkar, like Badungar, acted as per instructions from Badal and his son Sukhbir; for him orders from both father and son were like divine edicts and he would not even suggest something different. During the reign of Makkar the SGPC, the Darbar Sahib and the Gurdwara platform functioned as per the will of the Udasi-Nirmala Chowk Mehta Dera which guided Badal regarding code of conduct, practices and functioning of the Gurdwaras and other Sikh institutions. Today Darbar Sahib seems more of a temple than a Gurdwara; secondly all the *granthis* of Darbar Sahib, Akal Takht and most of the other Gurdwaras are the student/associates of Chowk Mehta Dera.

The Nanakshahi calendar

In 1997 Pal Singh Purewal,⁹⁹ a man associated with engineering job prepared a ‘calendar’; he claimed that his ‘calendar’ was based on Guru Granth Sahib. In fact this was not based on Guru Granth Sahib but was rather in contravention of the Sikh Rahitmaryada approved in the name of Akal Takht Sahib in 1945; Purewal’s calendar, which was

⁹⁹ At that time he was a clean shaven person; and to establish his credibility he stopped cutting his hair.

given a wrong name as ‘Nanakshahi Calendar’,¹⁰⁰ promoted celebration of *sangrand*,¹⁰¹ *massiya*, *pooranmaashi* and other Hindus’ so-called holy/auspicious days; besides it was not at all scientific in nature and thirdly it created confusion about historical dates. This ‘calendar’ had been mooted and promoted through a Chandigarh based ‘Institute of Sikh Studies’ (it was no ‘institute’ but an organisation of about a dozen retired officers) Kharak Singh Maan was the main person behind this ‘Institute’ and he was a sycophant of Gurcharan Singh Tohra hence he could get this calendar accepted. Tohra published this calendar in 1998 and released it to public for opinion but before it could be published one day Harjinder Singh Dilgeer visited Amritsar and went to see Tohra and Sukhdev Singh Bhaur (respectively President and acting Presidents of the SGPC); they presented that calendar to Dr Dilgeer who noticed the word *sangrand* and objected to it; as a result the word *sangrand* was replaced by ‘*aarambhata*’ (literally: beginning or the first day of month). When it was studied by various sections of Sikh society several objections were raised; Bhai Ranjit Singh called a meeting of different organisations and the Sikh elite on the 25th of January 1999 and this meeting resolved that it should not be implemented and the issue should be postponed for discussion till the celebration of the tercentenary of Khalsa. After this Ranjit Singh was removed from the post of caretaker of Akal Takht; he was replaced by Puran Singh who stopped implementation of this calendar and formed a seven member Committee with Santokh Singh (son of Jathedar Achhar Singh as its Convener); most of the members of this Committee opposed implementation of this ‘calendar’ but supported that the Sikhs should have a ‘calendar’ of their own.

¹⁰⁰ For an analysis of this Calendar, see the article ‘*Nanakshahi Calendar di asliyat*’ in the book *Nanakshahi Calendar* by Dr Harjinder Singh Dilgeer, published in 2010.

¹⁰¹ Of course it created new *sangrands*; thus adding to further confusion.

At that time Jagir Kaur was the President of the SGPC; somehow she came under the influence of the supporters of this 'calendar'; on the 16th of January 2000 she added four more names to the 7 member 'Calendar Committee.' On one hand Jagir Kaur formed this Committee and on the other hand its Executive passed a resolution to implement it; it indicated that whatever be the decision of the 'Calendar Committee' Jagir Kaur wanted to implement it. Puran Singh criticised Jagir Kaur for passing the resolution; this angered Jagir Kaur and during this period of confusion someone spread rumours that Puran Singh will be removed as caretaker of Akal Takht; at that time the latter had gone to participate in a function to be held at Nander; he got this news on the 25th of January 2000 when he was near the town of Gunna (in Madhya Pradesh); he broke his journey and faxed a letter to the SGPC and the media 'excommunicating' Jagir Kaur from Panth; she was indicted for 'disobeying orders from Akal Takht'; she, as well as the ten members of the Executive of the SGPC who had signed the resolution to implement the 'calendar' were ordered to appear at Akal Takht.

Jagir Kaur refused to bother for Puran Singh's so-called '*hukamnama*' (it was sarcastically known as 'fax-nama' because it had been sent by fax). On the 1st of February 2000 Badal called a meeting of the Executive of the SGPC; in this meeting Badal suggested that she should present herself before Puran Singh and we would ask him to give minor punishment but she refused; however, the rest ten members of the Executive of the SGPC whom Puran Singh had 'summoned' appeared before him on the 2nd of February 2000; the latter gave them minor punishment and cleared them of 'disobedience' of the 'order from Akal Takht.' By this time Jagir Kaur disappeared from the scene in the name of self-imposed exile; after about four weeks, on the 28th of February she visited Amritsar; she had been convinced to appear before Puran Singh but when she got clue that he was planning to grant her very tough punishment she changed her mind; she went to Akal Takht where she was presented '*sirpao*' by

Bhagwan Singh (head *granthi* Akal Takht) but did not appear before Puran Singh; it was double defiance and an open challenge to the latter; in between mediators tried to make peace between Puran Singh and Jagir Kaur; finally the former agreed that she should appear before him and he would give her the same 'punishment' that he had given to the other ten members of the Executive on the 2nd of February. Jagir Kaur was to appear before five priests (Puran Singh, Manjit Singh Kesgarh, Kewal Singh Talwandi Sabo and two more *granthis* of Akal Takht and Darbar Sahib) at Akal Takht on the 12th of March 2000 at 11 a.m.; by this time Mangal Singh Satlani had influenced Puran Singh and the latter had agreed to give her five months long punishment; Jagir Kaur got clue of this conspiracy hence on the said date and time she did not reach Akal Takht; however she went to the Takht at 12.15 a.m. made obeisance and went to the office of the SGPC; when Puran Singh came to know about this he became further angry; now he 'excommunicated' Bhagwan Singh, Manjit Singh and Kewal Singh, the three *granthis* as well as Jaswinder Singh and Pritam Singh Bhatia, the two members of the Executive of the SGPC. Jagir Kaur still did not bother and this drama continued till the 28th of March; on this day a meeting of the Executive of the SGPC was held at Amritsar; someone spread a rumour that Jagir Kaur was going to remove Puran Singh from his post; when this came to the knowledge of Puran Singh he went to the Akal Takht and proclaimed 'excommunication' of six members of the Executive of the SGPC who had reached Amritsar to attend the meeting; but at the same time someone told him that there were only four members in the meeting then he deleted two names and 'excommunicated' Raghujit Singh Virk, Gural Singh Gora, Satnam Singh Bhai Rupa and Pritam Singh Bhatia. In fact there was no move to remove Puran Singh but when the news of 'excommunication' of the members of the Executive of the SGPC reached them they passed a resolution removing Puran Singh as caretaker of Akal Takht and appointed Joginder Singh Vedanti in his place.

The issue of calendar however remained unsolved. Again, the Calendar Committee held meetings; final meeting was held on the 28th of March 2003; in this meeting several speakers rejected the calendar; some speakers suggested major amendments; it was resolved that the suggestions shall be considered but it was not done and the very next day a new calendar was printed and released and implemented the following day on the 29th of March 2003; hence it was forced on the Panth. In 2010 it came under attack from the Bhindran-Mehta Jatha and other *dereedaars*; and Badal succumbed to their pressure and finally on the 4th of January 2010, Gurbachan Singh modified it in such a way that it became a sort of copy of Bikrami calendar.

World Heritage Status for Darbar Sahib and ‘dossier’ conspiracy

The ‘1972 World Heritage Convention’ defines the kind of natural or cultural sites which can be considered for inscription on the World Heritage List; this list includes 936 properties forming part of the cultural and natural heritage which the World Heritage Committee considers as having outstanding universal value; these include 725 cultural, 183 natural and 28 mixed properties in 153 countries. In 2004 the issue of adding Darbar Sahib to this list was discussed; but this

became controversial due to two points: 1. the implications of granting such a status and 2. the text of the 'dossier' presented to the UNESCO to seek such a status.

This move had been begun by a careerist lady Gurmit Roy (a young Punjabi girl who is said to have married an old aged photographer Raghu Roy for boosting her career) who first befriended Kiranjot Kaur, a member of the SGPC, and then convinced the president of the SGPC to sanction her the project to prepare a 'dossier' about the Darbar Sahib to be submitted to the UNESCO for inclusion of the Darbar Sahib in the World Heritage List; she demanded forty lakh rupees to prepare this dossier; it is remarkable that no one questioned this amount; the SGPC itself had commissioned preparation of several books and documents and Kiranjot Kaur (a member of Executive of the SGPC) who is a member of the GN Univeristy Senate and Kirpal Singh Badungar, (president SGPC) who himself had been a teacher and was also a writer, knew the cost of preparation of a dossier; still this amount was gladly agreed; the SGPC was to pay 20 lakh rupees and the rest was to be paid by a Sikh family from Canada; some people however, alleged that Kiranjot Kaur, Kirpal Singh and/or some other persons associated with project had been given a share of this amount of 40 lakh rupees.

By the summer of 2004 the Sikh intelligentsia had come to know about the move, however it did not know about the dossier; this dossier had been prepared on behalf of the SGPC (it had formed a Committee of three persons which was to prepare/advice about the dossier but, it was later claimed that Gurmit Roy¹⁰² did not bother to get their approval) and the SGPC sent this dossier to the UNESCO. Somehow the material presented in the dossier was leaked¹⁰³ and it included a lot of

¹⁰² Gurmit Roy is a mediocre journalist; she has no qualification or even knowledge of Sikh religion of Sikh history (or any other religion or history); in spite of this Kiranjot Kaur and Kirpal Singh allowed her to represent the SGPC and prepare a document about Sikhism on its behalf.

¹⁰³ It was through the efforts of Dr Jasdev Singh Rai (England) and Hardip Singh (member SGPC from Mohali).

distortion of Sikh history and philosophy; this resulted into wide condemnation of the SGPC, especially Kiranjot Kaur and Kirpal Singh.¹⁰⁴

This project had the blessing of the Indian Government too;¹⁰⁵ on the 17th of August 2004, Prof. Enamul Haque, the one-man commission on behalf of the UNESCO, visited Darbar Sahib to assess the claim, based on historical, cultural and architectural factors, and forward his recommendation to the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)/ UNESCO. Here, he came to know that several Sikhs were opposed to enlisting Darbar Sahib in World Heritage List; hence he asked the SGPC to give clarification on this point; by this time it had sent copies of the dossier to two some Sikh intellectuals who had rejected this dossier and dubbed it as anti-Sikh;¹⁰⁶ however Kiranjot Kaur, who had coordinated preparation of the voluminous document, said “at least six members of the executive body were the same who had earlier passed the dossier during the president-ship of Mr Kirpal Singh Badungar. She said it was shocking that certain persons, close to SGPC chief, had described the dossier as ‘deep-rooted conspiracy’ to denigrate Sikhism. She said Mr Badungar should come out openly in favour of the dossier as it was he who had given the ‘go-ahead’ to the document.” The SGPC’s general secretary Sukhdev Singh Bhaur too supported Kiranjot Kaur but suggested that the required amendments should be made in the dossier.¹⁰⁷ But the defence presented by Kiranjot

¹⁰⁴ BBC London’s debate on this issue, dated 17.9.2004.

¹⁰⁵ Daily *Hindu*, dated 3.8.2004

¹⁰⁶ The other issue that whether the UNESCO or its representatives in India will have any right to interfere in the building of Darbar Sahib, draft some protocol for the visitors, monitor installations in and around Darbar Sahib as well as its management too was discussed but it became a secondary issue because the dossier itself had created great havoc; the SGPC leader were not capable of realising that grant of the new status would have involved the control of the Indian Government in the management of the infra-structure of the building of Darbar Sahib.

¹⁰⁷ *The Tribune*, dated 20.4.2005, report by Varinder Singh Walia and Rashmi Talwar.

Kaur and Sukhdev Singh Bhaur could not get support from any Sikh intellectual hence, on the 21st of April 2005, the SGPC not only withdrew the dossier but also withdrew application seeking grant of heritage status for Darbar Sahib.¹⁰⁸ In this ‘drama’ the only person top benefit was Gurmit Roy who earned 40 lakh rupees for preparing that poor dossier which was in fact a conspiracy to distort the Sikh history and philosophy; the SGPC leadership did not realise that the said document was going to become a document prepared by the SGPC (and not Gurmit Roy). This is not just an isolated instance; the SGPC has repeated such performance several times prior to and after this drama of dossier (Pal Singh Purewal’s calendar is one of these).

Badal implements RSS agenda in the S.G.P.C.

Planning to install Guru Granth Sahib in temples and Hindu idols in Gurdwaras

After the exit of Tohra from Badal Akali Dal in 1999, the RSS, the BJP and their sister organisations like Bajrang Brigade, Shiv Sena and Vishav Hindu Prishad etc planned to attack through another soft target; In the last week of December 2000 these organisations announced that they would arrange *akhand path* of Guru Granth Sahib in the temples and celebrate Gurburabs there; the purpose behind this was to bring the Sikhs into the temples where idols of fictitious Hindu gods and goddesses were worshipped. The Sikh elite gave no importance to this statement; the fanatic Hindus took it otherwise; so much so that Balramji Dass Tandon, a senior minister in the Badal Government, became so bold and vocal that on the 1st of January 2001 he issued a statement saying

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*; and also *The Tribune* dated 22.4.2005

that the *Ramayana* had been recited in all the Sikh shrines since long. A very large number of Sikh leaders, intellectuals and other elite condemned Tandon's statement, notable among them were Simranjeet Singh Maan and Professor Darshan Singh Ragi, but none of the leaders or the activists of Badal Akali Dal, except Jagdev Singh Talwandi, dared say even a single word. On the other hand, under directions from Badal, Sukhdev Dhindsa, rather advised the Sikhs by saying 'the Sikh organisations and the intellectuals should avoid unnecessary debate.' The Sikhs' reactions compelled the fanatic Hindus to issue statement that they won't install Guru Granth Sahib in temples. Reacting to all this, Buta Singh issued a statement on the 14th of January 2001, and alleged that the RSS was planning to create trouble in the Punjab. The alertness of the Sikh elite and their reactions and especially the statement by Buta Singh compelled the leaders of RSS to issue a statement acknowledging independent identity of the Sikh religion; such a statement, issued on the 10th of January 2001 was signed by M.G. Vaidya, Satya Narain Bansal and R.P. Singh.

Thus the RSS and other fanatic Hindu groups' planning to convert the Gurdwaras into temples was thwarted; and, on the other hand an anti-RSS campaign was launched by the Sikh missionaries; soon this campaign gained impetus and during the next two years several missionary conferences were arranged in the Punjab; its culmination was the Mohali Convention of October 2003.

Singing of *Vande matram* in SGPC schools

In August-September 2006 the RSS element in the Congress Party used another fanatic card by celebrating 125 year celebration of Bankim Chander Chattopadhyay's poem '*vande matram*' (in Bengali language)¹⁰⁹ and tried to present it as so-called 'national song'; this is, in fact, just another religious Hindu song which promotes worship of '*durga*

¹⁰⁹ This is a poem from Bankim Chander Chattopadhyay's novel *Anandmath*, written in 1882; it is a hymn to Durga, an imaginary Hindu goddess.

maata’ (an imaginary Hindu goddess); this is in contradiction with Sikhism as well as Islam and other religions which don’t worship idols. To quote Rabindernath Tagore: “*The core of Vande Mataram is a hymn to goddess Durga: this is so plain that there can be no debate about it. Of course Bankimchandra does show Durga to be inseparably united with Bengal in the end, but no Mussulman can be expected patriotically to worship the ten-handed deity as 'Swadesh' [the nation]. This year many of the special [Durga] Puja numbers of our magazines have quoted verses from Vande Mataram—prove that the editors take the song to be a hymn to Durga. The novel Anandamath is a work of literature, and so the song is appropriate in it. But Parliament is a place of union for all religious groups, and there the song cannot be appropriate. When Bengali Mussulmans show signs of stubborn fanaticism, we regard these as intolerable. When we too copy them and make unreasonable demands, it will be self-defeating*” (from a letter by Tagore to Subash Chander Bose in 1937).

On August 22, 2006, there was a row in the Lok Sabha (the lower house of the Indian Parliament) over whether singing of *Vande Mataram* in schools should be made mandatory. The ruling United Progressive Alliance (UPA) coalition and Opposition members debated the Government's stance that singing the national song *Vande Mataram* on the 7th of September 2006, to mark the 125th year celebration of its creation should be voluntary. This led to the House's being adjourned twice. Human Resources Development Minister Arjun Singh noted that it was not binding on citizens to sing the song. Arjun Singh had earlier asked all state governments to ensure that the first two stanzas of the song were sung in all schools on that day. Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) Deputy Leader V. K. Malhotra wanted the Government to clarify whether singing the national song on the 7th of September in schools was mandatory or not. On the 28th of August, targeting the BJP, Congress spokesman Abhishek Singhvi said that in 1998 when Atal Behari Vajpayee of the BJP was the Prime Minister, the BJP supported a similar circular issued by the Uttar Pradesh government to make the recitation compulsory but Vajpayee had then clarified that it was not necessary to make it compulsory.

The Muslims, Christians and Sikhs dubbed this song as non-secular; SGPC president Awtar Singh Makkar declared that the Sikhs will not sing *Vande Mataram* in the schools and institutions on its centenary on the 7th of September 2006; he said that “*imposing a song that reflected just one religion was bound to hurt the sentiments of the Muslims, Sikhs, Christians and other religious minorities*”.¹¹⁰ The Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee too declared the singing of *Vande Mataram* against Sikh tenants as the Sikhs sought *sarbat da bhala* (universal welfare) and did not believe in *devi* (goddess). Shiromani Akali Dal (Amritsar), led by former MP Simranjit Singh Mann, had also announced that Akali leaders would go to all schools in Punjab to ensure that no student is forced to sing *Vande Mataram*.¹¹¹ But the same evening the RSS headquarter ordered Badal to ensure that Makkar should reverse his decision and the latter had to allow singing of *Vande Mataram* in a couple of schools of the SGPC.

¹¹⁰ *The Tribune*, dated 6.9.2006

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

Badal & the Arya Samaj

Badal promotes martyr Bhagat Singh

Bhagat Singh, Shivram Rajguru and Sukhdev Thapar¹¹² had been hanged on the 23rd of March 1931 for killing police officers John Saunders (Assistant S.P.) and Channan Singh Head Constable; in fact they wanted to kill James A. Scott, the S.P. who had ordered cane-charge on the crowd gathered at Lahore, on the 30th of October, to protest against the visit of the Simon Commission; the police action left some Punjabi leaders injured; Lal Lajpat Rai, who was also present there, was not even slightly injured; later, Lala died of heart attack on the 19th of November; and, several months after his death the Arya Samaj leaders began propaganda that the Lala had died of injuries incurred by him due to police attack; this was a blatant lie but the Arya Samaj propaganda succeeded in fooling simple people. Bhagat Singh, an Arya Samajit activist, who had militant ideas, decided to 'avenge' Lala's death (because Lala was a leader of the Arya Samaj) and planned to kill J.A. Scott; however, on the 17th of December 1928, he and his companions killed Saunders by mistake and constable Channan Singh, when he tried to stop them. At first they could not be

¹¹² Jai Gopal and Chander Sheikhar too were with them in execution of this action but Jai Gopal had turned approver and Chander Sheikhar Azad was killed on the 27th of February 1931, in a battle with the police.

apprehended but later, on the 8th of April 1929, when they exploded a bomb in the Central Legislative Assembly, he and his companion Batukeshwar Dutt¹¹³ were arrested; both were given life term for the explosion of bomb; Bhagat Singh was also tried for murder of Saunders and was given death sentence for this (Bhagat Singh could not have been sentenced in the case of murder of Saunders had he not carried his pistol with him; it was the same pistol with Saunders had been killed; and this solved the mystery of the killing of Saunders).¹¹⁴

Bhagat Singh belonged to Arya Samaj; his father Swarn Singh and his uncle Ajit Singh had embraced Arya Samaj and they used to call themselves Hindu Aryas; however, like Lal Lajpat Rai and Kewal Kishan Singh Deol (father of Indian film actor Dharmendra) the parents of Bhagat Singh too continued having unshorn hair and turbans. Bhagat Singh was a product of militant wing of Arya Samaj; Lala Lajpat Rai was a leader of the Arya Samaj; and all of them were proud of being Hindus.

After 1947 the RSS and the Arya Samaj and other Hindu fundamentalists began promoting Hindu martyrs and leaders; Bhagat Singh, whom the leftist had been presenting as their role model and ideologist, suddenly became hero of the BJP which used him as their election card with an intention to

¹¹³ Batukeshwar Dutt was sent to Cellular Jail, Andemans; he was released in 1938; he died in penury on the 20th of July 1955; no body, neither the Government of India nor Communists/Socialists nor RSS or Arya Samaj gave him any recognition.

¹¹⁴ This, however, proves that Bhagat Singh was not an intelligent person; he had gone to the Central Assembly hall for exploding bomb to draw attention of the British as well as the world community; he had no plan to use violence – then why did he carry a revolver – and especially that revolver with which he had killed a person? Had he not taken the revolver no one would have known as to who killed Saunders; and, if he was not afraid of being charged for Saunderson's murder then why did he run from Lahore after murdering him? Those who present him as an intellectual have no answer to this; in fact, the articles published in his name are fake ones; he did not write anything of such type; he was not an ideologist; he was a revolutionary.

get the votes of the youth; the Arya Samaj element in the Congress Party promoted him because he belonged to their religion (Arya Samajists consider themselves as 'pure Aryas/Hindus' and dub other Hindus as *malechh* i.e. the polluted ones). Hence, with the passage of time Communist, BJP, Arya Samaj began presenting Bhagat Singh as the 'greatest martyr' of India; they belittled and degraded even Prithviraj Chauhan, Shivaji, Rana Partap, Rani Jhansi, Tanya Tope, Mangal Pandey and other Hindu warriors who had played much more important role as compared to Bhagat Singh; of course the Hindus were not expected to promote Hyder Ali, Tipu Sultan, Bahadur Shah Zafar because they were Muslims; the Hindus hated Banda Singh Bahadur¹¹⁵ who had achieved first major success in freeing this land from foreign (Mughal) usurpers especially when the Rajputs had accepted subjugation of the Mughals (the victory of Samana in 1709 and then Sirhind in 1710 were the first victories for freedom; then the Hindus called him Mukta i.e. 'liberator'); they did not like dozens of Ghadr martyrs (including young Kartar Singh Sarabha) and the Babar Akalis because they were Sikhs (their sacrifices and role was much higher than Bhagat Singh); the Arya Samajists did not like Madan Lal Dhingra, Rajguru and Sukhdev because they were Punjabis; the Hindu chauvinists accepted Bhagat Singh because he was an Arya Samajist; that is why even his martyr companions Rajguru and Sukhdev were not given the same respect and honour because they were just revolutionaries and not Arya Samajists.

When Badal joined the RSS he surrendered his mind, body and spirit to them; he obeyed the RSS (the RSS element rules the Congress Party, the BJP, the Arya Samaj) command as 'Divine edicts'; hence on the 3rd of September 2007 he asked the Prime Minister to name a Central University after Bhagat Singh; he revealed that he had already written a letter

¹¹⁵ Badal did not name any district after Banda Singh Bahadur; no airport was named after him; no university was named after him; Bhagat Singh is not 1/1000th of Banda Singh, one of the greatest heroes of the world history.

to the Prime Minister in this regard; again on the 27th of September 2008, when they celebrated Bhagat Singh's 101st birthday, Badal, obeying the orders from the RSS, declared that Nawanshahar be called Bhagat Singh Nagar and the Mohali airport be named Bhagat Singh Airport; several other institutions were named after Bhagat Singh;¹¹⁶ thus an Arya Samajist martyr was promoted as next to God. Badal even declared Bhagat Singh as *shaheed-i-aaazam* (supreme-most martyr); and by declaring this Badal demoted and degraded even Guru Arjan and Guru Tegh Bahadur (Badal did not name any district after any Guru-martyr). This was also gross insult to hundreds of great martyrs who had been belittled, whose sacrifices had been declared inferior, who had been placed much lower to one person; this was (is) rape of history, discrimination with other martyrs's sacrifices and an insult to humanity; this is chauvinism, high-handedness, monster mentality and misuse of power. Nobody would deny that Bhagat Singh was a martyr; he was a martyr like other hundreds of martyrs (several of them much 'greater' than him) and he should have been given the same status as was given to others, or the others too should have been given same promotion; distinguishing and discriminating between one and another martyr is rape of justice.

¹¹⁶ Again, in 2011 Badal started 'Shaheed-i-aazam Bhagat Singh Punjab Games'.

Neo-role of the clergies in Sikhism & Insult to Akal Takht

In Sikhism, there is no concept of clergy or priest or (so-called) '*Jathedar Akal Takht*';¹¹⁷ this designation was adopted for the leader of the *jatha* which was selected to protect the building of and perform caretaking services at Akal Takht on the 12th of October 1920.¹¹⁸ In 1979, Tohra and Talwandi tried to use this to pressurise Badal to share fruits of state power with them. The latest use of the institution of Akal Takht began on the 26th of January 1986 when a group of militants took control of the building of Akal Takht and appointed Jasbir Singh Rode as '*Jathedar*'; their sole purpose was to get him released from jail; they could not achieve it but in 1988 the Government of India released him after he agreed to collaborate with the regime; however, he was exposed within days and the Akalis dismissed him from this 'office'. Later, Tohra appointed Ranjit Singh so that Jasbir Singh may not be able to oppose his nomination, as the former was also a militant; as Ranjit Singh was in jail, Manjit Singh, a yes man of Tohra was brought in as acting caretaker. Manjit Singh proved to be just a show-boy of Tohra, and, as a person he functioned as a weak and petty priest; in the meanwhile Ranjit Singh had been freed and Manjit Singh was reverted to his former seat in Anandpur Sahib (later Manjit Singh was unceremoniously and insultingly dismissed even from Anandpur Sahib).

¹¹⁷ For comprehensive information about the concept of Akal Takht, read: *Akal Takht Sahib (Concept & Role)* by Harjinder Singh Dilgeer, published in 2011.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

Ranjit Singh used this newly created office for just for a little over than two years; during his tenure he proved to be a high-headed person; he too was dismissed unceremoniously on the 10th of February; this meeting appointed Giani Mohan Singh in place of Ranjit Singh; but, under pressure from his son Mohan Singh refused to accept it; and the Executive member, which were still sitting in Circuit House Amritsar, changed the proceedings of the Executive and appointed Giani Puran Singh as caretaker of Akal Takht. After taking over the charge as caretaker of Akal Takht, Puran Singh's first act was to withdraw *hukamnama* banning action against Tohra; as a result, Tohra was removed from his office on the 17th of March 1999; he was replaced by Jagir Kaur.

Drama of the 'excommunication' of Jagir Kaur

Badal had appointed Puran Singh just to remove Tohra and when his mission was accomplished he did not need him (Puran Singh). In January 2001, the issue of Pal Singh Purewal's calendar became an apple of discord between the *deras* and the S.G.P.C.; Puran Singh sided with the *deredaars* and tried to block the implementation of this calendar; on the other hand Jagir Kaur rushed to implement it; she actually celebrated birthday of Guru Gobind Singh on the 5th of January 2001 (in line with Purewal's calendar) instead of 14th of January 2001 (as per the Bikrami calendar); at this, Puran Singh summoned Jagir Kaur at Akal Takht. In the meanwhile Puran Singh went to Madhya Pradesh to participate in a function; when he was at Guna city he got rumour that Jagir Kaur was planning to remove him; hence, before she could take any action against him, he sent a fax to a newspaper, 'excommunicating' Jagir Kaur from Panth. It was followed by a long drama to convince her to appear before him and apologise; in fact she had been assured that he will give her 'token' punishment but when she learnt that he was going to impose very heavy punishment on her, she retracted and refused to surrender. Finally, her will prevailed and Puran

Singh was removed from his office on the 28th of March 2000; Joginder Singh Vedanti was appointed in his place.

Joginder Singh Vedanti and Akal Takht

Joginder Singh Vedanti was a weak person; he did not have any back and was fully dependent upon the president of the S.G.P.C.; hence he always acted as a loyal person. When Jagir Kaur's pregnant daughter died in mysterious circumstances, he gave her his full support (but due to public pressure Badal had to replace her by Jagdev Singh Talwandi).

Vedanti tries to help a rapist: In 2002, Shiromani Khalsa Panchayat submitted an application to Joginder Singh Vedanti alleging rape of a girl by Dhanwant Singh, a preacher from Palli Jhikki (near Nawanshahar); on the 10th of May 2002, Vedanti gave minor punishment¹¹⁹ to him (Dhanwant Singh) and also punished those who had made the petition (in fact Vedanti's brother-in-law cum P.A. Prithipal Singh Sandhu had accepted rupees seventy thousand as bribe from Dhanwant Singh). The Khalsa Panchayat reacted to it and demanded Vedanti's resignation; it also announced that it will stage a *dharna* outside the office of the S.G.P.C. On the 22nd of February 2003, when the supporters of Khalsa Panchayat reached near the office of the S.G.P.C., leaders and workers of Badal group headed by Jaswinder Singh Advocate, Alwinderpal Singh Pakkhone, Rajinder Singh Mehta, Gurcharan Singh Grewal, Sarchand Singh attacked them and wounded several of them; the police (by this time Captain Amarinder Singh had been sworn as the CM) watched it as silent spectators and later arrested even the victims (the leaders of Khalsa Panchayat); they were released on bail on the 8th of March 2003. Joginder Singh Vedanti helped not only Dhanwant Singh but also shielded Daljit Chicago, Maan Singh

¹¹⁹ Later, on the 29th of August 2002, the police arrested Dhanwant Singh in this case, and, on the 29th of January 2004 he was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment by a court of law.

Pehowa, Amar Singh Barundi, all of these were known as licentious and immoral *saadh*.¹²⁰

Sikh women and religious services in Darbar Sahib:

During this period, the issue of allowing Sikh women to perform religious services and *keertan* at Darbar Sahib also came up; all the *dera* groups opposed women whereas the missionaries and the intellectuals supported them; even Jagir Kaur (former President of the S.G.P.C.) and Manjit Singh (*granthi* Kesgarh, Anandpur Sahib) supported it; Manjit Singh even issued a statement that he had allowed the same when he was the acting caretaker of Akal Takht. At this, Kirpal Singh Badungar, the then president of the S.G.P.C., took up an old case against Manjit Singh and removed him on the allegations of moral turpitude.¹²¹ The issue of Sikh women's rights remained very active between January 2003 and August 2004.

Gurbakhsh Singh Kala Afghana:

Gurbakhsh Singh Kala Afghana was a former policeman; during his job he had been arrested and sentenced on charges of corruption; but before he could be sent to jail he absconded and reached Canada. Gurbakhsh Singh had published some good books on Sikh philosophy. One of his books, on *Gurbilas Patsahi Chhevin*, was extremely critical of Joginder Singh Vedanti, caretaker of Akal Takht; and he (Vedanti) was extremely angry at him. It was either a manoeuvring by Vedanti, or of their own, the Sikh Students federation (Mehta-Chawla group) was the first to raise

¹²⁰ Jasbir Rode too shielded and befriended Maan Singh Pehowa in spite of his bad reputation; Jasbir supported other such *saadhs* too (Hardip Singh Dibdiba, *op. cit.*, pp 144-147).

¹²¹ In fact there was no such formal complaint against Manjit Singh but Kirpal Singh Badungar used a 1999 resolution of the S.G.P.C. in which a Committee had been formed to investigate the role of Manjit Singh and Kewal Singh; Kewal Singh had already resigned his post following the issuance of warrants of his arrest on allegations of his abetment in the case of suicide by his daughter-in-law; and, now, Manjit Singh was removed unceremoniously. Manjit Singh tried to get help from Vedanti but the latter did not have nerves to help him.

objections against Kala Afghana's books; after this, some others too asked Vedanti to take action against Kala Afghana. Vedanti was already waiting for such an opportunity; he summoned Kala Afghana but the later expressed his inability to visit India and Vedanti agreed for questioning him through video conferencing which was to be held on the 18th of February 2003; but, one day before this video conferencing, i.e. on the 17th of February, Vedanti cancelled it and asked him to appear in person. But before he could present himself, on the 5th of April 2003, Vedanti banned the printing and sale of Kala Afghan's books and on the 10th of July 2003 'excommunicated' him from the Panth. Gurtej Singh former I.A.S. tried to appear on behalf of Kala Afghana, he too was refused permission; in fact it was an already planned action and no effort could have stopped it.

Mohali Convention of October 2003:

When Kala Afghana was 'excommunicated', his well-wishers decided to hold a 'Sarbat Khalsa Conference' at Mohali, on the 26th of October 2003 and discuss the issue of Kala Afghana's excommunication in that Convention. At that time, Kirpal Singh Badungar was the president of the S.G.P.C.; by this time Badal had made peace with Tohra; and, to handover President-ship of the S.G.P.C. to Tohra, Badungar had to resign; in between, as interim arrangements, Alwinderpal Singh Pakkhone was functioning as acting president; later, on the 25th of July 2003, Gurcharan Singh Tohra replaced him. In the meanwhile, Tohra too had joined hands with anti Kala Afghana group.

By this time, the proposed Mohali convention had received world-wide support and it was expected that a large number of Sikh elite from various parts of the world would attend it, and, the Convention would reject the action against Kala Afghana. Fearing this, some leaders of Bhindran-Mehta Jatha as well as Akhand Keertani Jatha approached Tohra to ban the Mohali Convention; at this Tohra and Vedanti issued a statement asking the Sikhs to boycott it; they (Tohra and

Vedanti) even approached the owner of Shivalik School Mohali and Jasbir Singh Khanna (Sohana) to cancel permission to allow holding of this Convention in their premises; hence, by the 24th of October, the organisers did not have any place to hold this Convention except a Community Hall in Mohali; and, on that day, even the managers of this Community Hall of Mohali too withdrew permission; but, per chance, on the 25th of October, the High Court issued injunction to the managers of the Mohali Community Hall ordering them to allow the Convention and it (court) also asked the police to provide security to the organisers; hence, after passing through enormous hurdles, the Convention was held at Mohali on the 26th of October. It was attended by a very large number of Sikh intellectuals, missionaries and the Sikh elite; this Convention condemned the un-Sikh role of the priests of Akal Takht with one voice.¹²²

So-called excommunication of Joginder Singh Spokesman:

Joginder Singh Spokesman, Gurtej Singh, Rajinder Singh Khalsa Panchayat and Major General Narinder Singh were the four main organizers of the Mohali Convention; Vedanti and Tohra wanted to punish all of them; Gurtej Singh was the first to be targeted; on the 27th of October Manjit Singh Calcutta, the Secretary of the S.G.P.C., while addressing a press conference, said that Gurtej Singh was '*Salman Rushdie of the Sikhs*' and his designation as '*Professor Emeritus of Sikhism*' will be withdrawn by the Akal Takht¹²³(Manjit Singh had no right to issue a statement of behalf of Akal Takht) [*but, later, in 2006, in the meeting of a sub-committee for the Delhi*

¹²² Main leaders of this Movement were Joginder Singh Spokesman, Rajinder Singh Khalsa Panchayat, Gurtej Singh former I.A.S., Major General Narinder Singh; and a large number of Sikh missionaries had supported them; some other leaders too were with them but, later, they backed out when Vedanti and Tohra 'banned' this convention.

¹²³ On the 5th of February 2004, the priests withdrew designation of Gurtej Singh too. In fact, Gurtej Singh had never been given any such designation by Akal Takht and it was the S.G.P.C. which had appointed him as Professor Emeritus; hence the Takht had no right to withdraw it.

*Gurdwara Committee comprising of Harwinder Singh Sarna, Manjit Singh Calcutta, Harjinder Singh Dilgeer, Jaswant Singh Mann and Gurtej Singh, he (Manjit Singh Calcutta) denied having said any such thing*¹²⁴.

Some days later, Vedanti summoned Joginder Singh Spokesman too; the latter refused to recognise the authority of the priests; the Mohali Convention had already passed a resolution asking Joginder Singh and others never to appear before these *granthis*. As it was already planned, on the 10th of March 2004, Vedanti issued a '*fatwa*' against Joginder Singh and 'excommunicated' him from Panth.¹²⁵ This '*fatwa*' was rejected by the Sikh intelligentsia with one voice; and, within a week of issuance of this '*fatwa*', a very large number of Sikh intellectuals and missionaries joined the press conference addressed by Joginder Singh.

Rozana Spokesman and cases against Joginder Singh

Later, when in 2005 Joginder Singh launched his daily Punjabi newspaper *Rozana Spokesman*, Barjinder Singh Hamdard fearing business losses asked Badal to use all means to stop launching of this paper; Badal and Chowk Mehta Dera chief Harnam Singh Dhumma asked Joginder Singh Vedanti to issue a *hukamnama* asking the Sikhs to boycott this newspaper on the plea that its editor Joginder Singh had been 'excommunicated' from Panth; and Vedanti issued such a letter. When this weapon could not stop the publication of the newspaper Barjinder Singh Hamdard asked his vendors not to sell this paper and non-compliance would mean losing their agency; some newspaper vendors did collaborate with Barjinder but they had no choice, public demand of this paper compelled them to sell it again. Badal's police too harassed vendors, correspondents and other persons associated with this newspaper. Badal stooped to so mean tactics that he stopped

¹²⁴ Per chance, this author was present on both these occasions.

¹²⁵ He was 'excommunicated' on frivolous charges on the basis of his words in one of his articles; in spite of the clarification and explanation given by him in the next issue.

issuance of all the Governments advertisements to this newspaper; between 2007 and 2011 not a single advertisement was issued to *Rozana Spokesman*; it is a historic record that though the Government did not grant advertisement even of a single penny to this paper but still this paper survived of its own for full five years of Badal's regime.

