

The Sikhism

Culture, History and Religion

Jagjit Singh

THE SIKHISM

Culture, History & Religion

ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ

ਸਭਿਆਚਾਰ, ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਅਤੇ ਧਰਮ

 **From the Same Pen**

'The message of the Gurus

THE SIKH TREE

as the same grew over a period of 239 years (from 1469 to 1708)'.

SOME VIEWS COMMENTS

Our youth, who are otherwise preoccupied with their other pursuits, shall get a handy but useful information from this book about our religion.”

Gurcharan Singh Arshi, Dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Delhi

Extracts from his 'A Few Introductory Words'

While explaining the incidents, the writer has taken great pains to explain the fundamentals behind them. On reading the book, one is deeply impressed by the discernment shown by the writer while handling the single most significant aspect of Sikh Guru ship, the absolute conformity of thinking, the same wave length of thought and perspective that each Guru had. It was this total similitude of thought in absolute totality, without any contradictions that led to the optimum fruitful point when the Khalsa was born.’

*Makhan Singh, Chairman, Guru Nanak Public School,
Pushpanjali Enclave, New Delhi.*

Frequent use of quotations from Guru Granth Sahib, in order to substantiate pertinent points makes the study of the book a must for those interested in understanding the fundamentals of Sikhism.

Hakam Singh Ph.D. USA – An eminent scholar and author

This unique book, clearly speaks of the mastery of his language, and it is treasure of information. The contents have more details than the usual works. I count it as authoritative reference book, and strongly feel that every library should have it.

*Dr. Kulwant Singh Khokhar,
12502 Nightingale Drive, Chester, VA 23836, USA.*

I have the opportunity to present this valuable book to the Sadh Sangat ji in Thailand through the book shop in Bangkok and simultaneously to some VIP delegates at Jakarta, Indonesia and Cebu (Phillipines) Inter-faith Dialogue Meetings held in Feb. and March 2006. A copy should be kept in every Gursikh house....

S.P. Singh, Bangkok.

“Certainly, this book is informative and enlightening, therefore, can be offered as a 3-credit course at a university.”...“This book is most suitable for Punjabi departments that have Sikh students.”

*Dr. Satyendra Singh, Associate Professor of Administrative Studies,
The University of Winnipeg, CANADA*

Dedication

WITH SWEET LOVE

To

ANAHITA KAUR ☉ JUGAAD SINGH
MAANIK SINGH ☉ MAAHEE KAUR

Our young grand kids,

Enjoying their lives in Melbourne and Toronto

Carrying the flag of Gursikhi

High up in the air

With an 'aseess', a blessing,

A prayer, 'an Ardass'

To Satguru Saché Paatshah,

The Almighty God,

To bestow upon them the

Strength and the Wisdom

To remain 'Saabat Surat,'

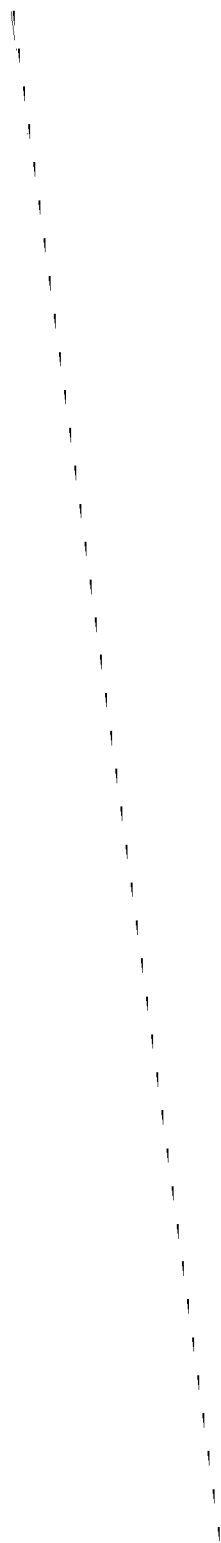
till they breath their last

and

pass on the flame, the torch,

to the generations to come.

JAGJIT SINGH
HARDIP KAUR



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ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ/ਸ਼ਬਦਾਵਲੀ ਦਾ ਗਿਆਨ ਵੀ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ**

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FOREWORD

Going through the manuscript of a great piece of historical research and expatiation is always a rich and exhilarating experience. It becomes more so when the writing is the outcome of the sedulous efforts of a person who has dedicated his life to disseminating knowledge about the world's youngest, most scientific and universal religion - SIKHISM. S. Jagjit Singh's first work, 'The Sikh Tree', took us through the entire experience of witnessing its growth over a period of 239 years from 1469 to 1708. Stemming from the seed planted by Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, it has now grown to be a radiant, resplendent and vibrant tree.

The author's second offering to the world, 'The Culture, History & Religion – SIKHISM - is an equally great endeavour. The choice of subjects is so comprehensive that the reader is taken through the course of Sikh culture and history in a well de-lined, brief and precise presentation. The book is divided into six parts, each dwelling on the important facets of Sikh festivals - special days, Gursikhi, religion, prominent women of the Guru families – mothers, wives and daughters and finally the most ennobling aspect of martyrdom. In a judicious manner it gives a description of historical Gurdwaras and also crucial words essential to understand for a study of Sikhism.

There is a dearth of suitable matter on different aspects of Sikh culture and religion. The Sikh youth who are not much aware of their rich and glorious heritage find it difficult to lay their hands on relevant material. This book adequately meets that requirement.

The information presented in a simple and fluid style is complete. The book is a ready reckoner for students and scholars of Sikh history, religion and culture. In fact, it is a treasure house of information accessing which had been a stupendous task. The special reference to prominent women of the Guru families is quite praiseworthy as there is an extreme paucity of details of their lives and supportive role played

by them in nurturing the efforts of the great Gurus.

Mata Gujri was the most venerated of the Khalsa Panth women but, as the author writes, she is generally known only as the mother of Guru Gobind Singh and the pious wife of Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib, the Ninth Nanak. The people at large are scarcely aware of the significance of her contribution to Sikh ethos and thought. Mata Gujri made sacrifices to protect her grand sons against the dreadful outrages perpetrated by the Mughals on her family and she herself was incarcerated along with them. She had inculcated in them the spirit of indomitable courage and resolute will to remain steadfast in the face of diversity. On the basis of the ennobling qualities of lofty ideals and selfless sacrifice she, as the writer rightly underlines, is known as the mother of martyrs.

S. Jagjit Singh's latest work also dissipates certain misconceptions pertaining to the second marriage of Guru Gobind Singh and the time of declaration of Mata Sahib Kaur's status as the mother of the Khalsa.

The part captioned 'Sikhism and Martyrdoms', is more than a tribute, to the tremendous sacrifice made by the Sikhs who in thought, word and deed lived up to the Guru's definition of the Khalsa. In his attempt to put a true and complete picture, he has also included, the supreme sacrifices made by Guru Arjan Dev Sahib and Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib, as they were the first two great martyrs who set the precedents and laid down the foundation of martyrdom in Sikhism. The writer has taken care to include even those Sikh martyrs who made the supreme sacrifice while staying in the background.

Ever since the dawn of Sikhism, Gurdwaras have been the center of Sikh culture, community life and history. Even as each Gurdwara has its historical sanctity by virtue of being associated with different Guru Sahibaans whether in India or Pakistan, they also have their own standing in the life of every Sikh as he passes through the journey of life. The author has dealt with the history and significance of most of the Gurdwaras located in various states.

A book on Sikhism and Punjab is not complete if it does not detail the special days and festivals those are celebrated by Sikhs with gusto. In fact the author starts viewing a unique Phulkari (the traditional

tapestry woven by the women of Punjab and used on special occasions) by filling in the colours of its religious, social and cultural festivals in the very first part. The explication of Gursikhi further strengthens the thread of thought as he goes on embroidering the glorious panorama of the phenomenon that is Sikhism.

S. Jagjit Singh has perspicaciously lent a fresh perspective and connotations to different facets of Sikh history. I congratulate him on producing this exquisite literature not only for the Sikhs but the entire humanity and which will last for centuries to come. I am certain the readers will respond to the book with the same spontaneity and recognition as they did to his first work, 'The Sikh Tree'.

May Akaal Purakh Waheguru always nurture his spring of knowledge with the bounty that only He can bestow.



MAKHAN SINGH
(Chairman)

New Delhi
The 4th February, 2008.

*Guru Arjan Dev Institute of Management
and Information Technology
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AN INTRODUCTION

With the blessings of 'Akaal Purakh', the Almighty God; exactly three years back on 5th of January 2005, I literally entered the literary world when my first book, THE SIKH TREE, was released. The venue was Gurdwara Rakab Ganj Sahib New Delhi and the occasion was the Parkash Divas' of Sahib Sri Guru Gobind Singh. The full title of the book was 'the Message of the Gurus – THE SIKH TREE- as the same grew over a period of 239 years (from 1469 to 1708)'. It primarily dealt with the landmarks established by Guru Jote in ten different physical appearances in this world. It tried to bring to the fore, as to how and why the Sikhism of Guru Nanak as propounded, professed and practiced by him, followed and preached by subsequent eight Gurus was transformed into Khalsa Panth by Guru Dasmesh the Tenth Nanak. It also touched the issue of bestowing of Guru Gaddi upon Sri Guru Granth Sahib. One chapter was given on Sri Guru Granth Sahib and the last chapter dealt with the 'Essence of Sikhism – The Message Of The Khalsa'.

The book has been well received. It has found its readers in substantial numbers in far-flung countries such as USA, CANADA, AUSTRALIA, THAILAND, MALAYSIA, KENYA, and KUWAIT. Some copies have also gone to U.K., SINGAPORE, AMASTERDOM (NETHERLAND). A number of individuals, institutions – schools, colleges, Gurdwaras, and libraries – have patronized the book in India as well. Some well known scholars, writers, who gave their views and comments about the book, helped me a lot in reaching out to a large readership.

Encouraged by the response and after getting the feed back, I, again with the grace and blessings of Sat Guru Nanak, embarked upon taking in hand the current work. With my old but continuous approach of spreading the message of Gurus, world - wide and with a focus on those readers - Sikhs and other aspirants alike - who are not well versed in Punjabi language, I have attempted this work. In this book whereas I have tried to codify and include some basic information about Gur Sikhi, I have also dealt upon some cultural and historical aspects, as

well, of our religion.

The book though not a voluminous one, has been split up into six small parts to facilitate its reading.

Part one deals with 'Our Festivals, Special Days'. Some festivals and certain other days, the Khalsa Panth specially celebrates and observes in a particular way have been mentioned and their importance has been brought to the fore. The Second part is just informative. Information on various points and issues of Sikhism has been given with some explanations, clarifications or interpretation. In part Three, the lives of; the roles played by and contribution direct or indirect made by our Guru family ladies – mothers, wives and daughters have been discussed. Starting right from Mata Tripta, to Mata Sahib Devan, in all nineteen lives, have been dealt with. The subject matter of Part Four is 'Martyrdom in Sikhism'. Besides a general note on the subject, martyrdoms of some very prominent personalities starting from The Crown of Martyrs – Shaheedan de Sirtaj - Guru Arjan Dev followed by 'The Sheet of India' - Hind di Chaader, Guru Teg Bahadur have been discussed. Then in part V, most of the Historical Gurdwaras and Gurudhams have been listed with some details about their historical importance and significance. Part VI contains brief information about some typical terms used in the study and practice of Sikhism.

The concluding pages carry two appendices. Appendix I is the Bibliography and Appendix II is all-important Index that shall prove to be of much help in locating any particular issue or subject in the text.

Before I say a few thanks giving words for some well wishers, guides, friends and scholars, I bow in reverence and in gratitude to my 'Isht Guru; Sri Guru Granth Sahib, 'The Shabad Guru', as I think whatever has been said and written in this book is all with His grace, blessings and persuasions. I owe everything to my Guru, my God as nothing is mine with me and whatever has been said and put forward in this book is as directed by Him only.

I am thankful to S. Makhan Singh, Chairman, Guru Arjan Dev Institute Of Technology, Pitam Pura, New Delhi, for writing a beautiful Foreword. It is needless to mention that it was he who on seeing the manuscript of my first book gave me a detailed note, 'An Appreciation', that encouraged me a lot in carrying forward my writing pursuits. (Although S. Makhan Singh is such an eminent personality, that does not need any introduction, yet for the

information of those who might not be aware of his stature, **I may just mention that, before he was on his present assignment, he was the Chairman of Guru Nanak Public School Pushpanjali Enclave, New Delhi. Prior to that he was in Punjab & Sind Bank and retired from there as a Deputy General Manager. In the School and Institute while he is directly in touch with the youth and is well aware of their spiritual needs and aspirations, in the Bank too, he was associated and responsible for publication and production of books and literature pertaining to the spread of the message of Gursikhi. All the Calendars issued by the Bank, those carried a new theme and thought every year, were produced and brought out by him. He was also invariably organizing and managing all the religious and social functions on behalf of the Bank during his tenure in the Bank).**

As he is a person who is associated with the dissemination of Sikh thought, values and culture amongst the masses, particularly the youth throughout his life, I once again presented the manuscript of the current book to him for evaluation. As I, through this book, intended to meet the needs and the requirements of the youth and other aspirants who may have some inclination towards Gursikhi, took him as the most appropriate person for evaluation and for writing its foreword, requested him accordingly for the purpose.

While going through the 'Foreword', I feel that he might have gone through the entire manuscript several times before embarking upon writing the same. He has used many superlative adjectives for my humble work and me to which I sometimes feel that I am not entitled to. While expressing my heart felt thanks to him, I leave it upon the readers at large to assess the contents - the quality, the quantity and the presentation - of the material themselves.

I owe a sense of gratitude to Dr. Kulwant Singh Khokhar, Dr. Hakam Singh, Dr. (Bhai) Harbans Lal (All from USA), Dr. Satyender Singh Winnipeg, Canada, S, Satvinder Pal Singh (Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Bangkok, S. Tarsem Singh Malaysia, and several other intellectual and writers who have encouraged me in different ways, guided and helped me in carrying forward my studies in my endeavor to bring out something useful.

Dr. Khokhar, who went through the entire manuscript, has opined that the book would be useful for writers and the masses

alike. I reproduce an extract from his e-mail:

‘Thanks for your sending me the manuscript of your second book.

It is superior and unique work full of information on the Sikh faith.

It is an excellent reference work.

‘Lay down of different topics under proper headings makes it easy to consult to reach conclusions. This book fulfils the need of every writer, and provides ready-made material to the masses’.

I feel highly indebted to him as in spite of his advanced age, having been entangled in several old age ailments, and being busy in writing his own autobiography, went through the manuscript, paid so much attention and sent me such an encouraging message.

Dr. Hakam Singh has expressed himself as under:

‘Let me on the very outset congratulate you on the beautiful work you have accomplished in the form of your new book. Because of my problem of not being able to focus on the computer screen for too long, I have not been able to go through the whole book so far. However, browsing through it and reading some parts has impressed me about the work that has gone into its conception and organization’.

I may add that he put forth some valuable suggestions too, those I took with gratitude and incorporated the same at the appropriate places.

For a record I may mention that in my mission of spreading the message of the Gurus both of my sons in law S. Harjinder Singh. Publisher, India Journal, Mississauga, Canada and S. Damneet Singh Bawa a telecom engineer by profession based at Melbourne, Australia along with my daughters Ms. Sandeep Kaur and Ms. Ipshita Singh took keen interest in my first work and helped me in reaching to the maximum number of the readers. My grand niece (grand daughter of my brother) Ms. Sheena Singh also devoted a lot of time out of her hectic life (in USA) to this work.

In my last book I mentioned about the patience shown by and

active help extended to me in bringing out the same by Sardarni Hardip Kaur- my wife, I have involved her now with this work in a more positive way as she is always, assisting me and suggesting different ideas and concepts and is even doing corrections in different ways.

I shall be failing in my thanks giving duty, if I do not mention a few more names. S. Paramjit Singh Sama, President Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee, was the first person who patronized my work and released the same in full view of the Sangat at Gurdwara Rakab Ganj Sahib New Delhi. Then S. Amarjit Singh Chawla a dedicated and an energetic Gursikh associated with various Sikh educational institutions, particularly Guru Hargobind Institute of Management & Technology; Mata Sundri College For Women, New Delhi and Dasmesh Public School, Vivek Vihar, Delhi, took a keen interest and was instrumental in promoting the book in his own way.

I am thankful to S. Autar Singh Bagga and Dr. B. S. Grewal multi pronged personalities living within my vicinity, who besides their hectic schedules find time for all types of religious and social activities and never say 'no' for any work. They went through substantial parts of the manuscript and made some concrete suggestions.

At the end I put on record my thanks and gratefulness for the interest in the work shown by the esteemed and renowned Publishers M/s B. Chattar Singh Jeewan Singh who are bringing out this book with a beautiful and well designed cover with a nice setting and quality printing.

I hope this work too, shall prove to be helpful to our different institutions – schools, colleges, Gurdwaras, libraries and different missionaries, in meeting their obligations and commitments for the spread of Gursikhi amongst the youth and in clarifying certain confusions, which often erupt into their minds.