Badal did not stop at this; he filed several cases against Joginder Singh under different sections, especially under section 295 of I.P.C., treason, libel and defamation sections and even sections relating to treason etc; and, cases were registered against him at different places; in one case registered at Amritsar he was summoned several times (so much so that with an intention to imprison Joginder Singh Badal Government even passed Bills amending Indian Penal Code). In 2007 several offices of *Rozana Spokesman* were attacked by the activists of Ashutosh (Nurmahalia) cult; in fact these attacks had been organised and monitored by the police and its touts; these attacks caused a lot of damage to the property of the paper at eight places.

Vedanti's negative role:

Throughout his tenure as caretaker Vedanti played a lot of negative role: 1. In December 2003 Parkash Singh and Sukhbir Badal were arrested and sent to jail; after their release they appeared at Akal Takht and Vedanti presented them with *siropaos*. 2. He forgave Prehlad Singh Chandok who had honoured Jagdish Tytler (a killer of hundreds of Sikhs during Black November 1984). Chandok had been summoned by Vedanti for the 25th of July 2004, but he (Chandok) secretly met him on the 23rd of July 2004 and Vedanti let him go free without even giving him minor punishment (it is widely believed that he had been given a bribe of five lakh rupees by Chandok).¹²⁶ 3. In May 2003 his role in the dispute between Iqbal Singh Patna and Mohinder Singh Romana was partial on one hand and exhibition of impotency on the other hand. 4. In

¹²⁶ Badal and Dhindsa expressed their anger at the exoneration of Chandok.

2004, when Iqbal Singh tried to ‘excommunicate’ Giani Gurdit Singh for his book *Mundavani*, at first Vedanti exhibited his cowardice by not condemning him (Iqbal Singh) but later mediated and solved it by giving minor punishment to Giani Gurdit Singh, on the 27th of January 2005, in the name of a minor editing mistake. 5. Daljit Singh, a controversial *saadh* from Chicago (U.S.A.), was caught red-handed in a shameful scenario, with Ms Meena Singh, a young girl (from Garnville, NY, USA), by the *sangat*, in a motel in the U.S.A. on the 17th of November 2005. In January 2006, 115 Gurdwara Committees of the U.S.A. submitted a memorandum to Vedanti to take action; but Vedanti let him (Daljit Singh) go free (in fact Daljit had been giving a lot of money to Vedanti and other priests and leaders of Badal group whenever they visited Chicago).¹²⁷ 6. In June 2006, the S.G.P.C. observed the quad centenary of the martyrdom of Guru Arjan Sahib and invited Sushma Swaraj and other leaders of the B.J.P. (who are known for their anti-Sikh mentality); in this function, Sushma Swaraj tried to exonerate Chandu who had perpetrated atrocities on the Guru; Vedanti too was sitting there but he did not say a single word against it. 7. The same was repeated at Manji Sahib (Darbar Sahib), in the function held on the 4th of July 2006, in the name of quad-centenary of the revelation of Akal Takht (which, in fact, should have been celebrated in 2008); in this function, when Simranjeet Singh Maan was refused permission to address the audience, there was a great disturbance; however, a possible fight between supporters of Maan and Nihal Singh of Harian Velan was averted, and, some days later, Vedanti summoned (only) Maan and punished him. 8. In October 2006, when the S.G.P.C. observed quincentenary of the birthday of Baba Buddha, it invited the R.S.S. and B.J.P. leaders (who had always insulted Sikhism during

¹²⁷ Daljit Singh’s *dera* does not have so much income but he spends lavishly; it creates doubts that he is being funded by some agencies, most probably by the R.S.S. or the Indian intelligence.

such functions)¹²⁸ and Simranjeet Singh Maan had condemned it; this time he (Maan) announced that he will go there and stop lectures by anti-Sikh speakers; on that day when Maan was yet several metres away from the venue, Vedanti asked the Badal Dal to attack him; Simranjeet Singh Maan and several others were mercilessly beaten by hundreds of Badal men with sticks and other weapons. 9. Vedanti did the same when he visited Faridabad in Haryana, on the 10th of November 2006; when some Sikhs made protest against Vedanti's visit, he told his security men to 'shut their mouths'; and they (security men) attacked the Sikhs; such was the mentality of Vedanti; in fact he had begun behaving as a '*goonda*' on one hand and a tout of Badal on the other hand. 10. He never summoned Badal in spite of several representations against him; Vedanti once disclosed that he had talked to Badal to appear but he (Badal) had no dates free to appear at Akal Takht. On the other hand he (Vedanti) summoned Paramjit Singh Sarna time and again just to please Badal (it was continued by Gurbachan Singh, the latest was in July 2010, in the case of a complaint by Harwinder Singh Phulka). 11. Vedanti even summoned Giani Surjit Singh for one of his articles in a monthly magazine and for the distribution of a book by Giani Bhag Singh; Giani Surjit Singh appeared on the 10th of June 2003 and Vedanti let him go after accepting the former's explanation. Vedanti was fond of harassing the Sikhs, just to assert his power. 12. In 2006, he used all his force to install the posting of Gurbakhsh Singh Gulshan, Giani Maan Singh and Giani Jaspal Singh as *granthis* in the Darbar Sahib, because they did not belong to the

¹²⁸ Badal had invited the B.J.P. and R.S.S. leaders in Sikh religious Conferences in September 2004 at Amritsar, in December 2004 at Chamkaur, Fatehgarh Sahib and Muktsar, in June 2006 at Tarn Taran and Kathu Nangal, in May 2011 at Chappar Chiri (and in several other functions); and, during their speeches the Hindu leaders, invariably, openly and surely, spoke against the Sikh philosophy, the Gurus and tried to distort the Sikh history. The priests and *dereedaars*, including Vedanti, Gurbachan Singh and Harnam Singh Dhumma, had been present in these gatherings but none say a single word to rebut them.

Bhindran-Mehta Jatha (of Udasi-Nirmala lineage) and stood for pure Gurmat philosophy.

Vedanti replaced by Gurbachan Singh

On the 5th of August 2008 Sukhdev Singh Bhaur and Rajinder Singh Mehta went to the residence of Vedanti and asked him to sign a letter of resignation;¹²⁹ as he is a weak personality, he did it without any protest.¹³⁰ On the 7th of August Gurbachan Singh assumed the charge as caretaker.

Gurbachan Singh and Akal Takht:

Sacrilege of Guru Granth Sahib by Rama Nand

Sarwan Das, Rama Nand and their group, of village Ballan (near Jalandhar), which belonged to *Ravidas biradari*, had been committing sacrilege of Guru Granth Sahib by establishing themselves as a parallel deity in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib; first, they had tried to do the same in Birmingham (England) where the management stopped them. In May 2009, they did the same in Austria. The Sikhs of Austria asked them to stop sacrilege of Guru Granth Sahib but they did not bother and in this scuffle Rama Nand was killed.¹³¹ Rama Nand had been killed because he had committed sacrilege of Guru Granth Sahib; but, on the 28th of May, Badal arranged an *akhand path* for him in the premises of Darbar Sahib; and, Badal himself attended it; others who attended included Gurbachan Singh caretaker of Akal Takht

¹²⁹ It was alleged that he had been asked to resign because he had appreciated Manmohan Singh, the Prime Minister of India, on the 21st of July 2008, at the time when a motion of no-confidence against him had been tabled in the Parliament.

¹³⁰ The following day he revealed it to the press that he had been forced to resign; at this Paramjit Singh Sarna approached him and offered him a project which he gladly accepted, but, later, when the S.G.P.C. offered him (Vedanti) a like project, he again returned to Badal's camp; this is the general behaviour of an average (not all) priest; they are ever ready to negotiate on suitable terms.

¹³¹ In October 2010, one of these five was given life imprisonment, two were given ten years term and the other two were given lesser terms of imprisonment by a Vienna court.

and other priests as well as Kiranjot Kaur. It was like arranging of *akhand path* of Guru Granth Sahib for Massa Ranghar or *mahant* Narain Das, the killers of the Sikhs.

Eye-wash on imitation of Darbar Sahib at Mastuana

Since long, a *saadh* of Mastuana had been constructing a building which was exactly like Darbar Sahib; several Sikh organisations as well as individuals protested against it; finally Gurbachan Singh called a gathering of selected organisations and persons on the 20th of June 2009, where most of the speakers demanded demolition of the structures but the priests passed a mild resolution just for an eye-wash; and even that was not implemented. As per the resolution the Mastuana *saadh* was asked to: (1) fill the tank and level the land (2) demolish the four domes; there should be just one dome (3) the name should be changed from Darbar Sahib to Gurdwara Mastuana. Awtar Singh Makkar the President of the SGPC visited the building on the 9th of August 2009 and noticed that not even minor change had been made; but, in spite of this, neither the priests nor the SGPC bother; and, there were no militants left to take action.

So-called ‘excommunication’ of Professor Darshan Singh Ragi

Professor Darshan Singh Ragi was summoned, in December 2009, for what he had ‘not said’ (at Rochester Gurdwara in the U.S.A. some weeks ago),¹³² to appear before the priests at Akal Takht, on the 7th of January 2010; he appeared at the Takht and continued sitting in front of the building of Takht but he refused to go to the room (in a separate building) where the priests were sitting; he was given another date to appear, and finally he was ‘excommunicated’

¹³² It was on the basis of a C.D. of the recording of Ragi Darshan Singh’s words, which had been edited and distorted by Gurcharanjit Singh Lamba in a malicious manner; original CD was provided to the priests but they did not bother as they had already planned to take action against the Ragi.

on the 29th of January 2010. This stupid and un-Sikh *fatwa* was strongly condemned by a very large number of organisations, missionaries and intellectuals; and people continued respecting Ragi Darshan Singh as before; he was invited to perform *keertan* at many places; in the Punjab the police stopped some of his functions by force; it proved that people had rejected the priests and it was the Punjab Government which was using high-handed methods to stop the rejection of the priests by the Sikhs. **The Sikhs had not rejected the so-called *hukamnama* against Professor Gurmukh Singh in 1887 with so strong force as did they rejected the conspiracy against Professor Darshan Singh.**

To condemn this, a World Sikh Convention was proposed by Dr Harjinder Singh Dilgeer, which Paramjit Singh Sarna had agreed to host; Sarna did announce a Convention to be held on the 10th and the 11th of April 2010, but due to its hijacking by Manjit Singh Calcutta, it ended in fiasco and also created breach in his (Sarna's) relations with Prof. Darshan Singh, Dr Dilgeer, Joginder Singh Spokesman, Jagtar Singh Jachak, Gurtej Singh who were known allies, helpers and mentors of Paramjit Singh Sarna.

‘Summoning’ of the Sikhs at Akal Takht

As mentioned above, the priests of Akal Takht had been behaving as autocrat rulers of the Sikh nation and they would ‘summon’ anyone in the name of Akal Takht, humiliate him, and in case he tried to show reluctance he would be declared *tankhahiya* (guilty) and if he still did not surrender before their (illegal) authority he would be excommunicated from the Sikh *Panth*.

On the 21st of May 2010, a news appeared in the media that the priests of Akal Takht were going to ‘summon’ Dr Harjinder Singh Dilgeer;¹³³ the reason was that he had published a volume, under the title of *Nitnaym* and *Jaap* and *Swayyas* (two verses) were missing from that book; when Dr

¹³³ *Rozana Spokesman*, dated 21.5.2010

Dilgeer read the news he immediately issued a statement declaring that he did not accept fake and bogus office of so-called Jathedar Akal Takht as no such status existed in Sikh philosophy; he declared that he won't appear before the priests and they should not wait and 'excommunicate' him from 'their Panth'.¹³⁴ After this the priests stopped 'summoning' Sikhs; in fact this 'summoning' and 'punishing' was reserved for anti Badal and anti Bhindran-Mehta Jatha people only; after this the priests secretly decided that they would 'summon' only those who would consider them so-called Jathedars.

It is interesting to note that Gurbachan Singh had issued warning that those who arranged or allowed *keertan* of Professor Darshan Singh in Gurdwaras would be summoned and punished at Akal Takht; about one hundred Gurdwaras in the US, Canada, Europe, India and other parts of the world had arranged *keertan* by Professor Darshan Singh; more than 60 thousand persons are members of '*Akhauti Santan de Kautak*' and '*Bachitar Natak Ik Sazash*' groups of Facebook, and all of them support Professor Darshan Singh and reject the priests but Gurbachan Singh or any other priest dare not summon them; they know that all of them will follow Dr Dilgeer's steps and refuse to appear before the priests. This is how the Sikh elite treat these priests who have declared them masters/bosses of the Panth and behave as mafia chiefs.

Honouring favourites in the name of Akal Takht

There is no status of *Singh Sahib* (literally: Master of the Sikhs) in Sikh philosophy; however, this term is used for Guru Gobind Singh;¹³⁵ but the priests of Akal Takht and the other Gurdwaras have begun calling themselves 'Singh Sahib', a title elevating them to the status of Masters/Pope or like; this

¹³⁴ *Rozana Spokesman*, dated 22.5.2010. Joginder Singh Spokesman is the first person who refused to appear before these priests in 2004.

¹³⁵ Kahan Singh Nabha: *Mahan Kosh*.

is like considering oneself as sub-Guru which is in contradiction to the Sikh faith.

Similarly, in the name of Akal Takht, several persons have been 'honoured' with titles of Bhai Sahib (literally: Brother), Singh Sahib (literally: Master of the Sikhs) and Panth Ratan (literally: Jewel of the Panth); the Party which controls the SGPC has been misusing this position in order to honour their favourites, friends, benefactors and even 'donors' (who provide 'purse' or favours to the 'rulers' of the SGPC).

Gurcharan Singh Tohra was the first to begin this game; he wanted to oblige those friends who would grant him special honour in return or would be very useful in different situations; he used the SGPC and Akal Takht for several such activities; due to this several prominent persons became his personal friends.

Within one year of becoming the president of the SGPC, i.e. in 1974, he granted the title of *Bhai Sahib* to Yogi Bhajan; later Badal granted him (Yogi) the '*Order of Khalsa*' as well as 'Panth Ratan' in 1999).¹³⁶ This sycophancy and money-greed made Joginder Singh Vedanti (caretaker of Akal Takht) to create still another title '*Bhai Sahiba*' which he granted in November 2004 to Inderjeet Kaur the widow of the Yogi (who had died on the 6th of October 2004).

The Panth Ratans: Panth Ratan is not a designation or status; it is a realisation, an honour which people grant in their minds to those who have made great contribution to the

¹³⁶ In 1999 Badal had captured the SGPC by shunting Gurcharan Singh Tohra out from the office of President; after this he conducted the celebrations of the tercentenary of Khalsa as per instructions of the RSS (the Indian Government, ruled by PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee of the BJP, granted one hundred crore rupees for the celebrations; out of this 50 crore rupees was given to the RSS). During these celebrations Badal honoured several persons; he granted a special 'Order of Khalsa' to several persons, most of those who were given this 'award' were not even Sikhs in the proper sense; one such recipient, Khushwant Singh, poking fun at Badal and other organisers said: '*I am not even a proper Sikh still they have given me this honour*'; this is how these honours/awards/titles are bestowed upon, and this is the value of these awards!).

Panthic cause; till 1960 this term was used only for Master Tara Singh but this title had not been bestowed upon him from Akal Takht or Sarbat Khalsa or the SGPC. Banda Singh Bahadur, Bhai Mani Singh, Sukha Singh-Mehtab Singh (Massa Ranghar killers), Nawab Kapur Singh, Sham Singh Atariwala, Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala, General Subeg Singh, Ranjit Singh-Kabal Singh (Gurbachan killers), Beant Singh Maloya-Satwant Singh (Indira killers) , Harjinder Singh Jinda-Sukhdev Singh Sukha (Vaidya killers), Dilawar Singh (Beant's killer) are considered among the greatest heroes of the Sikh history who had accomplished extra ordinary acts of chivalry hence they are considered Panth Ratan by the Sikhs; similarly intellectuals like Giani Dit Singh, Karam Singh Historian, Principal Sahib Singh, Giani Garja Singh etc deserve such honour and genuine Sikhs do revere them as Panth Ratans; they live in the minds of people hence they don't need grant of any formal status or honour by any organisation, body or institute.

The SGPC, in imitation of the Indian Government granting 'Bharat Ratan' awards, began giving 'Panth Ratan' awards but its cheap leaders did not act genuinely and began granting this title/award on partisan level. Gurcharan Singh Tohra was the first person to begin issuing such awards/titles; Inderjeet Singh (of Punjab and Sind Bank),¹³⁷ who died on the 4th of October 1998, was the first to be declared 'Panth Ratan' in October 1998. Gurcharan Singh Tohra died on the night of 31st of March and 1st of April 2004; on the 11th of April he was granted 'Panth Ratan' award; similarly, Sant Singh Maskeen, who had been won over by the R.S.S. in his later years, died on the 18th of February 2005; he was given the title of 'Gurmat Martand' on the 27th of March 2005; on the 14th of October

¹³⁷ Inderjeet Singh did grant jobs to Sikh youth and his well-wishers claim that he gave jobs to 18000 Sikhs, but all this contribution was marred when he honoured Beant Singh, the CM of Punjab, who had ordered killing of thousands of innocent Sikh youth; the Sikhs hated him for this mean act.

2006 Jasbir Singh Khanna died; on the 22nd of October he was given ‘Panth Ratan’ award.

Some of them got this title by making ‘offerings’ of money also (Vedanti received money, Gurbachan Singh has exceeded all limits), some were given this title on recommendations from Gurcharan Singh Tohra the SGPC chief of Parkash Singh Badal, the C.M. On the 29th of June 2010 Gurbachan Singh ‘honoured’ Mohinder Singh of Nishkam Sewak Jatha, Birmingham, England with the title of ‘Bhai Sahib’; Mohinder Singh does not follow Akal Takht Rahitmaryada; he even claims that ‘(so-called) sants are above the Panth’; to quote his words: ‘*saaraa Panth ikk paasay atay sant doojay paasay hoan taan Panth chhota tay sant vadday*’.¹³⁸

Hijacking of Akal Takht

(Takht in the grip of Chowk Mehta Dera and the R.S.S.)

Gurbachan Singh always received orders from Chowk Mehta *dera*. In fact, since 1999, Akal Takht has been occupied by the Bhindran-Mehta Jatha; Puran Singh, Vedanti and Gurbachan Singh all belonged to this *dera* which, especially now, follows the *maryada* of the Nirmala cult and not Sikhism; hence these priests practice several customs and rituals which are totally contrary to the Sikh philosophy; the stand of the priests on the book so-called Dasam Granth, practice of Brahminic rituals in Gurdwaras, opposition to ‘*tat*’ *gurmat* (real Sikh ideology) is all due to their association with this *dera*. Though Puran Singh and Vedanti too fully followed Chowk Mehta *dera* and the Udasi-Nirmala *maryada* but Gurbachan Singh regularly sought instructions from Harnam Singh Dhumma, the chief of Chowk Mehta *dera* (one of the many branches of ‘Bhindran Jatha’) who further works under instructions from the R.S.S. (the fanatic Hindu organisation); and, all the practices adopted by Chowk Mehta *dera* have, now, the blessings of the R.S.S and the latter’s agenda is being

¹³⁸ *Rozana Spokesman*, dated 6.11.2011 (p. 6).

fully honoured by this *dera* (and the priests of Akal Takht and other Gurdwaras are under the control of this group). In the Punjab, the R.S.S. agenda is being enforced by this Chowk Mehta Dera, a small group of Nihangs (headed by Sher Singh), a small group of Akhand Keertani Jatha, Sarabjot Singh Bedi and so-called Sant Samaj and Badal Akali Dal, with the help of the police, under special instructions from Parkash Singh Badal (Chief Minister Punjab) himself; and, in foreign countries, especially in England, it is being implemented, through a campaign of terror, by agents of Bhindran-Mehta Jatha (headed by Giani Pritam Singh and a small group of Babar Khalsa represented by Joga Singh), some police cats like Loveshinder Dallewal (Coventry), Punjab Radio (a sort of *dera*-type media of Surjit Ghumman and Gurdeep Jagbir, a senior RSS leader), pro-dasamgranth Sikh Channel (with Gurdeep Jagbir as its anchor) and Sangat Channel TV (of *dera* Nishkam Sewak Jatha, Birmingham) and R.S.S. agents like Ranjit Rana (*Sahib* magazine) and his tout Balihar Ramewal etc. However, this the Dasamgranth Mafia or the RSS do not have any influence in the Middle East, Far East, New Zealand, Australia, Norway, Finland, Germany, USA and Canada (except a small faction at Brampton and Malton in Greater Toronto).

At present Akal Takht, the S.G.P.C. and some Gurdwaras in the Punjab are in the *de facto* grip of the R.S.S., whereas most of the Gurdwaras have become like clubs, idol-worshipping temples and/or commercial centres; of course there is presence of Guru Granth Sahib in these buildings but Guru, Gurmat, Sikhism, *dharma* don't exist there; it is much worse than it was during pre-1920 days when the Gurdwaras were under the control of the Nirmala and Udasi *mahants*. Gurdwaras, the SGPC or Akal Takht can play no positive role unless these are freed by the Sikh Panth.

Rise of deraas/jathas/sants/ Nirmala/Udasis in Sikhism

During the time of (Maharaja) Ranjit Singh there was no so-called ‘sant’ among the Sikhs; no Sikh was addressed even as ‘Baba’; in fact there is neither priestly calls, nor clergy, nor any missionary class in Sikhism; there is no concept of even ascetics, hermits or *sanyasis* (in popular meanings those who have renounced the world); as per Sikhism one should choose householder’s life and work for his family as well as society; a Sikh is supposed to contribute to the needy people; hence he is a sort of ‘giver’¹³⁹ in other words a Sikh is a positive part of society and the world; hence there is no question of a priestly, mendicant, ascetic, clergy or even a beggar in Sikhism.

The first stage of missionary activities was that of those who used to voluntarily perform *katha* (exegesis) of Guru Granth Sahib or Sikh history to the visitors to major Sikh centres at Amritsar and Anandpur Sahib. By 1800 there were no other Sikh centres which the Sikhs used to visit for so-called ‘pilgrimage’.¹⁴⁰ Not only this, there were not even

¹³⁹ In Sikhism only God is ‘giver’; here ‘giver’ means one who gives some financial help to the poor and needy from his earnings and wealth.

¹⁴⁰ In Sikhism there is no concept of ‘sacred’ shrine hence no pilgrimage; here ‘pilgrimage’ refers to the eighteenth century scenario when the Sikhs used to Amritsar and Anandpur Sahib because Guru Sahib had been living at these places and these had become centres for gatherings of the Sikhs; meaning thereby that these were historical places and not pilgrim centres; it was not like Hindus visiting Hardwar or Kashi (Varanasi) or Muslims visiting Mecca, Medina, Jews visiting Jerusalem and Christians visiting

Gurdwaras at many places; the Gurdwaras existed only at Amritsar, Goindwal, Tarn Taran, Anandpur, Keeratpur, Baba Bakala, Kartarpur (Jalandhar), Patna, Nander, because the Gurus had been living there and some Sikhs still continued holding congregations; of course there existed a small pedestal at Lahore (Dera Sahib) where Guru Arjan Sahib had been executed on the *tavi*¹⁴¹ bank of Raavi river. It is remarkable to note that there was no Gurdwara even at Nanakana Sahib (birth place of Guru Nanak); this Gurdwara was first built by (Maharaja) Ranjit Singh; Gurdwaras Nander (Hazur Sahib) too was built by him; the Gurdwaras in the South had been built by Chandu Lal, a minister of Nawab of Hyderabad in the 1820s.

During all this time, though the Sikhs had been enjoying freedom in the Punjab and in most other parts too they had not much problem but still not many Gurdwaras were built; in the villages of the Punjab there were just a few Gurdwaras in the western Punjab; the first Gurdwaras were built by (Maharaja) Ranjit Singh or his generals or feudal and in the area beyond Satluj River, (Maharaja) Karam Singh of Patiala (1798-1845) took initiative and built some Gurdwaras at the places visited by the Gurus; these Gurdwaras were managed by local people; there was no priest/clergy/giani/*granthi* in any Gurdwara; in most of these Gurdwaras even there were no volumes of Guru Granth Sahib; by that time the volumes of Guru Granth Sahib were in handwritten form hence there were not many copies; however, after the printing of Guru Granth Sahib was started in 1887 it reached every nook and corner, at least in the Punjab. After the Singh Sabha Movement, people began visiting the Gurdwaras and with this several Sikhs became granthis.

The so-called sants were still not there; up to the Singh Sabha Movement there was no so-called 'sant', not a single

Bethlehem. The Sikhs' visit was refreshing their history and the memory of the Gurus.

¹⁴¹ *Tavi* means hot bank of a river where sand is hot like a '*tavi*' (hot plate on which loaves are baked; '*tavi*' itself means extremely hot, like furnace.

one; though before this Movement Bhai Bir Singh (1768-1844) of Naurangabad (mentor of Bhai Maharaj Singh), Bhag Singh (1766-1839) of Kuri, Jaswant/Khuda Singh (1777-1861) etc had been preaching Sikhism but they were not known as ‘Sant’ or ‘Baba’; they were just ‘Bhais’ (literally brother); all of them used to work in the fields and also perform religious services and missionary activities; people respected them but no one would treat them as semi-Guru or so-called Brahamgyani or even a mystic figure. At that time there were Nihangs too; among them Akali Phula Singh was in control of Darbar Sahib (up to his martyrdom in 1823) and after this his successors could not assert their position and control though they still had in their occupation the Akali Chhavni (the cantonment of the Nihangs) area at Amritsar; Gurdwaras in Anandpur Sahib and Keertapur were in the control the Sodhi family; still another family owned Talwandi Sabo too. After this the control of Darbar Sahib and some other Gurdwaras came under the control of the Udasis and Nirmalas under the patronage of the Brahmin and Dogra courtiers of (Maharaja) Ranjit Singh; and, when the British took control of Amritsar, these Udasi/Nirmala priests became subordinate of the English.¹⁴²

After the exit of Akali Phula Singh, Darbar Sahib came under the control of a *sarbrah* (literally: manager); Sant Singh Giani was the first to hold such a status and he belonged to Nirmala cult (a Hindu Vedanti cult wearing turbans); he was succeeded by his son Gurmukh Singh (who was the in-charge

¹⁴² The Brahmin minister of Ranjit Singh got the land of Darbar Sahib Amritsar granted to the Udasis and the other non-Sikh and anti-Sikh cults; today, there are several such sites which are, in fact, the property of Darbar Sahib (as the land of the whole of the town had been purchased by Guru Ram Das in 1564 from the owners of the village Tung; and there was no non-Sikh shrine in Amritsar up to the first decade of the nineteenth century. Under the patronage of the Brahmin minister of Ranjit Singh, the ‘priests’, ‘*sarbarahs*’ (managers) of Darbar Sahib and other shrines received good salaries, lavish grants, precious gifts; and, besides these people also embezzled offerings of the devotees; of course, this made them loyal to the Brahmin minister and the Dogras (and, later, to the British rulers).

of Akal Takht) and Darbara Singh (who looked after Darbar Sahib) and they were the persons who wrote *Gurbilas Patsahi Chhevin*, a book which severely distorted Sikh philosophy and history. During this period Wasti Ram and his sons Gobind Ram and Ram Singh, like those of Sahib Singh Bedi (a direct descendant of Guru Nanak Sahib), the Sodhis of Anandpur and Kartarpur (Jalandhar), had been patronised by (Maharaja) Ranjit Singh; Ranjit Singh gave grants to some centres of the Hindus, Jogis and Muslims too; Ranjit Singh did it with an intention to earn goodwill of these families and establish himself as a great donor. Ranjit Singh provided money to the Nihangs too; and his sole purpose was to silence all possible opposition to him and to his regime. In spite of this an average Sikh did not consider them as 'holy' persons.

When the English occupied the Punjab the control of the Gurdwaras automatically came into their hands; and, the priest and caretakers of the Gurdwaras immediately switched their loyalties to the new regime; in 1849, Pardumman Singh (son of Gurmukh Singh) was the caretaker of Akal Takht; he was succeeded by Jodh Singh (death 1862), followed by Mangal Singh Ramgarhia (died 1879). After this the English appointed a loyal army officer Colonel Jawala Singh as the *sarbrah*; in 1902 Arur Singh Shergill was elevated to this office.

During this period several *granthis* and *mahants*, e.g. Man Singh *sarbrah* (caretaker, senior most manager) Gurdwaras, Harnam Singh *granthi* Darbar Sahib, Gulab Singh *mahant* (literally: chief) Akal Bunga, Teja Singh *muhtamim* (literally manager) Akal Bunga, Jawahar Singh *muhtamim* Akal Bunga, Karam Singh *ardasia* (one who perform ritualistic prayer) Darbar Sahib, Jaswant Singh *pujari* (priest) Darbar Sahib, Thakar Singh *pujari*, Deva Singh *dhupia* (one who is ordained to ignite incense in a place of worship), Santa Singh *pujari*, Hardit Singh *ardasia*, Gulab Singh Akal Bungia, Gulab Singh *pujari* Darbar Sahib, Dhanna Singh *sukhai* (one who performs closing services) Baba Atal, Darbara Singh *pujari*

Jhanda Bungia and several others remained in 'service';¹⁴³ these priests had no role to play except to perform ritualistic service for the visitors and receive 'remuneration' for these services.

The priestly class came into lime light when the semi-Hindu group of the priests, led by Khem Singh Bedi, tried to use the name of Akal Takht to take revenge from Professor Gurmukh Singh in 1887 and made an attempt to excommunicate the latter from the Sikh Panth; however, the Sikh elite rejected this misuse of Akal Takht; besides, the priests too did not make any other attempt for follow up nor did they repeat it in future.

By this time, there were no missionaries or *saadhs* in filed. Though **Balak Singh Abhiyasi** (1785-1862) had been preaching meditation in the name of God and the Gurus but his was not at all an organised movement nor he was considered as *dereदार* (keeper of a cult centre) or *sant* or *brahmgyani* (literally: knower of God), though some Sikhs used to address him as 'Baba' (literally: elder/senior); moreover his area of activity was limited to Hujro and its surroundings.

Almost during the same time **Nirankari** (Movement) was born; it was born out of personal problem of a petty shopkeeper Dyal Das (1783-1855) but soon he was able to attract some followers and it became a reform group. Later, Dyal Das established a Gurdwara and gathered a good number of local Sikhs; he was succeeded by his sons Darbara Singh (1814-1869) and after his death by his son Ratta (died 1908), who continued their fathers' mission. Darbara Singh was the originator of Sikh marriage ceremony of *laavaan* (circumambulation) around Guru Granth Sahib; in the 1860s this group declared Dyal as successor of Guru Gobind Singh and even began calling him 'satguru' like the Kookas. This group was, however, not harmful as after 1947 they were uprooted from their stronghold in Rawalpindi; later, in 1960,

¹⁴³ These names appear of the so-called *hukamnama* of 1887 issued against Professor Gurmukh Singh.

one group of this organisation established itself in Delhi and soon began behaving as a cult; Indira Gandhi, the Indian P.M. extended all possible state-help and patronage to this cult to establish them against the Sikhs. This group still has State patronage and several officials are associated with this Mafia-type cult.¹⁴⁴

Ram Singh (1816-1885), known as **Kooka** (his followers adopted the name Namdhari in 1920s) too gathered a group of followers around him and after a couple of years it became a cult of socio-religious reform which later turned violent and damaged some graves and tombs in 1866 and it also indulged in killings of innocent butcher workers in 1870, resulting into exile for Ram Singh to Burma, in 1872, and an end to this *jatha* (band); however, this band restarted its activities in a new form around 1920 and this time it had the backing of the English regime; the latter had planned all this with intention to create division among the Sikhs; as a result, in 1921 this group collaborated the corrupt managers of the Gurdwaras. They have always collaborated with all the anti-Sikh forces. The Kookas (Namdharis) are not a sect/cult of Sikhs, they are, in fact a sect of Hindus as most of their rituals are Hinduistic in nature; moreover they don't consider Guru Granth Sahib as Guru; hence they are not Sikhs. The Indian regime and the anti-Sikh forces collaborate with them fully and promote them as Sikh sect; they are the first major conspiracy against Sikhism.

The activities of the first Nirankaris were limited to Rawalpindi and its surrounding areas; elsewhere their role was almost negligible; in 1873, the Singh Sabha Reform Movement was launched; gradually this Movement spread throughout the

¹⁴⁴ This Delhi faction was led by a debauched Avtar Singh (he was succeeded by his son Gurbachan Singh and grandson Hardev Singh in 1980) and was known as *Sant Nirankari Mandal*. On the 13th of April 1978, this cult killed 13 Sikhs, at Amritsar. In retaliation, the Sikhs killed their chief, on the 24th of April 1980. Since the 10th of June 1978 the Sikhs are forbidden from having any relationship with the Nirankaris and they are no more a part of the Sikh world.

Sikh world, so much so that it reached even England and North America. Such expanse and grand impact of the Singh Sabha Movement frightened the English and the communal Hindu forces; both had dreamt to devour up the Sikh religion but this Movement frustrated their hopes. After this the fanatic Hindu forces stooped to mean nasty acts; they began insulting the Gurus (Guru is used only for the ten Gurus of the Sikhs; the Hindus began using the word Guru for mentor of any and every art and especially negative activities, simply to insult the word Guru, in fact the Sikh Gurus); so much so that even Daya Nand used mean wording for Guru Nanak; this however boomeranged and the Sikh elite especially the intelligentsia became more committed to the Sikh mission; however it sowed the seeds of Hindu hatred for the Sikhs, hence extreme fanatics.

During this period the British and the Hindus began another soft target; the British began promoting some Sikh preachers who were carrying on mainly the activities of initiating the Sikhs with *khanday-di-pahul* (some people began calling it *amrit sanskar*) or holding series of recitation of Guru Granth Sahib (later it became *akhand path* i.e. unbroken recitation). Promotion of *khanday-di-pahul* and *akhand path* did play some positive role but it made more negative impact on Sikhism; it did help in bringing more and more Sikhs into faith and engaged them into reading of hymns, but, on the other hand it helped in establishing ritualism as the basic postulate of Sikhism; whereas Sikhism is a way of life, it is living life based on the teachings of Guru Granth Sahib, of which *khanday-di-pahul* and *path* of Guru Granth Sahib are just starting point of Sikh faith, but the promotion of just *khanday-di-pahul* and *path* and *akhand path* put Sikh philosophy into secondary place and rather in background; the Sikhs began considering *khanday-di-pahul* and *path* as everything of Sikhism. This turned Sikhism into a religion of rituals and ceremonies sans way of life.

Engaging the Sikhs into such activities further harmed the Sikh faith when these missionaries began preaching that *path* and *akhand path* and *keertan* etc will solve all the

problems of the Sikhs; this turned the Sikhs away from path of effort and struggle; it turned *Gurbaani* into *mantras* (incantations); and it tried to turn Sikhism into fatalism. This suited the English because they wanted the Sikhs to forget their chivalry and struggle, their *dharma yudh* (struggle for righteousness) and the Hindus wanted the Sikhs to turn into a religion of ritualism and thus become a part of Hindu mainstream. The success of these anti-Sikh forces was tremendous.

The first famous person to preach all this was **Atar Singh of Mastuana** (1866-1927), a former soldier of the British Indian Army; he is said to have initiated thousands of Sikhs. It is intriguingly remarkable that most of the missionaries of this period were former soldiers of the British Indian Army,¹⁴⁵ whereas the rest were illiterate persons who had been left their home just to avoid life of active activity and loved living on the earnings of others; most of them had spent several years at Hindu centres of pilgrimage, living like Hindu mendicants and ascetics; strictly speaking they were parasites of society; the Nirmalas and Udasis¹⁴⁶ belonged to the latter class. Atar Singh Mastuana was succeeded by Professor Teja Singh, also known as Teja Singh MA (1877-1965), who had been studying in the USA too and had also been the Principal of a college.

Another group which turned pacifist in order to save itself from prosecution by the Mughal rulers came to be known as ‘**sewapanthis**’. This group traces its origin from Bhai Ghaniya Singh (1648-1718); Sewa Ram was one of his

¹⁴⁵ Among the soldiers prominent were Atar Singh Reru (1867-1927), Karam Singh Hoti Mardan (1828-1902), Bishan Singh Kanjhla (d. 1949).

¹⁴⁶ Bishan Singh Murala (1852-1906), Gurmukh Singh *kaar sewa wala* (died 1947), Bishan Singh *kaar sewa wala* (died 1973), Nand Singh Kaleran (1870-1943), Ishar Singh Kaleran (1913-1963), Gurbachan Singh Bhindran (1902-1969); most of them had been wandering at Hindu centres at Hardwara, Rishikesh, Kashi (Varanasi), Tirveni (Allahabad), Mathura, Ayodhya, Badrinath, Rameshwaram, Gaya etc. and they had been trained by Udasi and Nirmalas who were mainly Brahmins.

companions who further had a '*chela*' (literally: follower) named Addan Shah (1688-1757); Addan Shah became more popular and this band came to be known as 'Addanshahis'; hence the name of Bhai Ghanaiya Singh was pushed to secondary place and was almost ignored; Addan Shah's *chela* Jagta (?-1811) became still more popular; he was given facilitations by Sikh rulers, as a result he found it more profitable to establish his *dera* than preaching Sikhism and his successors began giving more importance to their mentors; Jagta's group functioned in a small circle; Mahant Jawahar Mall of Mitha Tiwana, Mahant Gulab Singh and Mahant Asa Singh continued the lineage of Jagta but Mahant Tirath Singh (1925-2008) of Goniana Mandi (who had got training from Dera Amir Singh of Sattowali and Nischal Singh) became most important person of this *jatha*; his *dera* is known as 'Tikana Bhai Jagta'; they use the term '*tikana*' (literally: abode; it is another term for '*dera*') instead of Gurdwara.