New Delhi
The 5th February 2008

JAGJIT SINGH
NEW DELHI
Tele. Nos.: 011 25267500, 9873462856

ਕੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਤਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਗੁਰਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਭਾਇ ਭਗਤਿ ਗੁਰਪੁਰਖ ਕਰੰਦੇ ॥

ਗੁਰ ਸੇਵਾ ਫਲ ਸੁਫਲ ਫਲੰਦੇ ॥

ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ

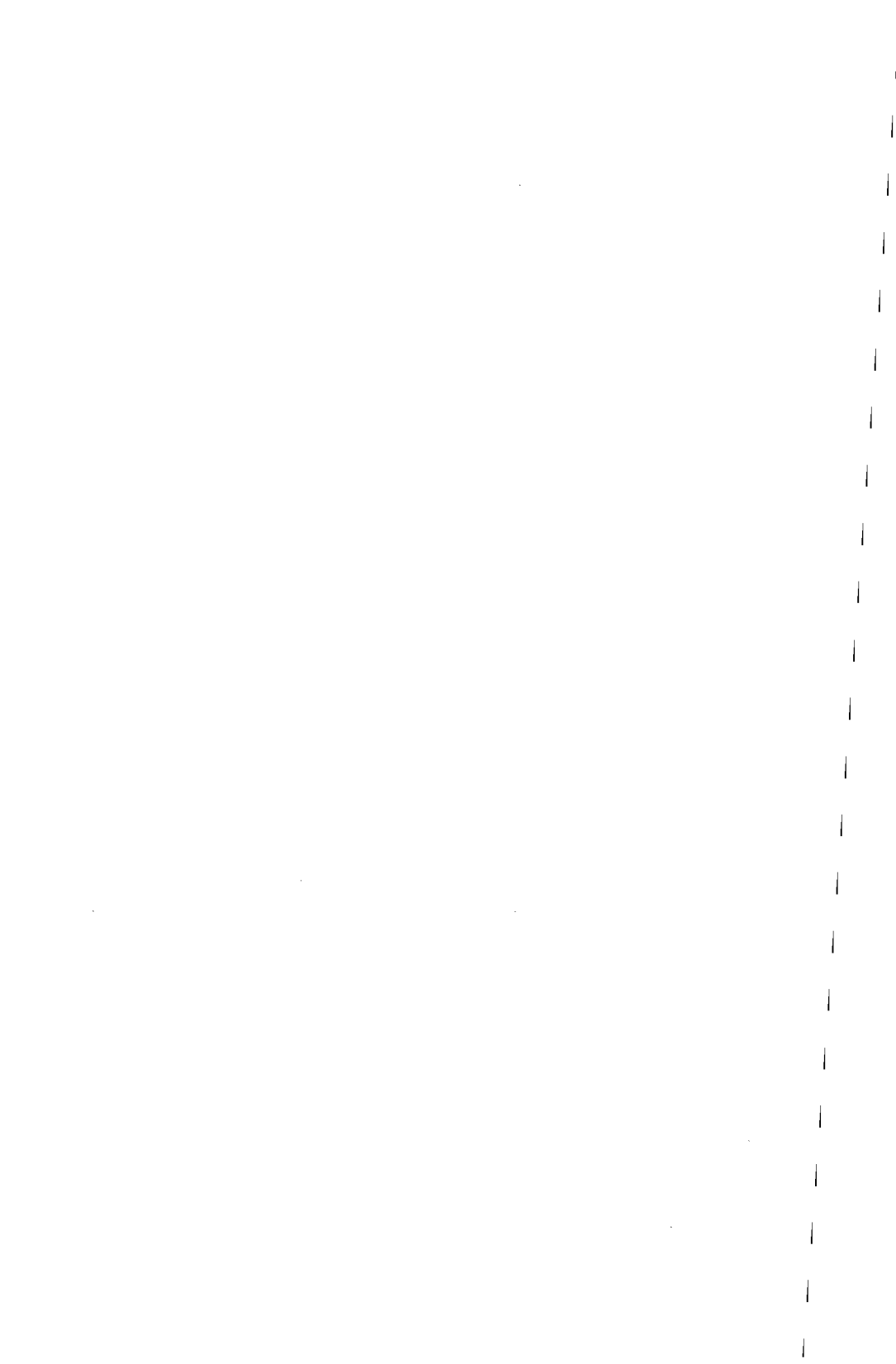
Part I

Our Festivals, Special Days

ਸਾਡੇ ਦਿਨ – ਦਿਹਾੜੇ, ਸਾਡੇ ਤਿਉਹਾਰ

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1. VAISAKHI – KHALSA SIRJANA DIVAS

ਵਿਸਾਖੀ— ਖਾਲਸਾ ਸਿਰਜਣਾ ਦਿਵਸ

Vaisakhi or Baisakhi is a festival of festivity and enjoyment by the peasantry. From cultural and economic point of view Vaisakhi is the most important and vibrant festival of Punjab. It is a festival of farmers who celebrate and rejoice when they see that the labour they had put in their fields in sowing crops has brought results. When they see the wheat and some other crops are ready to be harvested their joy knows no bounds. They dance and enjoy with their families, with their friends and other people around.

Vaisakhi is perhaps the only one Indian festival that falls every year exactly on the same day i.e., on 13th of April or 1st of Vaisakh. Spring season generally ends around this period and the summer ushers in. Harvest gets the required level of heat and the same is ready to be reaped. Before starting the reaping process, they all enjoy in a joyful mood, by wearing colourful dresses, participating in ‘Bhangra’ and ‘Gidda’ dances in a collective manner without any discrimination on the grounds of caste, colour, creed, religion etc. This festival is of equal importance for Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians. This is celebrated with equal fervor in Indian Punjab, Pakistani Punjab and in other states or provinces of both the countries. **Actually Punjabis** across the globe take it as a national or an intra-national festival and take pride when they sing the sweet **lore** (songs) of Punjab in a typical mood, postures, dress and style.

Now we come to its special importance for the Sikhs and Sikh religion. Due recognition of its importance was initially given to it by Guru Amar Dass Sahib, the 3rd Nanak. The story goes like this. *The Sikhi was growing and Dharmshalas were being established at several places, right from the period of Guru Nanak as a result of his long Udasis. One day Bhai Paro a devout Sikh, requested him (Guru Amar Dass Sahib); to fix at least one day in the year, when there should be a*

full congregation of the Sikhs, in which different issues could be discussed, Guru's clarification and guidance sought and Sikhs of different regions could meet one another and exchange their views on matters of common interest. Guru Ji readily agreed and fixed 1st of Vaisakh or Vaisakhi day for this purpose. The date had become important and auspicious for the Sikhs earlier too as on this day, the water was struck in "Baoli Sahib", at Goindwal Sahib, after prolonged and serious efforts.

Guru Gobind Singh Sahib made it a day of great and special significance for the Sikhs. For the celebration of this day, in 1699 he called a special gathering. Messages were sent through out that as Vaisakhi was going to be celebrated in a special way at Anand Pur Sahib, all should make a point to attend the same.

At Kes Garh Sahib (Anand Pur Sahib), special arrangements were made to accommodate thousands of Sikhs who had come from far and near, at the call of the Guru. On the appointed day, Guru Sahib had his appearance in a unique and unheard of manner and with an unsheathed sword in his hand, asked for a head. He said any one, who was willing to give his head at the call of the Guru should come forward. There was complete silence all around. People were stunned. None wanted to be a sacrificial goat. Guru Sahib thundered again. There was no response. At the third call, one Sikh, Bhai Daya Ram, stood up and offered his head. Guru Sahib took him to a tent nearby and after a while with his blood stained sword came out and asked for another head. This time another daring Sikh Bhai Dharam Chand stood up. He was also given the same treatment. There were three more calls and at each call 'one guru piyara', Bhai Mohkam Chand, Bhai Himmat Ram and Bhai Sahib Chand respectively stood up with abstract humility and presented themselves to the Guru.

When every one present, was taking it for granted that Guru Gobind Rai had taken the lives of some of his beloveds, in a most unwarranted manner and were thinking about the next course of action on the part of Guru Sahib, to the surprise of all, all of them came out of the tent quite intact, but in a very new saffron dresses and turbans on their heads.

Guru Sahib in full view of all, prepared 'Khande Bate Di Pahul', or 'Amrit' as the same is known in common terminology and transformed

them from Sikhs to Singhs. Then he in a unique and unheard of gesture known in the annals of any religion, stood before them with folded hands and asked for the Pahul from them, whom he was now taking as his Guru. The five obliged in a reluctant manner and he was also transformed into a 'Singh'. They all became from 'Ram', 'Dass', 'Chand' or 'Rai' etc to Singh and Singh only. All other suffixes were removed. Sikhism of Guru Nanak stood transformed into Khalsa Panth of 'Akaal Purakh,' God, Almighty. THE KHALSA WAS BORN. From that day onwards Vaisakhi or Baisakhi is being celebrated as Khalsa Sajana or Sirjana Divas.

It may also be emphasized here, that nowhere in the study of the evolution and the growth or history of any religion, we find that any particular religion or sect took birth on a particular day. It is always observed and found that whenever any 'prophet', or 'god' or any apostle of God in any form appear on this earth, starts practicing or preaching his or her principles or gives sermons, certain disciples start following him and during a course of time, the sermons or the teachings become the gospel of the new religion and the persons who follow those sermons or observe the practices constitute the followers of that religion. But Khalsa was born on a particular day. It was born on Vaisakhi day. So Vaisakhi is Khalsa's Birthday, A Happy Birthday. On this day several other events of national and international importance also took place. Worth mentioning is the tragedy of the Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar, that took place in Amritsar in 1919, on this day.

(Note: For the sake of not stretching the topic too long, the detailed process of the Khalsa Sirjana Ceremony has not been given)

2. DIWALI – BANDI CHHORH DIVAS

ਦੀਵਾਲੀ— ਬੰਦੀ ਛੋੜ ਦਿਵਸ

Diwali is another festival of national importance. Initially or originally it reminds and commemorates Lord Ram's return to home after 14 years of exile and after winning his War with King Ravana of Sri Lanka, who had kidnapped or rather forcibly lifted his wife Sita when she was alone, after hoodwinking him and his brother Laxman.

The story in brief goes like this. Lord Ram was exiled for 14 years by his father at the insistence of one of his wives, Kaikae. She asked for the exile of Ram and the Raj or Kingship or rule for her son Bharat. Dashrath, the father had to oblige her due to certain compulsions or earlier commitments to her. When Ram was preparing to go to the forests, his wife Sita and his younger brother Laxman accompanied him.

In the forests just at the fag end of their period of exile, Saroopnakh, sister of Ravana, came to their dwelling place and wanted to marry Laxman. Laxman, who was not willing, chopped off her nose. She complained to her brothers. When her other brothers failed in their attempt to over power Ram and Laxman, Ravana came in a disguise and lifted away Sita to his place in Sri Lanka. After a long drawn battle and with the help of Hanuman, other 'Vanar Saina' and Bhibhikshan, another brother of Ravana, Lord Ram won the battle and returned to Ayodhia, his Capital, duly victorious, with his wife and brother. On his return the entire kingdom was illuminated with earthen lamps, the 'diyaas', or the 'deepaks'. From the word of diyaas and deepaks the day has come to be known as Deevaali or Deepaavli.

With this background and India being predominantly a Hindu country, followers of Lord Ram, the day is being celebrated with great fervor and with the passage of time it has just become a cultural festival of India, being celebrated by all the communities, with wide spread exchange of gifts.

Sikhs have a special significance for this day as well. We are

observing Diwali as a 'Bandi Chhorh Divas'. The importance of the day shall be fully appreciated when we come to know the following incidence in proper perspective.

After Guru Arjan Sahib was cruelly and mercilessly martyred on the orders of Mughal Emperor Jahangir, at the instance of Chandu and Prithi Chand, the main culprits, Jahangir realized his folly and in due course of time became friendly with Guru Hargobind Sahib, Miri Piri Wale and Sache Paatshah – the True and Real Emperor. Queen Noor Jahan, who was a disciple of the Great Guru, Sain Mian Mir, the great Sufi saint, who laid the foundation of Sri Harmandir Sahib at the instance of Guru Arjan Dev, and Nawab Wazir Khan, another faithful of Guru Sahib were instrumental in bringing this amity.

Chandu, however wished that Guru Sahib and the emperor should not come closer as he apprehended that their friendship would be very dangerous for him as it was very likely that he would be handed over to the Guru for taking the revenge of his father's death and that shall be a catastrophe for him and his life. He made some false and fabricated reports to the Emperor and Guru Sahib was imprisoned and kept in Gwalior fort.

Professor Puran Singh mentions that once Jahangir fell seriously ill. Under a conspiracy chalked out by Chandu, the Dewan responsible for the martyrdom of Guru Arjan Sahib, some astrologers advised him, that he would be cured of his disease only if some holy person prayed at the Gwalior Fort. Chandu advised Jahangir, to send Guru Hargobind, who was the holiest of the holy in their eyes. Guru Ji was called and sent to Gwalior fort.

As said above, Chandu wanted to remove the close proximity of Guru Sahib and the emperor, as he feared, Guru Sahib would be instrumental in getting him the punishment for the role he played in the killing of his father. Once Guru Sahib was in the Fort, he even wrote to Hari Dass, the commander of the fort, to poison the Guru or kill him any way and promised him a large reward. Hari Dass, who himself by that time had come under the influence of the Holy Soul of Guru Hargobind Sahib, and had become a devout of the Master, placed all the letters before him. Guru Sahib smiled and said nothing.

How Guru Sahib proved himself as 'Bandi Chhorh', the Saviour:

When the truth was known to Jahangir he ordered the release of Guru Hargobind Sahib. But while Guru Sahib was at the fort another development took place. He came in contact with some native rulers, who were also held in captivity over there. They also pleaded to him that he should also get all of them out. Guru Ji sent the message that he won't come out until and unless all the 52 rulers whom he took as innocents were also released along with him. Emperor Jahangir conceded but put the condition that as many rulers could come out as were able to hold the shirt or 'Choga' of the Guru. Guru Ji got prepared a special 'Choga' with 52 robes. One ruler held each robe and thus all were released. Guru Sahib came to be known as Liberator or 'BANDI CHHORH'.

After being released he went straight away to Amritsar. When he reached Amritsar it was Deewali day. The entire Harimandir was specially illuminated to welcome the return of the Bandi Chhorh Guru. - The deliverer Guru, the liberator Guru. Since then Diwali is being celebrated by the entire Panth as Bandi Chhorh Divas.

Note: Some historians, of late, have started questioning the fact that Guru Hargobind Sahib returned to Amritsar on Dewali day. Without going into any controversy, as we are here, not attempting to enter into and settle the historical issues, it is sufficient to say that on this day, entire Harmandir Sahib at Amrtisar is beautifully illuminated and there is a joy full mood all around of the huge 'sangat', that specially gather over there to celebrate the day as 'Bandi Chhorh Divas'. Taking up a cue and the line of direction from there, the entire Sikh Panth celebrates it as a Bandi Chhorh Divas, across the globe.

From Times Immemorial

3.

HOLI Now Khalsa's HOLA MAHALLA

ਜੁਗਾਂ ਜੁਗਾਂਤਰਾਂ ਤੋਂ
ਹੋਲੀ
ਹੁਣ ਖਾਲਸੇ ਦਾ
ਹੋਲਾ ਮਹੱਲਾ

Holi is observed or celebrated in India from times immemorial. Its base is in a legend of Hindu mythology. Its brief description is essential here as we are supposed to know something about its background. It is all the more required as its main legendary figures Harnakash and Prehalad are mentioned a number of times in Sri Guru Granth Sahib too.

The story goes like this. There was a king Harnakash or Harnkashyap a very long time ago. By virtue of his very hard meditation (Tapasya), he had got a boon from the Almighty that he would never die. Detailed description as some times given is that he could not die or be killed either during day or night, either inside the house or outside or could not be killed either by a human being or a demon and so on.

After getting this boon he became so egoistic or proud of himself that he stopped recognizing even God and told his people that he was the God, and people should worship him. Whosoever was defying him was to lose his life.

It so happened by destiny that his own son, Prehlad by name raised a banner of revolt. He worshipped God and God only and all the efforts to persuade him to leave the path chosen by him failed. No threat could

work on him. All the efforts to harm or kill him by his father also failed as 'God' always stood by his side.

Incidentally it may be mentioned that Harnakhsh had a sister, Holika by name. She also by virtue of her Bhagti, Tapsaya or worship of God Almighty, had a boon that she could not be burnt in any fire. Whenever she was caught or jumped into fire, she came out unscathed. Harnakash decided to use her as another tool. The plan was made out that she being the aunt of child Prehlad would take him in her lap and take her position in a particular place. Then she would be put ablaze. Prehlad, the devout of God, shall be burnt alive and Holika would come out quite unhurt.

The plan was put to action. But the result was quite just the opposite. Holika was burnt but Prehlad came out quite safe. Some say that the boon was there, but it was to work and worked only when she was quite alone. If and when she was there with any one else, the boon would not work. Some hold the opinion that there was a head - gear or a particular piece of cloth (Dupatta) that was to be worn by her invariably to save herself from the fire. She was wearing the cloth at the given time. But it so happened that with the will of God, the piece of cloth with the current of air just changed its position. It deprived the protection to Holika, but it came over the head of Prehlad, who was saved. When people came to know about the wicked trick, they came out openly in favour of Prehlad and took away the ashes of Holika and spread the same as dust in the area.

From that day onwards people are celebrating Holi in the said way in a joyous mood. It is often taken as a victory of good deeds over bad ones or those of Ram Bhagats – God-fearing people over atheists or self-egoistic persons. But the way it was or even now, is being celebrated at several places brought in some evil practices too. Throwing of mud and paint, soil or ash, water colours of different types upon one another, when being drunk to the full, generate different types of crimes in society. There is no observance of sense of sex discipline. There are abuses all around. Sometimes even brutal and murderous attacks are made to settle scores with any one on the pretext or under the funs and guise of Holi.

Guru Gobind Singh Sahib, the great visionary, when observed the ill practices all around and wastage of human energy in meaningless

activities, thought of starting a new practice for canalizing this human energy in a constructive way.

It all happened after the Nirmoh Garh battle in 1701. Guru Sahib intended to crystallize the energy of Sikhs and was there to train them for the battlefield as the circumstances warranted. Regular training exercises were put in place. The Sikh warriors were being trained in swordsmanship, horse riding, shooting targets and other arts of the battle.

In the gatherings of the Khalsa at Anand Pur Sahib on Holi day, in 1701, he gave the Khalsa a new program. He put the Gursikhs in different groups according to their level of training, and started competitions amongst them. The people had the opportunity to show their prowess and the martial skills. As there were competitions, the Singhs could judge themselves, their positions viz a viz others and could gain a lot to improve their capabilities.

Any spirit generated by Guru Gobind Singh Sahib, is everlasting and is never going to die despite concerted and serious efforts by many to undo the acts done by him.

Hola Mahalla, is being celebrated with full fervor and zeal by the Panth even today. Special games and competitions are being organized at many important historical Gurdwaras. A particular mention may be made of Anand Pur Sahib, Hazoor Sahib Nanded, Patna Sahib, Mukatsar, a town of 40 Mukte, the forty liberated ones, Damdama Sahib Talwandi Sabo, Damdama Sahib, Delhi. Processions are carried out from one Gurdwara to another. Mock battles are held. Competitions are held. Nihangs perform different feats and show their varying skills. Gurbani Kirtans, Kavi darbars and Dhadi kirtans are also arranged on a vast scale.

At Anand Pur Sahib, an impressive and colourful procession is taken out in which the Nihangs in their traditional appearances take part on a large scale. Then competitions are held in the open ground near Hol Garh Fort, across Charan Ganga a small river. People from throughout the country and even from abroad throng the town and enjoy the games particularly the feats of the Nihangs, the 'Ladli Fauj', the beloved army' of the Guru.

At Hazoor Sahib, also it is celebrated with great zeal and the

procession is led by a white horse believed to be a scion of the favourite blueblack stallion of Guru Dasmesh, also known with the title of 'Neele Wala', the rider of the blue horse.

Thus we find how in a pragmatic way, the entire nature and 'roop' of a festival that had turned out to be quite ugly with the passage of time has been revitalized. The festival of colours, that was turning to be a festival of mud, paints, synthetic colours causing of different types of skin troubles, eye sight problems has been turned for providing an opportunity for creativity. It shows how a festival that was originally a festival of love, a festival of 'Milans', a festival of remembering and recognizing the power of God, the Almighty, but was turning into a festival of spreading hatred, opportunity of excessive alcoholism, sexual assaults, physical attacks, has again been restored its past glory and the dignity in a new garb, in a new name that is HOLA MAHALLA. Hola stands for masculine gender of Holi and Mahalla is a Persian word, signifying an organized march of the army.

It is worth mentioning that Hola Mahalla has been declared a holiday by the Punjab Government.

ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਪ੍ਰਗਟਿਆ ਮਿਟੀ ਧੁੰਧ ਜਗ ਚਾਨਣ ਹੋਆ।

Satguru Nanak Pargatiya, Mitti Dhund Jag Chanaan Hoya

4.

Advent Day

Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji

ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਦਿਵਸ

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ

(At the outset I would like to mention for the young readers, that this small chapter is not meant to give a comprehensive life sketch of Guru Nanak Sahib or a detailed account of the sermons delivered and messages given by him. Only certain points relating to his advent, the purpose of his coming, to this world, in his own language and as per Bhai Gurdass, are to be touched in brief.)

Sri Guru Nanak Dev Sahib, our first Guru, had his advent in this world exactly 538 years back in 1469, on 20th October. Some persons, however, contest the date, as they hold the view and that too, based upon some writings, that Guru Sahib arrived on this earth in April 1469. This is an endless controversy. Panth has however settled in favour of Kattak or 'Kartik Puranmashi', full moon night of Indian month 'Kaartik' or 'Kattak' or 'Katten' (ਕਾਰਤਿਕ, ਕਤਕ ਅਥਵਾ ਕਤੇ) as the same is known with different names in Punjab and rest of India. This full moon night falls in the months of October/November every year. To do away with the uncertainties and certain complexities of the Indian Calender, a new Calender, known as Nanak Shahi Calendar has been devised and put into operation. The above date has been given as per Nanakshahi Calender and has been approved by our apex authorities (However, the day is continuously being celebrated on 'Kartik Pooran Mashi 'full moon light' for the reasons best known to the Khalsa Panth).

A question that is often put forth by some, particularly by the younger generation as to why do we often refer to the event relating to

putting the foot on this earth of Guru Nanak as his advent or 'Parkash', or 'Aagman' (ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਅਥਵਾ ਆਗਮਨ) and do not refer to the same as 'birth', as is often said in common parlance or as per governmental records or even the language, used by governmental agencies or by people of faiths other than those of Sikh religion.

As per our conviction our Gurus have a very special place in our system of thought. In Gurbani, the Guru has been equated with God and God is immortal, self-existent and never takes birth or dies. **The attributes of the Almighty, Akaal Purakh or Ik-Onkaar as per our 'Mool Mantar' (Invocation) are,**

*He is One and One only (Ik),
 His spread or Pasaara is all around (Ong-Kaar)
 His name or existence is 'Sat', True (Sat Naam)
 He is the Creator (Karta Purakh),
 He is fearless (Nirbhau),
 He has no enmity with any one (Nirvair),
 He is The Immortal Figure (Akaal Moorat),
 He does not come in the circle of life and death (Ajooni),
 His existence is self-created (Sae Bhang)
 He can be reached or be attained by the grace of Guru (Gur Parsaad).*

After defining God, when Guru Nanak Sahib comes to the question as to how to reach Him or be one with Him he says that it is only with the grace of the Guru we can achieve our mission or the desired results.

This brings us back, to the issue of a true or a real Guru (Spiritual Teacher).

At page (ਅੰਗ) 864 of Sri Guru Granth Sahib, Guru Arjan, the 5th Nanak while defining and explaining the characteristics, the attributes, the virtues or the 'Gun' of the True Guru says,

ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਕਰਿ ਮਨ ਮੋਰ ॥ ਗੁਰੂ ਬਿਨਾ ਮੈ ਨਾਹੀ ਹੋਰ ॥
 ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਟੇਕ ਰਹਹੁ ਦਿਨੁ ਰਾਤਿ ॥ ਜਾ ਕੀ ਕੋਇ ਨ ਮੇਟੈ ਦਾਤਿ ॥
 ਗੁਰ ਪਰਮੇਸਰੁ ਏਕੋ ਜਾਣੁ ॥ ਜੋ ਤਿਸੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਸੋ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੮੬੪)
 GURU GURU GUR KAR MAN MOR. GURU BINA MAI NAAHEE HOR.

GUR KEE TAIK RAHHU DIN RAAT. JAKEE KOE NA MAITAI DAAT.
 GUR PARMAISAR AIKO JAAN. JO TIS BHAAVAI SO PARVAAN.
Chant Guru, Guru, Guru, O my mind.
I have no other than the Guru.
I am day and night upon the Support of the Guru.
No one can remove or reduce his blessings (bounties).
I take Guru and the Supreme Lord as One.
Whatever pleases Him is gladly acceptable (to me).

And Guru Ram Dass, the 4th Nanak says as under:

ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਮੇਰਾ ਸਦਾ ਸਦਾ ਨਾ ਆਵੈ ਨਾ ਜਾਇ।
 ਓਹੁ ਅਬਿਨਾਸੀ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਹੈ ਸਭ ਮਹਿ ਰਹਿਆ ਸਮਾਇ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੫੯)
 SATGUR MAIRA SADA SADA NAA AAVAI NA JAAE.
 OH ABINAASI PURAKH HAI SABH MAHIN RAHIYA SAMAAYE.
My True Guru, (is immortal) ever exists, does not come and go. He is Immortal, beyond extinction and he exists in all, he lives in all, he is all prevailing.

Bhai Gurdass, in his expositions about the advent of Guru Nanak says

ਸੁਣੀ ਪੁਕਾਰ ਦਾਤਾਰ ਪ੍ਰਭ,
 ਗੁਰੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਗ ਮਾਹਿ ਪਠਾਇਆ ॥
 ਕਲਿ ਤਾਰਣ ਗੁਰੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਆਇਆ ॥
 SUNE PUKAAR DAATAAR PRABH
 GURU NANAK JAG MAHIN PATHAAYAA.
 KAL TAARAN GUR NANAK AAYIA.

Bhai Gurdas, Vaar 1, Pauri 23.

The supreme Lord (God, the ultimate Giver, heard the cries (of the People) and sent Guru Nanak to the World. Guru Nanak came to Liberate (to help people swim across) in the dark period of 'Kalyug'.

And

As per Bhai Nand Lal:

ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਆਮਦ ਨਾਰਾਇਨ ਸਰੂਪ।

ਹੁਮਾਨਾ ਨਿਰੰਜਨ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ਰੂਪ॥

GURU NANAK AAMAD NARAIN SARUP.

HUMAANA NIRANJAN NIRANKAR ROOP.

The 'Narain' God himself came to this world in the guise of Guru Nanak. He Himself was the formless supreme God.

There are innumerable examples in Sri Guru Granth Sahib, those clearly say that Guru Nanak, an 'Agammi Jote', was sent to this world by the Almighty, to deliver the message of brotherhood, Oneness of God, high lighting the significance of His 'Naam', living a truthful, Householder's and God fearing life, earning livelihood with hard and genuinely put labour, helping the poor, sharing bounties with the others and be contented with what ever God gives us and always be thankful to Him for His bestowing bounties and endowments upon us.

Now if God is self - created (ਸੁਤੇ ਸਿਧ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਿਤ ਹੈ), and he is beyond the circle of life and death, so is the true Guru, the 'Sacha Paatshah'. Keeping in view the true spirit of this thought, philosophy and above all Gurbani edicts and guidelines, we observe the Parkash Dihaarha or advent day of Guru Sahib every year. Otherwise too every day millions of Sikhs across the globe bow (Matha Tekna), and pray in utter reverence to Guru Sahib daily. They bow to Sri Guru Granth Sahib, the Shabad Guru, our eternal Guru and even Guru of Guru Nanak Sahib as he himself proclaimed while he visited the Yogis of Himalayas when he said 'Shabad Guru Surat Dhun Chela'. This was also in tune with his statement that

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

JAISEE MAI AAVAI KHASAM KI BANI TAISRHAA KAREE GIYAN VAI LAALO.

As the Lord tells me, the same knowledge I pass on to the others, O Laalo!

Or

ਹਉ ਆਪਹੁ ਬੋਲਿ ਨ ਜਾਣਦਾ ਮੈ ਕਹਿਆ ਸਭੁ ਹੁਕਮਾਉ ਜੀਉ॥

HAUN AAPOON BOLL AN JAANDA MAIN KAHIIYA SABH HUKAMAO JIO,

Or

‘ਹਉ ਢਾਢੀ ਵੇਕਾਰੁ ਕਾਰੈ ਲਾਇਆ॥’, ਆਦਿ

‘HAUN DHADHI KAARE LAAYEAA’, etc.

The Guru Ke Sikhs have deep in their hearts somewhere Guru Nanak, Guru Nanak the eternal, who helps them and comes to their rescue in the hours of need. Only practicing Gursikhs, who really have a mind for the Guru, can experience and explain the pleasure and the glory of such a state of mind.

Again those of us who believe that Guru Nanak left this world or breathed his last are either totally mistaken or are not applying their mind or not exerting themselves to find out the truth behind the facts. It is an admitted fact that Guru Nanak before deserting his physical body made Bhai Lehna, the Angad, just by embracing him and making him a part of his body, and that is why he was given the name of 'Guru Angad' - from Lehna to Angad. Then Angad Guru during his life span was Nanak and Nanak only, as he gave us his sweet Gurbani under the pen name of 'Nanak', and so did all the Guru Jotes who contributed to the treasure house of Gurbani, i.e. SRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB.

Then the same soul, the same spirit, the same Jote that was passed on from One Guru to the Other (Physical appearance) was passed on to Sri Guru Granth Sahib, the 'Shabad Guru,' the Shabad, that was declared by Guru Nanak as his Guru.

To elaborate, it may be mentioned that during one of his sojourns (Udasis as the same are commonly known) Guru Nanak Sahib went to Sumer Parbat and met Yogis (Recluse, Siddh - Saints). While exchanging views the Yogis, the Siddhs, asked Baba Nanak as to who was his Guru, to which he replied, '**Shabad was his Guru**'

ਸਬਦੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਧੁਨਿ ਚੇਲਾ ॥

SABAD GURU SURAT DHUN CHELA.

The Shabad is the Guru, and the conscious, the determined devotion is the 'Chela', the disciple.

For a better appreciation and understanding an extract of the 'shabad' from Sri Guru Grant Sahib is reproduced below.

ਕਵਣ ਮੂਲੁ ਕਵਣ ਮਤਿ ਵੇਲਾ ॥ ਤੇਰਾ ਕਵਣੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਜਿਸ ਕਾ ਤੂ ਚੇਲਾ ॥

ਕਵਣ ਕਥਾ ਲੇ ਰਹਹੁ ਨਿਰਾਲੇ ॥ ਬੋਲੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਸੁਣਹੁ ਤੁਮ ਬਾਲੇ ॥

ਏਸੁ ਕਥਾ ਕਾ ਦੇਇ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ॥ ਭਵਜਲੁ ਸਬਦਿ ਲੰਘਾਵਣਹਾਰੁ ॥ ੪੩ ॥

ਪਵਨ ਅਰੰਭੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਮਤਿ ਵੇਲਾ ॥ ਸਬਦੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਧੁਨਿ ਚੇਲਾ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ ੯੪੩-੪੪)

KAVAN MOOL KAVAN MAT VAILAA.

TAIRAA KAVAN GURU JIS KAA TOO CHAILA.

KAVAN KATHAA LAY RAHHU NIRAAALAY,

BOLAI, NANAK 'SUNHU TUM BAALAY.'

AIS KATHAA KAA DEY BEECHAAR, BHAVJAL SABAD LANGHAAVAN HAAR.

PAVAN ARAMBH SATGUR MAT VAILAA, SABAD GURU SURAT DHUN CHAILA.

"What is the root, the source of all? What teachings hold for these times? Who is your guru? Whose disciple are you? What is the distinct teaching or message you are having with you Listen to what we say, O Nanak, you little boy. Give us your opinion on what we say. How can the Shabad carry us across the terrifying world-ocean?" The Guru's teachings began with the beginning of the air in the atmosphere. The Shabad (that originates and vibrates in the air) is my Guru, upon whom I lovingly focus dedicate and meditate and I am the 'chailaa', the disciple (of Shabad Guru).

Besides, giving the concept of 'Shabad' as perpetual, immortal and ever lasting true Guru 'Sat Guru', Guru Sahib introduced another unique and strange thought in the religious phenomenon. As hinted out above, Guru Nanak before leaving this world physically, made one of his disciples Bhai Lehna as 'another Nanak', and directed the people around to take him as his 'Rup' – his self as Nanak only. He not only said so but also actually bowed before him, passed on his 'jote' in him and made him 'another Guru of humanity'. Hitherto fore none had seen or established this type of practice. Chelas or disciples became gurus and sat at the place of their gurus, but subsequent to the passing away of the preceding Guru. Then they remained the disciples of the preceding Guru, or the Pir, or the saint. They were never given the status, or the honour of the original or originating personality in the said field. It was Guru Nanak and his successors up to Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib, who passed on the said jote or the soul or the spirit with whatever name one may call it, to the succeeding Guru and Guru Gobind Singh Sahib, the 10th master did yet another strange act by passing on the Jote to 'Shabad Guru', Guru Granth Sahib, in accordance with the concept, the thought and the wisdom of Guru Nanak the 1st, that he showed and expressed at 'Sumer Parbat'. It shall not be out of place to reproduce from the 'Swayea Mahalle Dujee Ke',

as incorporated in Guru Granth Sahib by Guru Arjan himself.

ਲਹਣੇ ਧਰਿਓਨੁ ਛਤੁ ਸਿਰਿ, ਕਰਿ ਸਿਫਤੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਪੀਵਦੈ ॥
ਮਤਿ ਗੁਰ ਆਤਮ ਦੇਵ ਦੀ ਖੜਗਿ ਜੋਰਿ ਪਰਾਕ੍ਰੁਇ ਜੀਅ ਦੈ ॥
ਗੁਰਿ ਚੇਲੇ ਰਹਰਾਸਿ ਕੀਈ, ਨਾਨਕਿ ਸਲਾਮਤਿ ਥੀਵਦੈ ॥
ਸਹਿ ਟਿਕਾ ਦਿਤੋਸੁ ਜੀਵਦੈ ॥ ੧ ॥
ਲਹਣੇ ਦੀ ਫੇਰਾਈਐ, ਨਾਨਕਾ ਦੋਹੀ ਖਟੀਐ ॥
ਜੋਤਿ ਓਹਾ, ਜੁਗਤਿ ਸਾਇ, ਸਹਿ ਕਾਇਆ ਫੇਰਿ ਪਲਟੀਐ ॥
ਝੁਲੈ ਸੁ ਛਤੁ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੀ, ਮਲਿ ਤਖਤੁ ਬੈਠਾ ਗੁਰ ਹਟੀਐ ॥
ਕਰਹਿ ਜਿ ਗੁਰੁ ਫੁਰਮਾਇਆ, ਸਿਲ ਜੋਗੁ ਅਲੂਣੀ ਚਟੀਐ ॥
ਲੰਗਰੁ ਚਲੈ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦਿ, ਹਰਿ ਤੋਟਿ ਨ ਆਵੀ ਖਟੀਐ ॥
ਖਰਚੇ ਦਿਤਿ ਖਸੰਮ ਦੀ, ਆਪ ਖਹਦੀ ਖੈਰਿ ਦਬਟੀਐ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ ੯੬੬)

LAHNAY DHARION CHHAT SIR KAR SIFTEE AMRIT PEEVDI.

MAT GUR AATAM DEV DEE KHARHAG JOR PURAAKUAY JEE-A DAI.

GUR CHEILAY RAHRAAS KEE-EE NANAKE SALAAMAT THEEVDI.

SEH TIKAA DITOS JEEVDI.

LAHNAY DEE PHEAYRAA-EE-AI NAANKAA DOHEE KHATEE-AI.

JOT OHAA JUGAT SAA-AY SEH KAAIYAPHER PALTEE-AI.

JHULAI SO CHHAT NIRANJANEE MAL TAKHAT BAITHAA GUR HATEE-AI.

KARAHJ JE GUR FURMAA-I-AA SIL JOG ALOONEE CHATEE-AI.

LANGAR CHALAI GUR SABAD HAR TOT NAAVEE KHATEE-AI.

KHARCHAY DITI KHASAMM DEE AAP KHAHDEE KHAIR DABTEE-AI.

He installed the royal canopy over Lehna's head; chanting the Lord's Praises, He drank in the Ambrosial Nectar. The Guru implanted the almighty sword of the Teachings to illuminate his Soul. The Guru bowed down to His disciple, while Nanak was still alive. The King, while still alive, applied the ceremonial mark to his forehead. Nanak proclaimed Lehna's succession - he earned it. They shared the One Light and the same way; the King just changed His body. The immaculate canopy waves over Him, and He sits on the throne in the Guru's shop. He does as the Guru commands; He tasted the tasteless stone of Yoga. The Langar - the Kitchen of the Guru's Shabad has been opened, and its supplies never run short. Whatever His Master gave, He spent; He distributed it all to be eaten.

Thus, I think it would be amply clear as to why, we Sikhs treat

Guru Nanak as 'Sat Guru,' or True Guru and taking him as immortal and all pervading in the 'world' and in the 'word', in the 'Shabad', and in the Shabad Guru', Guru Granth Sahib, and celebrate his day of arrival in this world as his 'Parkash Divas', or advent day.

5.