The latest to establish themselves as a strong group are the **Bindranwalas**; they have their origin in Giani Sunder Singh (1883-1930) of Bhinder Kalan village (in Firozpur district). Sunder Singh was known as '*Sri Maan 108 Giani Sunder Singh Nirmala*'; he was a student of Pandit Jawala Das Udasi;¹⁴⁷ Giani Sunder Singh's mission was a combination of **Udasi** and **Nirmala** activities and they used the weapon of *khanday-di-pahul* and series of *akhand path* to attract crowds of people; and they achieved tremendous success. Giani Sunder Singh was succeeded by Giani Gurbachan Singh (1902-1961); now the *jatha* (which had come to be known as 'Jatha Bhindran' because Giani Sunder Singh belonged to Bhinder Kalan village) was divided into two factions: one headed by Giani Kartar Singh and the other by Giani Mohan Singh;¹⁴⁸ Giani Kartar Singh (1932-1977) died in 1977 and was

¹⁴⁷ www.sarbloh.info, Dr Sher Singh Giani, *Amrit Jeewan*, p. 37.

¹⁴⁸ When Giani Kartar Singh was installed as the chief of this Jatha, the family of Giani Gurbachan Singh rejected him; so much so that that Giani Kartar Singh was not allowed even to sit on the dais during the ceremony of

succeeded by Giani Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala¹⁴⁹ of Rode village (in Moga district).

Clashes between the Nirankaris and the Bhindran-Jatha

The clashes between Nirankaris and the Jatha Bhindran-Mehta began when (on the 13th of September 1973) the former began holding functions in the village of Chowk Mehta and the other areas which the Jatha Bhindran regarded its exclusive monopoly zone; hence the Jatha Bhindran considered the entry of the Nirankaris in that area as ‘pouncing upon its market’ which would have meant losing some, if not several, followers and the Jatha declared it as an invasion. The Jatha Bhindran-Mehta is an extension of the Udasi-Nirmala ideology which is a semi-Hindu Movement but as the field of functioning of this Jatha was the Sikh Homeland, like other Udasi-Nirmala *deras* they too used *akhand paths* of Guru Granth Sahib and *amrit parchars* (giving initiation) to attract people. They regarded Guru Granth Sahib as their Scripture but also gave equal, if not more, respect to the Hindu mythological books like Ramayana, Mahabharata and the so-called *dasamgranth* (90% of which is translation of Hindu fictional and mythological writings). The preachers of this Jatha, in their exegesis and discourses, use more from the

final prayers of Giani Gurbachan Singh; people were so angry with Giani Kartar Singh that he had to flee the village to save his life on that day. The family installed Mohan Singh as Giani Gubachan Singh’s successor. According to Hardeep Singh Dibdiba (former PA to Jasbir Singh Rode), Jathedar Jagedev Singh Talwandi was so aggressive that he declared ‘How can we bestow *Malwa*’s honour on a man from *Majha*’ (Giani Gurbachan Singh and Giani Mohan Singh belonged to *Malwa* and Giani Kartar Singh belonged to *Majha* region of the Punjab); Giani Kartar Singh could not visit Bhinder Kalan again and he established his *dera* at Chowk Mehta and also renamed the *jatha* as Bhindran-Mehta Jatha; later, in 1977 this group began calling itself Damdami Taksal. (Hardeep Singh Dibdiba: *Saka Neela Tara ton baad Tabahee ki Twareekh*, pages 58-60).

¹⁴⁹ Giani Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala headed a great militant movement against the Indian regime and fought one of the greatest battles of the history of the world; among the leaders of the Sikh nation he is considered as the greatest hero since Banda Singh Bahadur (1670-1716).

Hindu fictional works than even Guru Granth Sahib; and, their religious, ritual and social practices are almost wholly Hindu in nature.

Professional and business interests, zonal monopoly and cult interests were the root cause of clashes between these two groups. Between 1973 and 1978 these clashes remained on very low scale; Giani Kartar Singh succeeded in using the SGPC to pass (on the 18th of November 1973) a resolution against the Nirankaris.¹⁵⁰ This resolution remained buried in the archives of the SGPC and there was no follow up; but on the 13th of April 1978, when the Nirankaris held a function at Amritsar in the religious capital of the Sikh Homeland and it resulted into killing of 13 Sikhs by the Nirankari 'army',¹⁵¹ the Jatha Bhindran - Nirankari dispute became a Sikh - Nirankari dispute. At that time the Punjab was being ruled by the Akali Party under the chief minister ship of Parkash Singh Badal; the Congress Party cells among the Sikhs and the pro-Congress Indian Intelligence Agencies manoeuvred to provoke common Sikhs to create a Movement against the Nirankaris; they also began patting and promoting Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala through different sources. These Agencies had no grudge against the Nirankaris (rather they had been collaborating with them and had a soft corner for them) but their target was the Akali Government; neither Bhindranwala nor the Sikh elite could understand the game of the Intelligence Agencies.

The acquittal of the Nirankari chief and all the 60 accused persons (in 1980), in the April 1978 murder case, became the starting point of the chapter of neo phase of militancy; now Bhindranwala and some other groups of Sikh radicals began thinking of planning to kill the Nirankari chief; though he could not achieve it but two individuals (Ranjit Singh and Kabal Singh) did accomplish it; Bhindranwala too had contributed to this militant action by providing Ranjit Singh a carbine to kill the Nirankari. Murder of Nirankari

¹⁵⁰ For details see: volume 7 of this *Sikh History*, pp 16-29

¹⁵¹ *Ibid*

boosted the morale of the Sikhs, especially the Sikh youth and the Sikh elite, and with this began the militant movement (which engulfed the Sikh Homeland for the next fifteen years) and Bhindranwala had become the leader of this Movement. Once the Sikh youth and the Sikh elite accepted Bhindranwala as their leader he became emotionally involved in the Sikh national movement; now he was not a cult leader but a *Lok Nayak* (hero of the masses) of the Sikh mainstream; and, due to the manoeuvrings of the Intelligence Agencies the Movement went on turning more and more serious as well as complicated; and in this scenario Bhindranwala resolved to fight for the Sikhs' rights; he swore not to backtrack or run away from the field.

During this period Indira Gandhi decided to attack Darbar Sahib in order to get lion's share of Hindu votes and under this planning she operated a movement of terror in the Punjab; Giani Jarnail Singh had nothing to do with the terrorist actions which were in fact were acts committed by the Third Agency of the Indira Gandhi; however, when he and General Subeg Singh got information about Indira Gandhi's planning they decided to create history by giving an unforgettable reply to the intentions of Indira Gandhi; Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala and Subeg Singh accomplished what he had proclaimed; and, this battle exalted them (Bhindranwala and Subeg Singh) to the status of the greatest war heroes of the past two centuries of the Sikhs' history.

The third role of Jatha Bhindran-Mehta began after 1985 when it, with the help of Sikh youth, led a militant campaign; in the struggle for Khalistan, major role was played by the activists of this Jatha, Babar Khalsa (established by Jathedar Talwinder Singh) and its second faction (under the command of Sukhdev Singh Babar, which became much more powerful after 1986). At that time Thakar Singh was the caretaker of the Chowk Mehta Dera; he was an illiterate and simple man whom any one could lead and mislead; he was, however, a show-piece and the major role was played by Mohkam Singh, Gurbachan Singh Manochahal, Manbir Singh

Chaheru, Gurnam Singh Bundala etc; these people knew that Thakar Singh was a simple person so they did not declare him as chief of the Jatha; at first they presented him as the caretaker of the Dera but later they declared him as Acting Chief of Jatha Bhindran-Mehta. During all this time all of them continued asserting that Giani Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala did not die during the attack by Indian Army in June 1984; even in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib they would declare that they were in touch with Giani Jarnail Singh; this was sacrilege of Guru Granth Sahib. So much so that when one very active Sikh youth, a valuable asset of their group asserted that Bhindranwala embraced martyrdom, he was killed by Gurnam Singh Bundala in cold blood; this killing gave him a new name 'Jallad' (literally: executioner). By the September 1992 most of the militant leaders of the Khalistan Movement had been killed by the police in fake encounters.

The fourth role of this Jatha began in 1992. On the 14th of October 1992, K.P. Gill the police chief visited Chowk Mehta Dera and held secret meeting with Harnam Singh Dhumma etc.¹⁵² Sarup Singh, a lecturer in the Evening College of the Panjab University Chandigarh, who was one of the closest friends of K.P. Gill, mediated friendship between the police chief and the Chowk Mehta Dera officials. After this Harnam Singh Dhumma became friendly first with K.P. Gill and through him he made understanding with the Indian Intelligence Agency and finally the RSS. Thakar Singh died in 2004 and the Indian Intelligence brought Harnam Singh Dhumma (who had become a citizen of the USA by that time) to India¹⁵³ and on the 2nd of January 2005 he was installed as the chief of the Jatha through Jasbir Singh Rode (an agent of the central agencies).¹⁵⁴ Those who were present at Chowk

¹⁵² Thakar Singh and Mohkam Singh were not present in Dera on that day.

¹⁵³ For more information: Hardip Singh Dibdiba, *op. cit.*, pp 129-134.

¹⁵⁴ On this day the Chowk Mehta Dera and Jatha Bhindran Mehta acknowledged the martyrdom of Giani Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala (in order to establish Harnam Dhumma as full-fledged chief of the Jatha); this also implied that they had accepted that Thakar Singh and other persons

Mehta to attend the ceremony of installation of Harnam Singh Dhumma included Sarbjot Singh Bedi (President, Sant Samaj), Simranjit Singh Mann (President SAD Amritsar), Mohkam Singh, Sucha Singh Chhotepur MLA, Dr Jagjit Singh Chauhan, Harcharan Singh Dharmi (President Dal Khalsa), Bhai Ranjit Singh (former caretaker of Akal Takht), Karnail Singh Panjauli, Wassan Singh Zafarwal.¹⁵⁵

On the other hand, on the same day, Ram Singh, a nephew of Giani Kartar Singh (predecessor of Giani Jarnail Singh), declared himself as the new chief of Bhindran-Mehta Jatha (earlier he had served as *granthi* in Darbar Sahib but has resigned when he was transferred to Jind); all the five major priests, Awtar Singh Makkar (president SGPC) and other senior leaders of Badal Akali Dal attended his installation ceremony in Gurdwara Gurshabad Parkash at village Sangrai (near Batala).¹⁵⁶

As the chief of this Jatha, Harnam Singh Dhumma first exhibited himself as an anti-Badal person, developed relations with radical Akalis but soon, under instructions from the Intelligence Agencies he began changing his stance; and, within just 13 months he had secretly shook hands with Badal;¹⁵⁷ the first revelation of this new relationship came to surface on the 26th of February 2006 when he chaired '*Virsa Sambhal Sammelan*';¹⁵⁸ this gathering had been arranged in

associated with the Jatha and the Dera had been telling lies for 21 years and had been committing sacrilege of Guru Granth Sahib by saying so.

¹⁵⁵ He had returned to India on the 11th of April 2001; his relative Sucha Singh Langah had managed his return with the help of Badal.

¹⁵⁶ *The Tribune*, dated 3.1.2005

¹⁵⁷ Rajinder Singh Mehta too played a mediator Badal and Harnam Dhumma (*The Tribune*, dated 3.1.2005).

¹⁵⁸ Most of the Sikh organisations boycotted or ignored this function; prominent Sikh leaders and organizations, including Bhai Ranjit Singh, Simranjeet Singh Mann, Jathedar Ram Singh (chief of the other faction of Jatha Bhindran-Mehta), Dal Khalsa, Akhand Kirtani Jatha, Khalra Mission Committee, International Human Rights Organization (IHRO) and several others boycotted it. Many of the critics billed it to be nothing more than "a meaningless show and gathering of (so-called) Babas of various *deras* and

collaboration with Ravi Inder Singh, Surjit Barnala's supporters, Parmjit Singh Sarna, Ranjit Singh Dhadarianwala and other anti-Badal Akalis, but, in this function Lakhbir did not say even a single word against Badal; in fact they (the organisers) did not know that he (Harnam Singh) had already established secret liaison with Badal. In the middle of this function Ravi Inder Singh and Surjit Barnala group smelt the conspiracy and left the stage before the passing of the resolutions;¹⁵⁹ open declaration of union between Badal and Harnam Dhumma was announced in August 2011 when both joined hands to contest the SGPC as one group.

Another major *dera* had been established by Giani **Amir Singh** (1870-1954) at **Gali Sattowali Amritsar**; Amir Singh was succeeded by Giani Kirpal Singh (1918-1993); the latter had also served as caretaker of Akal Takht; he was detested by the Sikhs for his collaboration with the Indian regime after the latter's attack on Darbar Sahib and destruction of the building of Akal Takht in June 1984. **Sucha Singh** (1948-2002), another student of this *dera*, also established a *dera* at **Jawaddi** (near Ludhiana).

Dera at Rara village too gained prominence among the people of Punjab; this *dera* had been established by Ishar Singh (1905-1975), a *chela* of Atar Singh of **Reru** village (1867-1927); Ishar Singh and Kishan Singh (1900/1915-1999) were two major *chelas* of Atar Singh Reru; the later moved to **Jarg** village. In 1990 Teja Singh became caretaker of Rara and Daya Singh took reigns of Jarg *dera*. Prominent *saadhs* belonging to this cult include Maan Singh Pehowa (Mohan Singh is his most confident and is the caretaker of Pehowa *dera*); Maan Singh Pehowa is known as lecherous person who has allegedly raped several young girl and has fathered several illegitimate children.

maryadas"; Bhai Ranjit Singh (former caretaker Akal Takht) called it "a conclave of "*Saadhs* and police cats", while others have labelled it "an orchestration of the Indian intelligence agencies."

¹⁵⁹ For more information: Hardip Singh Dibdiba, *op. cit.*, pp 135-143.

Kaleran Dera: Another prominent *dera* has been established at village Kaleran (near Jagraon); this is also known as Nanaksar; it has its origin in Nand Singh (1872-1943); who was succeeded by Ishar Singh (1916-1963) of Jhoraran village and after Ishar Singh's death Kundan Singh (1929-2002) became the caretaker of this *dera*; there have been several disputes for the control of the income of this *dera* and these disputes have led to violence also in which even guns were used. This *dera* has produced several *saadhs* including Khem Singh (Bhucho Dera Rumi), Sadhu Singh (Jagraon), Gurdev Singh (Samadh Bhaini), Mihan Singh, Sujan Singh, Bahadur Singh, Uttam Singh, Narinder Singh (Chandigarh), Kehar Singh, Bhajan Singh, Jaswant Singh (Barnala), Geninder Singh (Kaur village), Lal Singh (Kurmanian, Khalsa, Amritsar), Geja Singh (Jebowal, Begowal, Kapurthala), Partap Singh (Jagraon), Jorah Singh (Badhni Kalan), Jagir Singh (Barundi), Amar Singh (Barundi, Delhi and Hayes, England),¹⁶⁰ Balwinder Singh (Kurali, Ropar), Nishawar Singh (Jagraon) etc.; all these *saadhs* run independent *deras*. **Nahar Singh Sunehrawala** (grandson of Nand Singh Kaleran) too established his own *dera*; after his death his son Kapoor Singh too became a *saadh*; this faction too has property worth billions of rupees in India as well as England.

In 1960 a new *dera* came up at **Dodra** village (in Mansa district) and was named Gurdwara Brahm Bunga; it was established by a former soldier Jaswant Singh (who loves to be called Bauji and whose pen name is Khoji) with cooperation from his retired colleagues from Burmese Army. In 1976 Charanjeet Kaur, a lady from Malaysia, came to India and became a follower of Jaswant Singh; both began attracting crowds of simple people whom they began fooling in the name

¹⁶⁰ Amar Singh of village Barundi is notorious for his licentious life; it is alleged that he has fathered several illegitimate children; in England Gurdeep Singh Jabgir of 'Punjab Radio' Southall, England (a member of Apex Committee of the RSS) is one of his closest companions; Amar Singh has property worth several billions of rupees and lives a luxurious life.

of meditation led by so-called *Panj Piaray*, an un-Sikh practice; with the passage of time thousands of people became associated with this *dera*.

Karam Singh Hoti Mardan (1826-1902) established a *dera* at village Pani (near Hoti Mardan, Pakistan); he was succeeded by Aya Singh, Ram Singh and Majha Singh, in this order. Jawala Singh, of Dera Santgarh, was a disciple of Aya Singh before serving in the First World War. In 1937, this establishment came under the control of Majha Singh, who belonged to the Lubana community. After 1947 this *dera* was shifted to Maksudpur in the present Kapurthala district.

Begowal Dera: Prem Singh (1882-1950), of Khori Dunna Singh (in Gujrat district of Pakistan), was a follower of Bishan Singh of Murala (died 1907); in 1947 he moved to Begowal (in Kapurthala district) and established his *dera* there; he was succeeded by Harnam Singh (1915-1981), followed by the latter's daughter-in-law Jagir Kaur.

Another *dereedar* was **Balwant Singh of Maksudran** (Ludhiana) who had first established his *dera* at Bhorla (Payal, Ludhiana) in 1965; it is known as '*dera Tanda*'; he used to pose himself as Guru Gobind Singh and used to have a *kalgi* (aigrette); he was asked to mend his ways but he did not bother and was killed by the militants in 1994.

Some other *deras* include *dera* of **Piara Bhaniara** who was a fourth class employee of the Forest Department of the Punjab Government; he encroached upon forest land and established his *dera*; though he did not have much following but some politicians began visiting him with a hope to get votes: these included Buta Singh (central minister during Indira and Rajiv regimes), Gurdev Singh Badal (a Badal loyalist), Chowdhry Jagjit Singh (Congress leader), Charanjit Singh Channi, Kashi Ram (of BSP) too;¹⁶¹ per chance most of these belonged to *dalit* (depressed classes) because Bhaniara

¹⁶¹ On the 5th of June 2002 Sukhdev Singh Bhaur (of Tohra group) alleged that Kirpal Singh Badungar, president of the SGPC too was a follower of Bhaniara; the latter, however, denied the charges.

himself is a *dalit*. In order to come into highlight Bhaniara went to the extent of burning a volume of Guru Granth Sahib on the 18th of September 2001¹⁶² (at first Badal did not take any action against him but when the Sikh organisations issued aggressive statements, he had to act; when Bhaniara came to know about his possible arrest he went into hiding in the forest area but was finally nabbed on the 26th of September; 148 of his companions too had been arrested; trial against him was going on still in December 2011)

Another *dera* was set up in Nurmahal town by Ashutosh, a former convict in a fraud case; he had been commissioned by the RSS;¹⁶³ the latter, as well as the Third Agency provided him heavy funds and he hired several Sikh girls in the name of giving them jobs and converted them into his cult agents. Ashutosh *dera* came into prominence when, on the 20th of April 2002, Shardha Nand, one of his followers, openly attacked Sikhism in a lecture delivered at Tarn Taran and this lecture was relayed from a local TV station; when some Sikh youth took notice to his utterings they alerted alarm and several Sikhs began marching towards the venue of his lecture; the police immediately surrounded the area and escorted Shardha Nand from the place; this was followed by skirmishes between the Sikhs and the Ashutoshias in which 36 persons were injured. On the 21st of August the Nurmahal *dera* officials made a lame apology for Shardha Nand's words which was rejected by the Sikhs. It was followed by a struggle against this cult; several skirmishes took place in different parts of the Punjab; the police always protected this religious Mafia cult (for details, see: Appendix).¹⁶⁴

¹⁶² Bhaniara's followers burned another 7 volumes of Guru Granth Sahib at village Tarkhan Majra (near Sarhind) on the 30th of September 2001.

¹⁶³ It is interesting that the land on which he set up his *dera* had been donated by Badal family; Badal's wife Surinder herself used to visit him; Sital Singh, Badal group's MLA from Dharamkot (and son-in-law of Gurdev Badal) was is a committed follower of Ashutosh.

¹⁶⁴ Its extreme came when the *dera* arranged a show at Ludhiana on the 5th of December 2009; this show was organised by the BJP (a partner of Badal

The latest *dera* to attract crowds as well as amass billions of rupees was established by a young boy **Ranjit Singh of Dhaddarianwala** (born 1983)¹⁶⁵ who, due to his young age and good voice and memory, attracted thousands of people for about five years; however his influence decreased after 2010 but by that time he had amassed hundreds of billions of rupees from the Sikhs. Another new *dera* came up at village **Tarmala** (near Moga); it was begun by **Sewa Singh**, a former militant associated with Babar Khalsa (founded by Jathedar Talwinder Singh); Sewa Singh was involved in several militant actions against Nirankaris in 1981-82; later he was arrested and imprisoned in Tihar Jail Delhi where he was won over by the RSS and the Indian Intelligence Agencies; later he was released to carry the mission in which he is engaged since then.

Womanisers and Sex maniacs: Among the *deredaars* several persons are especially known as womanisers and Sex maniacs; these include Gurmit (of Sirsa Dera), Harnam Singh Dhumma (of Chowk Mehta), Maan Singh (of Pehowa), Amar Singh (of Barundi), Daljit Singh (of Chicago), Laddo Singh (of Nakodar), Dhanwant Singh (Nawanshahr); among these Laddo Singh and Dhanwant Singh have already been convicted by the courts; several cases of rape, kidnapping, murders and fraud etc, committed in these *deras*, have been reported in the press from time to time.¹⁶⁶

Another infamous *deredaar* is **Balwant Singh Sidhsar Sihorewala**; he claims himself as a follower of Atar Singh Mastuana; he claims his association with Jatha Bhindran-

in the government) and the RSS and the audience was all BJP 'clients'; the Sikhs protested against this gathering; Badal's police fired at the Sikhs killing one and wounding several.

¹⁶⁵ He was just a boy who used to perform *keertan* and sing poems but soon he became popular; he did not belong to any 'baba' but he aligned himself to Nand Singh and Ishar Singh of Kaleran in order to attract their followers to his gatherings.

¹⁶⁶ Sukhwinder Singh, of Sabhran village, has published the criminal activities of these *saadhs* and *deredaars* in *Santan de Kautik*, 5 volumes (more volumes in progress).

Mehta too; he has quite a big following in Sangrur district; he travels with an entourage of armed bodyguards as well as police security; Balwant Singh has no love for Sikhism; it is he who helped Baljit Singh takeover the *dera* of Udasi Mahant Heera Das of Kuli Kalan and converted Baljit Singh into Baljit Dass (on 13th of November 1994). Balwant behaves as a guru and an attendant always waves a *chaur* (a sort of whisk waved over Guru Granth Sahib as a mark of respect) over his head and a *narsingha* (trumpet) is played when he enters in a congregation hall. Balwant Singh has been committing acts of sacrilege of Guru Granth Sahib since long; he loves people make obeisance to him in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib; in 1996, the caretaker of Akal Takht issued an edict asking the Sikhs to boycott him; however ignorant Sikhs have never bothered for this edict; even the Akali leaders have ignored this edict; in one of the functions, in 2009, Simranjeet Singh Maan too was caught in camera while bowing before him; and Maan immediately apologised for this. It is this Balwant Sihorewala who is responsible for construction of a parallel Darbar Sahib in Mastuana.

These are the major *deras*; besides the *deras* at Beas (Radhsoami), Sirsa (Sacha Sauda), Bhaini (Kooka/Namdhari), Nurmahal (Divya Jyoti) are very powerful anti-Sikh *deras*; they have complete support and protection from the central government and the Punjab Government too fully collaborates with them; these *deras* behave as Mafia cults; most of them have their private armies; the police and the administrative officials have liaison and clandestine relations with these *deras*. This is in fact “religious mafia world” which fools simple people and emotionally blackmails them.

The Sikhs are the worst victims of these *deras*; these *deras* don't preach Sikhism; they practice a sort of Hinduism; they don't celebrate Gurburabs; their major events are birth/death days of their predecessors/founders; these *deras* encourage worship of their chiefs and they themselves behave as gods (they even encourage people to wash their feet with

water and then drink the dirty water); they live lives of luxury and most of them live licentious lives.

There are about 15000 such *saadh*s in 12655 villages and 195 cities and towns of the Punjab; it means that there is at least one *saadh* in each village; of these 15000 *deras* 10 are class A+ *deras* (with income of several crores of rupees an year),¹⁶⁷ 20 are class A *deras* (with income in a couple of crores an year), 100 are class B+ *deras* (with income of tens of lakhs an year) and 500 are class C *deras* (with an income of a few lakhs an year) and the rest are class D *deras* (with an income of a couple of lakhs an year); besides these *saadh*s own about one hundred thousand acres of land in the Punjab.

Usage of term Sant

The 'plague' of *dera*-ism began under the patronage by the English rulers as well as Brahmins who wanted to wean the Sikhs away from Guru Granth Sahib; this could not have been achieved by preaching against the Gurus or in favour of another religion; so these two forces created the class of so-called 'sant'; in Sikhism i.e. in Guru Granth Sahib the term '*sant*' has been used for Waheguru/God (see: *Sukhmani Sahib* hymn); no human being can be worshipped or venerated to a so-called 'holy' status; in Sikh history one finds BHAJI as the mode of address of respect/esteem (e.g. Bhai Mardana, Bhai Manjh, Bhai Gurdas, Bhai Jetha, Bhai Pheru, Bhai Mani Singh, Bhai Daya Singh, Bhai Dharam Singh and hundreds and thousands more); the terms *sant*, *braham gyani*, *baba*, *mahapurakh* did not exist at all, nowhere in history; one can't find any of these terms in any Sikh book published up to later part of the nineteenth century. Term 'sant' was first used for Atar Singh of Mastuana in the first decade of the twentieth century and that even by the Brahmins. Pandit Madan Mohan

¹⁶⁷ These include Beas, Sirsa, Kaleran, Mastuana, Rara, Dhaddarian, Pehowa, Dodra, Chowk Mehta, Nahar Singh Sunehrawala *dera*, Bhaini and Nurmahal *dera* (Ashutosh gets money from Intelligence agencies).

Malvia first used this term for Atar Singh;¹⁶⁸ Malvia was a cunning Brahmin who used to butter up the Sikhs by using sweet and tricky words and sentences in order to use them for his purposes; simple Sikhs would not read his word between the lines and become victims of his cunning manoeuvres. On one hand he would say: 'All the Hindu families should initiate at least one child as Sikh' and on the other hand it was he who laid the foundation of Durgiana Mandir at Amritsar, in 1922, which resulted into clashes between the Sikhs and the Hindus (he did not establish a temple in any other part of the Punjab but chose Amritsar to exhibit rivalry and competition, and, further, he especially chose to build this temple in imitation of Darbar Sahib). Even after Atar Singh the term 'sant' could not be adopted though Teja Singh (successor of Atar Singh) of Mastuana liked himself to be addressed as '*sant*'. On the 16th of November 1920 he had announced at Akal Takht Sahib that he won't allow anyone to address him as 'sant'.¹⁶⁹ The term 'sant' became popular in the Punjab after 1960s; it is interesting to note that even Kaleran, Rara and Chowk Mehta did not use the

¹⁶⁸ It has been propagated that Madan Mohan Malvia asked Atar Singh to lay down the foundation stone of the building of Banaras Hindu University; this is not true, in fact Atar Singh laid foundation of just one hostel building, and, Malvia manoeuvred all this so that he could use Atar Singh to get donations from the Sikh rulers; and the Sikh rulers did grant lavish donations for that university; it is believed that out of the total amount collected by that university at that time, more than 75% had been contributed by Patiala, Faridkot, Jind and other Sikh rulers.

¹⁶⁹ On the 16th of November 1920 when the first SGPC was formed and members were selected it was resolved that the religious credentials of all the members should be verified; hence *Punj Piaray* (the Five Chosen Ones; literally 'five beloved ones') were selected which were given the duty to verify the religious credentials of the selected members; the *Punj Piaray* selected for this purpose included: Balwant Singh Kulla, Bawa Harkishan Singh, Master Mota Singh, Jathedar Teja Singh Bhuchchar and Prof. Teja Singh Mastuana; objections were raised against the selection of Prof. Teja Singh that he allowed Sikhs call him a *sant* and bow before him; at this, he declared before Akal Takht Sahib: **"I will not allow anyone to bow before me and even address me as *sant*"** (Weekly *Panch*, 8.12.1920.).

term ‘sant’ even up to 1960s; all of them used ‘Baba’ (literally: elder) for the founders and the chiefs of their *deras*; even up to 1993, when the militant movement in the Punjab was at its zenith, there were not many so-called ‘sants’ in the Punjab; this epidemic is a product of fall of the militants and it is a result of manoeuvring of the Intelligence agencies under the blessings of the RSS.

Usage of term Baba: Term ‘Baba’ too is not in consonance with the Sikh philosophy; in Sikh history this prefix or word of reverence has been used for Guru Nanak only; he has been frequently mentioned as Baba Nanak and Guru Baba Nanak in all the *Janamsakhis*;¹⁷⁰ in later literature too Guru Nanak has been mentioned as Baba; it is remarkable to note that Baba has not been used as prefix or suffix for any other Guru; and no Sikh has been mentioned as Baba; all the prominent Sikhs have been mentioned as Bhai.¹⁷¹ Except that for Guru Nanak, the term Baba was first used for Bhai Buddha by some writers on the plea that he was more than one hundred and twenty-five years old (6.10.1506 – 17.11.1631), perhaps most aged person in Sikh history.¹⁷² Baba has also been used for Deep Singh (1682 – 11.11.1757) by some writer but Deep Singh has become popular recently; the first writer to mention him, and elevate him, was Giani Gian Singh (1822-1921) in his book ‘*Panth Parkash*’ (written in 1880); Deep Singh’s name does not find mention in Ratan Singh Bhangu, Santokh Singh or any other writer of the nineteenth century. Several Sikh elite realise that the people of Majha gave special importance to Buddha and Deep Singh because they belonged to Majha, and they were Jatt, interestingly Baba is not used for Bhai Mani Singh (10.3.1644 – 24.6.1734) who was fifteen years older

¹⁷⁰ *Nanak Vedi* and *Guru Nanak (Bhai Bala vaali Janamsakhi)*, *Guru **Baba** Nanak (Meharban vaali Janamsakhi)*, ***Baba** Nanak (Vilayat vaali Janamsakhi)*, *Guru Nanak, **Baba** Ji*, ***Baba** Nanak Ji* and *Guru Nanak Sahib Ji (Bhai Mani Singh vaali Janamsakhi)*.

¹⁷¹ For example Bhai Mardana, Bhai Gurdas, Bhai Mani Singh, Bhai Daya Singh, Bhai Dharam Singh and hundreds and thousands more.

¹⁷² Some people consider Sri Chand as the oldest (8.9.1494 – 9.11.1626 i.e. 132 years) but he was an Udasi and not a Sikh; Guru Nanak Sahib had rejected because he had never obeyed his father Guru Nanak.

than Deep Singh and the former's family had contributed 56 martyrs during the Sikh national struggle, but he did not belong to the Majha area nor he was a Jatts (he was a Parmar Rajput). The Sikh elite consider it Majha/Jatt chauvinism/racism; such prejudices are by products of tribal nature of some communities which has harmed the Sikh nation most.

Sikhs and the graves and temples: In Sikhism bowing before a grave/tomb/*samadh* is an act liable to *tankhah* (literally: salary) which is a religious indictment, it is almost like of *patitpuna* (apostasy) which means straying away from religion; it is amazing to find thousands of Sikhs making obeisance on the graves of Muslim faqirs including that of Sheikh Fatta;¹⁷³ some Sikhs can be seen worshipping in Hindu temples, bowing before idols of fictitious figures. This is all post 1962 phenomenon; when Fateh Singh group captured the SGPC; it almost stopped Sikh missionary activities and simple village folk and illiterate Sikhs began visiting graves and temples; during the management of Master Tara Singh regular missionary activities, and, religious training camps were being arranged at various places from time to time but all this was stopped after 1962; besides the Gurdwaras became den of immoral, criminal and sinful activities; all this suited *saadhhs* who behave almost like Hindu priests. But this profane activity of worshipping Muslim graves and Hindu temples gained more impetus when Parkash Singh Badal became a member of the RSS in 1994 and began openly performing Hindu religious ceremonies and rituals of *yajna*, *havan*, *pooja*; some sycophant Sikhs began joining him just to win his favour but this epidemic reached its peak when Badal captured power in 2007; this has harmed the Sikh faith most; in the past three hundred years such rape of Sikh philosophy and way of life has never been seen in the Sikh history.

¹⁷³ He is considered as one of those who were responsible for the martyrdom of Guru Arjan.

So-called Dasam Granth: A Conspiracy

In Sikhism Guru Granth Sahib is the Guru Eternal for the Sikhs; this status was granted by Guru Gobind Singh on the 6th of October 1708, a few hours before his death. Guru Granth Sahib was compiled in 1604 and it was installed in Darbar Sahib on the 16th of August 1604; later, in 1678, Guru Gobind Singh added hymns composed by Guru Tegh Bahadur; it was this volume that was granted the status of 'Guru Eternal'; as it was given final touches at Damdama Sahib (in Anandpur Sahib) it was known as *damdamay waali beerh* (literally: volume prepared at Damdama).

In August-September 2004 quad-centenary of compilation of the first volume of Guru Granth Sahib was celebrated at Amritsar; at that time Amarinder Singh was the C.M. of the Punjab, Manmohan Singh was the P.M. of India and Alwinderpal Singh Pakkhole was the acting president of the SGPC (since the death of Gurcharan Singh Tohra no new president could be elected till 23rd of September 2004).

During these celebrations the first function, held in front of Darbar Sahib complex on the 31st of August 2004, was presided over by Abdul Kalam Azad, the President of India; the President was presented ceremonial *siropao*; Captain Amarinder Singh, the C.M., who had escorted the President was not presented any *siropao* while all other dignitaries were presented with a *siropao* and a shawl (by this time Tohra was dead and Manjit Singh Calcutta was no more Secretary of the SGPC); to quote Varinder Walia, Reporter for *The Tribune* "the lack of vision on the issue of *siropao* also created an unsavoury situation as 'discriminatory approach' and revengeful treatment with the C.M. by Badal in the Darbar Sahib could not be acceptable to the Sikh sangat. The denial of *Serape* outside the information office of the SGPC to Amarinder Singh, along with the President of India and giving the same inside Darbar Sahib by none other than Head Granthi the next day baffled many. The SGPC itself had stopped the practice of presenting *Siropao* to the visiting dignitaries by the Sikh high priests long ago. The only exception was Queen Elizabeth, who was honoured in her capacity as symbolic head of the

Church in Great Britain. However, the Head Granthi honoured the 'patit' Sikhs in the Darbar Sahib who either cut or dye their hair.... The stage secretary, Capt Kanwaljit Singh, General Secretary, Shiromani Akali Dal, did not acknowledge even the presence of the Chief Minister's wife Maharani Praneet Kaur, who is also Member Parliament... The President sensed the cold vibes as soon as he arrived. On stage, he smiled affably at all the dignitaries present and then gestured to the Chief Minister to come close to him. As he came near, Dr Kalam caught his hand and made it touch that of Mr Badal. And, as if to reinforce his wish 'to transcend the limitations of our narrow self-interest and think of the collective good of society' he placed his own hand over those of the warring duo."¹⁷⁴

During this function an attempt by Badal to project himself as "religious leader" was to get himself seated in the chariot meant for carrying Guru Granth Sahib from Ramsar Gurdwara to the Darbar Sahib along with his *patit* (apostate) security personnel, which clearly amounted to the violation of *maryada*. The wheel of the chariot broke due to the excess weight of 'un-authorised persons', with the result that the head *granthi* had to carry Guru Granth Sahib on his head for some distance.¹⁷⁵

Badal authorised Jagir Kaur¹⁷⁶ to conduct the second day's function on the 1st of September; the invitees to this function included Atal Bihari Vajpayee (former P.M. of BJP) and several leaders of Hindu cults,¹⁷⁷ as the Congress Party was ruling both in the state and the Centre the Akalis had no choice but to invite the C.M. and the P.M. on this occasion,

¹⁷⁴ *The Tribune*, dated 1.9.2004

¹⁷⁵ *The Tribune*, dated 3.9.2004

¹⁷⁶ When she called Mr Badal to address the gathering in the presence of Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, Mr Atal Bihari Vajpayee, a former Prime Minister, and a galaxy of leaders from different faiths and other sections of society, she crossed all the limits of flattery and sycophancy; during all the time the names of Surinder Kaur Badal (wife of Badal) and Sukhbir Badal were repeated by her (*The Tribune*, dated 3.9.2004); and this earned her the presidency of the SGPC within three weeks.

¹⁷⁷ But the leaders of the rival Akali factions were conspicuous by their absence; in fact Badal had not invited them to join the mega event.

hence Amarinder Singh and Manmohan Singh both attended the function on that day. When Amarinder Singh was invited to address the congregation he first asked Harwinder Hanspal, a Kooka to read out message of Sonia Gandhi, the President of the Congress Party and the Chairperson of the Central coalition regime;¹⁷⁸ it was a controversial move because the Kookas are not Sikhs and they don't believe Guru Granth Sahib as Guru. Another controversial person on the stage was Virsa Singh (chief of a *dera*) who had the blessings of RSS and other anti-Sikh forces and he had always been under instructions from the RSS; however he had to stop his speech without completing it because the mike was switched off apprehending that he might say something wrong (he is known for uttering unpleasant and irrelevant remarks).¹⁷⁹

Birth of the so-called Dasam Granth¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁸ It was an undesirable act because the SGPC had not invited Sonia Gandhi because she was the wife of Rajiv Gandhi who was also fully responsible for attack on Darbar Sahib in June 1984. Even later when, on the 28th of December 2006, Sonia Gandhi and on the 23rd of September 2008 Rahul Gandhi visited Darbar Sahib they were not presented ceremonial *sirapas*; Sonia was not allowed even to enter Akal Takht.

¹⁷⁹ Though there is a lot of corruption in the SGPC but since Badal took over its command it has become a den of corruption. During the celebrations of quad-centenary of Guru Granth Sahib too more than a million rupees were squandered for publicity of Badal and much more was embezzled. The Executive of the SGPC had passed a tender of fifteen lakh rupees but, as per the statement of Gurvinder Singh Shampura (member SGPC) the bill submitted for payments was 27 lakh rupees thus 12 lakh rupees were embezzled; this bill had been recommended by Jaswinder Singh Advocate and Rajinder Singh Mehta, the two members of the SGPC. When the function was held Alwinderpal Singh Pakhoke was the acting president but within 25 days Jagir Kaur had taken charge from him hence it can't be said as to who was responsible for the bungling.

¹⁸⁰ It is a book consisting of the translations of works of Hindu mythology like *Chaubis Awtar* and other *Awtars*, *Chandi Charitar* etc as well as extremely erotic writings like *Charitropakhyan*, and, to place it alongside Guru Granth Sahib is utter insult to Guru Granth Sahib as well as sacrilege of the Gurdwara. Dr Jasbir Singh Mann of the USA, while delivering a lecture on the topic of 'Fresh Look at Dasam Granth: Analysis of its Text and History' organised by the department of Guru Granth Sahib Studies

The above mentioned quad-centenary of Guru Granth Sahib was celebrated in 2004 and the ter-centenary of installation of Guru Granth Sahib was to be observed in October 2008; anti-Sikh forces were worried over the publicity given to Guru Granth Sahib during these celebrations. These forces had succeeded in damaging the ter-centenary of Khalsa in 1999 by creating division in the Akali Dal as well as marring the celebrations by corrupting the proceedings through Parkash Singh Badal. These forces were worried over the glorification of Guru Granth Sahib which was going to be doubled in 2008, and, that would have added to the propagation of the concept of Word-Guru; hence, after serious and long deliberations it was planned that a new concept should be promoted in order to depreciate Guru Granth Sahib and this conspiracy resulted into promotion of the book known as (so-called) Dasam Granth. The (so-called) Dasam Granth is no granth or scripture, it is not at all religious in nature, what to talk of a revealed *baani* (hymns) it is not even any original work (these verses are just translations, mostly of some of the sections of the fictional work *Markanday Puran*). In 2006, the fanatic Hindu organisation RSS and the Intelligence Agencies' sponsored *saadh* Mafia and the *deras* began promoting this collection of translations as a granth and soon they began presenting it as a rival of Guru Granth Sahib; so much so that they even declared the 13th of November 2006 as tercentenary of its compilation and announced holding of a function at Dyalpura Bhaika village (in Bathinda district); and, the function included so-called *akhand path* of this book which

under the Guru Nanak Smirti Lecture series in the Senate Hall of Punjabi University, said that "*compilation of the granth started outside Punjab in Patna, probably around 1775 by Nirmalas Nawal Singh, Dyal Singh and Granthi Sukha Singh. This granth came to Punjab in the early 19th century and was converted into one published as 'Sri Dasam Granth Sahibji' in 1897.*" He further said that the tenth Guru had sanctified only one granth and that is Guru Granth Sahib." Daily Times of India, dated 10.12.2003. Also see: Appendix I.

was to be installed along with Guru Granth Sahib; this was also grave sacrilege of Guru Granth Sahib.

This function had been arranged mainly by Bhindran-Mehta Jatha and its associate *dereedaars* (chiefs of cult centres) in collaboration with some ignorant Nihangs; and, in this function the book so-called Dasam Granth was installed by the side of Guru Granth Sahib, thus violating not only the Sikh *Rahitmaryada* (issued from Akal Takht) itself but also a recent directive by Joginder Singh Vedanti prohibiting *parkash* (installation) of the so-called Dasam Granth or any other book in a Gurdwara. All this was done publically and all the five *granthis*, including Vedanti himself, attended this function; and, Vedanti defied his own orders under which he had forbidden installation of this book along with Guru Granth.

When this information became public several Sikh organisations and the Sikh intelligentsia condemned it; by that time *Rozana Spokesman* a daily Punjabi newspaper had been launched. Dr Harjinder Singh Dilgeer, the founder of Gurmat Taksal approached Joginder Singh, the editor of the paper, and requested, him to publish an appeal to the Sikhs asking them not to attend a function that insults Guru Gobind Singh and Guru Granth Sahib; Joginder Singh gladly agreed and the appeal was published in the issue of 11th of November; in this appeal Dr Dilgeer had given some excerpts from the so-called Dasam Granth; signatories to this one page appeal included principals of several missionary colleges, leaders of various organisations and several Sikh leaders and other elite from different countries.¹⁸¹ This insertion in *Rozana Spokesman* created

¹⁸¹ Other signatories on this letter included Mohinder Singh Josh, Rajinder Singh Khalsa Panchayat, Ravinder Singh Khalsa Panchayat, Gurtej Singh, Jasbinder Singh Dubai, Harbans Kaur Faridabad, Inder Singh Ghagga, Sukhwinder Singh Sabhra, Gurcharan Singh Missionary, Giani Harbans Singh Tegh, Harmohinder Singh Dhillon, Joginder Singh Deep, Kirpal Singh Bathinda, Harlaj Singh Bahadarpur, Giani Jagtar Singh Jachak, Giani Surjit Singh Delhi, Baldev Singh Delhi, Sarbjit Singh *India Awareness*, Col Gurdeep Singh, Sukhdev Singh Missionary, Dr Tarlochan Singh, Jagmohan Singh Giani, Upkar Singh Faridabad, Surjeet Singh Moga, Amanpreet

a hue and cry in the Sikh world and the Sikhs condemned conspiracy to call an erotic book as Guru-writing. The Sikhs totally boycotted the function at Dyalpura Bhaika. The same day, on the 13th of November 2006, the Khalsa Panchayat, Gurmat Taksal and several other Sikh organisations also held a function in Gurdwara sector 46 at Chandigarh and condemned insult to Guru Granth Sahib at Dyalpura Bhaika.

Though the Sikh elite, with the help of *Rozana Spokesman*, had succeeded in alarming the Sikh nation about the Dasam Granth conspiracy of the anti-Sikh forces but these forces formed a Mafia comprising of the RSS sponsored *deras* and like cults and began propaganda to defame all those who were in the front line of the movement to expose the Dasam Granth conspiracy; the major

Singh Ludhiana, Dr Maan Singh Nirankari, Principal Narinder Singh Jammu, Pritpal Singh Utranchal, Amrik Singh Dharmi Fauji, Harbhajan Singh of Sikh Missionary College Ludhiana, Kanwar Mahinder Partap Singh and Inderjeet Singh Rana of Gurmat Gian Missionary College Ludhiana, Harjit Singh of Sikh Missionary College Jalandhar, Kirpal Singh of Missionary College Faridabad, Gurbakhsh Singh of Missionary College Chaunta-Rupar, Surinder Singh of Missionary College Anandpur Sahib, Joginder Singh Fauji Tarn Taran, Jagjit Singh Missionary Jammu, Manmohan Singh Jammu, Tarlochan Singh Dupalpur USA, Prabhjeet Singh Dhawan Dubai, Raghbir Singh U.A.E., Jageer Singh England, Baljinder Singh Norway, Kulwinder Singh Spain, Surjeet Singh Chhadauri Belgium, Ranbir Singh Abu Dhabi etc.

This letter was also signed and published abroad in *The Sikh Bulletin* (published from the USA); it was signed by: Hardev Singh Shergill, editor *The Sikh Bulletin*, Sarbjit Singh, Sacramento USA, Avtar Singh Missionary, *Guru Granth Parchar Mission* of USA, Jaspal Singh, Silver Spring, USA, Gulbarg Singh Basi, Atlanta, USA, Ujagar Singh Gill, Chicago, USA, Raja Singh, Secretary, The Sikh House, USA, Gurmit Singh, Sydney, Australia, Jarnail Singh, Castle Hill, Australia, Bawa Singh Jagdev, Sydney, Australia, Balbinder Singh, Australia, Gurcharan Singh Brar, *Singh Sabha International*, Canada, Gurpreet Singh Samra, Brampton, Canada, *Singh Sabha International* U.K. members: Avtar Singh, Sewa Singh, Nirmaljit Singh, Maninderpal Singh, Tejinder Singh, Sukhdev Singh, Tejinderpal Singh, Swaran Singh, Manjit Singh, Nirmal Singh, Bibi Sukhraj Kiran Kaur, Kamaljit Kaur, Harpal Kaur, Ranjit Kaur, Balwinderjit Kaur, Gurbachan Singh Sidhu, Sikh Aid International Nottingham (UK), Giani Jarnail Singh Arshi Malaysia, Balreet Kaur Khalsa Malaysia etc.

victims were Professor Darshan Singh, Dr Harjinder Singh Dilgeer, Gurcharan Singh Jiunwala, Inder Singh Ghagga, Jagtar Singh Jachak, Sarbjit Singh Dhunda and the Sikh missionary colleges; Gurbakhsh Singh Kala Afghana and Joginder Singh Spokesman had already been ‘excommunicated’ by the Udasi-Nirmala priests (i.e. Dasam Granth Mafia) of Akal Takht.¹⁸²

Sirsa *dera* chief impersonates the tenth Guru and insults *Amrit*

On the 13th of May 2007, daily *Ajit*, a newspaper published from Jalandhar, published a photo of Gurmeet Ram, the Sirsa *dera* chief, posing himself in the dress of the tenth Guru drinking some sweet syrup in the name of *Amrit*. It was impersonation of, and insult to, the Guru; and, it created great resentment and anger among the Sikhs. On the 20th of May 2007, Joginder Singh Vedanti issued a so-called *hukamnama* in the name of Akal Takht, asking the Sikhs to stop functioning of the *deras* of the Sirsa cult in the Punjab(but this was never

¹⁸² Akal Takht was occupied by Bhindran-Mehta Jatha on the 26th of January 1986; though it was freed from this *jatha* in May 1988 but in 1999 Badal appointed Puran Singh as caretaker of Akal Takht; he belonged to Chowk Mehta cult; he was removed in 2008; his successor Joginder Singh Vedanti too was a student of this cult; in 2008 Vedanti too was dismissed and Gurbachan Singh was brought in; when he became caretaker of Akal Takht he crossed all the limits and began seeking instructions only from Harnam Singh Dhumma, the chief of Dera Chowk Mehta (Gurbachan Singh was not a student of Chowk Mehta Dera; he had joined Gurdwara at Muktsar just as a ‘sewadar’ i.e. peon but later he became a *granthi*); hence since 1999 Akal Takht is in the grip of this cult and they have introduced the Udasi-Nirmala *maryada* at Akal Takht and Darbar Sahib (in August 2011 this *Dasam Granth Mafia* joined hands with Badal; hence since then they are in complete occupation of all the Gurdwaras managed by the SGPC).

implemented because Parkash Singh Badal had made a secret deal with the Sirsa chief during the Lok Sabha elections). The Sikhs however held several processions and during one of these processions held on the 17th of May 2007, one Sikh named Kamaljit Singh, of Sangrur, was killed by followers of Sirsa cult who fired on the Sikhs from inside the Salabatpura *dera* (in Bathinda district) of this cult¹⁸³ (Badal government did not arrest anyone for this murder). Harnam Singh Dhumma was also one of those who led the Sikh protests but he disappeared after having received message from the 'higher sources.'

The Sirsa cult had supported Congress Party during Punjab Assembly election of 2007 hence Badal wanted to take action against the chief of the cult; Badal did register a case against him but his arrest could not be effected and in the meanwhile he succeeded in getting anticipatory bail.

During this period several mediators tried to diffuse the situation; they tried to seek an apology from the chief of the cult; several secret meetings were held between the senior members of this cult and the Congress leaders; even Parmjit Singh Sarna and Jasbir Singh Rode made an attempt (a meeting was held at the Mohali residence of Ranbir Singh Khatra SSP where these two Sikh leaders were present) but during all these negotiations the Sirsa cult continued playing tricks; all they agreed was to sign a letter (which was no apology at all) which was signed by some senior leaders of this

¹⁸³ The Sikhs, mainly young men, took out procession in several places; protestors organised marches at several places, including Patiala, Karnal and Yamuna Nagar, and a partial *band* was observed in the Sikh city of Amritsar; the shutdown was complete in the walled city. There were clashes between the Sikhs and the followers of Sirsa cult at many places (most of these incidents took place in Bathinda district); a group of 100 Sikhs, returning from Talwandi Sabo, attacked a *dera* property at Ram Nagar near Maur Mandi in Bathinda district, injuring 22 people, including a policeman. One of the injured was seriously hurt. Some 80 policemen were deployed in the area but did nothing. In Mansa, a chowk named after the *dera* was demolished. In Bathinda, *dera* followers surrounded Kila Gurdwara while a number of Sikh devotees were inside.

cult; and there were no signatures or names; they had put a tick mark and seven slashes on this mark symbolising signs by those seven members; hence it was just a ‘drama;’ the mediators accepted it but the Sikhs did not; hence the melee between the Sikhs and Sirsa cult continued (it is still the same situation) but no major incident has taken place.

Badal’s collaboration with Sirsa cult

The Lok Sabha elections were going to be held on the 7th and the 13th of May 2009 (in the Punjab);¹⁸⁴ Badal’s daughter-in-law Harsimrat was contesting Bathinda seat; she was opposed by Raninder Singh (son of former CM Captain Amarinder Singh); during these elections Badal group was sure to lose most of the seats (if not all) hence to save himself from massive defeat he made a secret deal with the Sirsa cult chief Gurmit Ram and the leaders of this cult worked day and night and contacted all their followers asking them to vote for Badal’s candidates; as the cult had big following among the *dalits* voters of this area Badal’s candidates captured all the three seats (Bathinda, Faridkot and Ferozpur); after wholehearted support by Sirsa cult Badal extended all help to this cult and even let the case against its chief be dropped.

On one hand Badal dropped the case against the chief of Sirsa cult and on the other hand he registered false cases against several Sikhs just to please the chief of Sirsa cult; notable among such cases was the human bomb case registered by Samana police, on the 9th of October 2009, against Bakhshish Singh Baba, Bagicha Singh, Amarjit Singh Marori and Gobind Kaur (alias Parveen Kaur alias Gurpreet Kaur); all four were acquitted by Samana Judge on the 6th of December 2011; besides this case there were three more cases against Bakhshish Singh Baba and one against Amarjit Singh Marori.¹⁸⁵ Badal harassed several Sikhs just to please the Sirsa

¹⁸⁴ Elections were held in five phases between the 16th of April and 13th of May 2009, results were declared on the 16th of May; in the Punjab the turnout was 69.58%.

¹⁸⁵ *Times of India*, dated 7.12.2011

cult and his sole purpose was to strengthen his vote bank among the followers of this cult.

Badal provides buses to the Sirsa *dera* to carry followers to attend their function: On the 11th of December 2011 Badal provided free bus service to the followers of this cult to participate in a function of the cult at Sirsa; only at Muktsar at least two dozen buses were provided to the cult; these included buses (all numbers begin with PV): PV-30-D-902, 903, 904, 956, 907, 9010, 9005 and several other (this facility had never been provided to anyone in the history of the Punjab).¹⁸⁶

Rama Nand killed for committing sacrilege of Guru Granth Sahib

On the 24th of May 2009, Rama Nand, a *saadh*, who had been committing sacrilege by getting himself worshipped as a Guru in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib, was attacked and killed in the Ravidas Gurdwara (now Ravidas Bhawan) in Vienna (Austria) by five Sikhs; another *saadh* Nirranjan Das was also grievously injured. Both belonged to the *dera* at Ballan village, about 13 km from Jalandhar, and were on a tour to Austria; they had been committing this profane activity for a few years; first they had tried to practice it in Ravidas Bhawan at Birmingham (England) where they were stopped from doing it hence they had to leave the Bhawan. Even at Vienna the local Sikhs had asked them not to commit sacrilege of Guru Granth Sahib but they did not bother for warnings and continued this nefarious act; this infuriated the Sikhs and some of them decided to stop it by all means; hence on that day they went to the venue of congregation and fired at Ramanand and

¹⁸⁶ *Rozana Spokesman*, dated 12.12.2011

Sarwan Das with a rusty, old 9mm gun. At that time about 300 persons were present there; they pounced upon these five Sikhs and continued beating them with sticks, rods and knives; one of them even fired upon them; they poured all the soup and curry on their faces and body that they had cooked for eating; by the time the police reached there all the five had fell unconscious.

The Sikhs who carried on this action were: Jaspal Singh (34), Charanjit Singh (24), a resident of U.P., Hardeep Singh (33), Sukhvinder Singh (28), a resident of Haryana, Satvinder Singh (28) from U.P. and Tarsem Singh (45), a resident of Gujarat state. They were arrested and taken to hospital where they were treated; four of them were in serious condition and had to be kept in intensive care unit for several days and had to be operated for several times; it took one month to bring them into the state of complete consciousness. Later they were tried for murder and in September 2010 they were given long imprisonments; Jaspal Singh, who had shot Ramanand dead, was give life term in jail; four were given 17 to 18 year terms and the sixth was sentenced for six months.

Badal sends charter plan to bring the body of Ramanand

On the 2nd of June Badal sent a special 15-seater chartered plane to bring the body of Ramanand from Austria; a Punjab government delegation comprising of Avinash Chander MLA, D.S. Guru (principal secretary to C.M.) and Som Prakash (a retired IAS officer); a medical team to look after Sarwan Das, also accompanied them; this specially chartered plan which brought body from Vienna to Delhi and the helicopter which carried the body from Delhi to Jalandhar, cost the state rupees more than one crore. When the plan reached Delhi Union Ministers Ambika Soni, Kumari Shailja and Praneet Kaur reportedly were present at the airport when the body earlier arrived at New Delhi; then the body was airlifted in a helicopter to the *dera* in Ballan, near Jalandhar.

Ramanand was cremated with full state honours on the 4th of June; a large number of people attended the funeral; these included Parkash Singh and Sukhbir Badal, Maya Wati

(CM of U.P. state), Captain Amarinder Singh; thousands of police and paramilitary personnel on hand to maintain law and order.

Violence in the Punjab disrupts life of people

The day this incident happened, the *dalits* belonging to this *dera* began gathering in Jalandhar; they blocked the traffic and damaged public and private property worth billions; this disturbance spread to some more towns as well; this continued for three days; they set fire to trains, vehicles and dozens of public and private buildings in Punjab; a curfew was enforced in several major cities but sporadic incidents of violence still continued; protesters clashed with police in the south-western town of Malout where the official car of the sub-divisional magistrate was damaged; traffic on national highways was disrupted for several hours, finally the police and paramilitary forces moved to clear barricades and move away the protesting crowds; the trains in the state remained at a complete standstill - all scheduled services to Delhi, Jammu and Kashmir and to Amritsar had been cancelled - leaving an estimated 40,000 passengers either stranded at railway stations or at entry points to Punjab. During all this time the police did not try to stop them; as per senior police officials Badal had asked the police not to interfere and let the people have their way; in fact Badal wanted to appease the *dalits* in order to get their votes in the future elections. Later, when there was heavy criticism of Badal and the police some miscreants were arrested but Badal ordered them to be released without bringing charges against them; this too was done to appease them to get their votes. Later the Punjab High Court took the Punjab Government to task and asked it to explain that it had not brought to justice those who had indulged in violence.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁷ The Punjab Government tried to avoid telling truth to the High Court; at this, on the 11th of July 2011, the Court asked the Punjab Government to explain as to why it had failed to identify the persons who had committed violence; the Punjab Government had stated that it had registered 75 cases

Later, on the 12th of October 2010, Badal government passed 2 laws (Prevention of Damage to Public and Private Property Bill 2010 and the Punjab Special Security Group Bill 2010) to regulate agitations and demonstrations and punish people with imprisonment for damaging public and private property. The Bill had a provision of imprisonment up to three years and Rs. 20,000 fine against those damaging public and private property. Use of explosives to damage property warranted imprisonment of minimum one year and maximum five years with Rs. 50,000 fine. Later, on the 24th of November 2011 both these Bills were withdrawn on the pretext of passing them after suitable amendments.

Insult of Guru Granth Sahib by Badal and Gurbachan

Rama Nand had been killed because he had committed sacrilege of Guru Granth Sahib; but, on the 28th of May, Badal arranged an *akhand path* of Guru Granth Sahib for him in the premises of Darbar Sahib, in room number ten, on the back of Akal Takht; and, Badal himself attended it; others who attended included Gurbachan Singh caretaker of Akal Takht and other priests as well as Kiranjot Kaur. It was like arranging of *akhand path* of Guru Granth Sahib for Massa Ranghar, Ahmed Shah Durrani or *mahant* Narainu.

Badal passes law to stop criticism of anti-Sikh cults

During this period Badal held secret meetings with the chiefs of Radhasoami, Kooka (Namdhari), Divya Jyoti (Ashutosh *dera* at Nurmahal), Mastuana, Kaleran, Rara and Chowk Mehta (Harnam Singh Dhumma) who asked him to stop the Sikh intellectuals, missionaries, Sikh media and other Sikh elite from exposing the fraud played by them; at this Badal passed an amendment to sections 295 and 153. On the last day of the Punjab Assembly session, only a few hours five Bills, including these two amendments, were passed by majority vote (later the Governor too signed these amendments

against unidentified persons (34 in Jalandhar alone) and it had paid rupees 2.38 crores as compensation to those who had suffered loss due to violence.

and Gazette notification of this law was issued on the 28th of September 2010).

This amendment said that “*whoever with deliberate and malicious intention of outraging the religious feelings of any class of citizens of India, by words either spoken and or written or by signs or by visible representation or otherwise insults or attempts to insult the religious feelings or the religious beliefs of that class, shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than three years, but which may extend to ten years and shall be liable to fine*”; to make provision not to apply Section 438 of Criminal Procedure Code with respect to offences under Sections 153-A and 295-A of the Indian Penal Code and also that the offences would be tried by the Court of Session.

In the ‘Statement of objective and reasons’ Sukhbir Badal (home minister) said, “*In the recent past, publication in newspapers, textbooks causing disharmony, feelings of hatred between different religious, racial, language or regional groups or caste or communities have been reported. There is an urgent need to curb these kinds of incidents.*” Sukhbir did not name *Rozana Spokesman* but everyone knew to whom he was referring to. On the 12th of October 2010, Captain Amarinder Singh strongly opposed the Punjab Special Security Group Bill 2010 and alleged that that would curb the individual freedom and gag the Press; he further said that the bills were clear violation of freedom of expression provided in the Indian constitution. He said that during last hour of last day of the Assembly session five bills were moved on behalf of Deputy CM Sukhbir Badal. It included three amendments in the Cr. P.C. and one on special security group. He even threatened that Congress party would challenge it the High Court.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁸ *The Tribune*, dated 13.10.2010

BJP-RSS leaders in Sikh religious functions Quad-centenary of martyrdom of Guru Arjan Sahib

Quad-centenary of martyrdom of Guru Arjan Sahib was observed in June 2006; the main function was held at Tarn Taran, on the 16th of June 2006, where Badal had invited Rajnath Singh (president BJP), Sushma Swaraj¹⁸⁹ and other BJP/RSS leaders. While speaking from this Sikh dais Sushma Swaraj said that Chandu had no role in the martyrdom of Guru Arjan and only Jahangir was responsible for this; she in fact, wanted to exonerate a fellow Hindu. The following day her statement was criticised by the Sikh leaders from different shades, especially the historians, the Sikh intellectuals and other elite; she however, issued a statement declaring that she stood by what she had said at Tarn Taran.¹⁹⁰ On this occasion

¹⁸⁹ Suhma Swaraj was no friend of the Sikhs or the Punjab; rather she had openly opposed the interests of the Punjab. On the 12th of July 2004 Captain Amarinder Singh government passed 'Punjab Termination of Agreement Act' (PTAA). The very next day Lal Kishan Advani, Sushma Swaraj and several MPs of the BJP created pandemonium in Parliament and condemned the Punjab action.

¹⁹⁰ *The Indian Express*, dated 26.6.2006: She said: "I did not concoct a story. I quoted excerpts from a book, '*Jeevani Guru Arjan Sahib*', by Satbir Singh. It clearly states that Jehangir was primarily responsible for the execution of Guru Arjan Sahib as Sikhism was becoming popular fast because of its principles and teachings." Some Sikh scholars also endorsed Swaraj's views. Bhai Veer Singh Sahitya Sadan Director Mohinder Singh (allegedly a man of the Indian Intelligence Bureau) said: "In a way she is right. There was a war of succession and Jehangir had to take a hard-line to remain in power". Columnist Mahip Singh (known to be an RSS man)

Simranjeet Singh Maan was also present on the dais; Maan raised a voice for reviving the Anandpur Sahib Resolution of 1973 from the stage in the presence of BJP national president Rajnath Singh thereby putting Badal in an embarrassing position.

Tercentenary of victory of Sirhind by Banda Singh Bahadur

The main function to celebrate ter-centenary of victory of Sirhind (in 1710) was held at Chappar Chiri on the 13th of May 2010; Badal had invited Nitin Gadkari (president BJP), Balbir Punj (General Secretary BJP), Manoranjan Kalia (BJP minister in the Punjab) and all of them insulted Banda Singh Bahadur by calling him Banda Bairagi from the dais right in front of Parkash Singh Badal (C.M.), Harnam Singh Dhumma (chief of Chowk Mehta dera), Gurbachan Singh (caretaker Akal Takht); none dared to correct them; only once Daljeet Singh Cheema made correction by saying that the complete name of the hero who freed Sirhind in 1710 was Banda Singh Bahadur and not Banda Bairagi; later, in the evening, Badal took Cheema to task for daring to correct the RSS-BJP leaders.

Quad-centenary of revelation of Akal Takht

On the 2nd of July 2006, the SGPC celebrated quad-centenary of the laying of the foundation of the building of Akal Takht; the main function was held at Manji Sahib; it was attended by Parkash Singh Badal, Awtar Singh Makkar (president SGPC), Simranjeet Singh Maan (president Akali Dal Amritsar) and others; among the non-Sikhs present on the occasion was Kuldeep Nayyar; the Akalis presented him a reward along with a cheque of five lakh rupees for his 'services for the Panth.' As usual Badal Akalis refused to allow Maan to address from the stage; this was objected to by Maan's

supported her by quoting excerpts from Jehangir's autobiography in which the Mughal emperor mentioned why he ordered the execution: "In *Tuzuk-i-Jehangiri*, the emperor himself has used highly disparaging remarks against Sikhism and pledged to wipe it out."

supporters; it was followed by a scuffle between both sides; turbans of Avtar Singh Makkar, Simranjit Singh Mann and some other Sikh leaders fell off in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib; Guru Granth Sahib had to be carried away hastily; the Task Force of the SGPC, Akali MLAs and senior leaders of Badal group fled from the scene; they escorted Badal and the SGPC chief to a safer place but left Guru Granth Sahib unattended. In the no-holds-barred clash, members of Badal and Mann factions used swords, *lathis* and attacked one another with fists and blows; even the “ardas” of the religious function could not be completed. Commenting on this Badal and SGPC chief said it was the sole right of the SGPC to decide who would be allowed to speak or not. Mr Mann claimed that he had participated in the function on the appeal of Jathedars who had said the centenary should be celebrated jointly; it was not the function of Badal Dal only.¹⁹¹

On the 7th of July Vedanti issued orders asking the Sikhs not to allow Maan speak from any stage till he apologised for the incident of the 2nd of July; this order had been issued at the behest of Badal. Later, Maan appeared before the priests who ‘punished’ him; the priests however did neither summon Badal nor Makkar, thus proving their loyalty for Badal.

Vedanti had been playing like “Badal’s show boy” from the very first day; after his mistreatment with Maan, several Sikh elite condemned him openly; on the 16th of August, Manjit Singh Calcutta, who had been expelled by Badal from his Dal just a few week earlier (on the 8th of July), made most scathing attack on Vedanti¹⁹² in a press conference:

¹⁹¹ *The Tribune*, dated 3.7.2006 (report by Varinder Singh Walia).

¹⁹² Vedanti had been behaving shamelessly; he summoned Parmjit Singh saran several times; other anti Badal leaders too were summoned, and, these leaders appeared before him and added to his ego on one hand and became instrumental in establishing the anti-Sikh office of (so-called) Jathedar Akal Takht. On the 19th of February 2006, a gathering was held at the residence of Simranjeet Singh Maan at Fatehgarh Sahib, which condemned Vedanti’s

*“Vedanti is an unethical personality and most of his edicts issued during his tenure had been issued at the behest of Parkash Singh Badal in order to please him and without caring the Sikh religious tenets; there are some SGPC members who are allegedly accused of moral turpitude and criminal activities and Vedanti failed to initiate action, and, he even could not dare to ask them to appear before Akal Takht for explanation.”*¹⁹³ This press conference was attended by Simranjit Singh Mann (Akali Dal - Amritsar), Paramjit Singh Sarna (President SGPC), Rajinder Singh (Khalsa Panchayat), Mohkam Singh (Jatha Bhindran-Mehta), and Dr. Jagjit Singh Chauhan.¹⁹⁴

Baba Buddha’s quin-centenary at Kathu Nangal

On the 25th of October 2006, the SGPC arranged a function to celebrate the quin-centenary of Baba Buddha, a Sikh who lived or about 125 years and had been attending the court of the Gurus up to the time of Guru Hargobind Sahib; in this religious function the Badal Akali Dal had invited Om Parkash Chautala (former C.M. of Haryana) and Navjot Sidhu (comedian-cum-politician); when it became public Simranjeet Singh Maan declared that under no circumstances would his party tolerate that the glorious history of Sikhs be tainted by the participation of Chautala and Sidhu in a religious function. As per his declaration, on that day, Maan along with dozens of his supporters reached Kathu Nangal; when he was still about one hundred metres away from the congregation site Vedanti (caretaker Akal Takht) asked the Badal Dal activist to stop him from reaching there; at this hundreds of Badal Dal men and the SGPC Task Force attacked Maan and his companions with sticks, swords, stones; Mann was hit by a sword on the head and he immediately collapsed in a pool of blood (his son

role (but this gathering could not take courage to reject this fake office of so-called Jathedar which could have solved this problem for ever).

¹⁹³ *The Tribune*, dated 16.8.2006

¹⁹⁴ Dr Chauhan had returned to India on the 25th of June 2001, after a self-imposed exile of 18 years.

Emaan Singh lied on him to save him from further attacks; Emaan too was grievously injured); Maan sustained head injuries and several others were also injured; many of them had to be rushed to hospitals in Amritsar. The police knew that this would happen hence a large force was present there; they (police) disarmed many of the SAD (Amritsar) activists and allowed Badal men to attack them; otherwise, the police remained a mute spectator leaving many injured.

Badal's collaboration with anti-Sikh cults

Badal and the Radhasoamis

As mentioned earlier, Badal had reached a secret alliance with Gurmit Ram Rahim of Sirsa's *Sacha Sauda* cult before the Lok Sabha elections of 2009; besides he had also had established relationship with the Radhasoamis of Beas; he visited their *dera* several times; his wife, son and daughter-in-law¹⁹⁵ too visited Gurinder Dhillon,¹⁹⁶ the chief of the *dera*, who also happened to belong to his *biradari* (caste); Sukhbir Badal¹⁹⁷ alone too visited Gurinder Dhillon more than once; the

¹⁹⁵ *The Tribune*, dated 22.5.2008

¹⁹⁶ Gurinder Dhillon is not just the chief of a *dera*; he is a billionaire like Badal and other politicians; as per a story dated 10.12.2010: "*SEBI nod for Radha Soami Satsang Beas.*" (SEBI is the Securities and Exchange Board of India): The capital market regulator has granted exemption to Logos Holding Company from making an open offer to the shareholders of Religare Enterprises for its acquisition of 19.53% stake in the company. Logos Holding is an investment arm of the Gurinder Dhillon family. Gurinder is the current head of one of India's largest religious sect – Radha Soami Satsang Beas. At Thursday's closing price of Rs 460.95, the value of Logos Holding's stake is about Rs 1,163 crore. The Dhillons had acquired the shares at just over Rs 13 crore in 2006... Gurinder Dhillon family is the proud possessor of Religare Enterprises shares worth \$257,187,507. Let's round it off and say... a quarter of a billion dollars..." This is the real story of all the religious Mafia.

¹⁹⁷ Sukhbir had got initiation (*Khanday di Pahul*) on the 3rd of September 2008 at Anandpur Sahib and was also the President of Akali Dal; press report said: 'Sukhbir was under pressure from within party to get himself initiated since his elevation to top party post on the 11th of March 2007; till then Sukhbir was the first non-initiated President of the Dal. On his election as President the media had commented: "The brat-turned-politician-turned-parallel power centre in the Akali polity, Sukhbir Singh Badal, was today declared the 'acting president' of the Shiromani Akali Dal after a meeting of the Political Affairs Committee (PAC) chose CM Parkash Singh Badal's

last being on the 10th of February 2011.¹⁹⁸ Badal's friends and relatives had also established family ties with the chief of the *dera*; brother of Badal's daughter-in-law and son of Badal's Attorney General-cum-friend Hardev Mattewal, are married in Radhasoami families. Badal had always shown great favour to the Beas *dera*; he allotted 250 acres of land to this *dera* in Mohali (and they encroached another 34 acres of Government land adjacent to this land, one full sector number 76);¹⁹⁹ Badal also allotted another big plot to this *dera* in Phase 7 of Mohali (Badal did not grant just two canals of land when the Sikhs, in several sectors of Mohali, applied for grant of land for a Gurdwara); besides Badal had exempted this *dera* from all state taxes (this exemption not available to Darbar Sahib; when Captain Amarinder Singh became C.M. he gave this exemption to Darbar Sahib in September 2004); Beas *dera* had usurped land of several farmers in Beas and had encroached upon Beas River Waters in a such a manner that it harmed a very large number of farmers; they filed complaints with the police but Badal had ordered the police not to take any action against the *dera*. The *dera* has been functioning as a Mafia cult since Gurinder Dhillon became the chief (it is widely known that before becoming the chief of this *dera* he had been living a fast life of an ordinary young man and had been drinking even alcohol).

Badal's liaison with the Kookas (Namdharis)

Badal could go to any extent for money or for votes; and with this intention he had accepted the offer of friendship from the Kookas (Namdharis) too; the Kookas have two senior leaders: Harwinder Hanspal and Surinder Singh Namdhari; they had made friends with both: the Congress and the Akalis; the former had liaison with the Congress Party and the latter

only son for the top job." Sukhbir visited Beas several times whereas an initiated Sikh must not visit *deraas*.

¹⁹⁸ *Indian Express*, dated 11.11.2011: "Sukhbir pays 'secret visit' to Dear Beas".

¹⁹⁹ In August 2008 Badal regularised this land.

had joined hands with Badal; the purpose of the both the Kooka leaders is to fool both the parties and get facilities from them. Neither the Congress nor the Badal Akalis know the real strength of the Kooka votes; there are no more than one hundred thousand Kooka in the Punjab and they are spread to different places hence they don't have any sizable number of votes anywhere (except in Kum Kalan, Ludhiana, constituency, nowhere have they more than 2000 votes; in spite of this both the parties especially Badal never refuses any demand of the Kookas.

When he (Badal) became the C.M. in 1997, he set up 'Satguru Ram Singh Chair' in the Guru Nanak University; the Sikhs protested against calling the Kooka as *satguru* and setting up a Chair in a University established in the name of Guru Nanak; at this Badal changed the name of the Chair into 'Namdhari satgru Ram Singh Chair'; he allotted liberal funds for this chair; in the past decade, several Chairs have ceased to exist but Badal always allocates liberal funds for this Chair every year²⁰⁰ in spite of the fact that no research is being done in this Chair and the only activity being done there is one or two seminars; but the politics of vote bank and pandering is continuing the existence of this meaningless 'Chair'.

In March 2007, when Badal became C.M. again, he announced projects worth 600 crores to commemorate 150th anniversary of Kooka Movement;²⁰¹ on the 24th of March 2007 Badal visited Jagjit Singh, chief of the 'Namdhari' cult, and presented him a cheque of rupees 50 lakhs. Badal stated that the money was being donated for the completion of a Kooka memorial at Malerkotla and promised that that was just the

²⁰⁰ The last allocation of funds was on the 24th of October 2011 when he sanctioned rupees 20 lakhs.

²⁰¹ The Kookas have launched false propaganda that Ram Singh had started a '*swadeshi*' (indigenous) Movement in 1857 by asking people to boycott English courts, English goods, English schools and postal services; this is pure gossip, a blatant lie and rape of history; at the time of Ram Singh (he was arrested and exiled in 1871) there was no English court, school, postal system or imported goods which public could use in villages.

beginning of his program to 'revive and create awareness of the Namdharis' in Punjab. Badal declared that the Punjab Government would also be providing funds to re-establish the 'Namdhari' headquarters at Bhaini and that Jagjit Singh will have unlimited access to these funds. Plans were also drafted to construct roads linking the Bhaini village to major cities in the Punjab to provide easy and fast access to the *dera*; besides Badal also instructed the Vice Chancellor of Guru Nanak University (Amritsar) to immediately reopen the Ram Singh Chair and promised that his government would cover every cost to revive this program, which had been previously become non-functional; he also agreed to plans to fund and build 'Namdhari' centres in Raikot and Amritsar.