The Crown of the Martyrs

Martyrdom Day Guru Arjan Dev Sahib

ਬਹੀਦਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਿਰਤਾਜ

ਸ਼ਹੀਦੀ ਦਿਹਾੜਾ

ਗੁਰੂ ਅਰਜਨ ਦੇਵ ਸਾਹਿਬ

The Sikh nation observes the martyrdom day of 5th Nanak, Guru Arjan Dev, in the month of May/June every year. Actually the most heinous and torturous event in Sikh history took place on 30th May, 1606 (as per SGPC and Nanakshahi Calender).

Every day, or event, that we celebrate or observe with the solemnity, serenity and the reverence it deserves, has its own significance in our history. Guru Arjan Sahib's martyrdom is one such event that shook the entire Sikh nation and it was this event that became instrumental in shaping the destiny of our community in the years to come.

It was from this day onwards, our Gurus started thinking and acting quite differently in order to secure a dignified, worry less and free life for their beloved Sikhs. It was from this day, the nation felt the burden of the yoke of slavery it was carrying upon its shoulders. It was this happening that stunned the entire Nation including some Muslim Pirs and saints, who noticed with great anguish how a saintly and heavenly figure Guru Arjan could be given such type of completely uncalled for, brutal, uncivilized and savage punishment on trumped up charges, false complaints and on flimsy grounds. No doubt the tyrannical Mughal Empire continued to be in power for more than hundred years, but its authority to rule dwindled thereafter.

If we rationally analyze its ultimate impact, it was this event from

which the decline and downfall of Mughals started. It resulted in its complete route with the arrival of Banda Singh Bahadur on the scene, followed by Sikh Misls and Khalsa Raj of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. It was Banda Singh Bahadur and other fellow Sikhs who took revenge and fully punished the perpetrators of the crime against the Sikh nation. This tragic event was enough to motivate all concerned to successfully throw away the Mughals for good from this land.

Now let us say a few words about the divine, cool and multi pronged and multi faceted personality of Guru Arjan, his contribution towards the propagation, consolidation and growth of the Sikh religion, his love and impeccable effect on the human beings around him. This is all the more necessary to understand and appreciate; the gruesome act had its effect, on the future course of events.

It is needless to mention that Guru Arjan Sahib was the youngest son of Guru Ram Dass Sahib and Mata Bhani, commonly known as Bibi Bhani in Sikh history, being the daughter of Guru Amar Dass Sahib. While bestowing Guru Gaddi, his father Guru Ram Dass did not yield to the claim of his eldest son Prithi Chand, as he was considered unworthy of the same. (The other son Mahadev, was of a recluse nature and did not even aspire for the same). Prithi Chand, took this act of his father as a great insult and injustice to him and explored all possible means including disrupting the life of Guru Arjan Sahib in several ways, making false complaints and representations to the Mughal court appealing for getting his so called right restored to him. While we shall deal with the causes of the gruesome martyrdom of Guru Arjan on the orders of Mughal ruler Jahangir, we shall see that this was also one of the several causes for the cruel act.

Guru Arjan remained on Guru Gaddi for about 25 years from 1581 to 1606. During this period of 25 years he did so much of work and was involved in such diversified activities that Mathra, one of the Bhatt (Bald), describing his glory, performance and achievements stated that he was 'Partakh Har' - the apparent and visible God.

ਧਰਨਿ ਗਗਨ ਨਵ ਖੰਡ ਮਹਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਸੂਰੂਪੀ ਰਹਿਓ ਭਰਿ॥

ਭਨਿ ਮਥੁਰਾ ਕਛੁ ਭੇਦੁ ਨਹੀ ਗੁਰੁ ਅਰਜਨੁ ਪਰਤਖੁ ਹਰਿ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੦੯)

DHARIN GAGAN NAV KHAND MEH JOT SAVROOPEE RAHIYO BHAR.

BHAN MATHURA KACHH BHAIID NAHEE GUR ARJUN PARTAKH HAR.

A glance at his performance, accomplishments and the land marks established by him shall reveal that no ordinary person can ever imagine performing and excelling in so many diversified activities as Guru Arjan Sahib did, and there shall be not any iota of doubt in concluding that Bhatt Mathra was quite right in making his assessment about Guru Sahib.

Guru Arjan was a great builder. He initially under took the completion of different projects initiated by Guru Ram Dass Sahib such as the development of the town Guru Ka Chak, Amritsar, the completion of the Amrit Sarovar, and building of Harimandir Sahib in the middle of the Sarovar. Then he gave us buildings and cities, which depicted his tastes and interests in art, minute observations and far sightedness. He built the Harimandir, our most revered place with four doors, in the middle of the Sarovar, in a clean environment with wide 'parikarma' (walking and service area around the sarovar). He took up and completed the building of Taran Taran Sahib –Sarovar and Hari Mandir, Kartarpur town near Jalandhar, Chhe-hartta well (A very big well with six chains and outlets, Guru Dham in the outskirts of Amritsar and Ram Sar, Santokh Sar and Ram Bagh in Amritsar itself.

Guru Arjan was a great Poet, who created and composed a lot of Gurbani. He as a young child was predicted to be 'Bani Ka Bohitha', by none other than Guru Amar Dass, who happened to be his maternal grand father. He, in the tradition set by Guru Nanak, composed a lot, most revered, and sweet and solace giving verses in a very simple language. His Bani gives rest and peace to the most disturbed and perturbed mind. Number wise too his compositions are much more than that of any other single contributor to Guru Granth Sahib. Out of 1430 pages of Sri Guru Granth Sahib, 650 pages are of his own writings. To be precise and to quote Dr. Teja Singh, out of a total of 5894 distinct pieces from different composers Guru Arjan himself composed 2216. Sukhmani Sahib i.e. "Sukhmani amrit prabh naam, bhagat jana ke man bisram", Bawan Akhri, Barah Mah, Ruti, Thiti, Pehrai, Din-Raain, Vaaraan are some of his vivid compositions. The Bani he gave us has a dense meaning, appeal and message for the entire humanity.

Besides giving his own diversified and solace giving bani, he compiled Guru Granth Sahib and gave the same as most precious and

the immortal gift to the Sikhs in particular, and to the world community at large, in general.

Guru Granth Sahib is the most undiluted original scripture of the Sikh religion – said by the Gurus and written in first person – and perhaps is unique as compared to the religious books and scriptures of all the religions throughout the world. It contains not only the Vani of Sikh Gurus but also of Muslim Saints and Hindu Bhagats and Bards, (irrespective of their religion, caste color creed etc) – but in conformity of Sikh Philosophy i.e. prescribing to worshipping of only One Almighty God and, not believing in casteism, idol worship, superstitions, rituals (Karam Kand) etc.

Guru Arjan Sahib always considered himself a humble servant of humanity. It is said that one evening Mata Ganga Ji, on seeing some tears in his eyes asked with anxiety about the cause. Guru Ji in a humble voice said that some Sangat (devout Sikhs) who had come from Kabul were camping at a few miles from the city of Amritsar. They could not continue their journey due to the darkness of night. The Sangat included children and women as well and they were hungry, as they could not get their evening meals. Both of them got some langar prepared and accompanied by some devout Sikhs went on foot to the camping site and served food to them all. On another occasion, Guru Arjan in the guise of a farmer looked after the shoes of the sangat when they were busy in 'shabad kirtan' (singing hymns with musical instruments). Such type of examples of a master serving his followers might be rare in world history.

Guru Arjan Sahib perfectly in tune with his own assertion and insertion in Gurbani was a Shelter for all. He said,

ਜੋ ਸਰਣਿ ਆਵੈ, ਤਿਸੁ ਕੰਠਿ ਲਾਵੈ, ਇਹੁ ਬਿਰਦੁ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਸੰਦਾ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੪੪)

'JO SARAN AWE TIS KANTH LAWE, EH BIRD, SWAMI SANDA'.

Prince Khusro, after facing defeat at the hands of Jahangir was on the run to Afghanistan. When Royal forces were chasing him, he asked for a shelter from Guru Arjan at Lahore and he readily obliged.

Guru Arjan was a Great Democrat too. He surrendered to the expression of views of his sangat to not to marry Hargobind (Guru) with the daughter of Chandu, a functionary of Jahangir who uttered

some derogatory words against Guru Nanak's house and rated his own stature as of very high order.

GURU ARJAN – A Great Martyr:

After a brief deviation i.e. after highlighting a few attributes of Guru Arjan Sahib and putting the same before the readers, we come to the issue that is of primary concern here and shall try to explain as to what a great martyr he was and why he has been given the title of 'SHAHEEDAN DE SIRTAJ' 'THE CROWN OF MARTYRS.

Guru Arjan faced first martyrdom in Sikh history at the hands of Mughal Emperor Jahangir in a most cruel manner. Jahangir was forming his opinion against Guru Sahib on the reports pouring to him from different quarters. As said above Prithi Chand, the elder brother of Guru Sahib was all along trying to capture Guru Gaddi. He was making representations to the emperor and was also sending some fabricated reports. It may be noted that it was during his time people started calling Guru Sahib as the Sacha Patshah (Guru – the true emperor, the spiritual king). Chandu, who also wanted to take revenge, was telling the emperor that he was even attracting certain Mohammedans to his court. When Jahangir was informed of the shelter given by Guru Arjan to Prince Khusro, he slapped a fine of Rupees two lakhs upon him but Guru Sahib refused to pay.

Influenced by all the above factors, *Jahangir in his autobiography 'Tauzik – a-Jahangiri' has mentioned that 'he was thinking since long to get this shop of falsehood closed and ultimately he ordered that the Guru be killed'.*

Guru Arjan Sahib was handed over to Chandu for getting his revenge. He wanted that Guru Arjan be brutally tortured to death. Guru Sahib was made to sit in a cauldron full with water. The fire was put on beneath the cauldron and water was allowed to boil, with Guru Sahib sitting in perfect calm in the boiling water. Then he was seated on a hot plate and hot burning sand of peak summer season (June month) was poured on his head. Guru Sahib remained unmoved, calm, quite and undisturbed saying that everything happens as per thy will and thy will is always sweet.

ਤੇਰਾ ਕੀਆ ਮੀਠਾ ਲਾਗੈ ॥ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਪਦਾਰਥੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਮਾਂਗੈ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੯੪)

TERA KEEYA MEETHA LAAGE, HAR NAAM PADARATH NANAK MANGE.

Your actions are sweet to me. Nanak begs for the treasure of the Naam, the Name of the Lord.

He faced cruelty and injustice. Sain Mian Mir on seeing this became so furious that he said that he would destroy Lahore and Delhi with the divine powers he was having - for this great cruelty. But Guru Arjan advised him to remain calm and bow towards the wishes of the ALMIGHTY. When his body blistered, he was chained and thrown into the river Ravi. Guru Sahib embraced martyrdom on Jeth Sudi 4th Samvat 1663, (May 30, 1606).

Thus we find how a messenger, an apostle of peace, a true saint possessing so many attributes and above all writer of such jewel embedded peace and solace giving Bani and a Guru who never in his life hurt any single individual despite a lot of provocation, was put to such a horrific and terrible end. Thus whereas he left this mortal world physically, he 'as a Partakh Har', the immortal one shall continuously be with us for ever and shall through his 'word' the baani, always be our Guide and Guru and help us in attaining eternal peace.

It is a matter of history that Jahangir later when came to know of reality and motive behind the cruel act of Chandu, handed him over to GURU HARGOBIND for giving due punishment to him. Sangat at Lahore mercilessly beat him with shoes and stones and in due course he had his tragic and most humiliating end.

ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਸੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਆ ਕਰੀ ਨ ਕਿਨਹੂੰ ਆਨ ॥
'Teg Bahadur si kirya karhi na kinhoon aan'.

6. *Martyrdom Day* **Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib**

ਬਹੀਦੀ ਦਿਹਾੜਾ
ਗੁਰੂ ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ

Martyrdom day of Sri Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib, the Ninth Nanak in succession, is also quite unique in Sikh history. Rather it is unique in the annals of world history or history of world religions seen all together or taken as a whole.

There are innumerable examples of supreme sacrifice made for the sake of the cause that is dear to one or to one's principles, he or she is supposed to observe and adhere to as per one's learning, understanding and teaching. But one cannot find an example other than of Guru Teg Bahadur, for laying down his life or offering his head to the sword of the killers for the protection of those values and thoughts or customary or ritualistic things, which were not observed or rather discarded by him and his forefathers.

Guru Nanak, the first at very young age, refused to wear the 'Janeau', (the sacred thread as per Hindu religion), terming the same as futile, discriminatory and not everlasting, and all the succeeding Guru Jotes steadfastly followed, the precedent set forth by Him, Guru Teg Bahadur, the Ninth Nanak, agreed to give his life for the protection of the same thread.

It so happened that Aurangzcb, the mighty but a fanatic to the extreme and otherwise a cruel ruler too (who had annexed the Delhi throne by putting his father, emperor Shah Jahan, in Jail and by putting all of his brothers to merciless and cruel death), was busy demolishing Hindu places of worship and in his attempt to turn India into a country of monotheism, was engaged in forcibly converting all the non

believers in Islam to its fold. The defying persons were being put to death. When confronted with such a terrible and fierce full situation, some Pundits, lead by their leader Kirpa Ram approached Guru Teg Bahadur for help. It is also written by some chroniclers, that one of them got a message from some heavenly power in his dream, that they should approach Guru Teg Bahadur – the then holder of Guru Nanak's Gaddi or throne at Anandpur Sahib, who would come to their rescue.

When the Pundits put their woes before the Guru – Guru the savior -, there was a perfect lull in the congregation. At this the young Gobind Rai, who was less than nine years of age, just enquired out of curiosity, the problem before his father. When Guru Ji told him that the religion or the faith of the Pundits was in danger and when confronted with the question of likely solution, from the young son, Guru Teg Bahadur told that the same needed the sacrifice of some supreme soul. The young child immediately said, who was the better super soul than that of his father. People all around were stunned, but Guru Sahib got the point that young Gobind Rai was capable enough to hold the reins of the Sikhs and he instantly told the delegation to tell the emperor that they would embrace Islam in case Guru Teg Bahadur did the same, and as he would not succumb to any pressure, his sacrifice would save their religion. The delegation went back with full satisfaction and conveyed the message from the Guru to the state functionaries.

Ultimately, as was expected the inevitable happened. All the efforts by the tyrannical rulers to intimidate or other wise allure Guru Sahib could not in any way effect the stand taken by Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib. He was kept for a number of days in a cage, and was given a torturous treatment most of the time. At intervals he was given some allurements too like in case he converted to Islam, he would be given some kingdom, some 'Nawabi', and was also given the offer of beautiful Muslim girls in marriage. Most torturous and unbearable acts were the gruesome killing in a most barbaric and heinous way of three Gur Sikhs and close associates of Guru Sahib, Bhai Mati Dass, Bhai Sati Dass and Bhai Dayala. All the three accompanied Guru Sahib to Delhi from Anandpur Sahib.

In full view of Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib, Bhai Mati Dass was cut into two pieces with a saw by making him stand erect. He faced martyrdom just by asking the perpetrators of the crime to put his face

in front of his beloved Guru. Bhai Sati Dass, his real brother was thrown in a cauldron of boiling water and was boiled alive. Bhai Dayala the third Gur Sikh was put afire, after covering him with thick cotton all around. Guru Sahib was made to see all this and just signals were being sent to him that he would also have the same fate, in case he did not yield to their tactics.

But Guru Teg Bahadur was Guru and was having the Jote of Guru Nanak within him. If his disciples, the Sikhs could face the inevitable death in those barbaric and savage manners, how he would have succumbed. He stood for

‘ਭੈ ਕਾਹੂ ਕਉ ਦੇਤ ਨਹਿ ਨਹਿ ਭੈ ਮਾਨਤ ਆਨ ॥
ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਸੁਨਿ ਰੇ ਮਨਾ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਤਾਹਿ ਬਖਾਨਿ ॥’

(ਸਲੋਕ ਮਹਲਾ ੯, ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੨੭)

‘BHAË KAHOON KO DET NAI, NAÏE BHAË MANAT AAN.
KAHO NANAK SUN RE MANA GYANI TAAHEN BAKHAAN’.

Or

ਬਾਹੇ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾ ਦੀ ਪਕੜੀਐ, ਸਿਰ ਦੀਜੈ, ਬਾਹੇ ਨ ਛੋੜੀਏ ॥
ਗੁਰ ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਬੋਲਿਆ, ਧਰ ਪਈਐ, ਧਰਮ ਨ ਛੋੜੀਏ ॥

BAAHAIN JINA DI PAKARIYEE, SIR DEEJE BAAHIN NA CHHORIYE.
GUR TEG BAHADUR BOLIYA DHAR PAYEEAI DHARAM NA CHHORIYEE.

Here when we have mentioned the supreme sacrifice made by three of his associate Gur Sikhs, we shall be doing grave injustice to a couple of more Gursikhs, if we do not make a mention of them, because in the absence of their bold, heroic, daring and glorious acts in those hours of crisis, we would not have been able to raise our heads high up, in the society at large, as there would have been a stigma or libel at our foreheads for leaving our Guru’s martyred body, in the bazaar of Chandni Chowk, Delhi, as unclaimed due to the terror of the cruel ruler and just to avoid facing his wrath.

It so happened that when on 11th November 1675, Guru Teg Bahadur’s head was severed from the rest of his mortal body, the executors challenged if their was any of his Sikhs around, dare pick up and lift his body. Most of the people though sighed, wept and even cried for such gruesome murders taking place in the heart of Delhi, but did not show the courage of coming forward to lift the body. Two Sikhs

at last could gather the courage. One was Bhai Lakhi Shah Vanjara and the other one Bhai Jaita Rangretta. It is said that immediately after the terrible event, there was a huge dust storm in Delhi. There was dust all around.

In the poor visibility conditions Bhai Lakhi Shah Vanjara who was passing through the bazaar with his carts loaded with luggage of sorts, picked up and took the headless body of his revered Guru to his place of residence in Raisina Village, put it in the house and using his house as his pyre and funeral place, lit the flames, cremated the body and in the process his entire house was gutted. People around were told that his house caught fire and he lost every thing in the calamity that he was put to suffer. What a type of reverence was shown by the beloved Sikh of the Guru.

The heroic act of Bhai Jaita was of no less significance. He picked up the Head portion and concealed it into some of his belonging and rushed towards Anand Pur Sahib to put the same in the hands of young Guru Gobind Rai and Mata Gujri. Some historians have gone on record to show that Bhai Jaita with the concurrence of his father Bhai Agya Ram, to hoodwink the authorities and the guards those were there on duty, cut off his head, put the same at the place where the head of Guru Sahib was lying, before picking up the same and carrying to Anand Pur Sahib. What a great unique sacrifice and heroic act was done by the duo – the father and the son!