On the day of the celebration of 150th anniversary in April 2007, Badal, Jagdev Singh Talwandi and several other leaders, including terrorist Hindu leaders and police cat fake Nihang Ajit Poohla too shared stage with the Kooka chief Jagjit Singh; these included: Pawan Kumar Gupta of Shiv Saina, Ashok Singhal of Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP), Avinash Rai Khanna of BJP, Charanjit Singh of Rashtriya Sikh Sangat (RSS), Mahinder Sethi (leader of the Radhasoami cult Beas), Balwant Ramoowalia (of Lok Bhalai Party), Rajinder Kaur Bhatthal (Congress), Balbir Singh Seecheval (a *Nirmala saadhu*) and, all of them expressed support and praise for the anti-Sikh cult. General Secretary of the fanatic VHP organization, Ashok Singhal praised the Namdharis for their "contributions and services towards cow protection."

Again in 2011 (on the 24th of October 2011) Badal announced more funds for the Kookas; as per a news report: "the Punjab CM Parkash Singh Badal gave approval for the budgetary allocation of funds to the already existing Chair in the name of Namdhari satguru Ram Singh at Guru Nanak University, Amritsar, to perpetuate his teachings and philosophy across the globe. A decision to this effect was taken by Badal while presiding over a meeting of the Kooka Martyrs Memorial Trust led by its president Surinder Singh Namdhari at his official residence here late last evening. Badal reviewed

the progress of various programmes initiated by the state government to commemorate the 150 years of martyrdom of the great Kooka martyrs during the freedom struggle. The C.M. asked the Finance Department to release a grant of Rs 20 lakh for the existing chair at GNDU during the current year and also asked it to make regular budgetary provision from the next fiscal year to ensure smooth functioning of the chair. Likewise, Badal also asked vice-chancellors of the various Universities present in the meeting to ensure that the syllabus regarding the role of Kookas in the freedom struggle of country to be included in the curriculum. The Chief Minister also approved the setting up of the name of various schools, dispensaries and roads on the name of the Kooka Martyrs across the state. The CM also agreed to the proposal put forth by the Trust for the transfer of 260 square yards of land belonging to Nursing School near the Namdhari Martyrs Memorial at Amritsar and the matter was referred to the OUVGL committee to take appropriate action in this regard. It was also decided in the meeting that the road from Martyr Memorial at Raikot to village Jalaldiwala would also be strengthened and widened by the Punjab Mandi Board. Similarly, Badal also acceded to the request of the Trust to name the Indoor Stadium (being constructed at the Pakhowal Road in Ludhiana) after Baba Ram Singh. The C.M. also directed the Transport department to enhance the frequency of bus service from Bhaini to Ludhiana, Chandigarh and Jiwan Nagar (Sirsa, Haryana) to and fro.²⁰²

Badal and Ashutosh and BJP

The cult Divya Jyoti Jagaran Sansthan at Noormahal (Nurmahal) was started by a Bihari *bhaeeya* Ashutosh who was an employee of another cult “Delhi Manav Dharam” from which he was kicked out due to his immoral activities. Then he was arrested in a criminal case and was lodged in Tihar jail

²⁰² <http://www.thefinancialworld.com>

Delhi where the RSS recruited him to work in the Punjab; in 1983 he was sent to Patiala; after sometime he established his centre in Noormahal and called it Diveya Jyoti (literally: light of God). At first he kept a low profile; the intelligence agencies provided him a lot of money and he began recruiting young Sikh girls to his cult in the name of giving them jobs; he would sexually abuse them and then convert them into Hindu fold; until the Sikh elite confronted him he had picked up more than 500 Jatt Sikh girls (he would not enrol any *dalit* girl into his employment because he does not cohabit with untouchable girls and his first act, always, is to sexually exploit every female employee; he is sex maniac too);²⁰³ he does not employ males except for security and like jobs; a girl joining his job would never leave him probably because he used to keep proofs of her sexual exploits; it is also in the air that he supplies these girls to high officials in the police, administration and politics; and that is why no one is interested taking action against him. It is believed that after sexually exploiting these girls he sells them in the flesh market in Patna, Delhi and Bombay etc. Once Ashutosh was found in mysterious circumstances with Sweeti (one of his favourite female follower) in Chandigarh; his driver who saw all this with his own eyes revealed this; when he was exposed the number of his followers decreased; and finally when he came in confrontation with the Sikhs he lost new Sikh recruitment into his cult.

To mislead the people, Ashutosh has his pictures taken wearing different dresses. He is wearing turban in one picture and has hair open in the other; he wears orange dress to pose off as a Hindu saint and green clothes to look like a Muslim 'pir'. This cult has hired many clever agents to bring

²⁰³ Almost all the *saadh*s are sex maniac; it may be Maan Singh Pehowa, Daljit Singh Chicago, Amar Singh Barundi, Dhanwant Singh, Gurmit Ram Rahim, Laddo Singh, Darshan Das, Harnam Singh Dhumma, Ajit Poohla or anyone else; one can find a hedonist, a womaniser, a debauch in most of the *saadh*s; stories about mysterious character of Dhaddarianwala and Gurinder Dhillon of Beas too are in the air.

in new followers; these agents always seek new targets especially *amritdharis*. They engage them in ordinary conversation and slowly make transition to religious discussion; their common question is: “Have you seen Diveya Jyoti”? Those who say no are urged to attend the program of Ashutosh which they call “*satsang*” and claim that there anyone can see God in physical form and experience higher level of spirituality. Main emphasis is put on the misconception that without obtaining *mantra* (*naam*) from Ashutosh, no one can see ‘*diveya jyoti*’. No other preacher has the right to give out *mantra*; only Ashutosh has this right. Once an agent gets handful of people to attend the programs on regular basis, he is appointed as ‘head’ of his local area. New attendees are required to attend at least 5-10 programs and then sent to headquarter to receive *mantra*.

They hold regular gatherings at the heart of Sikh districts like Tarn Taran, Amritsar and Gurdaspur. Many times, events of 1978 have been repeated where police was used for protection and attacking and killing the Sikh protestors. They came into light of the public on the 19th of April 2002 when they held a gathering in Tarn Taran where Shardha Nand, a preacher of Ashutosh, grossly insulted Sikhism and Guru Granth Sahib. When the Sikhs showed up to protest they were attacked and fired upon. Shardha Nand escaped in government vehicles and the protesting Sikhs were arrested for causing violence. Similar events have taken place in other cities but with the help of the government the Noormahalias always managed to escape and Sikhs became the target of violence and police brutality. The Punjab Government has complete knowledge of the activities of this dera; as per report of *Times of India* (dated 3.8.2002): “*The government has already identified over a dozen of his ‘deras’ in the state as potential trouble spots. While a large number of Sikh organisations are up in arms against him, security at all his ‘deras’ located in Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Patiala, Firozpur, Amritsar and Nawanshahar districts, has been stepped up. The government is more worried because Ashutosh's credentials are deemed to*

be suspect.” In 2002 Amarinder Singh was the C.M.; he played it safe by referring the matter to a committee comprising scholars from the Guru Nanak University and Punjab University, headed by N.S. Rattan, Secretary of Higher Education.

Confrontation at Malout: The first major confrontation between the Sikhs and this cult took place at Malout on the 31st of July 2002; on this day the Muktsar police opened fire on the Sikh Students' Federation activists who were protesting against a function organised by the Noormahal sect in Dabwali Malko Ki village, about six km from Malout; more than 15 Sikhs were injured in this incident, three of them (Channi, Gurmeet Singh and Swaran Singh) seriously.²⁰⁴ Captain Amarinder Singh immediately ordered an enquiry into the incident.

On the 5th of August 2002, a meeting of various Sikh organisations, held in front of Akal Takht, sought a ban on the congregations of Ashutosh and Bhaniarawala and their immediate arrest to avoid direct confrontation. On this occasion Vedanti said that if the state government failed to check the activities of Noormahalias and Bhaniarawala the Sikh Panth was in a position to accept the challenge of ‘anti-Panthic forces’ on its own and capable of giving a befitting reply to such forces; he said the Panth would adopt all possible means to smash ‘anti-Panthic’ activities. Rajinder Singh Khalsa, the Chief of the Khalsa Panchayat, sought summoning of the entire family of Gurdev Badal for his close links with sects of Noormahalias and Bhaniara; he said that the daughter of Gurdev Badal had organised a congregation of Noormahalias at her house; the Akali leaders themselves are responsible for encouraging such activities; Parkash Singh Badal, himself participated in ‘*havans*’ which was not admissible in Sikhism; Sucha Singh Langah, a former Akali Minister organised 501 paths of the ‘*Ramayana*’ and was never

²⁰⁴ *Times of India*, dated 1.8.2002 and The Tribune, dated 1.8.2002.

summoned by Akal Takht for the violation of Sikh tenets; we have to keep our own house in order.”²⁰⁵

Gurcharan Singh Tohra did not attend this meeting; however he blamed Badal for the meteoric rise of Ashutosh; Tohra alleged that ‘Badals had allotted funds to build a two kilometre road and a 66 kilowatt power grid near the Noormahalia’s dera and it was Badal’s younger brother Gurdas Singh who had donated the two acres on which the dera was built.’ Parkash Singh Badal’s wife Surinder Kaur, Gurdev Singh Badal’s daughter and wife of Sital Singh (MLA of Badal Dal) were regular visitors to this dera”.²⁰⁶ Tohra blamed Badal “for the rise of such kind of so-called religious personalities who had thrived during Badal’s tenure as chief minister”.²⁰⁷ Tohra alleged that Badal always used politics of pandering; he did the same in the case of Piara Bhaniara: “Badal took notice only when the situation in the case of Bhaniarawala seemed to get out of hand.”²⁰⁸

Again, on the 14th of May 2003, when the Khalsa Panchayat issued a ‘White Paper’ on Sikh situation it alleged that “Badal Akali Dal was responsible for the promotion of the ‘dera culture’ including Nirankaris, Bhaniara, Ashutosh, Radhasoami, Gobind Sadan due to political reasons.”²⁰⁹

It was repeated again in Malout on the 10th of September 2008 when followers of Ashutosh clashed with some local Sikhs leading to pitched battles. The Police fired in the air during the clash that left 15 people injured, three of them in a serious condition; here the police arrested 15 Sikhs but none of the Noormahalias. Giving report about this incident the reporter of the *Times of India* revealed: “As in the case of Dera Sacha Sauda, Divya Jyoti jagran Sangathan (DJJS) can turn out to be another potential trouble-spot. While

²⁰⁵ *The Tribune*, dated 6.8.2002

²⁰⁶ See photos in the volume 10 of this book.

²⁰⁷ *Times of India*, dated 6.8.2002

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁹ *The Tribune*, dated 15.5.2003

*a large number of Sikh organisations are up in arms against DJJS (Ashutosh's cult), its close ties with the Badal family have earned a severe rebuke from radical elements in the community.*²¹⁰

Mahilpur incident:

On the 25th of November 2002 the followers of the cult of Ashutosh at Noor Mahal attacked Jarnail Singh (a member of the Khalsa Panchayat), his two sons and attendants of Baba Lakho Gurdwara at Bharta Baneshpur (near Mahilpur) simply because they were selling cassettes in which the Ashutoshia cult had been criticised; instead of taking any action the police registered a case against Jarnail Singh under section 295-A and 323 of the Indian Penal Code (I.P.C) for selling the cassette '*Noormahalian di kartoot*'. When this news came to be known to the Sikhs there were protests everywhere; on the 28th of November a *dharna* (sit in blockade) was held at the main chowk of Mahilpur Town; traffic remained suspended; shopkeepers of Mahilpur and Kot Fatuhi also observed *bandh* in this connection. Fearing more unrest the police had arrested 53 persons involved in the attack and charged them under Sections 307, 204, 205A and 427 of the (I.P.C) but the court released them on bail immediately; the police did not oppose their bail plea in spite of the fact that it (police) had booked them under section 307 of the I.P.C.

On the 30th of November 2002, the SGPC executive sought the immediate arrest of controversial Ashutosh Maharaj, head of the Divya Jyoti Jagran Sansthan; it alleged that the *sansthan* was responsible for various blasphemous acts and the alleged attack on activists of Shiromani Khalsa Panchayat near Mahilpur.²¹¹ It is intriguing that it is Badal who had always promoted this cult and when Badal lost power his party (which ruled the SGPC) began demanding arrest of Ashutosh, the chief of the cult and a ban on the activities of this cult.

²¹⁰ *Times of India*, dated 11.9.2008

²¹¹ *The Tribune*, dated 29.11.2002

Ludhiana incident: Except for his paid agents Ashutosh does not have any following in the Punjab but with the help of funds from secret sources he has established centres in some towns of the Punjab; as mentioned above this sect has the blessing of the RSS and other extremist Hindu groups and the intelligence agencies of these syndicates provide lavish funds to this cult. In November 2009 Ashutosh declared that he would hold his special gathering at Ludhiana on the 5th and the 6th of December 2009; several Sikh organisations requested the Badal Government to stop this as Ashutosh had been propagating against the Gurus and the Sikh faith, but, as Ashutosh was an RSS man and it was the BJP which was arranging this function; it asked Badal not to bother for the Sikhs hence he did not take any action and the function was held on the said date; as expected hundreds of Sikhs gathered there to protest against the cult. That day Badal's police repeated the incident of the 13th of April 1978 when the Nirankaris (it is believed that the police was also involved in killings of 1978 because one SSP and one DC monitored all the Nirankari activities) killed 13 Sikhs at Amritsar, and, now, here in Ludhiana the police of Badal regime opened fire at the Sikh demonstrator; several Sikhs were hit and one of them (Darshan Singh)²¹² died instantly and more than one dozen Sikhs were seriously injured. The Sikh protests continued; even Ranjit Singh Dhaddarianwala had joined the Sikhs; he declared that he won't leave till the Sikhs' demand were not accepted²¹³ but he disappeared when he found that he too might be arrested by the police. On the other hand the following day's function was cancelled and the police escorted Ashutosh out of the Punjab (as it had been done with Gurbachan Nirankari on the 13th of April 1978).

²¹² Sukhbir Badal tried to shut the mouth of this family by announcing a grant of five lakh rupees for the family.

²¹³ Dhaddarianwala did not speak a single word after disappearing from the scene. See video of his speech before disappearing:
http://wn.com/sant_baba_ranjit_singh_ji_speaks_in_ludhiana_goli_kand

To protest again the police firing on the Sikhs, several Sikh organisations organised *Punjab Band* and on the 7th of December almost the whole of the Punjab remained paralysed; so much so that Panjab University Chandigarh had to postpone its examinations scheduled for Monday at Ludhiana, Hoshiarpur and Chandigarh centres in view of the shutdown and curfew in Ludhiana; Punjabi University, Patiala too postponed its examinations scheduled for Monday; educational institutions, including the Punjab Agricultural University Ludhiana were ordered closed by the local administration; the situation remained tense for several days.

Parkash Singh Badal had been warned; he knew the events of 1978; he knew the events of Malout and other places where the Ashutoshias had created disturbances, but still he allowed it to happen; in fact the RSS and the BJP leaders had ordered Badal to collaborate with them and the function was wholly organised by the BJP activists under the leadership of Harish Bedi MLA and the audience too was all BJP supporters.²¹⁴

To appease the Sikhs Badal ordered a ‘magisterial’ probe into the incidents; as such an enquiry is just a ‘drama’ the magistrate held that ‘firing was resorted to by the police in self-defence’ and Sukhbir Badal, the Deputy C.M. and President of Badal Akali Dal justified the police firing on the Sikhs;²¹⁵ at this the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee decided to hold a public enquiry and appointed

²¹⁴ Not only the Ludhiana function even in other parts too the BJP leaders openly organised Ashutosh’s functions; at Amritsar the fanatic lady Laxmi Kanta Chawla (a minister of the BJP) was a patron of this cult; in March 2009 she had organised a function of this cult at her own residence which Navjot Sidhu too attended (but later apologised as the Sikhs have been forbidden to have any relations with this cult. On the 5th of March 2009 Gurbachan Singh priest asked Sidhu to apologise for attending the function.

²¹⁵ Badal’s police did not resort to firing when *bhaiyas*, migrant labours, created disturbances in the same city, in the same period (December 2009); they even attacked the police several times; in spite of this the police did not resort to firing; firing was reserved for the Sikhs only.

former Justice T.S. Doabia to hold an enquiry; the Badal Government banned this enquiry. Justice Doabia reached Guru Nanak College in the morning of the 19th of December 2009 and began hearing; he had heard only one activist, when he was told by the Senior Superintendent of Police that he could not conduct an inquiry in Ludhiana. Justice Doabia immediately stopped listening to activists as he said he was a strict law-abiding citizen as he had dealt with the law throughout his life; he said he would follow the orders of the SSP.²¹⁶

It is remarkable to note that Badal allowed this function of Ashutosh-BJP-RSS in spite of warnings but he ordered the police to stop functions of the Sikhs in which Professor Darshan Singh was to present *keertan*; anti-Sikh function could be held by anyone but the Sikh religious functions banned.

Current Phase of the Sikh Panth

France bans Sikhism

By the end of the second millennium the European world had begun worrying about the increasing Muslim population in the continent; there were indications that by the middle of the twenty-first century the Muslims will have majority in many countries of the Europe because the growth rate among the Muslims was many times more than the Christians: average Christian European couple would produce 1.8 children whereas the average among the Muslims was 8.1 i.e. more than 4.5 times. This fear became the reason for increase in hatred for the Muslims and it promoted racism; and, under the impact of this racism France thought of passing some laws and making some rules which it thought would affect the immigrants, especially non-Christians and one of these laws was banning religious symbols in schools and places of work. This ban did not affect any Muslim as there is no obligation for a Muslim to wear a scarf to cover one's head or to wear a half

²¹⁶ *The Tribune*, dated 20.12.2009

or full *burqa* (veil) to conceal one's face; the only section among the foreigners/immigrants to be affected was the Sikhs as in Sikhism turban is obligatory; a Sikh cannot appear in public bare-head.

The French law on 'secularity and conspicuous religious symbols in schools' banned wearing conspicuous religious symbols in French public (i.e. government-operated) primary and secondary schools. The law is an amendment to the French Code of Education that expands principles founded in existing French law, especially the constitutional requirement of *laïcité*: the separation of state and religious activities. The bill was passed by the France's national legislature on the 4th of March 2004 and was signed into law by President Jacques Chirac on the 15th of March 2004 (thus the technical name is Law 2004-228 of 15 March 2004) and it came into effect on the 2nd of September 2004, at the beginning of the new school year; ²¹⁷ the first victim of this law was a Sikh who refused to take off his turban and was expelled from school.

Passing this law meant banning the Sikh religion in France; under this Law no Sikh student can join a public school and no Sikh will get a job, and further, no Sikh will get a passport or driving license because one would need to be photographed bare-head which was not allowed in Sikhism. The Sikhs made representations before the French government but the latter did not bother; the Sikhs made demonstrations in various parts of India as well as abroad but this too fell flat on the minds of the racist French politicians who were blind in hatred for the Muslim (though the new law did not make any impact on the increase in the growth of the Muslim population and affected only the Sikhs). The Sikhs tried to seek help from Catholic Pope and, on the 30th of January 2004, he issued a

²¹⁷ Daily *Le Monde*, Paris, dated 30.9.2005; also read: "*The Racist Hypocrisy behind the Hijab Ban*," in *Socialist Worker (USA)*, dated 28.2.2004 and '*United States Commission on International Religious Freedom*', 2004.

statement in favour of the Sikhs but the French politicians remained adamant. The Sikhs even sought support from some members of the European Parliament and even filed a petition in the French courts which rejected the Sikhs' case; even the European Court did not help the Sikhs. On the 1st of February 2004 the Sikhs brought out a huge procession in Paris but this procession rather gave a negative impression because most of those who joined it were clean shaven and the French politicians got a chance to say that if most of the Sikhs can cut their hair why don't the rest of them too. The Government of India which boasts of defending/representing Sikh interests abroad did nothing to help the Sikhs except making formal appeals; most shocking was the role of Manmohan Singh, the Indian P.M. who made four visits to France to sign trade agreements worth billions of dollars with the French Government but did not raise this issue; in fact Manmohan Singh, though having appearance of a Sikh, had no religious feelings and commitment; he had got two of his three daughters married to Hindus (a Sikh giving his daughter in marriage to a non-Sikh is barred from representing himself as a Sikh), moreover Manmohan Singh was a puppet P.M., he always acted under orders from Sonia Gandhi who was least interested in Sikhs; besides Sonia Gandhi has always acted as per the instructions from the Intelligence Bureau which is anti-Sikh in nature (*that is why the Indian regime had always been sympathetic to Jagdish Tytler, Kamal Nath and other persons who led killer gangs which butchered thousands of Sikhs during Black November 1984 in Delhi and more than 125 other places in the provinces ruled by Congress Party*).

The French law banning religious symbols was passed and promulgated thus banning Sikh religion in France; a country which boasts its motto ***Liberté, égalité, fraternité***; the new law banning religious symbols annulled this slogan which

had been incorporated into both 1946 and 1958 French Constitutions.²¹⁸

Insult to Turbans at airports

The Western Christian world has problems with the Islamic world; the 'war' is religious as well as political and economic. This 'war' has entered a new phase since the attack on the World Trade Centre of the 11th of September 2001 (known more as 'nine eleven'); the Western nations have begun disliking and even hating the Muslims; many countries have passed new laws to harass the Muslims; the latter have

²¹⁸ A legacy of the Age of Enlightenment, the motto "Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité" first appeared during the French Revolution. Although it was often called into question, it finally established itself under the Third Republic. It was written into the 1958 Constitution and is part nowadays of the French national heritage. Linked by Fénelon at the end of the 17th century, the notions of liberty, equality and fraternity became more widespread during the Age of Enlightenment. At the time of the French Revolution, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" was one of the many mottos in use. In December 1790, Robespierre advocated in a speech on the organization of the National Guards that the words "The French People" and "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" be written on uniforms and flags, but his proposal was rejected. From 1793 onwards, Parisians, soon to be imitated by the inhabitants of other cities, painted the following words on the façades of their houses: "Unity, indivisibility of the Republic; liberty, equality or death". This motto fell into disuse under the Empire, like many revolutionary symbols. It reappeared during the Revolution of 1848 marked with a religious dimension: priests celebrated the "Christ-Fraternité" and blessed the trees of liberty that were planted at the time. When the Constitution of 1848 was drafted, the motto "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" was defined as a "principle" of the Republic. Discarded under the Second Empire, this motto finally established itself under the Third Republic, although some people still objected to it, including partisans of the Republic: solidarity was sometimes preferred to equality which implies a levelling of society, and the Christian connotation of fraternity was not accepted by everyone. This motto was inscribed again on the pediments of public buildings on the occasion of the celebration of July 14, 1880. It appears in the constitutions of 1946 and 1958 and is today an integral part of France's national heritage. It is found on items used by the general public such as coins and postage stamps.

become victims of discrimination, hate wave and even physical attacks in various areas of the Western World, especially the USA, France, Belgium, Poland, Italy, Spain and some other lands too; and this has revived aggressive racism and all the non-Christians especially the Asians. But, especially the Sikhs have become targets of this new wave of racism because of their turbans, hair and other articles of faith which are obligatory for them; hence the Western World's hatred for Muslim did not make much difference to the latter but it had created havoc for the Sikhs.

After the nine eleven, vigilance was increased at all the airports but in 2010 very strict rules and regulations were framed which were to affect only the Sikhs. In the USA, in October of 2010, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) issued new regulations. Checking headwear and religious head gear such as turbans included possible removal of turbans by Transportation Security Officers (TSO) and under these mandatory procedures: (1) Advanced Imaging Technology (AIT) machine scan or full body pat down (2) Hand wand and pat down of turban. In the USA the Sikhs had to pass through hurdles; on the 13th of November 2010 Hardeep Singh Puri, the Indian envoy to the UN, was asked to remove his turban at airport in Houston; he however, claimed immunity as a diplomat but still he was detained in a "holding room."²¹⁹ Commenting on this incident Janet Napolitano, US Homeland Security Secretary, had said that the search had been "appropriate" but Hillary Clinton, the US Secretary of State, expressed concern about the incident after India's external affairs ministry called it 'unacceptable'. The Badal Akali Dal tried to get political advantage of this incident by holding a protest gathering outside the US Embassy.

²¹⁹ Several other very senior leaders of India have become victims of this type of racism at the US airports and these include persons of high status like Dr Kalam (former President of India), George Fernandes (former Defence Minister) and Meera Shankar (India's US Ambassador).

The EU too framed new laws on screening of passengers at airports and it was to be implemented from the 1st of July 2010; the new EU Regulation was to be implemented at the British airports too. This created grave concern for the Sikh elite of the UK and they lobbied with the British MPs; as a result implementation of the new rules was postponed by the UK authorities.

In Italy the position was very serious; there, at Milan, Rome and other airports the Sikhs were compelled to remove their turbans for inspection; on the 15th of March 2011, Amritinder Singh, the coach of ace golfer Jeev Milkha Singh, was asked to remove his turban while he was about to board the flight to Sicily; That led to protests in India. The government had then taken up the matter very strongly with the Italian authorities. On the 3rd of June 2011, S.M. Krishna, the minister for Foreign Affairs held a meeting with Franco Frattini, the Italian Foreign Minister, in Rome; after this meeting the Italian interior ministry announced that “the Sikhs travelling from Italian airports will no longer have to remove their turbans at the airport during security screening”. But, on the 1st of December 2011 the Sikh Captain of Jet Airways was asked to unceremoniously remove his turban at the Milan airport. This was strongly reacted by some Indian leaders; so much so that on the 7th of December 2011, some MPs took up this issue in the Raj Sabha; especially Naresh Gujral MP said: “*The Union government has been giving false assurances to the Sikh community in this regard but so far has failed miserably to protect their honour and dignity*”; he urged the foreign minister to urgently summon the Italian Ambassador and express the nation’s displeasure in no uncertain terms.” The stalemate is still continuing in January 2012.

Not only in Italy but even in Poland the Sikhs are being discriminated; the security personnel at international airports were “picking” turbaned Sikh passengers at random and asking them to remove their turbans as part of the ‘security drill’.

The Sikhs are under attack in the European lands and no serious action is being taken by the Indian Government; the

Akali leaders, as they are inept, simple and timid; they have no strategy to launch a struggle against this gross injustice to the Sikhs; most responsible person for this plight is Manmohan Singh, the turbaned Prime Minister of India, who never opens his mouth on Sikh issues; he watches all this as a silent spectator, like Nero who was fiddling when Rome was burning.

The SGPC elections of September 2011 ***(World history's biggest fraud elections)***

On the 18th of September 2011 the elections to the SGPC were held; 56 lakh persons had been enrolled as voters; out of these more than 35 lakh had been enrolled on the last day of enrolment and about one lakh had been enrolled even a couple of days before the date of voting. In this election the Congress party, under directions from Sonia Gandhi and the Indian Intelligence Agencies gave complete co-operation to Badal Akali Dal; the Central Government, the Punjab Government, the Gurdwara Election Commission, the RSS and BJP and even the Communists, all worked for and facilitated Badal Akali Dal; about 60% of the voters enrolled were fake and non-Sikhs; the Government machinery was shamelessly used, booths were captured and finally the bogus elections were 'won' by Badal. This was the greatest bogus and fraud election in the history of the world.

During these elections, the Congress Government in the Centre stood with Badal; as per the planning of the RSS element in the Intelligence agencies of the Central Government, with blessings of Sonia Gandhi and with the overall monitoring by the Central minister P. Chidambaram, assured that H.S. Brar, Chief Commissioner of the Gurdwara Election Commission should collaborate with Badal Akali Dal; the sole reason for this help was to stop Gurdwaras falling into the hands of these who would preach pure Sikhism and it was only he (Badal) who could destroy Sikh religious institutions or at least dilute Sikhism and corrupt the Sikh institution; the

BJP helped Badal because the latter was a senior member of the RSS (which he had joined in 1996); the Communists did it because it was only Badal who could corrupt Sikhism and Sikh institutions which would mean pushing the next generation of the Sikhs towards pantheism and communism; in these elections all the anti-Sikh cults, especially Sirsa based Sacha Sauda, Radhasoamis of Beas, Kookas/Namdharis of Bhaini, Nirankaris of Delhi, Ashutosh of Nurmahal, Chowk Mehta Dera and several *saadhhs* (parasites of the society) extended their whole-hearted support to Badal; all the forces were on the back and call of Badal Akali Dal; hence Badal captured 161 of the 170 seats and out the rest nine members he won those four who had contested as rebel candidates and only five were left in opposition (in December 2011 one of Badal's men joined the Congress Party and in January 2012 another member rebelled and resigned from the Badal Dal).

Another remarkable feature of these elections was that about 50% of the candidates of Badal were not even initiated Sikhs; several of them performed 'ritual' (in fact drama) of initiation a day before filing their nomination papers; besides, children of about 70% members of the SGPC were apostate.

The previous house of the SGPC was elected in June 2004 and during those elections too there were about 50% fake voters who voted Badal to power; during that election anti Badal groups succeeded in capturing 27 of the 170 seats and polled more than 40% of the total votes; they achieved this victory because Captain Amarinder Singh was the CM and he did not allow bungling in elections; the CM however, could not stop fake voters because, at that time, the notification barring so-called *sehajdhari*²²⁰ from voting had not been issued; had that notification been implemented at that time Badal would not have been able to capture more than 50% of the seats. Before 2004 elections Tohra and Badal had joined hands and

²²⁰ Literally: the one who adopts religion, or some quality, at a slow speed; in fact it is a term used for the Hindu posing themselves as Sikhs in order to reap benefits of such a position.

had there not been ‘unity’ then Badal would have been able to capture even 50 seats. In 2006 there was again division in Badal Akali Dal, several members of erstwhile Tohra faction rebelled and in November 2006 Gurvinder Singh Shampura contested presidential elections getting 35 votes; a month later Prem Singh Chandumajra joined Badal camp and the number of the ant- Badal SGPC members was again reduced to 30. In 2011 the opposition was limited to just 3.

Punjab High Court’s decision regarding so-called sahidhari/sehajdhari voters

On the 20th of December 2011, a three judge constitutional bench of Punjab and Haryana High Court set aside the notification issued by the Government of India on the 8th of October 2003, disallowing the so-called sahidharis/sehajdharis from voting in the SGPC elections. *The court had set aside the notification on technical ground that the Central Government of India had failed to follow the due procedure besides issuing the notification because it (Government) was required to approve the notification in the Parliament, which was never done.* This case pertained to a petition filed by some “Sehajdhari Sikh Federation” and two others challenging the Central notification which deprived the so-called Sehajdharis of their voting rights in SGPC polls. The petitioners had mainly challenged the Union government notification “whereby Sehajdhari Sikhs are not being considered as Sikhs in view of the impugned amended Section 49 and Section 92 of the Gurdwara Act”; the petitioners had submitted that the original Act declared Sehajdhari Sikhs as qualified electors for SGPC elections and the apex court had in numerous judgements held that the state could not regulate the definition of religion; it had also been argued by the petitioners that state authorities ‘cannot fetter the definition of Sikhs in general, and Sehajdhari Sikhs in particular, when religion is not within the bounds of any kind of legislation’. The Union government had asserted before the HC that the notification issued by it in October 2003, withdrawing the voting rights of Sehajdhari

Sikhs, had been issued with “due application of mind and was within their domain”.²²¹ In this judgement the court had not accepted that the so-called sehajdharis are Sikhs; in fact it had not even touched the issue as to who is a Sikh and who is not. This issue had already been decided in May 2009 by the same court in the case of Gurleen Kaur vs. State of Punjab; and according to that verdict a Sikh is one who does not cut/trim his/her hair.

Gurleen Kaur’s case and definition of a Sikh

In 2008 Gurleen Kaur was refused admission to M.B.B.S. at the Guru Ram Dass Institute of Medical Sciences Amritsar (a college owned by the SGPC); she had applied a seat from the seats reserved for Sikh candidates as minority quota; she was refused seat because she had trimmed her eyebrows; as she was a ‘*patit*’ (apostate) she could claim herself to be a Sikh. As this she filed a suit in the court claiming that she was a ‘*sehajdhari*’; the main issue of the petition was: (a) Can she claim admission from the Sikh quota if she trims, shaves, plucks etc. or otherwise removes or reduces/shortens her hair? (b) Is she a *sehajdhari* Sikh if she trims her hair? On the 30th of May 2009, the Full Bench of Punjab and Haryana High Court²²² rejected her petition and declared that “... **retaining hair unshorn is a fundamental tenet of the Sikh Religion**”; hence also rejecting the fake claims of the so-called sehajdharis.

When this case went to the High Court several parties got involved including SGPC, the Delhi Gurdwara Committee; the Governments of Punjab, Haryana and Himanchal and the Chandigarh Administration;²²³ the Sehajdhari Association and,

²²¹ *The Tribune*, dated 21.12.2011

²²² Comprising of Justice J.S. Khehar, Justice Jasbir Singh and Justice Ajay Kumar Mittal.

²²³ Represented by Mr. Ashish Rawal, Advocate for the Chandigarh Administration.

Chetan Mittal for the State of Punjab, Surinder K. Bishnoi for the State of Haryana, B.B. Sharma for the State of Himachal Pradesh; others who

some Sikh intellectuals too. The court had invited scholars, learned elders and missionaries to define who is a Sikh.

The follow up in this case led to two important intrigues: (1) the High Court asked the SGPC to submit the definition of a Sikh; at this the SGPC formed a Committee of six persons including Sukhdev Singh Bhaur, Kiranjot Kaur, G.S. Lamba, Suba Singh, Jasbir Singh Sabar and Anurag Singh and, on the 4th of December 2008, they drafted the definition which confirmed that ‘a Sikh is one who does not trim hair’; but when the wording of this letter was typed and sent to the High Court, Anurag Singh (due to some ulterior motives), in collaboration with Harbeant Singh,²²⁴ the Secretary SGPC, changed it by adding that ‘a Sikh is one who does not trim hair having once kept unshorn’; it meant that the non Sikhs could claim to be Sikhs in the name of Sehajdharis. When this definition was submitted to the Court there was a great hue and cry hence the SGPC had to withdraw this and submit the original draft passed by the 6 member subcommittee. (2) The SGPC had appointed Pavit Mattewal²²⁵ (son of Hardev Mattewal, Advocate General Punjab) as its attorney; he went to this extent that he said before the Court that: ‘there is no evidence that the first nine Gurus were *keshdharis* (with unshorn hair); the Judges, however, admonished him for making such a fraudulent statement.

participated in proceedings included Advocates Gurminder Singh, Dr. M.S. Rahi, Deepak Sibal, Saurav Verma, Navkiran Singh, Onkar Singh Batalvi, Sanjeev Sharma, J.J. Kaur and K.T.S. Tulsi (**the last one represented the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee, and, is personally a supporter of the claims of Sehajdharis**).

²²⁴ Harbeant Singh is the person who had submitted fake certificate to get SGPC job and was, later, dismissed for this fraud; however, after the death of Tohra Jagir Kaur withdrew his dismissal.

²²⁵ Pavit Mattewal is married to the daughter of a senior leader of the Radhasoami cult a branch of Hinduism; he and his father are supporters of the claims of the so-called sehajdharis; the father and son, in fact, don't have faith in Sikhism. Hardev Mattewal is a ‘man of inner circle of Parkash Singh Badal’ and he is a member of almost all the major enterprises of Badal.

Anna Hazare's and Ramdev's shows & Advani's drama of '*rath yatra*'

Lok Sabha elections were held in 2009; in these elections the BJP's dream of ruling India could not come true; one of the reasons was that people disliked Lal Kishan Advani and no one wanted to see him as the future P.M. of India; it was followed by infighting among the senior leaders of the Party which ended in bringing an end to the hegemony of Advani and Nitin Gadkari, a Maharashtrian business tycoon, was elected as new president of the party on the 25th of December 2009. In 2010 BJP began planning for revival of its image; in October 2010 it launched a campaign against the Congress in the name of crusade against corruption in Commonwealth Games (held in Delhi from the 3rd to the 14th of October 2010) but this too could not yield desired results.

Again, in May 2011 the BJP planned of using its Ramdev card. Ramdev (yoga-business tycoon), boasted that he could cure homosexuality, cancer and AIDS through yoga but was just a yoga-acrobatic player; he was a staunch RSS man and had been openly supporting the BJP in its elections and other political activities; to contribute to the campaign for the revival of the BJP; on the 4th of June 2011 he began an indefinite hunger strike in New Delhi under the slogan 'bring back stashed away black money deposited by Indian politicians in Switzerland', but in less than 24 hours the Delhi police broke it up; when he saw the police he disappeared disguised as a woman and fled to Hardwar.

A couple of months earlier, Kisan Baburao Hazare (popularity known as Anna Hazare), a social activist from Maharashtra, had also begun a campaign against corruption; he had taken an indefinite hunger strike on the 5th of April 2011 to exert pressure on the Indian government to enact a stringent anti-corruption law as envisaged in the Jan Lokpal Bill, for the institution of an 'ombudsman' with the power to deal with corruption in public places. The fast had led to country-wide

protests in his support; the fast ended on the 9th of April 2011, a day after the government accepted his demands. The government issued a gazette notification on the formation of a joint committee, consisting of government and civil society representatives, to draft the legislation and on the 28th of July 2011 the union cabinet approved a draft of the Lokpal Bill, which kept the Prime Minister, judiciary and lower bureaucracy out of the ambit of the proposed office of Lokpal. Anna Hazare rejected it by calling it as a “cruel joke” and announced his decision to go on an indefinite fast from the 16th of August 2011 in New Delhi if the government introduced its own version of the bill without taking suggestions from civil society members.

On the 16th of August 2011, Anna Hazare was arrested four hours before the planned hunger strike; after being kept in judicial detention for just four hours, he was released unconditionally; he began his fast; on the 20th of August 2011 thousands came to support him; Hazare ended his fast on the 28th of August 2011, after the Indian Government had passed the resolution for the Lokpal Bill.

During all this time the BJP tried to exploit Anna’s fast in its favour; a very large number of BJP leaders supported and joined Anna’s camp. But, even this did not yield desired results; people were not attracted by BJP’s slogans; people had begun realising that Babari Masjid - Ram Mandir, *Hindutava* were no solution to country’s problems and BJP, which was a Party of upper class Hindus, the feudal and the business tycoons, had no solution to poverty, unemployment, corruption and other problems; hence it drew blank.

L.K. Advani, who felt demoralized after being rejected and cornered by the Party, now began promoting Narendra Modi, another fanatic communal Hindu, the C.M. of Gujrat, as leader of the BJP and prospective candidate for Prime Minister-ship of India; but Modi got exposed within days; in this scenario Advani planned to use his years-old tactic of ‘*Rath Yatra*’ (literally: a chariot journey), with an intention to tour India to revive his lost honour and image. During this tour

he was to visit the Punjab from the 13th to the 15th of November 2011.

Digvijaya Sinh (Secretary of Congress Party), while addressing a rally in Srinagar, on the 14th of November, alleged that Advani and his Party had stoked communal hatred and were responsible for 'encouraging terrorism in the country.'

Simranjeet Singh Maan (president Akali Dal Amritsar) declared that they would make protests against Advani's so-called 'Rath Yatra'; at this Badal ordered the police to make strict arrangement and let no one disturb the rally; all the police was deployed to cordon Advani's caravan; but, in spite of their the activists of Maan's Party made protests where ever Advani went; on the 13th of November the Sikhs staged protests near village Sanghera while the yatra was on its way to Barnala; Advani met a hostile reception in Bathinda, with protesters hurling eggs at his 'rath' and waving black flags;²²⁶ the Punjab police took into custody over 50 activists of the Akali Dal-Amritsar; the route of Mr Advani's entourage had to be changed in Bathinda town to avoid more protests. On the 15th of November Advani reached Amritsar; there too the Sikhs made protests against Advani's visit; even inside the Darbar Sahib complex some Sikhs hurled abuses at him alleging that he was responsible for attack on Darbar Sahib; supporters, led by Simranjeet Singh Mann, stood outside the Akal Takht and waved black flags, shouting slogans of 'Khalistan Zindabad' and 'Advani Murdabad' just when Advani, escorted by the task force of SGPC, was about to move towards the Darshani Deodi (the entrance to the central part of the Darbar Sahib). This happened right in front of police officers who were present there to supervise security arrangement.²²⁷

When Advani went inside the Darbar Sahib; he threw (not offered with respect or devotion) a 500 rupee note when he stood (did not bow) before Guru Granth Sahib, but the

²²⁶ *Times of India*, dated 14.11.2011; *Asian Age*, dated 14.11.2011

²²⁷ *Times of India*, dated 16.11.2011; *The Tribune*, dated 16.11.2011; *Z News*, dated 15.11.2011; *The Hindu* (Delhi edition), dated 16.11.2011

granthis, who give a ceremonial '*siropao*' to all those who offer Rs 100 or more, did not give him one; later Giani Kulwinder Singh, the priest on duty, said that how he could give a '*siropao*' to that person who boasts that it was he who had instigated Indira Gandhi to attack Darbar Sahib in June 1984. However, on his way back, Advani was taken to the information office of SGPC and secretly given a '*siropao*' besides a set of books. When he stepped out, activists of Akali Dal (Maan) and Akali Dal (Delhi) started raising slogans of '*Sikhan da gaddar- Advani Murdabad*'.²²⁸ At Batala Advani was *gheraoed* by over several activists of Akali Dal (Maan) who waved black flags at him; the incident occurred while Advani was delivering his speech after his *yatra* entered the district at Batala from Amritsar amidst a lukewarm response.²²⁹

On the 16th of November, several Sikh youth were detained near the Tribune Chowk at Chandigarh, after the local police reportedly received information that they were likely to show black flags to the BJP leader and could hurl eggs at his *rath*; the police also seized two black flags from their possession.

Advani's 3 day tour of the Punjab turned into a major failure; he had expected to revive the BJP in the Punjab but the Hindus of the Punjab did not bother for his visit and when he addressed rallies at Barnala and Bathinda more than 90% of the chairs were empty. It happened in spite of the fact that more than 20 thousand policemen in uniform as well as in plain clothes had been deployed and everywhere, except in Amritsar and Batala, majority of the audience was the police in plain clothes. Though Badal Akalis fully co-operated the '*yatra*' but this too could not give any glory to Advani or the BJP; thus the whole show remained a flop. On the other hand Simranjeet Singh Maan's Akali Dal made demonstration at almost all the places; so much so that Maan himself led protests in the Darbar Sahib campus.

²²⁸ *Ibid*

²²⁹ *The Tribune*, dated 16.11.2011

Insult to turbans and hair by Badal's police

During the visit of Advani the police used all possible tactics and used maximum force to stop demonstrations against him; and while doing so the police insulted turbans and hair of several Sikhs; it had been a routine in the Badal regime that the police deliberately insults Sikhs by removing their turbans and dragging them by gripping their hair; it seems a part of implementation of the RSS agenda to insult turban, hair, beards and the Sikh articles of faith.

Insulting the Sikhs was not just a November 2011 phenomenon; the police during Badal's reign insulted the Sikh turban time and again; an incident of Mohali, where, on the 28th of March 2011, two policemen (Pritam Singh SP-Detective Mohali and Kul Bhushan SHO of Phase 8 Police Station Mohali) took off the turban of a leader of the Pharmacists Union created a great hue and cry; this incident had been recorded on camera by some person and was immediately relayed on You Tube; when the Sikhs around the Globe condemned Badal he suspended the two police officials and also filed a minor case against them; as all this was just for an eye wash the police took it as indication not to bother for the Sikhs' protests hence during the visit of Advani turbans and hair of dozens of Sikhs were insulted by Badal's police. Badal's indifference to such sacrilegious acts made even the employees of the SGPC to insult turban and hair; during one scuffle the SGPC employees held a Sikh from his hair and dragged him away for beating.

Badal pays 3 crore to Shahrukh Khan for 19 minute drama

On the 1st of November 2011 when the Sikhs were remembering the thousands of victims of Black November 1984, Badal was celebrating it at Bathinda with World Cup Kabaddi inauguration and for this purpose he had invited film actor Shah Rukh Khan; he danced with half-clad dancing girls; Khan spent just 19 minutes on the stage; he was paid rupees three crores for this 'performance'. Badal had invited the film actor in order to attract crowds with a hope that his misdeeds

would be forgotten and such drama would fetch him votes. The Sikh elite and opposition parties condemned Badal for holding a fun event instead of paying tribute to the victims of pogrom and also wasting money when the province was already passing through economic crisis.

Inauguration of Khalsa Heritage Complex

Even though Badal was widely condemned for his Shah Rukh Khan drama at Bathinda but still he did not bother for the Sikhs; a few days later he announced opening of Khalsa Heritage Complex (KHC) in Anandpur Sahib on the 25th of November 2011 and to commemorate the opening of a purely religious museum he invited (Sri Sri) Ravi Shankar (a Hindu fanatic who, while addressing quad-centenary of compilation of Guru Granth Sahib, held on the 1st of September 2004 at Amritsar, had said “*Gurbaani aur kuchh nahin, vedon ka saral anuvaad hai*” meaning Gurbaani is nothing more than simple translation of Vedas), Amitabh Bachan (who was allegedly involved in instigating the killing of thousands of Sikhs during Black November 1984; and, just a few days ago Badal’s own party activists had been demanding his arrest), Nitin Gadkari (president of the BJP), Shankracharaya of Jyotirmath Swami Madhav Ashram, Om Parkash Chautala (former CM Haryana; whose presence at Kathu Nangal in October 2006 became the cause of inhuman attack on Maan and his supporter Akalis), *saadhu* Aasa Ram (who was in picture for killings in his *dera* and had been poking cheap jokes about the Sikhs), Gujarat agriculture minister Dalip Sangheri (another fanatic Hindu) besides Moshe Saifdi, Tamil Nadu leader Vaiko, Asha Bhonsle, Hema Malini, Ruby Dhalla and Gurbax Mallhi (two former MPs from Canada who had been recently defeated in elections), Navjot Sidhu (BJP’s cheap comedian MP) and a few others. Badal wanted to invite this show-team just to attract crowds with a hope to cash all this in the forthcoming Assembly elections. But, when there was a scathing attack on the list of the invitees Badal had to withdraw Amitabh

Bachan's name; however all other fanatic Hindus attended and, as usual, distorted Sikh philosophy and history.

In this function Badal had invited Imran Massod (former education minister from Pakistan) too and he too used this occasion to attack Guru Nanak Sahib saying that Guru Nanak could not have visited Mecca as only Muslims could go to Mecca and if Guru Nanak had gone there he would have been there as a Muslim (probably Masood did not know than ban on non-Muslim had been imposed just a few decades earlier). *saadhu* Aasa Ram in the tone of chiding Guru Nanak said that 'Guru Nanak in verse '*raam gaeyo raavan gaeyo*' had belittled Rama but I tell you the same Nanak wrote: '*sang sakha sab taj gaey kou na nibhiyo saath*' and then only Raghunath (a Hindu god) appears to help"; making fun of a Sikh verse he said "it is useless to talk of intoxicants in that Punjab which had said '*naam khumaree nanaka charhi rahay din raat*'; let them indulge in drugs their inebriation will be like *naam khumaree*"; here he was making fun of *naam khumaree* too.²³⁰

Thus the event of the opening of the KHC turned out to be mainly a show of Hindu fanatics (who insulted Sikh philosophy, Gurbaani and even Guru Nanak) and a gathering of some imposter *saadhs* like Ghala Singh of Kaleran, Bhag Singh, Nirmala *saadh* Balbir Singh Sichewal. However, Harnam Singh Dhumma (chief of Jatha Bhindran-Mehta of Chowk Mehta Dera), Jasbir Rode and their associates were conspicuous by their absence the newly formed alliance (during the SGPC elections) between this cult and Badal had probably 'begun crumbling.'

On this occasion the absence of Khanda (the Khalsa insignia), which was to be the main structure to be built in the front of the museum, was conspicuous and intriguing; it was the shape of this insignia that became one of the causes of difference between Gurcharan Singh Tohra (president SGPC) and Barjinder Hamdard (then Chairman of Anandpur Sahib Foundation).

²³⁰ *Rozana Spokesman*, dated 26.11.2011.

The KHC is no ‘wonder of the world’ as it was boasted by Badal; it is just a simple petty museum of very low standard; besides it presents serious distortion of the history and philosophy of the Sikhs; this is a result of long planned conspiracy to destroyed the whole concept.

The question²³¹ that why Badal does so time and again has baffled several scholars, leaders and the elite; but the answer is very simple, being a loyal member of the RSS Badal has a duty to destroy the Sikh religion and to accomplish it he has to turn the Gurdwaras into temples of a ‘sub sect of Hinduism’; he worships in Hindu temples and performs Hindu rituals of *havan* in order to allure other Sikhs to practice Hinduism; he bows before Hindu ascetics and other imposters; he collaborated with all those *deraas* which are inimical to Sikhism; he makes mockery of all the functions of the Sikhs, invites anti-Sikh fanatic Hindus who attack Sikh faith and history on the Sikh stages; and in furtherance of this agenda he uses Gurdwaras as clubs and treats the Gurdwara properties and income as his own private property; he grants jobs to anti Sikh people even in the SGPC run institutions; he appoints most cheap Sikhs to priestly jobs; he promotes and honours the killers of the Sikhs. Badal implements anti-Sikh agenda honestly and he sincerely wishes to accomplish destruction of Sikh faith completely.

Bestowing so-called *Panth Ratan Fakhar-i-Qaum* on Badal

Despite worldwide criticism from Panthic organizations and institutions,²³² the shameless puppet clergy of Akal Takht

²³² The Sikh elite had warned the clergy that bestowing an award on Badal from Akal Takht would be worse than honouring the notorious General Dyer and the Hindu puppet Khem Singh Bedi (*Rozana Spokesman* several published several statement between the 1st and the 5th of December 2011); Joginder Singh (editor *Rozana Spokesman*) gave most wise advice to Badal that he should himself refuse to accept this award and save his honour, but, Badal was so idiotic, imprudent and shameless that he did not listen to any good counsel. No one, in the whole of the history of the Sikhs, has been so condemned and insulted as Badal and Gurbachan Singh priest have been.

and other Gurdwaras honoured the *patit* (apostate) C.M. on the 5th of December 2011 with the first ever “Panth Rattan Fakhari-Quam” (literally: Jewel of Panth, Pride of nation) title during politically orchestrated rally in the courtyard in front of the building of Akal Takht.²³³

The sham award was actually ‘thrown’ on the head of Badal by Gurbachan Singh (caretaker Akal Takht), Tarlochan Singh (caretaker Kesgarh Sahib), Jaswinder Singh (heath *granthi* Darbar Sahib), and Iqbal Singh (priest Takht Patna Sahib) from the balcony of Akal Takht Sahib; Balwant Singh Nandgarh caretaker of Damdama Sahib had refused to join this show of sycophancy. The bestowing of the dubious award by the puppet clergy, exhibited the complete leverage and political control by Akali Dal Badal over even the highest institution of the Sikhs.

This ceremony by the puppet clergy overshadowed the act of Arur Singh *sarbrah* (caretaker) who had denigrated the Takht by endowing General Dyer (known as ‘the butcher of Amritsar’) who had killed hundreds of people in Jallianwala Bagh on the 13th of April 1919, with a *siropao* (robe of honour) at Akal Takht.

It is remarkable that Badal is not even a practicing Sikh; he has performed Hindu *havans* (an anti-Sikh Hindu religious ceremony), participated in *pooja* (worship) of fictitious Hindu gods and he has repeated such acts several times. He even arranged *akhand path* (non-stop recitation) of Guru Granth Sahib to pay tribute to Rama Nand who was killed for committing desecration of Guru Granth Sahib; Badal had frequently visited and made obeisance to the chiefs of Namdhari, Radhasoami and other cults which are anti Sikh cults; besides Badal has persecuted Sikh several times – showering bullets on them; he is responsible for the deaths of several Sikhs at the hands of the police; he has desecrated

²³³ The ceremony too looked like insult to Badal; the *siropao* was virtually ‘**thrown**’ on Badal’s head from the first floor of the building of Takht; it looked like ‘throwing food towards an untouchable’.

Gurdwaras several times; thus in no way he can be considered even a Sikh.

Though the clergy had performed a drama but it made no difference to Badal's position among the Sikhs; they rather began hating the clergy and Badal more than before because this act was further sacrilege of Akal Takht. This too is remarkable to note that in the history of the Sikhs no man had been condemned so much as Badal had been.

Devinderpal Singh Bhullar's case

On the 11th of September 1993, there was a big explosion in a car parked outside the Delhi office of Maninderjit Bitta, the then President of All India Youth Congress; in this bomb blast, nine persons died and twenty nine persons sustained injuries; Bitta suffered injuries on his leg. As per the police version five members of Khalistan Liberation Force (KLF) - Kuldeep Singh, Sukhdev Singh, Harnek Singh, Devinderpal Singh Bhullar and Daya Singh Lahauria - were responsible for the act. None of the above persons were arrested for a long time. Later, Devinderpal Singh Bhullar was deported from Germany while Daya Singh Lahauria, a co-accused, was extradited from USA to India and both were tried together for the offences under TADA Act, 1987²³⁴ and various sections of Indian Penal Code by a court at Delhi. Daya Singh Lahauria was acquitted by the trial court on the ground that there was no evidence against him; Devinderpal Singh Bhullar alias Deepak, who had entered Germany to seek asylum on the night between the 18th and the 19th of December 1994 was detained by the airport authorities at Germany for travelling on a fake passport. Ultimately, he was deported back to India on the 17th of January 1995 and was handed over to the Indian police at the New Delhi Airport on the 19th of January 1995. In custody Bhullar was made to sign 'confessions' that he had committed the act of explosion

²³⁴ Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act, 1987 (TADA) was promulgated in India on the 3rd of September 1987 and it lapsed in May, 1995

of the bomb; on the 24th of August 2001 the Sessions Court sentenced him to death. Daya Singh Lahauria was however, acquitted of all charges. An appeal against the judgment was dismissed by the Delhi High Court; a further appeal was filed before the Supreme Court of India; the Supreme Court with an unprecedented speed, dismissed the appeal of Bhullar and confirmed the death sentence upon him, vide order dated 22nd of March 2002. Interestingly, the senior judge of the bench, Justice M. B. Shah in his minority judgment gave sound reasons for his acquittal and held him 'not guilty'. But the majority view authored by Justice Arijit Pasayat and Justice B.N. Agarwal, held Bhullar guilty and confirmed the death sentence; a review petition too was rejected by the Supreme Court on the 17th of December 2002. On the 14th of January 2003 a mercy petition was filed before the President of India which was rejected on the 25th of May 2011 (after a wait of more than eight years).

During all this time the Akali leaders played 'drama' of getting reprieve for Bhullar. In 1999 Badal had expelled Tohra from his Akali Dal and both launched an all out hate campaign against each other for four years, however, on the 25th of February 2003, Badal, Tohra and Maan, the three major leaders of different Akali factions, formed a joint delegation and met Lal Kishan Advani, the then Home Minister (who was known for his hatred for the Sikhs), and made a petition to commute death sentence of Professor Devinderpal Singh Bhullar; ²³⁵Advani was supposed to ignore the request.

²³⁵ Reacting to this mercy appeal Balwant Singh Rajoana, who was under trial for killing Beant Singh, the terrorist CM of the Punjab, got published an advertisement in daily *Ajit* (dated 26.2.2003) chiding Bhullar for making mercy petitions and asked him to gladly embrace martyrdom.

It is remarkable to note that Balwant Singh Rajoana had refused to defend himself as innocent; he openly confessed it in the court that he and Shaheed Dilawar Singh had killed the terrorist CM; later, when he was given death sentence he refused to make an appeal against the court decision; the other accused in the same case filed appeals and their death sentences were commuted by the Punjab High Court.

In 2007 Badal was returned to power; during this period Bhullar made an appeal requesting his transfer to some Punjab jail but Badal Government refused to accept him on the plea that he was a **dreaded terrorist**; this proved that Badal's show of sympathy for Bhullar was just a fraud. During this period Paramjit Singh Sarna too boasted that he had been assured by Sonia Gandhi that Bhullar's mercy petition will be accepted but the Congress Party ditched even Sarna.

In Bhullar's case most sincere role has been played by Simranjeet Singh Maan and Daljit Singh Bittu group; Badal had been playing fraud with the Sikhs by making statements in favour of Bhullar²³⁶ but secretly collaborating with Manjinder Bitta, Sumedh Saini and other Hindu terrorist and fanatic groups who wanted Bhullar to be hanged; it is due to this that in spite of demand by several Sikh organisations Badal did not bring a resolution in the Punjab Assembly demanding clemency for Bhullar;²³⁷ whereas a like resolution was passed by the J & K Assembly on the 26th of September 2011, for commutation of death sentence of Afzal Guru, who was sentenced for attack on the Indian parliament on the 13th of October 2001. On the other hand, Captain Amarinder Singh, a Congress leader, too demanded commutation of the sentence.²³⁸ It is interesting to note that Sarbdip Virk (known

²³⁶ On the 9th of September Badal had announced that the state government would introduce a resolution in the Punjab Assembly seeking clemency for Bhullar. Addressing SGPC election rally Badal said: "The BJP is a separate political party and may have a different view on this matter but we will certainly table a resolution in the Assembly seeking clemency for Bhullar" (*The Tribune*, dated 10.9.2011)

²³⁷ Capt. Amarinder Singh alleged that Badal has never been sincere with his statements about Bhai Bhullar. He said that the same Badal who is flip-flopping about Bhai Bhullar's clemency had labelled him a terrorist and threat to the state of Punjab in the Supreme Court. Amarinder Singh went on saying that at that time, Badal was seeking the support of Sumedh Saini's sympathizers and when there was need to appease Bhai Bhullar's supporters, Badal started giving statements in his support (Amarinder Singh's statement dated 30.9.2011).

²³⁸ *The Tribune*, dated 2.6.2011

for his persecution of the Sikhs during his term as police chief in the Punjab) too supported commutation of the sentence of Bhullar.

At present another appeal is pending before the Supreme Court; on the 28th of September 2011, Justice GS Singhvi had asked the Centre to file an affidavit by October 10, explaining the delay in deciding Bhullar's mercy plea of 2003, rejected by the President in 2011.

Bhullar is currently undergoing treatment for hypertension, psychiatric illness and suicidal tendencies. In a petition to the apex court, his wife Navneet Kaur has contended that the order of the President ought to be quashed as 'the same suffers from lack of application of mind, non-consideration of relevant circumstances and presumably having been made on extraneous grounds'. She had also pleaded for altering his death penalty to life term saying it would be 'inhuman and violative of Article 21 of the Constitution' to carry out his execution. She claimed that Bhullar had turned 'mentally retarded' due to delay of more than 5,700 days in deciding his mercy plea. She claimed the last time she met him and found him to be quiet, withdrawn and unwilling to talk. His condition had continued to deteriorate since his conviction in 2003. Earlier, she thought he was only suffering from hypertension and arthritis but now she realised the psychotic symptoms with suicidal tendencies are a by-product of suffering a slow death on account of being a condemned prisoner since 2001. Execution of a mentally retarded prisoner is considered to be cruel and inhuman and should be deemed to be prohibited under Article 21 of Constitution of India. In the US, there is a national consensus that mentally retarded persons are excluded from execution because it can neither serve as a retribution nor deterrence," said the petition. She cited the apex court's ruling in the Triveniben versus State of Gujarat (1989) case that "undue delay in execution of death sentence entitles the condemned prisoner under Article 32 of the Constitution to approach court

that his death sentence be commuted to life imprisonment”.²³⁹
The case is still continuing.

Delhi factor in Sikh history (& Paramjit Singh Sarna)

Tohra and Parmjit Singh Sarna

On the 30th of June 2002 the elections to the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (DSGMC) were held in which Badal Akali Dal was badly defeated (they won just 14 of 46 seats) and on the 24th of July 2002 Paramjit Singh Sarna became the president of the Delhi DSGMC. Sarna was a supporter of Tohra but the latter had no say in Delhi nor he had not played any role in Sarna's victory; on the other hand the Delhi victory boosted morale of a despondent Tohra. In June 2003 when Tohra united his Akali Dal he did not negotiate the Delhi question with Badal; on one hand Tohra gave signal to Sarna that he should assert his independence and not surrender his authority or office and on the other hand he issued a statement asking Sarna to share power with Badal group (Awtar Singh Hit) in Delhi; at this Sarna issued a statement that the Delhi Akali Dal is independent and it was never a part of Tohra's Sarb Hind Akali Dal; Sarna had stated the same 11 months earlier (in August 2002) too: 'Delhi Akali Dal has independent identity; it is not affiliated or associated with Sarb Hind Akali Dal.'²⁴⁰

After his unity with Badal, Tohra did not negotiate the position of his friends, associates and supporters in the new scenario; he even tried to sacrifice Sarna who was not a 'man' or a part of Tohra Akali Dal; this was the mentality of Tohra that whenever he negotiated with his opponents he bothered

²³⁹ *CNN, IBN, PTI, The Tribune* dated 29.9.2011

²⁴⁰ *Ajit Jalandhar*, dated 9.8.2002

just for his own interest and forgot even his most sincere and loyal friends and would sacrificed them or left them on their own; he had done the same in 1980, 1985, 1988, 1995-96 and again now in 2003. However this time Sarna refused to be sacrificed; on the 7th of July Harwinder Singh Sarna (brother of Parmjit Singh Sarna) declared: ‘We, the Delhi Akali Dal, are not a unit of Tohra Akali Dal’;²⁴¹ at this Manjit Singh Calcutta used very tough words for Sarna and dubbed him as a tout of Congress Party; in spite of this Sarna did not bow to Tohra and Manjit Singh’s pressures.

In September 2003 annual elections to the Executive of the Delhi SGMC were due; during this period Badal, Tohra and Manjit Singh Calcutta were successful in winning some members belonging to Sarna’s Delhi Akali Dal especially Manmohan Singh Sachdeva’s group; to counter this Sarna group made negotiations with Prehlad Singh Chandok; as a result, when the election was held on the 24th of September 2003, Badal groups’ candidate Manmohan Singh Sachdeva was defeated by Chandok²⁴² with 27 votes against 22 votes. Badal, Tohra and Manjit Singh had worked very hard for this election but they could not defeat Sarna, and after this insult Manjit Singh Calcutta condemned Sarna for shaking hand with Congress Party; reacting to this Sarna said: “*I am all in all Akali and I don’t need Badal and Tohra’s certificate for my Akali identity.*”²⁴³ Manjit Singh Calcutta warned Sarna that “*joining hands with Congress was an act of political suicide for him*”; reacting to this Harwinder Singh Sarna said: “*Akali Dal Badal is on way to political suicide by making alliance with the BJP.*”²⁴⁴

Though Sarna had defeated Badal in Delhi SGMC elections but Chandok, the man elevated by him to the

²⁴¹ Ajit Jalandhar dated 8.7.2003

²⁴² Chandok again came in picture when he presented honour to Jagdish Tytler who had played major role in the massacre of the Sikhs during Black November 1984.

²⁴³ Ajit Jalandhar dated 25.9.2003

²⁴⁴ Ajit Jalandhar dated 25.10.2003

presidency, first began ignoring him (Sarna) and then he started even harassing his supporters; it was an act of ungratefulness. Now Sarna decided to teach a lesson to Chandok; the next annual elections were due in November 2004; this time Sarna made negotiations with Badal's group and captured the Delhi SGMC; Sarna became the president on the 22nd of November 2004, Ravinder Singh Khurana of Badal Akali Dal became the General Secretary.

In November 2005, the Badal group again planned to ditch Sarna; Sarna had planned to install a golden *paalkhi* (palanquin)²⁴⁵ in Nanakana Sahib Gurdwara; the *paalkhi* was to leave Delhi on the 27th of November 2005 and reach Nanakana Sahib on the 30th of November; Sarna and Ravinder Singh Khurana had decided that the elections to the Executive will be held in January 2006 but when Sarna was on way to cross Indo-Pak border, on the 28th of November Khurana announced holding of the said elections on the 19th of December 2005. Sarna did not react but on his return he cancelled the election meeting of the 19th of December but later, when he (Sarna) found that the majority of the members were still with him he announced that he would abide by the decision of Khurana and hold elections on the 19th; by this time Badal group had realised that they won't be able to win of the 19th; hence they wished to postpone it; they even used Joginder Singh Vedanti (caretaker of Akal Takht) and got issued an 'order' in the name of Akal Takht for cancellation of the meeting of the 19th; this time Sarna did not bother for this 'order' and held the election meeting; Badal group boycotted this meeting and Harwinder Singh Sarna was elected president unanimously.

²⁴⁵ Later, in August 2006, Badal's supporters, Kuldeep Singh Bhogal, claimed that the golden *paalkhi* (palanquin) merely carried one and half kilograms of gold whereas according to Paramjit Singh Sarna, over 10 kg of gold was used in preparing the *paalkhi*. Later it was revealed that Amrik Singh of the *kaar sewa jatha* had embezzled a vast amount in the name of this *paalkhi*; it was also found that Amrik Singh had embezzled Rs. 2 crore rupees and all this was amount of Sikhs' donations; a criminal case was filed against him. *The Tribune*, dated 6.8.2006

Badal group challenged validity of this election (Avtar Singh Hit vs. Delhi Sikh Gurdwara management Committee); the court decided this case on the 23rd of January 2006 and ordered holding of new elections on the 14th of February 2006; it also ordered that Justice S.S. Chadda (retired) would 'preside over the meeting as Chairman'; an appeal had been filed against this election to the Supreme Court too; on the 24th of October this court declared that the 19th of December 2005 election of Harwinder Singh Sarna was valid.²⁴⁶ General elections to the DSGMC were held on the 14th of January 2007; Saran group won 27 of 46 seats (it had 23 members in outgoing house); Badal group won 12, Akali Dal (Manjit Singh GK) won 6 seats and 1 went to an independent candidate; the next elections are due in 2012.

Role of Paramjit Singh Sarna

Paramjit Singh Sarna had been considered as a radical Sikh leader. Since Parkash Singh Badal joined hands with the BJP and the RSS Sarna had become leader of the lobby which is known as 'Panthic'; but, on the other hand Sarna, due to his liaison with Congress Party, has become controversial figure too; Badal Akali leaders usually attack him for his association with Sheila Dixit (CM Delhi) and Sonia Gandhi (chief of the Congress Party); Sarna's relations with Sajjan Kumar (who is one of those who are guilty of pogrom of the Sikhs during Black November 1984) too have harmed him (Sarna) a lot. Sarna is said to be having personal relationship with K.P. Gill, the former chief of the Punjab Police; in January 2010 Sarna invited Gill and Sajjan Kumar to join his son's wedding.

Another negative act by Sarna also affected his reputation; the sons of Ramesh Kumar (son of Lala Jagat Narain of Punjab Kesri newspaper) observed a function in the memory of their father at Gurdwara Rakab Ganj Delhi; Sarna not only allowed this function to be held in a Gurdwara but

²⁴⁶ *Hindustan Times* Delhi, dated 24.10.2006

also presented him tribute to Ramesh. Lala Jagat Narayan and Ramesh Kumar both had been killed by the militants.

Sarna has association with Laxman Chela Ram and Chaman Lal (Chamanjit Singh Lal), both of whom worship mythical Hindu gods in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib and thus commit sacrilege of Guru Granth Sahib. The Sikhs consider these two as agents of the RSS but Sarna has always defended them and stood by them; this too has affected Sarna's position among the radical Sikhs.

Some projects launched by Sarna have created doubts about his sincerity to the Sikh mission in the minds of the elite Sikhs; the Sikhs believe that the installation of a golden *paalki* in Nanakana Sahib Gurdwara, gold plating of Gurdwara Bangla Sahib, multi billion parking project in Gurdwara Rakab Ganj campus are useless projects and wastage of Panthic wealth; they feel that instead of these meaningless projects money should be spent on Sikh missionary activities.

The Sikh elite had disliked Sarna trying to make liaison with Gurmit Ram Raheem, the chief of the Sarsa *dera*; Sarna held several meetings with the leaders of this cult; most important meeting was held at the residence of Ranbir Singh Khatra SSP, in latter's residence in Phase 7 of Mohali which was attended by Jasbir Singh Rode too.

Sarna had been claiming that he had been promised release of Davinderpal Singh Bhullar, abrogation of the 'Black lists' of the Sikhs abroad, grant of Indian citizenship to Afghan Sikhs; but, as none of these demands was accepted; this too affected credibility of Sarna.

At one time it was believed that Sarna may achieve the status of Master Tara Singh or Santokh Singh Delhi but due to all these factors he has lost his reputation, credibility and respect; he shall have to do a lot to regain his lost name.

Manmohan Singh P.M. as a Sikh

Manmohan Singh became the Prime Minister (P.M.) of India (on the 19th of May 2004) as Sonia Gandhi could not

have been given this office, because being born as a foreigner, she was not legally allowed to head the Indian Army as per its law; hence it was just 'drama' when she said that she had appointed Manmohan Singh because she wanted an intelligent person for this office.

When he became the P.M. for the first time, not many Sikhs, except those belonging to the Akali Party, expressed their positive reactions. It was widely believed (and was proved too) that he will be a puppet in the hands of Sonia Gandhi and won't have any independent role to play neither for India nor for the Sikhs; hence, as expected, Manmohan Singh always remained not only indifferent to the Sikh issues but rather he acted as a part of anti-Sikh games and conspiracies; his role was no different from an average fanatic Hindu.

In fact, his own household does not have Sikh ambience; two of his three daughters (he has no son) are married to Hindu husbands, and these were not run-away marriages, Manmohan Singh himself gladly performed these marriages; thus, though he might have hung (imaginary) pictures of the Gurus or might be having a volume of Sikh Scripture in his house, his Hindu grandchildren can always be seen playing and roaming there; giving the environment of his household a Hindu look.

As P.M. he did not object to the appointment of Jagdish Tytler, Sajjan Kumar, Chidambaram, Kamal Nath and other persons guilty of pogrom of the Sikhs during Black November 1984; he could have done so but he did not because he had no Sikh feelings in his being (this had been evident even in January 1985 when he accepted the office of Deputy Chairman of Planning under Rajiv Gandhi who was fully responsible for pogrom of the Sikhs during 'Black November 1984'. Manmohan Singh had no feeling of guilt when he collaborated with the killers of the Sikhs; he rather always helped and whenever the Sikhs demanded their dismissal from cabinet he shielded them; he also acquiesced the conspiracy hatched by the C.B.I. for their acquittal in cases of Black November 1984;

in June 2010, responding to a question on the 1984 massacre of the Sikhs, he said: "It is not correct to say that India has failed to bring the perpetrators of the 1984 attacks on Sikhs in New Delhi to justice."²⁴⁷

Manmohan Singh always suggested/asked the Sikhs to forget the gruesome and inhuman massacre of thousands of innocent Sikhs but he never offered to release the Sikhs who were languishing in jails for no crime; he never offered to bring an end to discrimination against the Sikhs; he never made any attempt to solve the long standing Sikh issues. On the other hand he always issued statements against the Sikhs; in June 2010 when he visited Canada he shocked the Sikh world when he asked the Canadian prime minister Stephen Harper, in at least two of his three bilateral meetings, to crack down on 'Sikh extremists' in Canada; and before landing in Canada, he issued a shocking statement against the Sikhs by saying: "Sikh extremism, separatism and militancy were a problem in India more than two decades ago. Today, Punjab is at peace and there is growth and prosperity. There are, however, some elements outside India, including in Canada, who try to keep this issue alive for their own purposes. In many cases, such elements have links to or are themselves wedded to terrorism;" such a statement could not have been made by a Sikh; only an anti-Sikh fanatic Hindu could have made such a hate statement, which was just a lie (the Sikhs reacted to it and made big demonstrations against the Indian PM).²⁴⁸

When the French regime banned Sikhism (by banning turban) in France in 2004,²⁴⁹ Manmohan Singh did not bother

²⁴⁷ *Daily News and Analysis*, dated 26.6.2010; *Hindustan Times*, dated 30.6.2010; *The Hindu*, dated 28.6.2010

²⁴⁸ *Hindustan Times*, dated 30.6.2010; *The Tribune*, dated 30.6.2010, *Rozana Spokesman*, dated 30.6.2010.

²⁴⁹ On the 10th of February 2004 the French Parliament voted (494 voted for and 36 against) for ban on head scarfs and in included the Sikh turban too; ban on turban means ban on religion as turban is obligatory for a Sikh (*The Tribune*, dated 13.2.2004).

(he behaved as if nothing had happened) and he took no step to stop it; after this he visited France four times²⁵⁰ and signed several agreements with France; had he taken up this issue the French would have obliged him without any hesitation but he behaved as if he had no objection on banning Sikhism by the French Government; the Indian Government did eye-wash by asking its External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha to talk to French officials and the former did perform just formality.²⁵¹ The Sikhs did get support from the Catholic Pope²⁵² and even the British Home Secretary David Blunkett who sincerely supported the Sikhs' case but Manmohan Singh did nothing. Thus, Manmohan Singh proved that he might have turban on his head but in his heart of hearts he has no feeling of being a Sikh!

Simranjeet Singh Maan phenomenon

Since 1981 Simranjeet Singh Maan has affected the Sikh history or politics in one or another manner; he was one of the major forces behind the Babar Khalsa militant movement of 1981-82; in June 1984 when the Indian Army attacked the Darbar Sahib he wrote a strong letter of protest and resigned from his highly paid job; after this he planned to flee India but was arrested on Indo-Nepal border; he spent five years in jail where he was tortured physically and mentally; finally, in 1989, when he was elected M.P. he was released.

²⁵⁰ He visited France in September 2005, September 2008, July 2009, and December 2010.

²⁵¹ *The Tribune*, dated 13.2.2004

²⁵² *The Tribune*, dated 31.1.2004

From 1989 and 1996 he played remarkable role and represented the Sikh opinion in a befitting manner; but, when Gurcharan Singh Tohra, just for love of the presidency of the SGPC, played treason with Akali Dal Amritsar and joined hands with Badal and most of the Akali leaders, allured by office, power and wealth, too followed him and renounced Panthic interests; he (Maan) did not surrender and preserved the Dal which had been formed at Akal Takht; even after this several of his companions left him just for ‘a handful of coins and a feather in their caps’ but he did not lose heart and continued struggling.