Then he did not adopt the open usual route for reaching his destination. He went through, 'kacha' roads and streets, villages and towns and reached Kirat Pur Sahib and from there sent the message to Guru Sahib at Anand Pur Sahib. Guru Gobind Rai accompanied by the revered mother Mata Gujri and Sikh Sangat reached Kirat Pur Sahib, took the head to Anand Pur Sahib with utmost honour and sanctity the same deserved, and cremated the same at a place that is now known with the name of Gurdwara Sis Ganj, at Anandpur Sahib. The place where Guru Sahib was martyred at Delhi is also known with the same name viz GURDWARA SIS GANJ, and at the place where his body was cremated stands a magnificent Gurdwara with the name of Rakab Ganj, in the heart of New Delhi.

A vast hall in the name of Lakhi Shah Vanjara also has been built within the premises, to commemorate the memory of the heroic and

sacrificing Sewa or service done by the Sikh towards his beloved Guru. Likewise a great monument in the form of a museum has been built in Chandni Chowk, Delhi, in the names of Bhai Mati Dass, Bhai Sati Dass and Bhai Dayala, at the spot where all the three obtained martyrdom. Guru Gobind Rai on receiving the head of his father Guru, from Bhai Jaita Rangretta, took him in his arms, embraced him and said. 'Rangrette – Guru Ke Bete'. Thus he was given the honour and title of 'Guru's son'. Incidentally it may also be mentioned here that this very Bhai Jaita, became Bhai Jeewan Singh after taking Khande Baate Di Pahul from Dasmesh and also obtained martyrdom, while crossing the swollen river Sarsa, and while defending the attack on Sahibzada Ajit Singh.

The matter of reckoning here is not just of martyrdom (s), one, two, or several, because the world history is full of martyrs and in almost all the religions; there is no dearth of martyrs. The issue that is of relevance is the cause and the purpose of martyrdom. Guru Teg Bahadur, the 'Dharam Da Raakha' (Protector of the religion), and 'Hind Di Chaadar' (the sheet or the anchor of Hindustan, i.e. India), as he is often called sacrificed his life and life of some of his dear Sikhs, for saving the religion of others, for saving those values, which were never subscribed for or adhered to by him or his predecessors. **He fought for the right of freedom of religion – for a right that has been recognized by the world at large in 20th century (and in several parts of the world it is still being fought), he made the supreme sacrifice in 17th century. It shall be a befitting tribute to him and to his associates if the world bodies like United Nations Organization and its other organs declare and observe Guru Sahib's martyrdom day as a 'freedom of Religion Day', across the globe.**

ਤਹੀਂ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਹਮਾਰਾ ਭਯੋ।
ਪਟਨਾ ਸ਼ਹਰ ਵਿਖੇ ਭਵ ਲਯੋ॥

Tahin Parkash hamara bhaiyo
Patna Shaihar Vikhe Bhav layo

7.

ADVENT DAY

Guru Gobind Singh Sahib

ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਦਿਹਾੜਾ

ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਾਹਿਬ

As has been said above in the chapter relating to Guru Nanak Sahib, our conviction is, a true Guru 'Sat Guru', is just God Himself or is sent by Him only. He comes and goes out of his own free will or is sent and called back by God only. He is immortal and never, takes birth or dies. The advent of Guru Gobind Singh Sahib further strengthened this conviction. He himself dealt in detail 'his arrival' in this world. While putting in black and white that he was sent by 'God', the Almighty, he also mentioned the purpose of his coming to this earth.

In Bachitter Natak, one of his vivid compositions, he gives something like his autobiography along with some details of his past life and how he was persuaded by God Almighty to come to this earth planet once again and with what mission, he was sent. He writes

ਅਬ ਮੈ ਅਪਨੀ ਕਥਾ ਬਖਾਨੋ ॥
ਤਪ ਸਾਧਤ ਜਿਹ ਬਿਧਿ ਮੁਹਿ ਆਨੋ ॥
ਹੇਮਕੁੰਟ ਪਰਬਤ ਹੈ ਜਹਾਂ ॥
ਸਪਤਸਿੰਗ ਸੋਭਿਤ ਹੈ ਤਹਾਂ ॥
ਤਹਿ ਹਮ ਅਧਿਕ ਤਪੋਸਿਆ ਸਾਧੀ ॥
ਮਹਾਂਕਾਲ ਕਾਲਕਾ ਅਰਾਧੀ ॥ ੨ ॥

AB MAIN APNEE KATHA BAKHAANO.

TAP SAADHAT JIH BIDH MOHAE AANO.

HEM KUNT PARBAT HAI JAHAN.
 SAPT SRING SOBHAT HAI TAHAN.
 TEH HAM ADHAK TAPASYA SAADHI.
 MAHAKAAL KAAL KA ARAADHI.

He said that from now onwards he was giving his own story (History) and while so saying, he said while he was busy in meditation (of God), he was sent here by Him. At the Hem Kunt Mountain, there is a place with seven peaks. There I did a long and deep meditation and worshipped the Mahakal – the great Killer, the God, as His devotee, 'Mahakaal Kaal Ka Araadhi'. Most people often read it as Mahakaal Kalka Aradhi and interpret it that Guru Sahib worshipped Goddess Kalka of the Hindu Religion. This is a clear-cut misinterpretation. If we read it as Mahaakaal Kalka, it does not appear to be sound and rational as Mahakal and Kalka are two different entities and one cannot worship or meditate or concentrate on both at the same time. Then otherwise too Kalka a goddess of Hindu mythology cannot in herself be designated as Maha Kaal. If any goddess under the name of Kalka exists she must be under the over all control or command of Mahakaal – the Supreme power or the Killer As against this Mahakaal Kaal means Kaal of the Mahaakal i.e., super killer or the chief destroyer or the killer at the top, which in turn is the attribute of God only.

Then continuing his story further, he said,

ਤਾਤ ਮਾਤ ਮੁਰ ਅਲਖ ਅਰਾਧਾ ॥
 ਬਹੁ ਬਿਧਿ ਜੋਗ ਸਾਧਨਾ ਸਾਧਾ ॥ ੩ ॥
 ਤਿਨ ਜੋ ਕਰੀ ਅਲਖ ਕੀ ਸੇਵਾ ॥
 ਤਾ ਤੇ ਭਏ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਨ ਗੁਰਦੇਵਾ ॥
 ਤਿਨ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਜਬ ਆਇਸ ਮੁਹਿ ਦੀਯਾ ॥
 ਤਬ ਹਮ ਜਨਮ ਕਲੂ ਮਹਿ ਲੀਆ ॥ ੪ ॥
 ਚਿਤ ਨ ਭਯੋ ਹਮਰੋ ਆਵਨ ਕਹਿ ॥
 ਚੁਭੀ ਰਹੀ ਸੁਤਿ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਚਰਨਨ ਮਹਿ ॥
 ਜਿਉ ਤਿਉ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਹਮ ਕੋ ਸਮਝਾਯੋ ॥
 ਇਮ ਕਹਿ ਕੈ ਇਹ ਲੋਕ ਪਠਾਯੋ ॥ ੫ ॥
 TAAT MAAT MUR ALAKH ARAADHA.
 BAHU BIDH JOG SADHNA SADHAA.

TIN JO KARI ALAKH KI SEWA.
 TAATE BHAIE PARSANN GUR DEVA.
 TIN PRABH JAB AAIYES MOHE DIYA.
 TABH HAM JANAM KALU MAIN LIYA.
 CHIT NA BHAYO HAMRO AAVAN KEIH.
 CHUBI RAHI SURAT PARBH CHARAN MEH.
 JEO TEO PRABH HAM KO SAMJHAAIO.
 IM KEH KAI IEH LOK PATHAAIYO.

While mentioning his cause of coming, he specifically mentioned, the service, the meditation and the devotion of his parents towards the Lord, who was impressed with the same and gave him the directions and he accordingly on his command and orders took birth as their son in this Kalyug. His mind was not willing to come, as he was deeply engrossed in the worship, in the feet of the Almighty. God persuaded him in different ways and by saying so sent him to this world.

ਯਾਹੀ ਕਾਜ ਧਰਾ ਹਮ ਜਨਮੰ ॥
 ਸਮਝ ਲੇਹੁ ਸਾਧੂ ਸਭ ਮਨਮੰ ॥
 ਧਰਮ ਚਲਾਵਨ ਸੰਤ ਉਬਾਰਨ ॥
 ਦੁਸ਼ਟ ਸਭਨ ਕੋ ਮੂਲ ਪਚਾਰਨ ॥

YAAHI KAAJ DHARA HAM JANAMANG.
 SAMAJH LEHOO SAADHU SAB MANMANG.
 DAHRAM CHALWAN, SANT UBARAN.
 DUSHT SABHAN KO MOOL PACHARAN.

Then while explaining further the cause of his birth or advent, he said that he had come for this particular purpose and all the noble hearted people (Saints), must clearly understand the same. He had come for the establishment of the religion, the rule of righteousness and to uplift the morale of the noble people, the saints, and he was there to root out all the wicked people.

ਤਹੀਂ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਹਮਾਰਾ ਭਯੋ ॥
 ਪਟਨਾ ਸ਼ਹਿਰ ਬਿਖੈ ਭਵ ਲਯੋ ॥

TAHIN PARKASH HAMAARA BHAYIO.
 PATNA SHEHAR BIKHAI BHAV LAYO.

He said he had his advent (ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼), at Patna. This in nutshell is the story given by Guru Gobind Singh Sahib under his own pen.

This is a unique and distinct description of a religious head or Guru, explaining in such a clear cut and explicit words, his past life and how he was persuaded by the Almighty to come to this world and the purpose of his coming.

Then for those who do not believe the above version and sometimes contest that Guru Sahib did not write Bachitter Natak, and the same has come out of the pen of some other writer, there is another story relating to his advent that speaks of the same facts. Pir Bhikham Shah, an Islamic Sufi Pir, who was based in Punjab, one fine morning did his Namaz or Sajjda towards the East instead of the customary practice of doing the same to the West i.e. towards Mecca – the birth place of Hazarat Mohammad. His disciples were quite perplexed of this development and anxiously asked about this grave violation of Islamic rule by him. The Pir replied that his God, 'Allah Taala' had made his appearance, (zahoor) in the East, at Patna and that was why he read his Namaz in the East. To meet their curiosity he along with some of the disciples started on a journey to Patna. After several days of journey, when they were not allowed to have a glimpse of the young child being the baby of a few days only and could not be exposed, they sat outside their residence and vowed not to move without having a 'darshan' of the young child. Ultimately the mother and the maternal uncle had to budge. The child was shown to them, he took the test of the child and came back to their place.

Although this small essay is not meant to write his glorious performance and achievements in detail, as the same needs volumes and volumes, yet when we see his total physical span of life of 42 years (from 1666 to 1708), and the turmoil he had to undergo, the sacrifices he made, the land marks he established and the complete transformation he made of the Sikhs of Guru Nanak into Khalsa Panth as per the dictates of the Almighty, there does not remain an iota of doubt that he completely fits into the definition of a true Guru as given in Sri Guru Granth Sahib and what ever he said in the Bachitter Natak was no exaggeration at all.

We have seen above the instinct of Pir Bhikham Shah and his disciples and how they went completely satisfied when the little child Gobind touched both the little pots with his tiny hands. The story that goes may be briefly described here, as the same may not remain a mystery for those who are not conversant with the same. Pir Bhikham

Shah put two bowls before the little child, taking one representing the Hindus and the other the Muslims. He thought in his mind that which ever bowl the child would touch with his hands, he would derive the inference that he would stand by the side of the said religion. The little child in his wisdom touched both the bowls with both of his tiny hands signaling to the Pir that he would treat the followers of both the religions at par.

Then at the age of less than nine, he was instrumental in making his father Guru, Guru Teg Bahadur to make the supreme sacrifice for the protection of the depressed and helpless people at the hands of the cruel and tyrannical rulers. When Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib noticed the clarity of thought and boldness and maturity of expression in his young son, he felt that he was strong enough to hold the reins of Guru Nanak's house.

Immediately after he was anointed as 10th Nanak, he established the 'RANJIT NAGARA' - an embodiment of Kingship - that signified a clear sense of rebellion by the young Guru at the age of less than 10 years. As his next step he put his foot in the Shivalik Hills and established Paonta Sahib. Here he had a number of poets and writers in his court and he gave us volumes of morale boosting Bani and other literature. The poets and other writers were also directed to write on the given lines. Bhangani Yudh was also fought over here with the Hill Rajas, that was thrust upon him on flimsy grounds as Guru Sahib himself said that,

ਫਤਿਹ ਸ਼ਾਹ ਕੋਪਾ ਤਬ ਰਾਜਾ । ਲੋਹ ਪਰਾ ਹਮਸੋ ਬਿਨ ਕਾਜਾ ॥

FATEH SHAH KOPA TAB RAJA, LOH PARA HAM SO BIN KAJA.

Guru Gobind Singh had to fight several wars and battles with the forces of the Mughals and Hill Rajas. With Akaal Purakh at his back, he won all the battles in the Pre-Khalsa creation period. At the conclusion of Bhangani war he himself said, 'ਭਈ ਜੀਤ ਮੇਰੀ, ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਾਲ ਕੇਰੀ ॥ Bhai Jeet Meri, kirpa kaal kerī'. Meaning thereby 'I have become victorious with the grace of God'.

How paradoxical does it look when one finds that while producing and directing the production of best poetic works, unparallel in its form and content, he was very much occupied, in various struggles and battles, with the Hill Rajas (Chieftains) and all powerful Mughal

forces. This could only be expected from Dasmesh, Dusht Daman and Hem Kunt Vaasi, who was here after getting an Aiyes (Order or Direction) from Almighty, after being appointed as his Son to accomplish the assigned tasks.

Then he made a final and crucial attack on 'karam kands', rituals and Brahmanical practices, those were still left despite 200 years of continuous attack by the Nine Nanaks and their devout Sikhs. He was at Guru Nanak's throne as 'Guru Gobind Rai', for about 24 years, i.e. in the Pre Khalsa Creation Period. Then the way he created the Khalsa, the undaunted, the fearless and 'The Charhdi Kala' spirit he put in them, the confidence and the strength he created is beyond any body's comprehension. Then there is no match to him in the history of mankind in the field of making sacrifices. First of all he sacrificed his father at the tender age of nine years. Then he sacrificed all his four sons. His aged mother also breathed her last in tragic circumstances. His three of the five beloved Sikhs (Panj Piyaras) and several of his other close relatives faced martyrdom.

Besides writing a voluminous Dasam Granth commonly known as Dasam Granth or Dasam Guru Ka Granth, he, when refused the copy of Sri Guru Granth Sahib by Dhir Mall's followers, dictated the entire Granth verbatim by sitting just in meditation. While doing so he also added the Bani of 9th Nanak, Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib at appropriate places.

Another wonderful rather matchless act he did was the installation of Guru Granth Sahib as Guru after him, thus ending the chain of human Gurus. Although Guru Nanak Sahib had also told the Yogis that 'Shabad', was his Guru, other Guru Jotes' worked towards the same concept and gave highest regard to Bani, yet it was left to Guru Gobind Singh Sahib to formally pass on Guru Gaddi to Guru Granth Sahib.

One may go on counting his endless feats for days together. But we have to conclude as the main aim of this topic was as to why we celebrate his advent on this day as his 'Parkash Utsav', or 'Parkash Diharha'. I think we have made the point. On the day we celebrate, we sing the saga of his accomplishments, the sacrifices – in Parbhaat Pheris (carrying morning rounds of Kirtans continuously for a number of days), in the Nagar Kirtans – the processions and all day and night Deewans – congregations, and pay our obeisance to him in gratitude.

ਵਾਹੁ ਵਾਹੁ ਬਾਣੀ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ਹੈ, ਤਿਸੁ ਜੇਵਡੁ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥
WAHO WAHO BANI NIRANKAAR HAI, TIS JEWAD AVAR NA KOI.

**8. First Parkash (Installation Day) Divas
&**

Guru Gaddi (Day of Anointing as Guru) Divas

SRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB

ਪਹਿਲਾ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਦਿਹਾੜਾ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੱਦੀ ਦਿਹਾੜਾ

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ

The entire Sikh Jagat knows that Guru Granth Sahib is our eternal Guru. Guru Granth Sahib is our scripture as well. It is again quite unique in the context of all the religions of the world. Our Sri Guru Granth Sahib, was initially named as Pothi Sahib or the scripture book, but was later named as Granth by the 10th Nanak and he himself bestowed Guru Gaddi upon the Granth Sahib and it became Jugo Jug Attal – immortal through the periods – Guru of the Khalsa Panth.

We shall revert to the cause and effect of anointing Guru Gaddi to Guru Granth Sahib, a bit later. Let us for the time being refer to the other very important day relating to Guru Granth Sahib and that is its First Parkash Divas.

Most of the Gursikhs are aware that ‘Shabad’, or the Bani of the Gurus, has particularly a unique place in our religion and even in the words of Guru Nanak the first, ‘Shabad’ was his Guru. In a dialogue with the Siddhs at Sumer Parbat, when the Yogis confronted him as to who was his Guru (religious teacher or emancipator), he categorically said the ‘shabad’, was his Guru. The complete ‘Shabad’, or the composition with its meaning is produced below.

‘ਕਵਣ ਮੂਲੁ ਕਵਣ ਮਤਿ ਵੇਲਾ ॥

ਤੇਰਾ ਕਵਣੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਜਿਸ ਕਾ ਤੂ ਚੇਲਾ ॥

ਕਵਣ ਕਥਾ ਲੇ ਰਹਹੁ ਨਿਰਾਲੇ ॥

ਬੋਲੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਸੁਣਹੁ ਤੁਮ ਬਾਲੇ ॥

ਏਸੁ ਕਥਾ ਕਾ ਦੇਇ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ॥

ਭਵਜਲੁ ਸਬਦਿ ਲੰਘਾਵਣਹਾਰੁ ॥ ੪੩ ॥

ਪਵਨ ਅਰੰਭੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਮਤਿ ਵੇਲਾ ॥

ਸਬਦੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਧੁਨਿ ਚੇਲਾ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ ੯੪੩-੪੪)

KAVAN MOOL KAVAN MAT VAILAA.