In 1997 Badal captured power in the Punjab but, as he had already joined the RSS, hence after becoming the C.M. he gave up his Sikh agenda of Punjab demands and rather began suppressing the Sikhs himself; during all this time he (Maan) spearheaded the Sikhs’ struggle for their rights. On the 7th of June Daljit Singh Bittu (who had been the chief of the Shiromani Khalsa Dal formed on the 14th of April 2004) joined him and he (Maan) appointed him (Bittu) as vice president of Akali Dal Amritsar on the 7th of June 2006. In August 2007 relations between Maan and Bittu came to an end because of the latter’s association with the Khalsa Action Committee (KAC); Maan asked him to resign but he refused (he was the Chairman of KAC); at this Maan expelled him from the Dal on the 26th of August 2007 (later on the 30th of November 2007 Bittu formed ‘Akali Dal Panj Pardhani’ and became the Chairman of its Presidium).²⁵³

²⁵³ The five member of the Presidium included Harinder Singh Norway, Gur Jatinderpal Singh Bhikhiwind, Harpal Singh Cheema (then in Nabha jail), Kulbir Singh Barapind and Kamikkar Singh Mukandpur. Justice Ajit Singh Bains, Giani Harinder Singh (Singh Sabha) and Karamjit Singh (journalist) were appointed as Advisors. From among these Harinder Singh Norway had been a man of dubious character: in 1984 he resigned in protest against attack on Darbar Sahib; later he returned to the Punjab and the Congress Government appointed him member of the Scheduled Castes Board; when his term ended and the Congress regime did not grant him extension or any other job, he joined Badal Akali Dal; when he was refused

Daljit Singh Bittu's gathering at Gurdwara Aalamgir too became a matter of controversy; Badal considered all the Khalistani and other radical Sikhs as his enemies; but, in spite of this he not only allowed Bittu to hold a gathering in the Gurdwara but also arranged *langar* for thousands of participants and visitors; this led to allegations that he had some understanding with Badal and both had joined hands to oppose Maan. Maan too did not lose this opportunity to attack the credentials of Bittu and he and his senior companions levelled very serious allegations of corrupt practices against him; one of them said that Bittu and Gursharan Singh Gama, another former militant, owned a big farm house near Nurpur Bedi in Ropar district; they also claimed that Bittu also owned properties worth crores in Delhi and Uttar Pradesh which had been registered in names of their wives and children; they alleged that Bittu and Gamma had purchased property with the money looted from Ludhiana Bank. Mann alleged that even during militancy Bittu had played in the hands of intelligence agencies. He said that he was misusing the money raised in the name of Sikh struggle and Sikh martyrs. Maan claimed that Bittu was taken into party since he had remained in jail for 12 years and it was expected that he might have changed his ways. He alleged that Bittu started sabotaging party within nine months of joining it. Gursewak Singh (General Secretary of SAD Amritsar) alleged that Bittu had formed Panthic Committee parallel to that of Manochahal's Panthic Committee and within days all the members of Panthic Committee headed by Manochahal had been killed by police and Bittu's companions were still alive; he elaborated that Bittu's Committee was headed by Dr. Sohan Singh, who had surrendered in a dramatic way; he alleged that it should be

Lok Sabha seat he joined Maan camp; thus he proved himself to be a careerist and for him Akali and Congress, Maan and Badal made no difference; similarly Karamjit Singh too had always been changing sides from leftist to Khalistani, from militants to Akalis, to Badal to Maan and then Bittu.

enough evidence to show Bittu's involvement with state agencies. Another leader of Akali Dal Amritsar said that thousands of innocent youth had been killed but these people are enjoying their lives.²⁵⁴ An year earlier Narain Singh Chaura too had made sarcastic remarks doubting credentials of Daljit Singh Bittu: “*The movement is dead. All its protagonists are toothless. Daljit Bittu is the most dreaded of the former terrorists and Sukhi attended his wedding last year. So, what does he have to fear?*” commenting on this Chander Suta Dogra said: “*Bittu has yet to clarify his relationship with Sukhi; like a true politician, his explanations so far have been vague.*”²⁵⁵

Arrests of Simranjeet Singh Maan

Between 1997 and 2011 Simranjeet Singh Maan had been arrested for several times; there had been three regimes during this period; Badal was the CM twice (1997-2002 and 2002-2012) and Captain Amarinder Singh remained CM for one term (2002-2007) and both the CMs remained aggressive towards Maan; Badal always disliked Maan because he knew that it was only Maan who could challenge him (Badal used to call the rest of his opposition groups as ‘*dukki tikki*’ i.e. Tom, Dick and Harry)) hence he was always planning to trouble Maan in one or another way; on the other hand Captain Amarinder Singh, who is brother-in-law of Maan (Maan’s wife Geetinder Kaur and Captain’s wife Preneet Kaur are real sisters) too troubled Maan several times; so much so that he arrested him several times and when Badal group tried even to kill him at Kathu Nangal in October 2006 he did not interfere.

Some of the noteworthy arrests of Maan are: On the 7th of April 1991 Maan had made a speech in Gurdwara Bangla Sahib Delhi; a case was registered but the police did not take any action on it; however more than 12 years later, on the 22nd of February 2003 the Delhi police issued warrants for his

²⁵⁴ *The Tribune*, dated 1.12.2007

²⁵⁵ *Weekly Outlook*, dated 13.3.2006

arrest. On the 19th of October 2004 when Jagir Kaur appeared in CBI court Maan and his companions made a demonstration against her which resulted into skirmishes and the police registered a case against Maan.

On the 6th of June 2005 Simranjeet Singh Maan and his companions raised pro-Khalistan slogans during the celebrations of the anniversary of attack on Darbar Sahib; Jagir Kaur (president of the SGPC) acted as a tout of the police and made a complaint to the police and asked the latter to arrest Maan on charges of sedition; at this Maan was arrested on the 15th of June; on the 8th of July more charges were filed against him as a result he could not get bail up to 26th of July 2005.

On the 18th of May 2006, Maan and his companions hung a poster, bearing the photo of Dilawar Singh, in the neck of the statue of the terrorist CM Beant Singh (killed by Dilawar Singh and Balwant Singh Rajoana on the 30th of August 1995). For this act Maan was arrested on the charges of sedition (in this case the Supreme Court bench comprising of Justices Altamas Kabir and Markandeya Katju quashed sedition charges in a verdict passed in September 2008 said that mere raising of slogans does not amount to sedition

Maan was arrested in several cases on other occasions too; in the past 15 years he has been arrested for about 30 times but in none of the cases the court held him guilty of violation of any Indian law. The latest act against him was on the 23rd of July 2011 when he was ordered to leave Kashmir (where he had gone to sympathise the Muslim victims of State terrorism) or face arrest.

EPILOGUE

Unsikh state of the Sikh Panth

Where is Panth & who is a Sikh?

More than $\frac{3}{4}$ of the Sikhs have cut their hair and shaved their beards and moustaches; though they are considered 22 million; in fact this number includes millions those who don't have faith in Sikhs; probably only 5 million are proper Sikhs who have faith in Guru Granth Sahib as Guru (even this figure is very liberal).

Most of the Sikhs are caste maniac; there are Jatt Sikhs, Khatri Sikhs, Bhaapa Sikhs, Rajput Sikhs, Lubana Sikhs, Saini Sikhs, Kamboj Sikhs, Brahmin Sikhs, Ramgarhia Sikhs, Bhatra Sikhs, Ghumiaar Sikhs, Ramdasia Sikhs, Ravidasia Sikhs, Mazhabi Sikhs, Gora/Kaala Sikhs, Sikligar-Wanjara Sikhs, Bhaiya Sikhs, and Afghani Sikhs etc. It is Malwa, Majha, Doaba (in the Punjab), Haryana, Delhi, Rest of India, Diaspora Sikhs; they are parochial, tribal, caste-ist, racist.

The Gurdwaras of the *dereedaars* (in fact cult centres) are Nanaksar/Thaath, Babeke (Sunehrawala), Sang Dhesian, Parmeshar Duar, Gurdarshan Parkash (so-called Taksaal); some Gurdwaras belong to particular castes too i.e. Ramgarhia Gurdwara, Ravidasia Gurdwara, Gurdwara Bhaat Sangat, Gurdwara Rajputan; even those Gurdwara which are managed by committees comprising of mixed sections of the Sikh society have been transformed into cult centres, guild centres, clubs, societies, business centres; several Gurdwaras have become monopoly of certain groups/ guilds/ syndicates/ families; also in these Gurdwaras the elections are contested on the basis of caste/area and other considerations (it is remarkable to note that during the elections of Gurdwara Singh Sabha, Southal, England in the October 2008 the winning party had used 'Malwa' Sikh card).

In several Gurdwaras no new member can be enrolled; the Sikhs may visit the Gurdwaras but they don't have right to question the management or code of conduct. The income of Gurdwaras is being squandered, embezzled and misused; biggest fraud is being played in the SGPC; especially since Badal has captured its control 90% funds of the SGPC are being misused or plundered; Badal has created several private 'Trusts' (under the control of his family or loyalists) and thousands of acre of Gurdwaras' land and billions of rupees have been granted to these 'trusts'.

Un-Sikh festivals are being observed/celebrated in many Gurdwaras: *saradhs, Karva Chauth, Kanjakan, Sangrand, Pooranmaasi, Massiya, Panchami, Diwali, Dussehra, Rakhar Punnia, Holi, Basant, 'Babe da Viah Purab'* etc are being observed.

Gurdwaras have been ritual centres; only, path, *akhand path, keertan, langar* is the major activity; besides they are used for marriage, death and other family rites.

There are Nihang groups, Akhand Keertani Jatha who have different code of conduct.

Sikhism has been hijacked by Udasi/Nirmala cults Bhindran-Mehta Jatha (3 to 4 groups), Kaleran, Raara, Dodra,

Neeldhari, Dhakki, Mastuana, Sunehrawala/Babeke, Gobind Sadan (Virsa Singh), Yogi Bhajan cult, Sewa Tarmala, Dakhani Sikhs (of Nander) and other big and small *saadhhs* etc; for them certain sections of the Sikhs and all the women are untouchable; these cults are most dangerous as they present themselves as Sikhs, fool the Sikhs and wean them away from real Sikhism; thus these cults are most harmful and dangerous for Sikhism.

Whereas the Kookas (Namdharis), Nirankaris, Radhasoamis, Sirsa dera walas, Nurmahalias/Ashutoshias, Bhaniarawalas, Rashtariya Sikh Sangat's (RSS's) Brahminic *kesdharis* are not at all Sikhs.

State of the Sikh leadership

At present Simranjeet Singh Maan is the most sincere Sikh leader who is concerned about the future of the Sikhs, whereas Captain Amarinder Singh is sincere for the Punjab. Among the others Badal is a devoted RSS leader, Surjit Barnala (who attacked Darbar Sahib in 1986 to justify Indira Gandhi's similar attack in June 1984 and killed hundreds of Sikh youth during his reign) is neither sincere nor has he any say among the Sikhs except in a few small segments of Barnala district; Ravi Inder Singh (who runs politics from his bed and sofa) has lost his grip even on his own zone (Kharar-Morinda); among the Akali Dal (Punj Pardhani) leaders (led by Daljeet Singh Bittu) Harpal Singh Cheema and Kulbir Singh Barapind seem to be sincere, the credentials of Harinder Singh (former Secretary of Indian Government in Norway) have always been doubtful, some advisors of this group too are considered as persons of dubious character and their policy is a cobweb of confusions, that is why there is less possibility of any positive role by them.

As far as the Badal-Tohra-Talwandi Akali Dal is concerned it is all just one man show; Badal is the only person who dictates decisions (in fact edicts); all others are just dumb puppets and petty beggars; the Executive, the Delegates, the General House all are decoration pieces. Badal, his son, his

daughter-in-law, his son-in-law and several other relatives are legislatures; besides his most trusted 'pets' Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa and Balwinder Singh Bhundar, Kirpal Singh Badungar, Daljeet Singh Cheema, Sewa Singh Sekhwan, Sucha Singh Langah, Nirmal Singh Kahlon are at his mercy; Jagir Kaur is loyal to him due to her precarious situation (that resulted from the mysterious death of her daughter); Badal too does not reject her due to vote bank of the Lubana brotherhood to which she belongs to; similar is the situation of Kamboj vote bank which he has managed by offering a cabinet post to Dr Upinder Kaur (daughter of Atma Singh). Jagdev Singh Talwandi is an old and weak person; however, Badal offers him nothing more than a seat in the SGPC and another one for his son in the Punjab Assembly. Ranjit Singh Brahmputra heads one group but it is limited to some area of Majha, Gurdev Singh Badal, a *dalit*, is Badal's undeclared slave; the rest are either rich persons making regular contributions to his or Sukhbir's purse or are minor activists who hanker after minor designations and offices. The only person who has used, rather exploited, Badal is Barjinder Hamdard (owner of daily *Ajit*, a newspaper published from Jalandhar); so much so that he became an M.P. and got an inept person like S.P. Singh (his class-fellow) appointed as the V.C. of Guru Nanak University. As far as the role of this group is concerned they are no Akalis at all; as Badal is a member of the RSS and he has nothing to do with the Sikhs; and, as all his followers are almost like 'slaves' to him they too dare not talk about the plight of the Sikhs; however, they are allowed to blame the Congress and the Central Government for being hostile to the Sikhs. Badal is, till today, fully successful in fooling the Sikhs who don't use their brain while voting for him, and, by electing him they sign on the warrants for their destruction.

From amongst human rights activists abroad the most active are: Council of Khalistan (Dr Gurmit Singh Aulakh, USA), Sikhs For Justice (Gurpatwant Singh Pannu, Canada) and United Sikhs; and, from amongst and the missionary groups: wakeupkhalisa.com (Kuldeep Singh New York, USA),

khalsanews.org (Prof. Darshan Singh), gurupanth.com (Gurpreet Singh Brampton, Gurpreet Singh Cambridge, Canada and their companions), Shere-i-Punjab Radio (Kuldeep Singh), Singh Sabha USA (Hardev Singh Shergill), Singh Sabha Canada (Gurcharan Singh Jiunwala, Manjit Singh Sahota, Parminder Singh Parmar etc), Tiger Jathas (UK, Canada, USA), Jhoothi Taksal (Canada), Balkaran Singh Shergill (Brampton, Canada), Kuldeep Singh Toledo (USA), Sikh Spokesman web paper (Canada), Gurdwara Sikh Lehar Brampton (Canada), Gurdwara Sikh Mission Brampton (Canada), World Sikh Organisation (Canada), World Sikh News (USA), *Akhauti Santan De Kautak* group on Facebook (Daljit Singh and others USA), *Bachitar Natak ik Saajash* group of Facebook (Resham Singh USA), Satpal Singh Purewal (USA), Gurdev Singh Sandhwalia (Canada), Canadian Sikh and Teaching Society Vancouver (Satnam Singh Johal, Dr Puran Singh Gill, Jasbir Singh Gandam etc).

The Sikhs' response to the Sikh leaders is itself an analysis of the Panth's leadership; Simranjeet Singh Maan has about 5% votes (i.e. 11% of the Sikh votes) in the Punjab (and he has always maintained this support; his Party polled almost same percentage of votes during 1997, 1998, 2002, 2007, 2009 elections); out of the total votes in the Punjab Sikh have about 55% share and of all the Sikh voters just 15 % have unshorn hair; hence most of the practicing Sikhs are with Maan; Bittu group has the support of about 2-3% Sikh votes and other non-Badal groups together have less than 1 % support; from among the Sikhs with unshorn hair Badal has support of 3 to 5% Sikhs; however Badal has support of most of the *patits* (apostates) Sikhs as well as most of the Nirankaris, Radhasoamis, Kookas, Sarsa followers.

Past, present and future of the Panth

Since Parkash Singh Badal's joining of the R.S.S. (in February 1996) the Sikhs are passing through the worst ever crisis of their history. The Sikhs have braved several holocausts (persecution during 1711-1716 and 1734-45,

carnage of 1746, carnage of 1762, killings of Sikhs during two Anglo-Sikh wars in 1845-46, 1849, Nanakana Sahib massacre 1921, killings at Jaito in 1924, mass killings during migration of 1947, pogroms of June 1984, Black November 1984 and ten years long massacres of Sikh youth during 1985-95); these holocausts could not annihilate the Sikhs; every time the Sikhs rose out of the ashes; and, every time, within a couple of years they were rejuvenated.

The above mentioned massacres were the physical holocausts; but the Sikhs braved 'soft target' attacks also; during the lives of the Gurus, some of their rejected children opposed the Gurus' successors and some of them even tried to set up their own dominions; however the Sikhs baffled their evil designs and rejected them like fake coins. Again, during their struggle for sovereignty in the eighteenth century when the Sikhs were living in their hideouts, the Udasi and the Nirmalas infiltrated into the Sikh world and actually succeeded in ushering Brahminic customs and practices in the lives of many ignorant Sikhs. This was followed by still another assault on Sikhism when the Sikh Misls gained power; the non-Sikh elite joined them in the name of assisting them in administrating their territories and estates; most of these were fundamentalist Hindus; as the Sikh leaders were simple people the cunning Hindus achieved their goal easily and led many of the illiterate and simple chiefs of the Misls astray from Sikh philosophy; ignorant Sikh chiefs could not understand when their Hindu advisors had pushed them to Brahminic ways.²⁵⁶

²⁵⁶ The grip of these Hindu officers on the Sikh rulers became so firm that they became *de facto* rulers in most of the Sikh States; they were so powerful that they would discriminate the Sikhs in every sphere; this continued even in the twentieth century; the resolutions passed by the Akali Dal and other Sikh organisations condemning discrimination against and persecution of the Sikhs by these Hindu officers in the Sikh States reveal that how powerful these officials were and the Sikh rulers were least concerned about common Sikhs or they ignored it due to some of their weakness known to these Hindu officers.

The worst was yet to come during the reign of (Maharaja) Ranjit Singh; the Brahmins from Hindustan (Misr Khushal Chand/Sinh, Misr Tej Ram/Teja Sinh, Misr Lal Chand/Sinh) and Dogras from Jammu (Gulab Chand/Sinh, Dhian Chand/Sinh and Suchet Sinh, the three sons of Rajput Kishori Sinh, a descendant of an illegitimate Rajput) fully captured the Lahore Darbar; within a decade Ranjit Singh became a puppet in the hands of these cunning Hindus and from almost all the major offices were under their command; so much so that Ranjit Singh appointed a Brahmin as his Minister of Religion; and after this he (Maharaja), though in full physical Sikh form, was a man without *dharma*, i.e. he did not have commitment for the Sikh fundamentals and/or Sikh religious values; he was a true Hindu '*maharaja*' ready to please everyone in return of loyalty to his kingdom sans religion; it was this scenario which made him donate millions of rupees to the temples of Banaras, Jammu, Kangra, Jawala and several other; and as a show off a small amount was spent to gold-plate Darbar Sahib too.

During the reign of Ranjit Singh, with the exception of Darbar Sahib and Akal Takht and the Gurdwaras in Anandpur Sahib, which were under the care of Akali Phula Singh, remained safe; all the rest of the Gurdwaras had come under the control of Udasi and Nirmala priests. Still more harm was done in the villages where the Brahmins fooled the Sikh masses and began polluting their rituals and religious way of life with introduction of Brahminic practices side by side of Sikh *maryada* (way of life). From 1800 to 1849, for five decades, a very large number of the Sikhs could not understand what fraud had been played with them; they still considered Brahmins as their senior/elder brothers; but the damage was done. Then came the English – the Christians – their planning was to destroy Sikhism and convert the whole of the Punjab into Christianity; they employed both strategies: preaching Christianity as well as distorting Sikh religion and history; besides this the English gained indirect but actual control of all the Sikh shrines; they appointed their *sarbrahs* (managers); for

Darbar Sahib, they drafted a *dastur-i-amal* (rules for management) and all this was accomplished by a Brahmin named Tej Ram (former Commander-in-chief of the Sikh Army) to whom many Sikhs still take as Raja Teja Singh; and, the managing committee to administer Darbar Sahib too was headed by him.

In 1873, the Singh Sabha Movement was launched; still the agents of the Brahmins like Khem Singh Bedi, who exploited being a direct descendant of Lakhmi Das, the rejected son of Guru Nanak became leader of this Movement. Bedi was basically a Hindu and he opposed the Sikh renaissance movement tooth and nail; he succeeded in getting patronage of and complete help from Bikram Singh (Raja of Faridkot); but the Sikh masses refused to become ‘turban wearing Hindus’; had there been no Professor Gurmukh Singh, Giani Dit Singh and Kahan Singh Nabha then the Sikhs would have met their unsung demise under the foreign rule.

In 1902, the command of the Singh Sabha Movement was taken over by the Chief Khalsa Diwan; though they were toadies of the regime and had feudal mentality but Sikh religious values thronged in their blood; persons like Sunder Singh Majithia and Harbans Singh Attari stood like rocks and did not let Brahmins distort Sikhism or lead the Sikhs astray. During this period Daya Nand (the founder of the Arya Samaj) came to the Punjab; he was successful in wooing the Hindus of the Punjab but he could not attract many Sikhs to the Arya/Hindu fold; such conversions (like that of Bhagt Singh’s elders of Khatkar Kalan or Dharmendra Deol’s elders of Sahnewal and a few other families who renounced Sikhism to become Arya Samajist) could be counted on finger-tips; however the Arya Samaj was able to create enmity between the Sikhs and the Punjabi Hindus.

During this period the Brahmins tried to occupy or share the control of Darbar Sahib by bringing status of fictitious Hindu gods into the *parkarma* of Darbar for worship but in 1905 Arur Singh Sarbrah thwarted this conspiracy too and saved Darbar Sahib from becoming a semi-Hindu temple.

The Akali Movement (1920-25) made remarkable contribution; it freed almost all the Gurdwaras from the Udasi and Nirmala *mahants*; in 1925 the Gurdwara Act was passed expelling the Hindu priests from Gurdwaras (but it did give birth to a more dangerous epidemic i.e. election system in the Gurdwaras). The Akali Movement succeeded in taking control of the management of the Gurdwaras but still they could not exile all anti-Sikh practices from the Gurdwaras; there was still a *jyoti* (flame) burning in Darbar Sahib (a symbol of fire worship); there was Mahant Santokh Das Udasi's saffron flag instead of blue flag (which the Nihangs still had) that fluttered in between Darbar Sahib and Akal Takht; the practice of washing Darbar Sahib with milk continued; everyone donating rupees 100 or more continued getting so-called *sirpao*; naming a *ber* tree as *Dukh Bhanjani Beri* and stairs of the Darbar Sahib as *Har-ki-Pauri* (in imitation of the name of a temple at Hardwar) and making obeisance to them and some more such Brahminic practices continued polluting Darbar Sahib complex; celebration of *sangrand*, *massiya*, *pooran maasi* could not be stopped; *Massiya* bath at Tarn Taran, *Maaghi* bath at Muktsar could not be exposed; Rakhar Punniya at Baba Bakala was allowed to be celebrated as Sikh festival, the Dogra and Brahmin practice of celebration of Diwali in Darbar Sahib remained in practice and several other Brahminic practices could not be eliminated even by the leadership of the Akali Movement; in fact they considered freeing Gurdwaras from the control of the *mahants* as final victory and the epidemic of contesting elections to control the Gurdwaras polluted their mind so much that they forgot to free Gurdwaras from the Brahminic practices.

After this the movement to expel the British from the sub-continent became so forceful that the Sikh leaders began ignoring Gurdwaras and the missionary role; the Akalis spent the next 20 years in such activities; during this period the cunning Brahmins (Nehru and Patel etc) and Baniyas (Gandhi etc) succeeded in fooling some Akali leaders in the name of so-

called nationalism²⁵⁷ and tempting some others in the name of making them co-rulers and in this scenario of confusion and greed these Akali leaders became blind followers of the Congress leaders; but, in 1947, when they realised the truth they were just dumbfounded; they realised their stupidity when everything was lost.

However, after 1947 Master Tara Singh struggled hard to preserve the identity of the Sikhs; he fought for political rights; he launched a Sikh missionary movement; he nurtured the Sikh Students Federation and founded Sikh youth organisation Bir Khalsa Dal; and all this played role in preserving the Sikh identity and entity; had it not been done the Sikhs, bereft of political power, would have assimilated in the Hindu fold. In 1960 when master Tara Singh was in jail during the Punjabi Suba agitation, the Brahmin rulers through the C. M. Partap Singh Kairon, succeeded in dividing the Sikhs in the name of *Jatt* and non-*Jatt* (at that time *Jatt* versus *Bhaapa* because Master Tara Singh was a *Bhaapa*); and by using all Government machinery he expelled Master Tara Singh from the SGPC and handed it over to Fateh Singh; the latter was so naive that during his time the Communists joined Gurdwara services and missionary jobs. The life-style of these missionary turned Communists was in no way that of Gurmat hence they polluted the Sikh missionary world (which is at its apex at present).

In 1967 the Akalis captured power; in spite of becoming rulers some Akalis continued practicing and preaching Sikh values; such leaders remained role model of an average Sikh youth; but after Parkash Singh Badal became the

²⁵⁷ India never was a nation; it was a sub-continent of different nations (Punjab, Bengal, Maharashtra, Saurashtra, Tilangana, Orissa, Rajputana, Bundelkhand, Hindustan, Vijaynagar, Ahom Des/Assam etc); these nations were like that of Germany, France, Poland, Holland, Belgium, Italy, Greece, Switzerland, Hungary and other countries of Europe; the British had occupied these nations one by one and had brought all of them under one administration; it was the English who gave it the name and form of one country.

CM of the Punjab in 1970, the hunger for power began playing its role and gradually it polluted the minds of a very large number of Akalis. This change of mind also affected their religious lives; now they bothered less for religion and spiritual values; for them material world, power, wealth became primary; and thus lower and negative values defiled and sullied the minds of the Akali leaders; even traditional Akali leaders began ignoring the deterioration and downwards trends.

However, the killings of 13 Sikhs on the 13th of April 1978 changed the scenario; Jathedar Talwinder Singh (Canada) and Baba Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala led the Sikh nation out of stupor and ushered a movement for religious and spiritual values and rejuvenated the Sikh youth; this revived their spirit of chivalry and all this brought back the Sikhs' glory. Soon the whole Sikh World joined the Sikh national movement; the Indian Intelligence Agencies and especially the RSS and the Third Agency got alarmed and scared and they decided that the Sikhs should either be annihilated or subjugated to slavery; between 1981 and 1995 about twenty-five thousand Sikh youth and a like number of others were butchered (conservative figures put this number to one hundred thousand and some even believe it to be quarter of a million).

The fanatic, fundamentalist, terrorist and chauvinist Hindu leaders thought that they had broken the backbone of the Sikhs and had subjugated the Sikhs politically; and now they began the final assault to exile Sikhism from the lives of the Sikhs; this soft target was a planned, fully organised, mass-scale invasion; it was so cunning that even many of the Sikh intellectual could not read in between the lines.

After offering Parksah Singh Badal (and his descendants) permanent rule of the Punjab subject to his joining the RSS,²⁵⁸ it (RSS) began translating into action its '*decimate and annihilate Sikhism*' plan; under this plan everything conspicuous as Sikh was to be exiled from Sikhism;

²⁵⁸ For details: read the first chapter of this volume.

and it could have been done only by transformation; hence, under this project the following actions were planned:

1. The Sikhs should be made to hanker after power and forget even the name of religion.
2. The militant Sikhs should be defamed and presented as terrorists; their activities should be presented in such a way that they should be blamed for all the losses and troubles of the Sikhs.
3. The Sikhs should be encouraged to become rich; corruption should be allowed to become a way of life of the Sikhs and this will kill ethical values among the Sikhs.
4. The Gurdwaras should be converted into ritual centres performing only *akhand path*, *keertan*, *katha*/exegesis (based only on Hindu mythology); ritualism and pomp and show should be the main business there; missionary activity should be discouraged in the Gurdwaras.
5. More stress should be laid on celebration of Hindu festivals (*Holi*, *Diwali*, *Rakhri*, *Karva Chauth*, *Kanjaks* etc) in the Sikh homes in the name of cultural and seasonal festivals.
6. Palmistry, astrology, *vaastu-shastra* and like activities should be promoted and the Sikhs should be attracted to *shagun/apshagan* and *mahurat* (auspicious and inauspiciousness).
7. Apostate Sikhs should be encouraged by giving them jobs, facilities, promotions etc.
8. Badal and his family should publically perform Hindu rituals i.e. *havans* and *pooja* etc, worship in temples and Hindu idols and thus promote worship of Hindu deities by the Sikhs especially by the Akalis; and those who fall in the line of Badal should be elevated to high offices of power and money-earning seats.

9. *Sants, Babas, Brahamgyanis* and *deraas* should be promoted.²⁵⁹ They should wean the Sikhs away from Gurbaani and start singing of poetry, especially cheap poetry.
10. All the Sikh institutions should be corrupted:
- (A) *Akali Dal*: non-Sikhs or apostates should be given high offices in the Party and should be nominated for elections to Punjab Assembly as well as other Government bodies;
- (B) *SGPC/Gurdwaras*: corrupt and debauched employees should be appointed, funds should be embezzled and Gurdwara income should be used for party promotion; immoral preachers should be promoted, missionary activities should not be allowed and for eye-wash shows of missionary activity should be high-lighted in the form of *amrit parchar, nagar keertan, keertan darbars, akhand path* series and other ritualistic shows; only those person should be appointed *granthis* which belong to *deraas* (especially Chowk Mehta Dera), Udasi or Nirmala centres.
- (C) *Akal Takht*: Loyal *granthis* should be appointed as Jathedars and they should behave as semi-gods and harass and pounce upon the opponents of Badal, *deraas*, RSS, BJP and other Hindu organisations; the Takhts should promote and honour *dereadaars* or Hindu leaders and snub the missionaries and their supporters.
11. *Dasamgranth* should be promoted as ‘Sri guru’ and it should be urged that every Gurdwara should also install this as granth along with Guru Granth Sahib so that the Sikhs should get confused about their scripture and also forget *Shabad Guru*; gradually Dasam Granth should be given more importance by preaching that institution of Khalsa, *ardas* and *nitnaym* were based on it and also that the Sikh chivalry as its root ‘only’ in this book. Dasam

²⁵⁹ Most of the *deraas* have been established or have prospered during the regime of Badal, especially between 1997 and 2002 and 2007 and 2011.

Granth would also establish Raam and Krishan in the Gurdwaras; it should be followed by the recitation of *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*.

12. The Sikh Rehatmaryada (code of conduct), the Sikh rites and the Sikh way of life (in the name of '*sampardas*' and different and several '*maryadas*') should be twisted, muddled and confused.
13. It should be preached that there are several *sampardas* among the Sikhs.
14. The *raagis* should be encouraged (rather ordered) to sing hymns from Dasam Granth; especially in Darbar Sahib singing of hymns should be made obligatory for every *raagi*.
15. The RSS and BJP leaders, Hindu *saadhus* and *samparda* leaders should be invited and honoured in all the Sikh functions; they should attack one or another aspect of Sikhs history and philosophy; and, it should be assured that no one rebuts, refutes or 'rectifies' their statements; and if any one tries to do so should be side-lined and black-listed.
16. Anti-Sikh cults should be nurtured and promoted especially the Namdharis, Radhasoamis, Divya Jyoti Jagran Sangathan (Ashutosh) should be frequently visited by Akali leaders so that other Sikhs may also fall in their trap; and, enmity for Sirsa *dera* should not be allowed to continue.
17. The descendants of Guru Sahibs (Sri Chand, Bedis, Bhallas and Sodhis etc) and those who distort Sikhism (Udasis, Nirmalas, etc) should be promoted as senior and superior Sikhs.
18. The members of the RSS, BJP, Arya Samajist and other fundamentalist Hindu groups should be given jobs, especially high status jobs, in the infra-structure of the regime in the Punjab and it should be tired that no Sikh missionary is given any job.
19. The police officers that killed the Sikh militants should be fully helped and shielded; and it is possible they should

be honoured; it would defeat morals of the supporters of the Khalistan movement and degrade the families of the Khalistani militants.

20. Sikh studies should be eliminated from the books of syllabi in the schools.
21. Sikh history and philosophy should be distorted; those who contribute to this planning should be promoted and provided all possible facilities; special regards should be given to the associates of the Christian missionary W.H. McLeod especially Pishaura Singh, Gurinder Maan, J.S. Grewal, Harjot Oberoi, Lou Fenech, Nikky Guninder Kaur etc. Under this project the following points should be preached: (a) the Sikhs are a part of Hinduism (b) the Sikhs should be presented just as 'defenders of Hinduism' (c) hair, beards and moustaches are obligatory only for '*amritdhari*' Khalsa and others may cut them (d) it should be preached that there are several types of a Sikh: *amritdhari*, *kesdhari*, *sehajdhari*.
22. Distort Sikhism through films, serials on TV and documentaries as well as through other electronic and print media.
23. Punjabi language should not be promoted and rather it should be discouraged by dubbing it as the language of the rustics; English and Hindi should be promoted and these two should be taught as compulsory languages up to the tenth grade in the schools.
24. Sikh religious functions should be turned into social and cultural functions; film actors/actresses, singers should be invited so that they should become attraction of the Sikhs and the importance of the religious event should be forgotten.
25. The films and TV's serials should promote clean-shaven Sikhs; and whenever a Sikh character is brought in he should be shown as target of mockery, insult and a symbol of cowardice and stupidity; every serial should show a Sikh girl marrying a Hindu.

26. Arya Samaj's hero Bhagat Singh should be promoted as the *shaheed-i-aazam* ('greatest ever' martyr) of the Sikhs; no Sikh martyrs who had remained in full (*saabat soorat*) Sikh form should be promoted; Banda Singh Bahadur should always be presented as 'Banda Bairagi' and not as a Sikh; still, in no way, his greatness should ever be high-lighted; if possible the Ghadr, Akali and Babar martyrs should never be referred to; even Guru Arjan and Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom should not be promoted. An airport, a university, a district, some colleges, schools, hospitals, parks should be named after Bhagat Singh; he should become a symbol of Punjab; this will promote Arya/Hindu supremacy. Care should be taken that even Sukhdev, Rajguru, Kartar Singh Sarabha etc should not be promoted as they were not Arya Samajist and had secular thinking.
27. The Delhi Sikhs should be monitored through RSS cell in the Congress Party; of course they should be promoted so that Badal should ever remain under pressure hence always be obliged to seek help from the BJP and RSS. Strict vigilance should be observed over the Delhi's anti-Badal group so that they should not allow Sikh fundamentalists and missionaries to use the Delhi platforms for promotion of their agenda.
28. Those who oppose Akali Dal Badal should be presented as agents of the Congress Party and the carnage of the Sikhs in November 1984 should be used as the most forceful tool to create hatred for the Congress.
29. As much as possible the Sikh should be weaned away from constructive role and they should be encouraged to meaningless activities so that their money and energy should not be used for missionary of educational activities; the Sikhs should be motivated to gold-plate their Gurdwaras, construct big buildings, *saraans* (hostels for visitors) and parking lots, participate in international humanitarian projects and other show business.

30. Launch anti-Sikh propaganda through websites, fake IDs on Facebook and other such web groups; it should include defaming and confusing the Sikhs.

The RSS had chalked out this 30 point programme and it was implemented through the Central and State agencies, the RSS and the BJP and other organisations; in the Punjab Parkash Singh Badal made tremendous contribution to the implementation of the above agenda; under his command the Akali Dal (Badal), the SGPC, the priests of Akal Takht, *deredaars* left no stone unturned to kill Sikhi spirit; it was (and is still going on) such an all out, powerful and multi-faceted invasion on Sikhism that it seemed that within two decades more than 90% of the Sikhs will shave their hair and beards and by the next decade the rest too will follow the course.

The Sikhs had not seen such a phenomenon except during the period after occupation of the Punjab by the English in 1849; then too the English had hoped that turban and hair of the Sikhs shall become a part of history. But, in the 1870s the Singh Sabha played marvellous role and turned the tides and reversed the phase of history which revived the glory of Sikhism. Again, the new Singh Sabha was born in the Punjab but this time a handful of Sikh missionaries and elite especially in Chandigarh, Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Jammu, Calcutta, Kanpur and other parts of India, with their meagre sources, played remarkable role; the Mohali Convention of the 26th of October 2003 blocked the RSS's '*decimate and annihilate Sikhism*' plan. This Convention shook the anti-Sikh world and they had to chalk out another plan to disintegrate the unity of the Sikh elite; and these forces did succeed; within a few months the organisers of Mohali Convention had their different paths; along with this the anti-Sikh forces succeeded in 'excommunicating' Joginder Singh of Spokesman who was one of the three major forces behind the Convention; though the Sikh elite rejected this so-called excommunication but still the anti-Sikh groups took it as a great victory; but jubilations of anti-Sikh world were defeated very soon because the spirit of the Mohali Convention had spread throughout the Globe;

several organisations in the name of Singh Sabhas, missionary societies, Panthic associations had been formed in especially in the USA, Canada and Europe; though not aligned to each other but they began work on the same agenda. By that time the *saadhhs*, who had been created/promoted by the RSS and Badal, had begun spreading their wings in the western world; the Sikh Diaspora played major role in creating a revolution against these thugs and the Sikh Diaspora began rejecting these parasites (*saadhhs*) one by one: Ranjit Singh Dhadarianwala, Maan Singh Pehowa, Amar Singh Barundi, Hari Singh Randhawa, Daljit Singh Chicago all were exposed. Again, on the 1st of December 2005, Joginder Singh Sahni launched *Rozana Spokesman* (which was to play major role in creating an anti-Dasam Granth movement); the RSS and Dasam Granth Mafia used several high-handed tactics to stop this paper but their wishes were badly defeated and the paper survived in spite of blockage of State advertisements by the Badal.

Hate campaign against the Sikh missionaries

The RSS, the deredaars (especially Chowk Mehta Dera and other Nirmala/Udasi deraas) and anti Sikh agencies launched a hate campaign against the Sikh missionaries by dubbing them as *Machineries*, *Kala Afghaniay*, *Dilgeeriay*, *Darshan Singhiay*, *Spokesmaniay* etc. This hate campaign did work for some time and some illiterate persons were affected by them but this did not last long and anti Sikh groups were soon exposed and after this they began using other devices and hatching new conspiracies to attack genuine Sikh missionaries.

In 2009 the RSS, through its Chowk Mehta Dera outfit and their priests made another attempt to silence the voices against the Dasam Granth; the clergy of Akal Takht ‘excommunicated’ Professor Darshan Singh Raagi on fake allegations; and to their shock the Sikhs everywhere rejected the authority of the clergy to issue such an edict.