TAIRAA KAVAN GURU JIS KAA TOO CHAILA.

KAVAN KATHAA LAY RAHHU NIRAAALAY.

BOLAI, NANAK 'SUNHU TUM BAALAY'.

AES KATHAA KAA DEY BEECHAAR.

BHAVJAL SABAD LANGHAAVAN HAAR.

PAVAN ARAMBH SATGUR MAT VAILAA.

SABAD GURU SURAT DHUN CHAILA. (943 - 44)

"What is the root, the source of all? What teachings hold for these times? Who is your Guru? Whose disciple are you? What is the distinct teaching or message you are having with you. Listen to what we say, O Nanak, you little boy. Give us your opinion on what we say. How can the Shabad carry us across the terrifying world ocean?" The Guru's teachings began with the beginning of the air in the atmosphere. The Shabad (that originates and vibrates in the air) is my Guru, upon whom I lovingly focus dedicate and meditate and I am the 'chela', the disciple (of Shabad Guru).

Thus whereas, Guru Nanak himself stressed that 'the Shabad', that penetrates and vibrates in the air was his Guru, a closer view shall lead us to the conclusion that it was 'Shabad' that was instrumental in taking Bhai Lehna and Baba Amar Dass to the preceding Guru Jotes. When one fine morning, Bhai Lehna 'a devout of the Devi' listened to Bhai Jodh or Jodhan - with whatever name he was called, singing some melodious 'Bani', he asked him as to whose composition he was singing. He told him that the same was of Baba Nanak, who was then residing at Kartarpur, after completing all his sojourns – Udasis. Bhai Lehna decided that next time on his way to Devi's Darshan, he would also visit Kartar Pur to have a 'darshan' of Baba Nanak. The pull, the urge of 'darshan', or we may say the air that vibrated from Holy Bani was so strong that when Bhai Lehna visited Kartarpur, he did neither move forward nor backward. He instead made

'Guru duvar' his house, his dwelling place and stayed there with an unflinching faith, dedication, devotion, and abstract surrender. With his service and conviction he rose to such a stature that he lost his identity and merged himself into his beloved Guru. The Guru, who himself was 'Sat Guru', and was sent by God, the Almighty to this earth, felt the merger, embraced him, made him a part of his limb, and ultimately leaving on his shoulders the responsibility of the further spread of his mission, left this mortal world in 1539.

Guru Amar Dass the 3rd Nanak also had somewhat similar experience. At the age of sixty plus, after having a number of trips to Hardwar, spread into several years, hit by the satirical words of 'the Brahamchari' was desperately searching for a true Guru, spending sleepless nights. One fine morning, when his elder brother's daughter in law 'Bibi Amro', who happened to be Guru Angad Sahib's daughter, was singing and reciting some bani, he just out of curiosity, asked from her that whose compositions she was singing in the wee hours. She told that the same were of his father, who was sitting on the Gaddi of Guru Nanak and was at Khadoor at that time. He expressed an urge and requested her to take him to his father. **He too on seeing him, made himself his Sikh, his slave, his servant and never looked back. His long committed service to him for a long period of more than twelve years that started at the advanced age of 60 plus years made him sit at the throne of Baba Nanak at the ripe age of 73, and continued to be on the throne till he reached 95 and left this mortal world.**

These two incidents have been quoted to bring to the fore the glory of the 'Shabad'. All the Gurus, right from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh Sahib, through their writing and deeds glorified 'the Shabad – the Naam' and the Gurbani.

Since we are focused here on highlighting the importance of two distinct and memorable events in our history, we intend avoiding a detailed analysis of Gurbani and contribution of different Guru Jotes and others towards it. We straight away come to Guru Arjan Sahib, the 5th Nanak, who did a monumental work in contributing to the Bani, spread of the 'Shabad' and in preservation of the same in the form of a Granth, giving it a 'Jugo Jug Attal', immortal status. Our first objective

i.e. knowing the event relating to 1st Parkash Divas and the importance thereof for us, shall be met, when we shall see the constructive, active and concrete part played by the 5th Guru.

Guru Arjan, as a young child was predicted to be 'Bani Ka Bohitha', by none other than Guru Amar Dass himself, who happened to be his maternal grand father. He had a very melodious and sweet voice too and he used to do 'Kirtan for hours together on 'saranda', a fine musical instrument of the day. *Guru Arjan Sahib, in the tradition set by Guru Nanak, composed a lot, most revered and sweet, solace giving verses in a very simple language. His Bani gives rest and peace to the most disturbed and perturbed mind.* Number wise too his compositions are much more than that of any other single contributor to Guru Granth Sahib. Out of 1430 pages of Sri Guru Granth Sahib, 650 pages are of his own writings. To be precise and to quote Dr. Teja Singh, out of a total of 5894 distinct pieces from different composers Guru Arjan himself composed 2216.

He contributed the vani in 30 ragas (measures). Latter while Editing/Compiling Sri Guru Granth Sahib, he arranged the Bani in all the 30 Ragas those were there up to the time of the compilation of the Granth. The 31st rag i.e. Rag Jai Ja Vanti, that was included there by the 10th Nanak at Damdama Sahib has the vani of 9th Guru, Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib only. Sukhmani Sahib i.e "Sukhmani amrit prabh naam, bhagat jana ke man bisraam", Bawan Akhri, Barah Mah, Ruti, Thiti, Pehrai, Din-Raain, Vaaraan are some of his vivid compositions.

The Bani he gave us has a deep meaning, appeal and message for the entire humanity.

Compilation of Guru Granth Sahib: Whereas on one hand Guru Arjan composed a lot of Bani and that too in 30 ragas of Sri Guru Granth Sahib, yet the most precious and the immortal gift Guru Arjan Sahib gave to the Sikhs in particular, and to the world community at large, in general, is 'Adi Granth', now known as Guru Granth Sahib. It was Guru Arjan who made tremendous efforts in compiling the Granth. To appreciate as to why he, endeavored to compile The Granth, whereas we are firm in our belief that it was as per the predestined and heavenly chalked out program as we find from the importance given to Shabad from day one by our revered Gurus, yet outwardly when we look into and analyze the circumstances those

were prevailing at that time, we easily come to the conclusion, that certain factors as they come to exist at that time prompted Guru Sahib to take up this work in hand, on a priority basis.

Some of us might be aware, that when Guru Ram Dass Sahib bestowed Guru Gaddi upon Guru Arjan Sahib, his youngest son, his eldest son Prithi Chand did not take the same lying down. He raised a lot of hue and cry, misguided the sangat through his own Masands and misappropriated the offerings. He even went to the Mughal emperor Jahangir and made a complaint to him for the injustice caused to him by his father by ignoring his right.

Then he resorted to another undesirable mean to hood wink the Sikhs of Guru Nanak. He with the connivance of his son, Meharban, in his attempt to declare himself as the VI Guru, started composing the bani with the pen name 'Nanak' Mahalla Chhevan (6th) as was the practice by the reigning Guru jotes at that time.

When some devout Sikhs pointed out the same to Guru Sahib, he decided to collect the entire bani of his preceding Guru Jotes, and along with his own compositions and with those of some 'bhagats' and others, he took up in hand the compilation of the Granth. He wished to prepare a Granth that could be treated as an authentic one, containing only those compositions, those were by the Gurus and some others duly examined, tested on the principles of Gur Sikhi, edited and approved by him only, in such a way that no one could add in the same. He desired that all the gurbani should be made available at one particular place in its original form and in the proposed Granth no adulteration of any sort could be made at a latter date.

At the outset we may mention that there is a small confusion in Sikh history, as to how did he collect the entire Bani. As per one and the prevailing version in most Sikh circles, he went in a humble way, barefooted to Baba Mohan, son of Guru Amar Dass who was in possession of the Pothis – Books containing hymns (vani) of the earlier Gurus, and brought them to his place by placing them on his head, with complete reverence and respect. But as per some latest findings and analytical version of some historians and intellectuals, the Pothis (copies or hand written books) containing Banis were being preserved by the Gurus and their contemporary Sikhs and were being handed over to the succeeding Gurus at the time of their anointing as such.

Prof. Sahib Singh and Dr. Tarlochan Singh subscribe to this view and there appears a lot of logic and truth in their presentation. Every Guru Sahib who composed bani, did the same mostly in continuation of the earlier style and spirit and 'Raga', the musical measures, and every Guru was doing 'Katha' religious discourses of the bani given to them by their predecessors and earlier Gurus too. Moreover, 'relevant Shabad' in Guru Granth Sahib, about 'Mohan', is about God Almighty, and not about any individual human being.

Anyhow for the compilation of the 'Adi Granth' GURU ARJAN SAHIB used the services of four writers viz. Sant Dass, Haria, Sukha and Mansa Ram for copying out the Pothis. Then he went through the writings of Sufi Saints and 'Bhagats' irrespective of their religion and caste for incorporating in the Granth. Guru Arjan deeply studied the manuscripts, corrected and edited the same wherever felt necessary. He approved only those writings, those were found fit when tested on the principles of the Mission of Guru Nanak i.e. One-ness of Supreme God, significance of 'Naam' and devoid of idol worship and useless rituals. He ensured that no self-praise or human glory was there.

Then the entire work of writing the Granth was entrusted to Bhai Gurdas, who under the direct guidance and close supervision of Guru Sahib compiled the Granth. The entire Vani – barring a few exceptions was arranged according to Ragas and the Order as envisaged by him only. Compilation was completed in 1604 AD and it was enshrined or installed in Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar with Baba Buddha Ji as its first Granthi (head priest).

He compiled the Granth, in such a manner, by giving such intricate numbers to each composition that made adulteration completely impossible. Thus he has put his own seal of authentication, which proves beyond doubt the originality and genuineness of the compositions. This may be one of the reasons, as to why Guru Sahib took so much pain in giving Guru Granth Sahib to us.

I think we have by now come closer to know as to what is the First Parkash Divas of Sri Guru Granth Sahib and what is the significance of the same.

The day, the Guru Granth Sahib was compiled and enshrined at Harmandir Sahib at Amritsar and its Parkash was done is known as the First Parkash Divas of the Jugo Jug Attal Guru – the

Immortal Guru. It was on 1st September 1604 AD. We must, however, keep in mind that on this day it was not given the title of Guru, but was known by the name of Pothi Sahib or simply the Granth or the Granth Sahib. But the fact that on this day, the great, original, undiluted scripture was given to the Guru Sikhs and Guru Sangat, was in itself a day of great significance.

Then even before the formal Guru Gaddi was bestowed upon ‘the Granth’, all the Guru Jotes right from Guru Arjan Dev Sahib showed their great reverence to ‘The Granth Sahib’. The day the 1st Parkash was done, on asking from Baba Buddha ji, as to where the ‘Sukhasan’ of the Pothi Sahib was to be done, Guru Arjan Sahib directed that same be done on his ‘Palang’ bed, and he himself, slept on the floor by its side throughout his life. The subsequent Guru Jotes used to do ‘Katha’ of the shabad with due reverence, was having daily kirtan sessions in the Darbars –with the exceptions when the abnormal circumstances did not warrant the same and even was getting recitations (Paths) done when ever there was any occasion for the same.

Now we come to the question relating to the bestowing of Guru Gaddi upon Guru Granth Sahib, by 10th Master Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh Sahib at Nanded in the South. Here again to the naked eye or to an ordinary person it shall appear, that as Guru Sahib was leaving his mortal body at Nanded at the young age of 42 years, after having been stabbed by Jamshaid Khan and Gul Khan, the two killers hired by Nawab Wazir Khan of Sarhind, he bestowed Guru Gaddi upon Granth Sahib abruptly. But a deeper peep into the subject shall reveal that he was contemplating to end the human chain of Gurus and was working on the plan several years before that.

Sometimes nine years before that he had created the Khalsa, and had passed on the authority of the Guru to the ‘five beloved ones’, by bowing before them and sought Amrit or ‘Khande Baate Di Pahul’ from them on their conditions. Then sometimes in or around 1706, on being challenged by the Dhir Mallias, who refused to give the Bir Sahib to him when demanded, that as he was the Guru and was sitting on the Gaddi of Guru Nanak, he should get the same rewritten, he dictated the entire Granth Sahib to Bhai Mani Singh, in the same order and spirit the same was originally written, but added the Bani of the 9th

Nanak, Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib at the appropriate places. Then he had replaced the practice of 'Charan Pahul' with Khande Baate Di Pahul in 1699 at the Khalsa Creation ceremony. He also told Banda Bahadur to treat 'Granth' as the Guru, when he was sent to Punjab to square up the accounts with Wazir Khan and other perpetrators of cruelty upon Gurus and the Sikhs alike.

Thus on the ultimate day when he was destined to leave this mortal world Guru Dasmesh, asked for the 'Granth'. When some Sikhs asked as to whether he was asking for Dasam Granth, Guru Sahib, replied in the negative and straight away told that the same was history and he was asking for 'Shabad Guru', Granth. He got its Parkash done, bowed before it, placed the customary offerings before it, and bestowed Guru Gaddi upon the Granth, making it from 'Pothi Sahib or Granth Sahib, to Sri Guru Granth Sahib, the Jugo Jug Attal Guru, the Immortal Guru. This event took place on 6th October 1708. Thus this is the Guru Gaddi Divas and as such is quite distinct from first Parkash Divas.

Guru Granth Sahib is the most undiluted original scripture of the Sikh religion – said by the Gurus and written in first person – and perhaps is unique as compared to the religious books and scriptures of all the religions throughout the world. Again as said earlier it contains not only the Vani of Sikh Gurus but also compositions of Muslim Saints and Hindu Bhagats and Bards, (irrespective of their religion, caste color creed etc.) – those were in conformity of Sikh Philosophy i.e. prescribing to worship of only One Almighty God and, not believing in casteism, idol worship, superstitions, rituals (Karam Kands) etc. Let it be known to the world that when Sikhs bow in reverence to the Vani of the great Gurus, they give equal respect and sing and read with equal devotion the writings of these saints and men of God. This is another unique feature of Sikhism.

Note: Some (Data) details and a brief note about Guru Granth Sahib have been given under head (e) in Part II, at pages 60-64 under the head 'Our Religion', in this very book.

ਮਰਣੁ ਮੁਣਸਾ ਸੂਰਿਆ ਹਕੁ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਹੋਇ ਮਰਨਿ ਪਰਵਾਣੋ ॥
ਸੂਰੇ ਸੇਈ ਆਗੈ ਆਖੀਅਹਿ ਦਰਗਹ ਪਾਵਹਿ ਸਾਚੀ ਮਾਣੋ ॥

(੫੭੯-੮੦)

MARAN MUNSA SURIYAN HAQ HAI, JE HOVE MARAN PARVANO.

SOORE SOEE AAGAI AAIKHIYE DARGAEH PAAVEH SAACHEE MAANO.

9. **Martyrdom days of Sahibzadas**

ਸ਼ਹੀਦੀ ਦਿਹਾੜੇ ਸਾਹਿਬਜ਼ਾਦਿਆਂ ਦੇ

Some material about the lives and the martyrdom of Sahibzadas of Dasmesh has been placed in Part II of this Book under the head 'Four Sahibzade' at pages 64-67). As such to say something in detail over here shall make the reading at that place quite redundant as it would appear a sheer repetition.

It shall be quite sufficient to say here that the martyrdom of all the four Sahibzadas of Sarbans Daani, Guru Gobind Singh Sahib is quite unique and to date unparallel in the world history or in the annals of world religions. How strong might be the conviction, will power or the spirit of sacrifice of Dasam Pita when he sent eldest son Sahibzada Ajit Singh, in the Chamkaur Battle to face the enemy in thousands, when he had only a few Sikhs on his side. How strong might be his heart (the toleration spirit), when he saw from one edge of the Garhi, the Katcha Fort, his Sahibzada, piercing into the enemy columns, killing them in numbers and then ultimately when his all the arms and ammunition were exhausted, fell down in the battlefield fighting with just his sword. Then the Great Guru faced a greater test, when his younger Sahibzada Jujhar Singh came to him with his folded hands and sought his permission to follow the foot steps of his elder brother. Guru Dasmesh himself decorated him with the arms and ammunition, dressed him up well and sent him to the battlefield. Then before the sun was set, he too fell down. Thus the Great father sacrificed two of his

sons who gave away their lives while heroically fighting in the battle with the enemy on a single day.

And then in the darkness of night, when he was crossing through the battle field, his foot stumbled with a dead body, and when the thunder lightening of the night fell upon the face of the object touched by his foot and came in his way, it was the body of the elder Sahibzada. One of the 'beloved', 'the Pyara of the Guru' Bhai Daya Singh had a pause with the wet eyes, and tried to put a cover or sheet upon the body. Guru Sahib, straight away stopped him from doing the same and asked him that in case he had enough number of sheets to cover all his dear fallen soldiers, he could do the same. He did not allow any special treatment for his son.

Can any one quote such a type of father or sons anywhere in the history of the world ? The sons of fathers might have died and even in greater numbers, but the same might have been there under the adverse circumstances or due to any calamities beyond the control of any one but we have not come across any case , where the father might have sent his beloved sons to the battle field himself. Knowing fully well their fate, and saw them falling down and then on their falling raising a victory slogan 'Jaikara' at the top of his voice '*BOLE SO NIHAL – SAT SRI AKAAL*'. Then there cannot be any father, who might have left the fallen bodies of his beloved sons, in the battle field uncovered and uncared, and even did not allow one of his loving Sikh to cover the same as that would have discriminated against the other fallen bodies of the loving sons of some other mothers and fathers, who were equally loved by the Great Guru.

Then the saga of the younger Sahibzadas – Sahibzada Zorawar Singh and Sahibzada Fateh Singh, the little kids of nine and six years respectively is more heart piercing. Words fail to describe the torture, the agony, the pain, the trauma the elderly, fragile grandma (Dadi – the grand mother), Mata Gujri had to bear, when she prepared them to face death in the hands of their tyrannical captives and to not to succumb to the pressures put on them and the allurements given to them for converting to Islam.

When faced with the grim situation, in the cold high Minarat (Thanda Burj) of Sarhind, she took them in her lap and narrated them the story of the great sacrifice of their grand father, - her husband Guru

Teg Bahadur. She told them as to how he and his grand father Guru Arjan Dev had faced similar situations in the hands of the tyrannical rulers and gave the supreme sacrifice. She told them the stories of innumerable Sikhs, who too did not lag behind. She told them the stories of the valiant Sikhs who fought in various battles. She filled in them, a spirit, a passion, to not to surrender at any cost. They were told not to budge even if they were to make the supreme sacrifice. The exercise continued for two to three days. During the days, the young kids were being tortured and grilled in the court of the Nawab and during nights the little souls were to face the temperature below zero degree in the cold nights of December of Punjab, high up in the air, on an floor that was open on all the four sides and that too without having any woolen clothes on them. Their only protection was the grand old mother Mata Gujri, the mother of Dasam Pita, who was in her eighties, slim and weak in body as she had faced several agonistic scenes in her life. **But, and I repeat, the entire human history might not have seen any woman of her conviction, her determination, or will power, who might have seen virtually a wiping out of her entire family, and yet was fully determined to not to succumb and also not let his grand sons succumb to the adverse circumstances and sent them herself to face the most heinous death, that they were put to by the culprits.**

Can any one imagine and visualize that what would have been the reaction upon the great Guru, the super father, when he came to know of the gruesome murder of his little kids, the kids in infancy, the buds those were yet to become flowers to give some fragrance to the world at large. The same can not be better understood than by the words he expressed when our revered mothers Mata Sundari and Mata Sahib Devan on not seeing any of the Sahibzadas (Princes) asked him their whereabouts at Damdama Sahib, Talwandi Sabo, where they met him for the first time after the grave and grim incidents. He said,

*'In putarran ke sis par vaar diye sut chaar,
Chaar muve to kiya hua jeewat kai hazaar.'*

I have sacrificed my four sons on the heads of (for the sake of) these sons (pointing out towards the Sikhs present in his audience at that time). What if the four have died, several thousands are still alive !

To commemorate these great sacrifices, the entire Sikh Panth observes solemnly their martyrdom days in December, almost throughout the world. But there are very elaborate and long programmes at Chamkaur Sahib, Fategarh Sahib Sarhind, Delhi etc because these are the places which are especially associated in one way or the other with these incidents. Occasion is used for inculcating an undaunting spirit of Sikhi and preservation of Sikhi swaroop among the Sikhs and particularly amongst the youth and the kids, even though in, how so ever, adverse circumstances they may be put to.

ਕੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਤਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਗੁਰਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਭਾਇ ਭਗਤਿ ਗੁਰਪੁਰਖ ਕਰੰਦੇ ॥
ਗੁਰ ਸੇਵਾ ਫਲ ਸੁਫਲ ਫਲੰਦੇ ॥

(ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ)

10. Parkash, Guru Gaddi and Joti Jote Samana Divas of other Guru (Jotes)

ਹੋਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੋਤ ਸਵਰੂਪਾਂ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼,
ਗੁਰੂ-ਗੱਦੀ ਅਤੇ ਜੋਤੀ ਜੋਤ ਸਮਾਣ ਦੇ ਦਿਹਾੜੇ

The Sikhs or 'Guru Nanak naam levas', celebrate different events other than those discussed above with due solemnity and the grace. Some events or occasions such as Guru Nanak Sahib 'Joti Jote Samana Divas', Guru Ram Dass Sahib's Parkash Divas, Guru Harkrishan Sahib's Parkash Divas etc are celebrated, mostly universally by the entire Panth, in almost all the Gurdwaras of reckoning, but some other events are remembered at some specific local places to which the event specifically relates.

For example Guru Angad Dev Sahib is specifically remembered at Khadoor Sahib, the place that remained his headquarters as per the dictates of Baba Nanak, and the place at which he lived up to the period he left this mortal world. Several monuments to commemorate his attachment and connections to this place have been built there. There exist besides some other monuments, a magnificent Gurdwara, 'Sri Darbar Sahib', an old well in the name of Bibi Amro, a vast langar hall in the name of Mata Khivi. Recently a State of the Art computerized touch screen system Sikh museum has been established. This was to commemorate the 500th birth anniversary of the Guru jote that was celebrated in 2002 A. D. Another monument, NISHAN-E-SIKHI- a nine storey building in red stone is coming up near the Gurdwara.

Guru Amar Dass Sahib, practiced and preached Sikhi from Goindwal Sahib. This was as per the directions of Guru Angad Dev

Sahib, who got built this town under the close supervision of , ‘Baba’ Amar Dass. The word ‘baba’ has been used as the Guru Gaddi was not bestowed upon him till that time. A vast Gurdwara building with very serene and environment friendly surroundings, Baoli Sahib and other several monuments stand in the town. As it has developed into a nice town and has become a hub of industrial and commercial activity, with the patronage of the State, there are round the year celebrations over here. This town is also otherwise known as the first pilgrimage center of the Sikhs. It was from here the bi-annual congregations on Baisakhi and Deewali was started by the 3rd Nanak. Parkash Divas of Guru Amar Dass Sahib, his Guryaee Divas, and his Joti Jote Samana Divas are specially celebrated in this town. Keeping in view the huge ‘sangat’ of Guru Khalsa in and around the city, all other days as referred to above are also observed with great enthusiasm over here.

Guru Ram Dass Sahib, the 4th Nanak, who had his ‘Parkash’ advent or birth at Lahore, Pakistan established Amritsar as ‘Guru ka Chak’. After drawing the elaborate plan, he dug a Sarovar, and planned to have a HARIMANDIR over there. But he left his mortal body, passing on the Guru Gaddi to Guru Arjan, the 5th Nanak, without giving his plan a practical shape. It was Guru Arjan Sahib, who built Harmandir Sahib and several places around . It may also be mentioned that out of total seven years of Guru Gaddi period , he too was having Goindwal Sahib as his base for about 3 years. He left his mortal body too at Goindwal Sahib. Thus all the days of importance pertaining to his physical life are celebrated at all those centers and places, where he had put his foot. Even other wise too Guru Ram Dass Sodhi Sultan has a name across the globe and he is remembered at all the places at all the times with great reverence. His ‘Parkash Diharha’ is also being celebrated at Gurdwra Parkash Asthan, Lahore (Pakistan), where he had his advent (Parkash).

Guru Arjan Sahib had his advent at Goindwal Sahib. His center of activity was Amritsar as well as Taran Taran. He was martyred at Lahore , now in Pakistan. He took a multifarious building activity in his hands even while he was engaged in several other important spheres of the growth of Sikhism. He built Harmandir Sahib, Taran Taaran, Chheharta Well, Kartar Pur town in Jullundhar, Baoli Sahib, Lahore etc. He took a lot of interest and pain in the building and in the growth of the city of Amritsar. Whereas his martyrdom day is observed

and programs are held on an extensive scale at all the places where Sikhs reside, his birth and Guryaee day etc are celebrated on a large scale at Goindwal, Taran Taaran, Amritsar etc.

Guru Hargobind Sahib's advent was at Guru ki Wadali, Amritsar. He was bestowed Guru Gaddi at Amritsar and he left this mortal world at Kiratpur Sahib. His Miri Piri concept also started from Amritsar Sahib and the Bandi Chhorh Divas originated from Gwalior fort and culminated at Amritsar. As such all the commemorative days relating to him are specially celebrated at these towns.

Guru Har Rai Sahib had his birth at Kirat Pur Sahib. He left his mortal body too, over there. He had a small physical life of 31 years, out of which for more than 17 years he was on Guru Nanak's throne. He traveled to different places during his Guru period. He established certain, 'Bakhshan', 'blessings' for the spread of Sikhism. His message was well received in areas like Peshawar (now in Pakistan), and Afghanistan etc. Days commemorating the event of his life whereas are celebrated at Kirat Pur Sahib, the Peshawari and Afghani Sangat wherever it is, especially sing his virtues throughout their lives.

Guru Harkrishan Sahib has a special place in Sikhism. Not only in Sikhism, in the history of world religions or even in the case of any other type of activity of reckoning, he has the only place being the youngest in age who became a Guru, a religious head and that too of the holder of Gaddi of Guru Nanak. He not only was bestowed upon the Guru Gaddi at the tender age of less than 6 years, he left his mortal body when he had not even entered the ninth year of his life, thus relinquishing Guru Gaddi just within three years of his getting the same. Then even during this shortest life span, he had proved his metal in all possible ways and told the people around that he was not sitting over the Guru Gaddi in default. He established several land marks for which he shall be remembered in history eternally. Days specifically related to his physical life span with those of Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib and 'Kalgian Wala, Dasmesh Pita' are celebrated with full fervour by the entire Panth and other Guru Nanak naam levas, wherever they are.

Part II

Something Particular About Gursikhi

ਕੁਝ ਖਾਸ ਗੁਰਸਿੱਖੀ ਬਾਰੇ

Our Religion

ਸਾਡਾ ਧਰਮ

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a) General

Our Religion - Sikhism: SIKHISM was founded by Guru Nanak, the first, about five hundred years ago, It was transformed into KHALSA PANTH IN 1699 BY GURU GOBIND SINGH SAHIB, THE 10TH NANAK AT Takhat Sri Kes Garh Sahib, Anand Pur, Punjab, India. Guru Gobind Singh while initiating a 'Khande Baate Di Pahul' or 'Amrit Sanchaar' ceremony gave a separate entity and identity to the Sikhs. It is at present the 5th largest organized religion of the world and spread over across the globe, having its base and vast majority living in Punjab. A rough estimate numbers the Sikhs in the world around 23 million.

Sikh Rehat Maryada: Sikh Rehat Maryada is in substance a code of conduct arrived at and prescribed after a prolonged deliberations by several prominent Sikhs, Sikh organizations and approved by Shiromani Gurdwara Parbhandhak Committee, Amritsar. This is in vogue since 1945. Several contentious issues in Sikh Panth are settled in the light of the provisions of this Sikh Rehat Maryada.

b) Our Mool Mantar — Invocation and definition of God – The Almighty

Ik	ੴ	:	The One
On(g)kaar	ੴ	:	He has universal spread – He is all Prevailing and Omnipresent
Sat Naam	ਸਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ	:	His Name is True
Karta Purakh	ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ	:	He is 'The Creator' of all.
Nir Bhou	ਨਿਰਭਉ	:	He is never afraid of any one
Nirvair	ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ	:	He has enmity towards none.
Akaal Murat	ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ :		He is The Immortal Figure
Ajoooni	ਅਜੂਨੀ	:	He never takes birth or ever dies.
Sai Bhan(g)	ਸੈਭੰ	:	He has come of His Own

Gur Parsaad ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥ : He can be attained or reached with the grace (blessings) of the True Guru.

Note: Here we must mention that the Moolmantar as such starts from Ik Ongkaar and is concluded at Gur Parsaad. Some people erroneously or just out of ignorance stretch it further from 'Jap' upto 'Nanak Hosi Bhi Sach'. We must know that right from 'Jap', the Jap or Jap ji bani starts. Moolmantar, as such is, repeatedly mentioned at several places in Sri Guru Granth Sahib, particularly at the start of every 'Raag', and it is invariably upto 'Gur Parsaad'.

c) Who is a Sikh:

According to Sikh Rehat Maryada, Chapter 1, Article 1, (English translation as published by Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee)

Any human being who faithfully believes in

- (i) One immortal Being,**
- (ii) Ten Gurus from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh,**
- (iii) The Guru Granth Sahib,**
- (iv) The utterances and teachings of the ten Gurus and**
- (v) The baptism bequeathed by the tenth Guru, And who does not owe allegiance to any other religion, is a Sikh.**

Thus the definition has some very important ingredients and a person to call him self or her self a Sikh must have all of them. One must believe and have faith in One Supreme Lord 'Akaal Purakh with no intermediaries, as in most of other religions. One must have faith in, regard and reverence for all the ten Gurus along with Sri Guru Granth Sahib. Then he must have full faith and believe in 'Amrit; or Khande Baate Di Pahul as initiated by tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh Sahib and over and above all of these requirements, one must not owe allegiance to any other religion.

d) Our Ten Gurus with brief details:

Name	Parentage	Physical Life span	(Guriayee) Period	Family Details
Sri Guru Nanak Dev Sahib Ji	Mehta Kalyan Chand (Kalu) Mata Tripta	1469 - 1539	1469 to 1539	Wife: Mata Sulakhani Children : Baba Sri Chand, Baba Lakhmi Chand
Sri Guru Angad Dev Sahib Ji	Baba Pheru Mal Maia Daya Kaur	1504 – 1552	1539 to 1552	Wife: Mata Khivi Children: Sons: Baba Datu and Baba Dasu, Daughters: Bibi Amro and Bibi Anokhi
Sri Guru Amar Dass Sahib Ji	Bhai Tej Bhan Mata Bakhat Kaur	1479 - 1574	1552 to 1574	Wife: Mansa Devi Children: Sons: Baba Mohan and Baba Mohri Daughters: Bibi Dani and Bibi Bhani

Sri Guru Ram Dass Sahib Ji	Bhai Har Dass Mata Daya Kaur (Bibi Anupi)	1534 – 1581	1574 to 1581	Wife: Bibi Bhani Sons: Prithi Chand Mahadev, and (Guru) Arjan Dev
Sri Guru Arjan Dev Sahib Ji	Guru Ram Dass Bibi Bhani	1563 – 1606	1581 to 1606	Wives : Mata Ram Dai, Mata Ganga Ji Son: (Guru) Hargobind
Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji	Guru Arjan Dev, Mata Ganga Ji	1595 – 1644	1606 to 1644	Wives: Mata Damodri, Mata Nanaki and Mata Marwahi Ji Sons: Baba Gurditta, Baba Suraj Mal, Baba Attal Rai, Baba Ani Rai, (Guru) Tegh Bahadur Daughter: Bibi Veero
Sri Guru Har Rai Sahib Ji	Baba Gurditta Mata Nihal Kaur	1630 – 1661	1644 to 1661	Wife : Mata Krishan Kaur Sons : Ram Rai and (Guru) Harkrishan Ji

Sri Guru Harkrishan Sahib Ji	Guru Har Rai Mata Krishan Kaur	1656 – 1664	1661 to 1664	----
Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji	Guru Hargobind Mata Nanaki	1621- 1675	1664 to 1675	Wife : Mata Gujri Ji Son : (Guru) Gobind Singh
Sri Guru Gobind Singh Sahib Ji	Guru Tegh Bahadur Mata Gujri	1666 – 1708	1675 to 1708	Wives: Mata Jeeto Ji, Mata Sundri Ji, Mata Sahib Devan Ji (Some writers hold that Mata Jeeto Ji and Mata Sundri are two distinct names of only one entity). <i>Sahibzadas:</i> Ajit Singh, Jhujhar Singh, Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh

e) *Our Present Guru :*

Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji

JUGO JUG ATTAL - SRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB JI

SOME BASIC INFORMATION:

Compiled By	:	Guru Arjan Dev Sahib
Writer	:	Bhai Gurdass
Associated Writers	:	Sant Dass, Haria, Sukha and Mansa Ram
Date of First Parkash	:	1 st September 1604
First Head Granthi	:	Braham Gyani Baba Buddha Ji
Place of First Parkash	:	Sri Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar
Date of Anointing (Guru Gaddi)	:	6 th October 1708
Contents	:	
Total Pages (ਅੰਕ)	:	1430
Total Rags (Musical Measures)	:	31
Total Shabads (Compositions)	:	5894

Contributors And Their Contributions :

Guru Sahibs*

1. Guru Nanak Dev Ji :	976
2. Guru Angad Dev Ji :	61
3. Guru Amar Dass Ji :	907
4. Guru Ram Dass Ji :	679
5. Guru Arjan Dev Ji :	2216
6. Guru Teg Bahadur Ji :	118

4957*

* Figures have been taken from "The Holy Granth—Sri Rag to Majh" by Professor Teja Singh pp. xviii. He has given the figure of compositions by others as 937, but without mentioning the details. The figure with the details taken from some other source as given below comes to 938. There appears to be some printing mistake at either source.

Bhagats

1. Bhagat Kabir	541
2. Bhagat Farid	134
3. Bhagat Ravi Dass	40
4. Bhagat Namdev	61
5. Bhagat Dhanna	4
6. Bhagat Sadhana	1
7. Bhagat Trilochan	4
8. Bhagat Sur Dass	2
9. Bhagat Pipa	1
10. Bhagat Beni	3
11. Bhagat (Sheikh) Bhikhan	2
12. Bhagat Jai Dev	2
13. Bhagat Parmanand	1
14. Bhagat Ramanand	1
15. Bhagat Sain	1

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Bhatts

1. Balh	5
2. Balah	1
3. Bhika	2
4. Gayaand	13
5. Harbans	2
6. Jalap	5
7. Kalsahar	54
8. Kirat	8
9. Mathura	14
10. Nath	16
11. Salh	3

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Other Contributors:

1. Rababi Mardana	3
2& 3. Satta & Balwand	8
4. Baba Sunder Ji	6

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Note: Figures of Compositions by Bhagats, Bhatts and others have been taken From 'About Sri Guru Granth Sahib' By Sutantar Singh Published By Young Sikh Cultural Association, New Delhi.

How to worship Sri Guru Granth Sahib ?

It is a most pertinent question, but is generally overlooked by most of the people. Several people fail to appreciate as to how Guru Granth Sahib that is a scripture in their eyes can also be a Guru. We Sikhs who generally don't raise such type of questions but often do not appreciate the way the Guru should be worshipped or revered to.

Some times we go to a Gurdwara bow before the Guru (Matha

Tekana) and come back with a mental satisfaction that we have done our duty. Then some people go near Guru Sahib and have a glimpse of the Guru by lifting or removing the cover (The Rumala), and are satisfied that they have done the 'darshan' of the Guru. Both these modes have their importance but are not sufficient in them selves. One does not get anything beyond any psychological satisfaction.

The real way of worshipping Guru Granth Sahib is to visit any Gurdwara or the Guru (may be at a place other than a regular Gurdwara), sit in reverence, do listen to some Path or Gurbani, listen to Katha (religious discourses) or Kirtan (recitation and singing of Gurbani with musical instruments in Sikhi Style), concentrate and contemplate over the Gurbani and act or perform one's daily course as directed by the Guru.

Doing Path (reading or reciting Gurbani) by one self, singing the same with due deference and contemplating over the same are all the more welcome and added features of a Gur Sikh.

To substantiate and authenticate the above statement or interpretation, some quotes from Gurbani are given below.