Again, major role was played by the Sikh elite active on the internet, especially the Facebook; within one year more than 60000 elite Sikh families had joined hands through

Akhauti Santan de Kautak (Daljit Singh) and *Bachitar Natak Ik Sazash* (Resham Singh) forums; it was like a major revolution; in seconds the Sikhs would get message of all the conspiracies against the Sikhs and everyone would be informed and warned about the anti-Sikh forces. Having lost on intellectual front, the RSS and the Dasam Granth Mafia stooped to very low level to combat the Sikh elite; they created doctrine videos of Professor Darshan Singh and Sarbjeet Singh Dhoonda and false identities (IDs) of Dr Harjinder Singh Dilgeer and Inder Singh Ghagga and several others and began sending dirty postings in their names so that they may be defamed among the Sikhs but this racket was soon exposed; after this the RSS and Dasam Granth Mafia began hacking the Panthic websites and groups and pages on the Facebook; they succeeded in hacking '*santan de kautak*', '*bachitar natak*' and the organisers had to create new groups. The RSS and Dasam Granth Mafia gangs have engaged the services of IT experts and they are all the time busy in planning intrigues and conspiracies; in fact, now, they are on the run. In the Canada and the US the Sikh elite have another positive point in their favour; they have control over several radio stations through which they give their message in minutes; Raghbir Singh Samagh's Gurbani TV, Kuldeep Singh's *Sher-i-Punjab Radio* in Vancouver (Canada) has played major role; similarly Harcharan Singh Calgary and his team, several radios in Toronto (Ontario) and California, New York, Gurcharan Singh Jiunwala and Manjit Singh Sahota of Singh Sabha Canada (Toronto, Canada), Balkaran Singh Gill (Brampton, Canada), Gurpreet Singh Brampton and Gurpreet Singh Cambridge (Canada) and their gurupanth.com team, Manjit Singh Mangat and Gurdev Singh Sandhwalia (Gurdwara Sikh Lehar, Brampton, Canada), Harnek Singh (Newzealand), Malkiat Singh (Germany), Kulwinder Singh (Spain), Surjeet Singh Chhadauri (Belgium), Jaswant Singh (Norway), Manjit Singh (Finland), Kuldeep Singh (Wakeup Khalsa), Kuldeep Singh Toledo, Tejinderpal Singh Hounslow and Arwinderpal Singh Chigwel (England), Gurmit Singh (Australia) and several others have played marvellous role.

At present the anti-Sikh forces have equally forceful and committed opponents and their hopes of annihilation of Sikhism or dilution of Sikh philosophy have been shattered; the war is still going on in December 2011.

Appendix I

Historicity of so-called Dasam Granth

Current controversy about the Dasam Granth is totally uncalled for. Recognized Banis of Sikh Baptismal accepted by Sikh Code of Conduct and recitation of daily prayers has been there since the creation of Khalsa. Guruship was bestowed only on Guru Granth Sahib, therefore, no other Granth can be installed along with Sri Guru Granth Sahib.

When the earthly sojourn of Guru Gobind Singh Ji was nearing its end at Nanded, He gathered his devotees around Him, and declared in an emphatic but in a revelational tone: "I am soon leaving my visible abode of divine law, but I will not leave you in utter loneliness. I entrust you to the ambrosial reservoir of immortal word, the finality of which is preserved by my super insight in the Damdami Bir (Guru Granth Sahib). I bestow the divine gift of Gurgaddi upon Guru Granth Sahib, an everlasting spirit of the Ten Guru-Prophets." The Sikhs have been finding solutions by referring to their great Scripture, and thus paying obeisance to no other Scripture as their Guru ever since the physical departure of Guru Gobind Singh Ji. There is no gap of history, and contradiction or any obstruction in the endless flow of this divine practice. Thus the prophetic faith of 10th master, transcending all illusory forms of knowledge and rejecting all false masks of apostasy, embracing none but the "supreme word", revealed his final commitment to Guru Granth Sahib as the only eternal Guru of the Khalsa Panth.

Neither Tenth master nor any of His Darbari Kavis - Sainpath (*Sri Gur Sobha*) Koer Singh (*Gur Bilas Das* or *Parchian Sewa Das*) and so forth - mentioned the existence of Dasam Granth or its historic whereabouts anywhere. In fact, no reference to Dasam Granth or any other such literature is found anywhere in any such literature in the Guru period at all. It is only in the Sikh literature of the post-Guru period that one comes across sketchy references to some composition of the Tenth Guru.

Chronologically, the so-called letter of Bhai Mani Singh to Mata Sundri Ji is the first link, as alleged by few scholars, between the compilation of Dasam Granth and Bhai Mani Singh. This letter could not have been written earlier than 1716 C.E., as it mentions the rumour of Banda Bahadur having escaped from mogul custody, for he was arrested and executed in that year. Dr. Rattan Singh Jaggi believes this letter as a fake one. In all the Gurmukhi prose writings of that period (e.g. the Hukamnamas of Guru Gobind Singh and Banda Bahadur) words constituting a sentence were joined together without leaving blank spaces between them and this method of writing continued to be followed right up to 1867 C.E. as shown by a copy of the newspaper (Akhbar Sri Darbar Sahib) published in that year. But the words in so-called letter of Bhai Mani Singh are not joined together, and are separated by blank spaces. Also, as discussed by Dr Jaggi in detail, the shape of letters and liberal use of bindi of Gurmukhi script in the letter are different from the

writing of Bhai Mani Singh's period. This clearly shows that the so-called letter of Bhai Mani Singh is forged as it was drafted at a much later date than 1867 C.E. This letter is a fraudulent attempt to associate Bhai Mani Singh's name with CHARITROPAKYAN. It is unthinkable that a learned Sikh like Bhai Mani Singh would send CHARITROPAKYAN to venerable Mata Ji, as it is a document which Sikhs will never read or recite in the presence of a lady or in Sangat. Furthermore, the metallic Nib used on this letter was not available in those times.

Second document of note is "*Bansavalinamam Dasan Patshahian Ka*" written by Kesar Singh Chhiber, a Brahmin of Jammu. He completed his work in 1779 C.E., 71 years after the demise of Guru Gobind Singh and 45 years after the martyrdom of Bhai Mani Singh. He writes in the very beginning, that his account is based on his recollections of hearsays "*Suni Sunai bolke joi rahi hai yaad*", again "*Soi Kahani Suni sunai, apni sauk nal pothi hai banai.*" How can such memory or record be taken to be reliable? He was over 70 years old when he completed his work and clearly has made mistakes in the dates he recorded.

Third document is *Mehma Parkash* (1800 C.E.). It tells us of Granth named *Vidya Sagar* that was compiled at the time of Guru Gobind Singh. Beside these three documents we have noted above, there are *Guru Gyan Suraj* by Bhai Santokh Singh (1843), *Panth Prakash* by Gyani Gyan Singh (1930 C.E.) and *Mahan Kosh* (1930 C.E.). All these sources are of very later period and appear only to reiterate in one form or other what had been written earlier.

There is no historical evidence for linking the Dasam Granth with Tenth Master, Bhai Mani Singh or with the literature that was allegedly thrown away or was lost. Additionally, there are four so-called Birs available with us: 1. Bhai Mani Singh Bir; 2. Baba Deep Singh Bir; 3. Patna Bir; and, 4. Sangrur Bir. Textual analysis of all these Birs is very imperative to check their authenticity. Let us discuss the history and internal evidence of these four Birs along with some other Birs available to us.

(A) History of Bhai Mani Singh Bir: Currently published Dasam Granth is the same one which was finalized in 1897-1902 by Sodhak Committee, after consulting 32 different Dasam Granths and deleting some compositions. The British floated Colebrook Dasam Granth, which is almost same as Sodhak Committee's Dasam Granth, with minor changes. Why would they go through the charade of changing or Sodh the compositions of Guru Gobind Singh and even Bhai Mani Singh if they consider them to be the writings of the Guru and/or Bhai Mani Singh to begin with? Authenticity of this currently published Dasam Granth as compiled by Sodhak committee needs a thorough independent inquiry by Panthic Scholars under the guidance of SGPC and Akal Takth to end this matter.

(Raja Gulab Singh Sethi bought it from Jamandar Para Singh in 1945. Raja Gulab Singh took it to Lahore and later his family settled in Delhi after partition. This Bir is supposed to have been found by a military person during Multan Victory in 1818 C.E. He moved to Hyderabad in South India and after

retirement settled in Nanded area in Maharashtra. The Bir is said to have reached Delhi later on. The date on this Bir is 1713 C.E.; however, the ink and handwriting of recording of the date is different than that of original handwriting. The scribe recording the date of the manuscript seems to lack proficient knowledge of Gurmukhi and Punjabi language and is far below Bhai Mani Singh's calibre. On the other hand the scribe is apparently interested in distorting the Sikh Scripture as well as in promoting the Puranic literature. The author has combined Guru Granth Sahib's bani with Dasam Ganth Literature. The contents of the Bir are unlike in Guru Granth Sahib, not recorded, in sequential order of Ragas. Additionally, it separates Bhagat Bani and Dasam Granth Literature.

(B) History of Baba Deep Singh Bir: Giani Gian Singh in his book "Panth Prakash" reports that this Bir was written by Baba Deep Singh in 1763 C.E. Bhai Randhir Singh writes in his book "*Shabadmoorat*" (page 51) that "Giani Gian Singh did not see the real manuscript of this Bir." Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha in 1931 reports that Bhai Mani Singh Bir and Baba Deep Singh Bir are the same person. But Textual analysis of this Bir tells us that history goes only up to 1857 C.E. There is no known history of this Bir and it is not traceable anywhere anymore.

(c) History of Sangrur Bir: This Bir is reported to have been received by Raja Sarup Singh in 1857 C.E. from a Pathan when the Raja went to Delhi to help British during the Indian Mutiny. The Bir has two portions: first is Guru Granth Sahib and the second is Dasam Granth. It has extra compositions like Sansahar Sukhmana, Var Malkkauns Ji, and Chakha Bhagota Ji Da, which was deleted by Sodhak Committee in 1897 C.E.

(D) History of Patna Ji Misal Bir: No detailed history of this Bir is available. Its reference is found only in Bhai Randhir Singh's writings. According to Bhai Randhir Singh, this Bir was prepared by sewadars at Takhat Patna in Sammat 1821 or 1764 C.E.

(E) History of Two Patna Sahib Birs: First one has no colophon. No history of these two Birs is available. Though the recorded date of their compilation is 1755 (1698 CE), yet inclusion of Zafarnama (written in 1705 CE) at the end in the same handwriting calls that claim into question. It was probably written by Sukha Singh *granthi* at Patna. These two Birs have extra compositions, which were deleted by Sodhak Committee in 1897 C.E. Giani Gian Singh reports that Sukha Singh wrote the Dasam Granth in 1775 C.E., but no colophon is available. What happened to the Bir mentioned by Giani Gian Singh?

Beside the above mentioned Birs there are several other manuscripts: 1. Moti Bagh Gurdwara Bir written in 1775 C.E., 2. Anandpuri Bir goes back to the period of Maharaja Ranjit Singh (1800-1839), 3. Mss D5 Punjabi HT Colebrook 1805, 4. Mss D6 Devnagari in British Library London has colophon indicated 1847, 5. Mss Punjabi E1 1859 C.E., 6. Mss ADD 21452, 1841 and their tatkars tell us that all these manuscripts are different in terms of total numbers of compositions, and Chhand count.

BRITISH CONNECTION WITH DASAM GRANTH

Historical evidence shows that no such Granth as Dasam Granth or Dasmī Pathshahī Granth or simply Granth comparable to the presently published Dasam Granth, was in circulation in any language in 18th century Punjab or Delhi area. British were well aware of emerging Sikh power of the Sikhs. Warren Hastings recorded his opinion in 1784. He regarded the Sikh power extending from the most western branch of Attock to the walls of Delhi as a new subject worth serious contemplation. The Sikhs, so eminently suited to the military profession, could not become very powerful because of their spirit of independence and frequent internal warfare but they were prompt to rally together at the call of common danger. It appears that the British knew very well about Sikh history and were aware of their binding force at the time of common danger and their firm belief in Guru Granth Sahib.

William Tenet, a Christian Missionary, writes about expanding missionary work in Punjab precisely on Sikhism in 1796. Malcolm came to Punjab in 1815 accompanied by Raja Bhag Singh of Jind. Malcolm succeeded in obtaining a copy of Guru Granth Sahib but not of Dasam Granth, as there was no Dasam Granth in Punjab at that time. Raja Bhag Singh had very close relations with the British and was awarded an estate and an annual grant of 11000 pounds. By 1809 the British bought land between Sutluj and Jamuna by giving protection to Cis-Satluj States. Dasam Granth came with them. Evidence shows that Dasam Granth was to be found more in Malwa (Pepsu) Gurdwaras as compared to other parts of Punjab. In 1810 John Malcolm introduced Dasmī Patshahī Ka Granth procured by "Colebrook with indefatigable research." The top of title page of this Dasmī Patshahī Granth read "NANAK PANTHI KABHYA" in Devnagri (Hindi) and "Gurmukhi Dasmī Patshahī Granth" on the first page inside. This is the first time the name "**Dasam Granth**" appeared in history with association with 10th Guru. The compositions and their arrangements as noted in the current Dasam Granth (Corrected by Sodhak Committee in 1897) clearly matches with this Granth. This manuscript bears no name of any scribe but small loose folio tells us the date of 1840 Miti Poosshabdi 15 Mangalvar on one side. The use of word "Poosshbadi" indicates scribe is from outside Punjab and is from Hindi Belt area. Charles Wilkin in 1781 C.E. reported another Granth in Patna in "HINDOOVE AND SANSKRIT" and wished to get it translated in future. There, however, is no evidence of translation anywhere. Then Colebrook procured this Dasmī Patshahī ka Granth (with title in Devnagari but Granth contents in Gurmukhi) which was used by Malcolm in his book "Sketch of Sikhs". It appears that Nirmala priest Atma Ram of Calcutta, along with Mahants at Patna, also helped Malcolm in the writing of "Sketch of Sikhs" (Patna City in late 1800 was part of State of Bengal). Probably this Dasam Patshahī Granth was procured by Colebrook and planted into Indian office Library as well at Patna Sahib. Malcolm account clearly accepts services of Nirmala Atma Ram at Calcutta, and also understanding of Sikh History. Chhand

201 in Akal Ustat reads as Atma Uchrio (pronounced or produced by Atma) and four Chhands 126-130 in Gian Prabodh written by Atma Ram indicate his involvement in creation of Dasam Patshahi Granth. Malcolm writes on page 186 of his book "Sketch of the Sikhs" that Khalsa was created on Friday 8th month of B'hadra in samat 1753 (1696 C.E.). He also writes on same page 186, "Agreeably to this author Guru Gobind was initiated on Friday the 8th month of B'HADRA IN THE SAMAT 1753 (1696 C.E.) and on that day his work, the Dasam Padshah Ka Granth or book of tenth king was completed." This date matches with the date where Chiritro Pakhiyan ends in the currently published Dasam Granth. This is obviously a nefarious attempt by the British and anti-Sikh elements from the Indian (Nirmalas and Brahmins) society to obfuscate the genuine and real historic milestones in Sikh theological history. It's also a cowardly attempt to create an environment for the posterity to believe that somehow Guru Gobind Singh's spiritual philosophy was different than the previous nine Guru-Prophets. Malcolm writes in his book summary "Nirmals and Shahid, who read the sacred writing, may hereafter introduce some changes". Devanagri Dasam Granth was written under British supervision in 1847, after Anglo Sikh war, Ek Onkar from Gurmukhi was changed to OM in Devnagri in this Manuscript. Shabad Hazaray was changed to *Khyal Patshahi 10*.

Historical, textual and academic analysis of various available Dasam Granth Birs or manuscripts tells us that there was no Bir/Granth/ Manuscript of Dasam Patshahi Da Granth or Bacchitar Natak Granth anywhere prior to the 18th century in Punjab, which can be traced back to or associated with Bhai Mani Singh, Baba Deep Singh and Tenth Guru.

Up until 1849 the British considered Sikh Nation as a separate identity, but in 1855 census Sikhs were clubbed with Hindu but it was changed later. Special reservations were given to Khalsa Sikhs after 1857 Mutiny. But the internal British policy of controlling Sikh instituted by the Pujaris was always there, especially in Darbar Sahib and Akal Takhat. Deputy Commander of Lahore sent a note in 1859 to Queen that reads "Copy of original with signature of Guru himself and now in possession of his descendants, Guru Sadhu Singh's family had only Original Kartarpuri Bir compiled by Guru Arjan and no original Dasam Granth." Why such a wrong note about the history of Dasam Granth was added by British Officials? Furthermore, in 1881, Viceroy of India sent a proposal to Governor of Punjab to give back control of Sikh institutions into Sikh Hands but Governor Eggerton of Punjab opposed this advice. "I think it will be politically dangerous to allow the management of Sikh Temples to fall into the hands of a committee, emancipated from Government control, and trust, your Excellency will resist passing such orders in the case, as will enable to continue the system, which has worked successfully for more than 30 years"(MS ADD 43592, British Library).

By now we can say that the British had political and Christian missionary interest in Punjab. By promoting a parallel, second Guru Scripture (Dasam Granth),

it would have weakened the Sikh cause of One Panth, One Granth, One Maryada. It has always been a notorious tactic of political power to deny a distinct unity to populations, it seeks to govern and treat them as contingent indeterminate. There is very apparent connection of the British to divide the Sikhs for Political and Missionary expansion through a handy tool of Brahmin ideological sects as Nirmalas and Udasis to diffuse, divide the uniqueness of SIKH ideology of Guru Granth Sahib. Nirmalas and Udasis remain main sects of Hinduism and their Sampardas.

SODHAK COMMITTEE OF DASAM GRANTH (1897-1902)

British were behind the so called Sodhak Committee, from beginning to the end. It was formed by Gurmat Granth Pracharak Sabha at the request of Khalsa Diwan Amritsar. Singh Sabha was controlled by Baba Khem Singh, a direct descent of Guru Nanak. He was prompted by the British to control Sikh institutions, and a Jagir of 28,742 acres and a title of honorary Munsif was given to him in reward in 1878. He was also nominated to Viceroy's Legislative Council Punjab in 1893. He conspired with the British to confuse Sikhs with a new Scripture of Dasam Granth and, due to fact of being a direct descendant of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, declared himself a Guru. But mainstream Sikh Institution such as Khalsa Diwan Lahore and other Sikh organizations did not approve the Sodhak Committee's Dasam Granth as parallel second Scripture at all. Even Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha never mentioned this Sodhak Committee, he only tells us about Bhai Mani Singh and Mahant Sukha Singh's Dasam Granth and further mentioned that some munmauji and manmukhs have added so many compositions in these granths. We have already discussed the authenticity of these two manuscripts. Currently published Dasam Granth is the same one which was finalized in 1897-1902 by Sodhak Committee, after consulting 32 different Dasam Granths and deleting some compositions. The British floated Colebrook Dasam Granth, which is almost same as Sodhak Committee's Dasam Granth, with minor changes. Why would they go through the charade of changing or Sodh the compositions of Guru Gobind Singh and even Bhai Mani Singh if they consider them to be the writings of the Guru and/or Bhai Mani Singh to begin with? Authenticity of this currently published Dasam Granth as compiled by Sodhak committee needs a thorough independent inquiry by Panthic Scholars under the guidance of SGPC and Akal Takth Sahib to end this matter.

SIKH RAHIT MARYADA AND PRESENT DASAM GRANTH

Guru Panth in (1927-1936) did not use the document of presently published Dasam Granth, while making their decision on Sikh Rahit Maryada. Their deciding factor was oral evidence practiced by family to family and whatever written sources available to them since Khalsa's birth in 1699. They excluded two extreme views and approved on October 12, 1936 a resolution and a final version was completed on February 3rd, 1945. Gurdwara Act passed in 1925 recommends Sikh institutions to follow only Guru Granth Sahib Ji. This act reinforces again in

section 2 Definitions and section 134.G (dealing with powers of committee to dismiss office holders. Ministers and office holders must perform duties per teachings of SGGS).

CONCLUSION

Historical, textual and academic analysis of various available Dasam Granth Birs or manuscripts tells us that there was no Bir/Granth/Manuscript of Dasam Patshahi Da Granth or Bacchitar Natak Granth anywhere prior to the 18th century in Punjab, which can be traced back to or associated with Bhai Mani Singh, Baba Deep Singh and Tenth Guru Ji. Further evidence shows us that individual Granth such as Chaubis Avtar, Chritro Pakhyan and Bachitar Natak (14 cantos) were available, but who compiled them together by inserting Bani of Tenth Guru and similar Chhands which were popular in Sikh Daily usage (Gutkas or Oral remembrance) into this heterogeneous Dasami Patsahahi Da Granth with no sanctification of Tenth Guru? The role of Henry Colebrook, an attorney and administrator in Calcutta, who never visited Punjab, shows us a Granth as NANAK PANTHI KABHYA in Devnagri with a note "Dasmi Patshahi Granth". It appears that Colebrook assisted in creating, compiling and researching this Granth after procuring it from Nirmals Atma Ram and Mahants of Patna Sahib and later placed this Granth in British library where Charles Wilkin was a Librarian. Malcolm also mentions about this Bir in his book History and mentions that the British recognized Sikhs' power in North and that the British also knew about their strong belief in Guru Granth Sahib ji. They intentionally assisted in Dasam Granth's creation and promotion to gain entry in Punjab and for their political, missionary purpose. Malcolm assisted the transplantation of this Granth in Punjab Gurdwaras through Nirmalas and Shahids during the time of Khalsa Raj to confuse and divide the Sikhs. Furthermore, Colebrook Dasam Granth (British) and the current Dasam Granth corrected by Sodhak Committee in 1897 are the same with minor variations.

Dasam Granth in one volume was an outcome of post-Guru period. It did not exist in the Tenth Guru time. The master under his supervision prepared the authentic version of Guru Granth Sahib and before his physical departure he conferred on it the honor of Guru Scripture of the Sikh Jagat. Bhai Mani Singh, the last scribe of the authentic Damdami Bir, did not make any suggestion to the Guru to compile his Bani in one volume. It is equally important that he did not receive any direction in this matter from the Tenth Guru. This fact of creative history is known to the common Sikh of today that the Khalsa-brotherhood of Guru-period generally committed to their memory the Banis of Dasam Guru entitled Jap Sahib, Akal Ustat and Sawayyas and also Zafarnama. It was easy to preserve them in the written form on loose sheets or in bound copies and therefore, the Sikhs faced on indispensability to incorporate them in a bulky volume such as Dasam Granth. Then why did this passionate desire to create Dasam Granth out of the mass of anti-gurmat literature enter Bhai Mani Singh's brain at Amritsar after 1725 C.E.? Dasam

Granth associated with the name of Bhai Mani Singh, includes in its contents of Adi Granth in addition to the supposed Bani of Dasam Granth. Bhai Mani Singh could never commit such an act of betrayal by desecrating of the original form of the undisputed Guru Granth Sahib.

SIKH NATION HAS ONLY ONE GRANTH (GURU GRANTH SAHIB JI) ONE PANTH AND ONE MARAYADA.

Current controversy about the Dasam Granth is totally uncalled for. Recognized Banis of Sikh Baptismal (Khanday Batay Da Amrit Chhakauna) accepted by Sikh Code of Conduct, recitation of daily prayers has been there since the creation of Khalsa. Guruship was bestowed only on Guru Granth Sahib, therefore, no other Granth can be installed along with Sri Guru Granth Sahib. Time and time again, SGPC and Akal Takht have issued edicts to reiterate the same. In their letter #36672 it is clearly stated "Chritropakhyan" is not Dashmesh Bani; Chritropakhyans are in fact old Hindu Mythihas Stories. Recently, Akal Takht has issued another Gurmata on June 6th, 2008, *Tercentenary of Gurta Gaddi Diwas*: "In obedience of Guru Gobind Singh Ji's last command "Accept Granth ss Guru. This is my order for the panth". The Sikh Panth has always stood by it and has been consistently blessed with guidance by the living light, eternal Guru for the solution of every national crisis.

Finally, Guru Gobind Singh had put the final seal of complete separateness by creating Khalsa, the Nash doctrine of Dharm Nash: Bharam Nash, Karam Nash, Sharam Nash, Janam Nash and declaration of Guru Granth Sahib as the sole ideological guide, the living Guru of the Sikhs. (from *World Sikh News*, dated 29.10.2011)

Appendix II

Who is Ashutosh and what is Diveya Jyoti dera at Nurmahal

After Nirankaris, Noormahal was the second cult to have physical clash with the Sikhs. The cult was started by a Bihari *bhaeeya* named Ashutosh soon after the decline of the Sikh movement. Ashutosh was a servant at Delhi Manav Dharam from which he was kicked out due to his immoral activities. He left Delhi and came to Patiala where he became the puppet of the government and decided to mislead people of Punjab. He established his center in Noormahal and called it *Diveya Jyoti* or light of God. His misleading propaganda involves some new and different scamming techniques than many of the other cults.

To mislead the people, Ashutosh has his pictures taken wearing different dresses. He is wearing turban in one picture and has hair open in the other. He wears orange dress to pose off as a Hindu saint and green clothes to look like a Muslim *pir*. Gurbani lines are displayed on these pictures to justify his different appearances.

Recruitment

This cult has hired many clever agents to bring in new followers. These agents always seek new targets especially Amritdharis. They engage them in ordinary conversation and slowly make transition to religious discussion. Their common question is '*Have you seen Diveya Jyoti?*' Those who say no are urged to attend the program of Ashutosh which they call *satsang* and claim that there anyone can see God in physical form and experience higher level of spirituality. Use of the word *satsang* misleads people into thinking that it is another form of Sikh congregation where Gurbani is sung and explained.

Any agent initially would hold a program at his house to attract new followers. All expenses are paid by the head office. During the program, everyone sits on the floor and stage is setup for the preacher. Picture of Ashutosh is placed at a higher level giving him the status of guru. People stand in line, bow to the picture and donate money. This is an exact copy of Sikh Gurdwara. Many uneducated and unemployed people are hired as preachers and then trained by the cult. They are required to memorize certain lines from every religious scripture and taught to recite these at every program. Since the program is attended by people from different religions, the preacher speaks in a respectful manner and extensively quotes from their respective scriptures. However, main emphasis is put on the misconception that without obtaining mantra (naam) from Ashutosh, no one can see diveya jyoti. No preacher has the right to give out mantra. Only Ashutosh has this right. Once an agent gets handful of people to attend the programs on regular basis, he is appointed as head of his local area. New attendees are required to attend at least 5-10 programs and then sent to headquarter to receive mantra.

Brainwashing (Obtaining Mantra)

Process of obtaining naam is a complete rip off. New followers are required to arrive at headquarter in the early morning. When new followers get there, they are given a form to fill in their personal information such as their name, address etc. This is done to select candidates for different jobs to serve the cult. An educated person who can fill out the form on his own is trained to become a preacher and an uneducated one is trained to become an agent to bring in new

followers. After people are done filling out the form, they are required to pay the admission fee. Each person is charged minimum of 50 rupee. They are also required to bring *parsad* (fruit) to offer to Ashutosh. Since the dera is at a distance from the city, people are told to buy it from the dera. So a large sum of money is collected by agents and in return they provide *parsad* to the new devotees.

Everyone is kept there all day with no food and water. They are told that food and water will be provided after everyone has obtained mantra and seen the *diveya jyoti*. After the sunset, around 8pm new recruits are taken to a room. Men stand on one side and women on the other. After taking back the *parsad* sold to devotees they are asked to offer money before getting mantra. Then one preacher comes in a room and starts giving lecture on *naam* and what they will experience when they receive it. People are persuaded to believe that if they are pure souls and good hearted they will have revelation of *diveya jyoti*. It is also told that those who do not experience anything are sinful people and will burn in hell till eternity. After the lecture the preacher leaves in an expensive car and rest of the work is given to the agents dressed in light orange clothes with open hair

. First the devotees are asked to sit down and keep their eyes closed. They sit crossed legged crossing their hands and raising their arms perpendicular to the body. They are given one word 'sohanm' and taught how to recite it. After a while, eyes of a devotee are pressed hard by an agent and after few seconds he is told to open them. When the light suddenly enters their eyes, it seems very bright. The devotee testifies that he has seen a bright light which he is told is the *diveya jyoti*. Then an agent presses his hands on devotees' ears and keeps them closed for few seconds. Then he is asked if he has heard any sound. It is very common to hear a buzzing sound after pressing your ears closed. This sound is what they call *anhad shabad* and quote Gurbani to justify it. Those who say they did not see or hear anything the same procedure is repeated until they say yes. Many say yes just to get over with the process so that they can get something to eat and drink. Some say yes to keep themselves from being branded as sinful people.

Anti-Sikhi Activities

Belief system of Noormahal cult is created solely to insult Sikhi. Saroops of Guru Granth Sahib are kept in the dera just like other books on the shelf and read like books. No respect is shown such as washing hands, covering head and wrapping in *rumalas*. Gurbani is called 'summary of Vedas'. Gurbani is quoted and misinterpreted in their programs on daily basis. Followers are preached that keeping hair, reading *bani*, following the *Shabad Guru*, wearing five *kakaars* and going to the *Gurdwara* etc. are waste of time. Gurbani is misused to prove their belief system. Insulting comments are delivered about *Khalsa* in their programs and they refer to themselves as the 'true *khalsa*'. They believe *Jot of Guru Sahib* is not in *Guru Granth Sahib* but within themselves and consider themselves the true image of the *Guru*. Sikh martyrs of 1984 and *Khalistan* movement are branded as terrorists and Ashutosh is portrayed as the only national hero. **It is further preached that all Gurus were Hindus and Guru Gobind Singh Ji revered hindu deities.**

They hold regular gatherings at the heart of Sikh cities like Tarn Taran, Amritsar and Gurdaspur. Many times, events of 1978 have been repeated where police was used for protection and attacking and killing the Sikh protestors. On one occasion, a program was held on 19th of April 2002 at which Sharda Nand, a preacher of Ashutosh, grossly insulted Sikhi and *Guru Granth Sahib* (video can be found online). When Sikhs showed up to protest they were attacked and fired upon.

Shardha Nand escaped in government vehicles and on the other hand Sikhs were arrested for causing violence. Similar events have taken place in other cities but with the help of the government Noormahalias always managed to escape and Sikhs became the target of violence and police brutality. All of this is being done to cause violence in Punjab so that the government could move in and kill Sikhs in large numbers in the name of terrorism. Such events are also used to identify Sikhs who are outspoken and show some bravery. They are arrested and put away in jails forever.

Preachers are trained to tell false stories to glorify Ashutosh to attract new followers. One time a woman preacher came to an Amritdhari person and started telling made up stories about Ashutosh. She claimed that Ashutosh is so great that one time one of his followers had passed away and was cremated at a grave yard. But Ashutosh liked him so much that he brought the dead follower back to life. The woman preacher was not even finished with the story that an Amritdhari Sikh grabbed her from throat and threatened to kill her. She started begging for life and mercy. Amritdhari said, 'Dont worry. You will be brought back to life by your guru. So why are you afraid?' She replied, 'We are taught to tell these false stories to mislead Amritdharis and convince them to follow Ashutosh'. This is just one example of how they deceive and mislead people into following an immoral person.

Ashutosh has a taste for wealth and women. While he takes a large sum of money from his followers he also urges them (especially Sikhs) to donate their young daughters to him. He usually keeps 15-20 girls at every dera and after using them (having sexual intercourse) he sells them in the flesh market in Bihar. According to a report published in *Shamsher-E- Kaum* two girls Rekha and Paramjit were sold in Bihar for 500,000 rupee (half million) each. His follower Mr. Sandhu from village Duniya testified to this. This is being done to destroy the progress of Sikh faith and Sikh population.

Ashutosh was once apprehended having an illicit relation with his female follower named Sweeti in Chandigarh. He was noticed by his driver who decided to expose his true face. Although numbers of his followers have decreased since then but Sikhs collectively need to start a massive campaign of parchaar to deal with this thug. If Sikh preachers work hard and preach Gurbani then no one will be brainwashed and Sikhs will stay stronger in their faith. Only then such cults will go out of business.

(Based on: Noormahal and Gurudom by Sarabjit Singh and Propaganda of Noormahal by Nihal Singh).

Appendix III

**Rashtriya Sikh Sangat leaders and their
associates²⁶⁰**

RSS's 'Apex Committee', Special Invitees and 'Honours list'

Giani Puran Singh
Giani Iqbal Singh Patna
Giani Kulwant Singh Hazoor Sahib
Thakur Singh *Jatha Bhindran-Mehta* (now dead)
Mohkam Singh *Jatha Bhindran-Mehta*
Trilochan Singh ex MP
Joginder Sing Moni
Joginder Singh Vedanti
Sudh Singh Sant
Baldev Singh Akhand Keertani Jatha
Beant Singh Sant
Balwant Singh Bhalla, Ruderpur (Uttrakhand)
Niranjan Singh Agra (U.P.)
Pritam Singh, Agra (U.P.)
Baba Sukhdev Singh, Nanaksar Wale
Giani Kehar Singh
Justice R.S. Narula (Punjab & Haryana High Court)
Dr. Harpal Singh Pannu Punjabi University Patiala
Dr. Jodh Singh Punjabi University Patiala
Dr. Samsher Singh Punjabi University Patiala
Dr. Harminder Singh Bedi Guru Nanak University Amritsar
Chiranjiv Singh
Rulda Singh (now dead)
Virender Singh Delhi
Gurcharan Singh Jaipur
Ravinderpal Singh Khurana Delhi (ex Gen Secy Delhi SGMC)
Jagjivanjot Singh Uttranchal
Dr Jaswinder Singh
Dr Awtar Singh Shastri

²⁶⁰<http://www.sikhphilosophy.net/hard-talk/25232-sikh-members-rss-reveal-faces-touts.html>;
<http://www.sikhsangat.com/index.php?/topic/50950-list-of-rss-members-in-the-uk/>; <http://rssandsikhs.blogspot.com/2011/06/senior-member-of-rss-dr-gurdip-singh.html>
<http://xa.yimg.com/kq/groups/3680067/423329378/name/Bulletin%25203%264%25202010.pdf>

Babu Singh Dukhia
Daljit Singh Khalsa
Rajinder Singh Bhangu
Manjinder Singh Sarsa
Wing Com J.S. Chadda
Partap Singh Faujdar
Ranbir Singh
Sher Singh Fauji
Sher Singh Nihang Khanna
Baldev Singh Nihang
Giandev Singh, Sant
Balbir Singh Sichewal
Sukhdev Singh Sant
Darshan Singh Grewal ex-Mayor, Hounslow, England
Omarjit Singh Anand Tehran (Iran)
Karnail Singh Garib USA.
Joginder Singh ex-Director CBI
Jagjit Singh Daltan Ganj
Bhupinder Singh ex Director. MMTC
Dr. Mahip Singh Hindi Writer
Prahlaad Singh Chandok former President Delhi SGPC
Gulab Singh former M.L.A., Shivpur Kalan
Hari Singh Randhawa
Giani Thakar Singh Damdami Taksal
Harnam Singh Dhumma Damdami Taksal
Dr Gurdeep Singh Jagbir (Punjab Radio, England)
Ranjit Singh Rana (editor *Sahib* magazine)
Balihar Singh Ramewal Gurdwara Akal Darbar, Birmingham, England
Pritam Singh Bhatia, Faridabad
Giani Kulwinder Singh
Gurcharanjit Singh Lamba
Prof. Harbhajan Singh Dehradun
Ratinder Singh Indore (of 'Panthic weekly')
Gurpreet Singh California
Kashmir Singh Patiala University
Gur Iqbal Singh Mata Kaulan Taksal
Harbans Singh Jagadhari (Religious preacher)
Prof. Davinder Singh Jammu (writer)
Prof. Davinder Singh Mohali (now Canada)
ADS Mangat of Malaysia/Canada

Appendix IV

Anti Sikh websites

The anti Sikh Mafia has also indulged in propaganda on web media through their websites and blog spots; some of websites and blog spots managed/monitored by anti Sikh cults, groups and organisation and/or those who, though they are Sikhs but are puppets in the hands of the anti Sikh gangs, are:

www.1888pressrelease.com
www.akj.org
www.amritword.com
www.attackonsikhiparchar.com
www.damdमितaksaal.org
www.dasamgranthsahib.org
www.ekconsciousliving.com
www.filestube.com
www.forums.waheguroo.com
www.gobindsadan.org
www.guppshupp.com
www.gurbanifiles.org
www.gurbaniupdesh.com
www.gurindersinghmann.com
www.ik13.com
www.indopedia.org
www.info-sikh.com
www.khalsawatch.com
manvirsingh.blogspot.com
www.mrsikhnet.com
www.panthic.org
www.patshahi10.org
www.prlog.org
www.profdarshansinghkhalsa-exposed.com
www.rajkaregakhalsa.net
www.rampurkhera.com
www.sachkhojacademy.org
www.sachkibela.org
www.sangatsansar.com

www.santsipahi.worldpress.com

www.sikh24.com

www.sikh-heritage.co.uk

www.sikher.com

www.sikhnuggets.com

www.sikhsangat.com

www.sikhsnagat.org

www.sikhsangeet.com

www.silobreaker.com

www.sridasam.org

www.sridasamgranth.com

www.tapoban.org

www.unp.me

www.vismaadnaad.org

www.wahegurusimran.org

Most of this propaganda is done/monitored by:

Dharam Singh Nihang Khanna

Ratinder Singh Indore

Amritpal Singh Brampton/Malton (Toronto) Canada

Ajmer Singh Randhawa Delhi

Gurpreet Singh California.

Gurjeet Australia etc

Some the above mentioned websites or blogs are directly managed or monitored by the RSS and other anti Sikh cults and syndicates whereas some of them are (knowingly or unknowingly) playing in the hands of R.S.S. and other anti-Sikh organisations and their associates; and, even www.punjabpectrum.com (of Sukhpreet Udoke) promotes the agenda of the 'Dasam Granth Mafia' and are the 'Black Cats' of the Indian police/regime.

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www.lfhri.org
www.neverforget84.com
www.punjabjustice.com
www.savevid.com
www.shaheed-khalsa.com
www.sikharchives.com
www.sikhchic.com
www.sikhcoalition.org
www.sikhfreedom.com
www.sikh-history.com
www.sikhlionz.com
www.sikhmarg.com
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