‘ਸੇਵਕ ਸਿਖ ਪੂਜਣ ਸਭਿ ਆਵਹਿ
 ਸਭਿ ਗਾਵਹਿ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਉਤਮ ਬਾਨੀ ॥
 ਗਾਵਿਆ ਸੁਣਿਆ ਤਿਨ ਕਾ ਹਰਿ ਬਾਇ ਪਾਵੈ,
 ਜਿਨ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਆਗਿਆ ਸਤਿ ਸਤਿ ਕਰਿ ਮਾਨੀ’ ॥ ੧ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੬੯)

SEWAK SIKH POOJAN SABH AAVAHI

SABH GAAVAHAI HAR HAR OOTAM BANI.

GAAVIYAA SUNIYAA TIN KAA HAR THAAE PAAVAI,

JIN SATGUR KEE AAGIYA SAT SAT KAR MAANI.

All the Sikhs and servants come to worship. They sing the sublime Bani of the Lord, Har, Har. But the singing and listening of only those is approved by the Lord; who take the edict of the True Guru, as True and totally True and abide by the same.

ਅਤੇ

“ਹਉ ਆਇਆ ਦੂਰਹੁ ਚਲਿ ਕੈ ਮੈ ਤਕੀ ਤਉ ਸਰਣਾਇ ਜੀਉ ॥
 ਮੈ ਆਸਾ ਰਖੀ ਚਿਤਿ ਮਹਿ ਮੇਰਾ ਸਭੋ ਦੁਖੁ ਗਵਾਇ ਜੀਉ ॥
 ਇਤੁ ਮਾਰਗਿ ਚਲੇ ਭਾਈਅੜੇ ਗੁਰੁ ਕਹੈ ਸੁ ਕਾਰ ਕਮਾਇ ਜੀਉ ॥

ਤਿਆਗੋਂ ਮਨ ਕੀ ਮਤੜੀ ਵਿਸਾਰੋਂ ਦੂਜਾ ਭਾਉ ਜੀਉ ॥

ਇਉ ਪਾਵਹਿ ਹਰਿ ਦਰਸਾਵੜਾ ਨਹ ਲਗੈ ਤਤੀ ਵਾਉ ਜੀਉ ॥

ਹਉ ਆਪਹੁ ਬੋਲਿ ਨ ਜਾਣਦਾ ਮੈ ਕਹਿਆ ਸਭੁ ਹੁਕਮਾਉ ਜੀਉ ॥” (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੬੩)

HAUN AAIYA DOORAHU CHAL KAI MAI TAKEE TAO SARNAAIY JEO.

MAE AASAA RAKHEE CHIT MEH MAIRAA SABHO DUKH GAVAAIY JEO.

IT MAARAG CHALAY BHAAEE- ARHAY GUR KAHAI SO KAAR KAMAAY JEO.

TIAGAIN MAN KEE MATRHEE VISAARAIN DOOJAA BHAAO JEO.

IEO PAAVAHI HAR DARSAAVARHA NAH LAGAI TATTEE VAAO JEO.

HAUN AAPHU BOL NA JAANDAA MEH KAHIAA SABH HUKMAO JEO.

I have come from a far off place, seeking the Protection of Your Sanctuary. Within my mind, I place my hopes in You. Please, take my pain and suffering away.

So walk on this Path, O soul-brides; do that work which the Guru tells you to do. Abandon the intellectual pursuits of the mind, and forget the love of duality. In this way, you shall obtain the Blessed Vision of the Lord's Darshan; the hot winds shall not even touch you. By myself, I do not even know how and what to speak; I said whatever the Lord has ordered me to say.

ਜਿਨਾ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨ ਸੇਵਿਓ ਸਬਦਿ ਨ ਕੀਤੇ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ ॥

ਓਇ ਮਾਣਸ ਜੁਨਿ ਨ ਆਖਿਅਨਿ ਪਸੂ ਢੋਰ ਗਾਵਾਰ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੧੮)

JINAA SATGUR PURAKH NA SAYVIO SABAD NA KEETO VEECHAAR.

OAI MAANAS JOON NA AAKHEEYAN PASSOO DHOR GAAVAAR.

Those who do not serve the True Guru, the Primal Being, and do not reflect upon the Word of the Shabad - do not call them human beings; they are just animals and stupid beasts and ignorant illiterates.

ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਨੋ ਸਭੁ ਕੋ ਵੇਖਦਾ ਜੇਤਾ ਜਗਤੁ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ॥

ਡਿਠੈ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ ਜਿਚਰੁ ਸਬਦਿ ਨ ਕਰੇ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੫੯੪)

SATGUR NO SABH KO VAIKHDAJAITAA JAGAT SANSAAR.

DITHAI MUKAT NA HOVAYEE JICHAR SABAD NAA KARAI VEECHAAR.

All the living beings of the world see the True Guru. But one is not liberated by merely seeing Him. The same is not possible until and unless contemplation is done on Shabad (His Word).

Innumerable Shabads in Sri Guru Granth Sahib direct an individual to give a considered and patient thought to Gurbani, the message of the Guru, contemplate and act upon the same. To surrender

to the Guru, to do as the Guru directs, without questioning is a must for getting the blessings of the Guru - the blessings those give solace, peace and ultimate liberation from worldly entanglements. Guru often stresses for 'Naam Japna, Wand Chaknaa, Dharam Di Kirat Karni, Garib dee Madad atte Mazloom Di Rakhya Karni, Sarbat Da Bhalla, Chitvana aad'. (To meditate on Naam, sharing our meals, to earn with righteous means, to help the poor, to protect the weak, to seek well – being of all etc). We should for a while have introspection and think over as to how far and to what extent we understand and follow Guru's advice.

f) *Four Sahibzaade (Princes)*

Sons of Guru Gobind Singh Sahib (A Brief description only)

Sahibzada Ajit Singh

&

Sahibzada Jujhar Singh :

‘ਮਰਣੁ ਮੁਣਸਾ ਸੂਰਿਆ ਹਕੁ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਹੋਇ ਮਰਨਿ ਪਰਵਾਣੋ ॥

(ਵਡਹੰਸ ਮਹਲਾ ੧, ਪੰਨਾ ੫੭੯)

MARAN MUNSAN SOORIYAN HAQ HAI JE HOE MARAN PARVAANO.

To die is the right of warriors and braves, provided the same is accepted by the Lord.

Ajit Singh, the eldest Sahibzada was born on 4th May 1686 at Paonta Sahib, just a few days after the culmination of the Bhangani Yudh, and as such was given the name 'Ajit', a person who could not be won over or 'the victorious'. He faced martyrdom while fighting valiantly at Chamkaur in December 1704, after sue motto getting the permission and the blessings of his father Guru, Guru Gobind Singh Sahib.

No doubt he had hardly seen 18 springs of his life, yet it must be mentioned that he was not a novice in the battlefield even at that age. He fought in the Nirmohgarh and Anand Pur Sahib battles quite fierce fully and successfully. He had also shown his warrior like qualities,

while being chased by the enemy forces, at the banks of Sirsa, when the Khalsa vacated Anand Pur Sahib.

He had the superb qualities as “He matured into a powerful young man who was well versed in Sikh way of life. Under his father, Guru Gobind Singh’s guidance, he learnt the art of war and wielded weapons skillfully. He was also an adept rider, a natural leader and a forceful commander’, writes Dr. Santokh Singh in his classic *The Guru’s Word and Illustrated Sikh History* at page 176.

He joined the Khalsa fold by taking Amrit in March / April 1699 and displayed his leader like and ‘Sahibzada of Dasmesh and Mata Sundri’, qualities at several other occasions too.

Sahibzada Jujhar Singh was born in 1690 at Anand Pur Sahib. He was four years younger to his elder brother but was always watching with keen interest the outstanding qualities of his elder brother and was following his footsteps in his daily life.

He watched Sahibzada Ajit Singh fighting the forces of the enemy at Chamkaur Sahib. He saw how he was giving a fight to the force that was several times strong in size and heavily equipped with arms and ammunitions. He saw as to how the elder brother was moving his hand and horse so swiftly and he also saw him falling down in the field. He saw his father Guru, Guru Dasmesh, raising the Jaikara (A Sikh slogan— a war cry) ‘Bole So Nihaal, Sat Sri Akaal, at his fall. **But the most significant aspect of his life or role that must be taken in ‘high regards’ is his first and immediate reaction to the valiant fall of his brother. He immediately went to Guru Sahib, his father, and presented himself before him and sought his permission with folded hands to follow the footsteps of his elder brother.**

Guru Sahib ‘Ghat ghat ke antar ki jaanat’, having inner knowledge of every one and having full knowledge of the forth coming events, gladly received his younger lad of just 14 years of age, dressed him well and after giving appropriate arms and ammunition, sent him to the battle field, apprehending fully well the inevitable outcome of his action.

And before the sunset the younger sahibzada, true to his name ‘Jujhar’ piercing through the enemy followed his elder brother in his heavenly pursuits.

Sahibzada Zorawar Singh

&

Sahibzada Fateh Singh

The saga of the two younger Sahibzadas in their infancy is not less piercing and heart breaking. The first one, stepped into this world in 1694 while the other arrived in 1698 at Anand Pur Sahib. Both departed from this world in 1704, just at the age of nine and six only. Both were bricked alive at Sarhind by the Nawab Wazir Khan and his men just because they were the sons of Guru Gobind Singh and did not succumb to the pressure and allurements for converting to Islam and leaving the path of Gursikhi.

The sequence of events may be described in brief.

After leaving Anand Pur Sahib, as they were being chased by the Mughal forces - despite their vows and pledges given on "Koran" their Holy scripture - while crossing the swollen river Sirsa, in the darkness of night, Guru Gobind Singh Sahib and his men got separated from one another. Guru Sahib and two elder Sahibzadas and some Sikhs remained in one group while the elderly but our revered mother Mata Gujri and the two younger Sahibzadas were completely separated from them. In the morning that followed, one Kumma, a Muslim water carrier, spotted them and after recognizing them took them to his small home and gave them shelter. Here Gangu Brahmin, who was their former cook, took them to his house with some ulterior motives.

During the night, it is said that some jewellery that was there, in the possession of the old mother was stolen, and she just mentioned to him about the theft. Feeling that he has been blamed and suspected to have committed the theft, reported the presence of the children and the mother of the Guru to the local authorities. They were immediately arrested and taken to Sarhind and presented in the court of the Nawab. There on the advise of one Sucha Nand, one of his court official, that they were 'the sons of a snake', (a remark passed for 10th Nanak), must not be allowed to live. Another Nawab Sher Khan, Nawab of Malerkotla did not agree and even protested the cruel act that was being proposed and contemplated for the tender souls, but the wicked

designs prevailed and both were bricked alive at Sarhind, on 26th December 1704.

The revered mother Mata Gujri, their grand mother in whose lap they were in their last days, was regularly and constantly advising them about the Sikh Values, about the great and unprecedented martyrdom of their grand father Guru Teg Bahadur, and the heroic deeds of their father Guru Gobind Singh. It was her motherly but divine advice that made them immune to allurements and pressures of the Nawab and prompted them to readily accept the sentence of burying them alive in a wall. People in the streets irrespective of their religion caste or creed bitterly wept over the heinous act of the cruel ruler of the day.

In accepting the verdict, the little souls showed to the people around and the world at large that they were Sikhs and the sons of Guru Gobind Singh.

The place of their martyrdom is now known as Fateh Garh Sahib and a beautiful Gurdwara has been built over there. At the place where the last rites were performed stands another Gurdwara known as Gurdwara Jayoti Saroop.

Note: Revered mother Mata Gujri - their loving grand mother – also breathed her last at this spot.

The figure Five: Let it be seen as a matter of chance or a well calculated scheme or idea, the figure five has assumed a significant importance in our way of thinking and way of life. Following few facts speak a lot about it.

g) Panj Piyaare (Five beloved Ones) : On the initiation of the Amrit ceremony called as ‘Khande Baate Di Pahul’ in 1699, five Sikhs came forward and offered their heads on the call of their beloved Guru. These Sikhs were termed as five beloved ones or PANJ PIYAARE.

This initiation transformed Sikhism into KHALSA PANTH. Some basic information about these ‘Guru’s Piyaare’ is given here under.

<p>Bhai Daya Singh Ji 1669 - 1708 Belonged to : Lahore, now in Pakistan.</p>	<p>Parents : Bhai Sudha, Bibi Dayali</p>	<p>On the Baisakhi of 1699, he was the first to offer his head in response to the call of Guru Gobind Singh</p>	<p>His name is taken first among the five Beloved ones (Panj Piyaare) of the Guru. He remained with the Guru throughout his period of turmoil. He breathed his last at Nanded (Hazoor Sahib) in Maharashtra.</p>
<p>Bhai Dharam Singh Ji 1668 to 1708 Belonged to : Hastina Pur, Delhi.</p>	<p>Parents : Sant Ram Bibi Saboo Bai</p>	<p>He stood up at number two and offered his head to Guru Sahib.</p>	<p>A dedicated selfless Sikh of Amrit Data Guru. He too remained with Guru Sahib, through out his testing times and accompanied Him to Nanded, where he breathed his last.</p>
<p>Bhai Himmat Singh Ji 1661 to 1704 Belonged to : Jagannath Puri</p>	<p>Parents : Bhai Gulzari, Bibi Dhanno</p>	<p>Offered his head at number three</p>	<p>He obtained martyrdom while fighting at Chamkaur in 1704</p>

Bhai Mohkam Singh Ji 1663 - 1704 Belonged to : Dwarka	Parents : Tirath Chand, Bibi Devi Bai	He had settled in Anand Pur Sahib to serve Guru Gobind Singh Sahib. Obtained martial skills at his court. And offered his head to Guru Dasmesh at number four	Received martyrdom while fighting at Chamkaur in 1704.
Bhai Sahib Singh Ji 1662 -1704 Belonged to : Bidar ..	Parents : Chaman Rai, Bibi Sona Bai	He came to Anand Pur Sahib and learnt martial arts in the court of Guru Dasmesh. He fought in Bhangani Yudh in 1688 and received a special mention at the hands of Dasmesh in Bachitter Natak	Received martyrdom while fighting at Chamkaur in 1704

The ‘baata’ or ‘amrit’ or ‘khande baate di pahul’:

Guru Sahib prepared the ‘Baata’. Mata (mother) Jeeto Ji put some sweet balls (Patashas) into the ‘Amrit’. It was prepared in a special way with a peculiar double edged sword (Khanda) while continuously reciting some ‘Banis’. Guru Sahib gave them the Amrit and directed them to observe certain rules of the game through out their lives. **These instructions, rules, things or features too, carried the figure five in them.**

But before we proceed with the ‘figure five’ it would be worthwhile to mention for the information of the young readers or the learners that Guru Sahib gave such a high importance to the five beloved ones that he bowed before them and begged for Amrit or

Khande Baate Di Pahul from them and obtained the same on their terms and conditions. While passing on Guru Gaddi to Guru Granth Sahib later in 1708 at Nanded, he further alleviated their position by saying 'Pooja Akal Ki, Parcha Shabad Ka and Deedar Khaalse Ka'. But it must be noted that he sowed the seeds of Khalsa being Guru here at Anand Pur Sahib in 1699 itself, and the concept of 'Aape Guru Chela' - He himself being Guru and himself being Chela (a disciple) at the same time, came into being, here.

Some 'fives' are described below.

h) Five Baanis

While preparing 'baata', Guru Sahib recited *Five Baanis* (A bani is a compact Gurbani Path or composition, under one head).

1. **Jap Ji Sahib**
2. **Jaap Sahib**
3. **Sawayeea – 10 Srawag Sudh Samooh Sidhaan Ke**
4. **Benti Chaupai**
5. **Anand Sahib (Complete)**

Whereas he directed them to recite these banis daily in the morning, he also instructed the newly formed 'Singhs' to recite 'Rehras Sahib' in the evening and Sohila while going to bed at night.

It may, however, be mentioned that Khalsa Panth in its wisdom has reduced the morning Banis from five to three viz Jap ji, Jaap and Sawayeea, omitting Benti Chaupai and Anand Sahib. However it has kept the overall figures at five, including two 'baanis' for the evening and the night.

i) Five Kakaars – Articles of faith:

While Guru Amrit Data (Guru The Amrit giver), initiated the 'Khande Baate Di Pahul' and gave the same to Amrit Abhilakhis (amrit aspirants), he directed them to keep always with them the following five articles, thence forth known as Five Kakaars – articles names of all starting with 'K'.

1. **Kesh** : Kesh stand for **hair** in Punjabi language. Guru Sahib

directed that Kesh from any part of the body should never be shorn or removed at any cost. Some Sikhs or organizations or cults with whatever name we may call them, however, hold that Guru Sahib prescribed 'Keski' and not 'Kes'. Their arguments rest on the ground that kes are part of the body and there was no specific need to ask the Sikhs to keep them as that was implied to be so. Keski was prescribed to keep the 'kes' of the head duly covered in a neat and clean manner. Keeping in view this interpretation some women also wear 'keski' upon their heads.

2. Kangha or Comb: The second Kakaar prescribed is the 'kangha' or the wooden comb. This is supposed to be kept on the head in the hair, to comb them at least twice a day to keep them neat and tidy.

3. Kirpan or Sword: The next Kakaar is 'Kirpan'. It is one edged sword and is always kept in a sheath. It is prescribed for self-defence and for the defence of the oppressed ones. When we analyse the meaning of the word 'Kirpaan, it signifies 'Kirpa' plus 'Aan', meaning thereby showering grace on the weak and the oppressed ones and ensuring their protection from the cruel acts and high handed ness of some other strong person or persons or organizations, including the tyrannical rulers.

It also signifies one's right to live with self-respect and dignity with a sense of confidence and strength in one self. Regarding its use Guru Dasmesh himself said, practiced and believed in the principle,

Chu kar az hama heelte Darguzashat

Halalast Burdan Baa Shamsheer Dast (Zafar Nama)

Meaning thereby that when all the efforts for a peaceful settlement of an issue failed, it was justified to take up the sword (the arms) in hand for the purpose.

4. Karha or the Iron bangle : It is an iron or steel (Sarab Loh) bangle to be worn in the wrist (arms) by all men and women alike. Its importance or significance has been glorified in two different ways.

- a). In our Indian way of system every married woman wears bangles, those apparently show that she is married and has a husband. In Sikhism we are supposed to be married to God,

Almighty, who is immortal, never dies and is away from the concept of birth and death. He is 'Akaal Moorat, Ajooni, Saibhang'. Being the 'wives' or 'maids' of such a husband, we have been directed to wear a bangle made of Iron or steel that shows that it is never broken, as is our relation with our 'husband Lord.'

- b) Second justification that appears to be more convincing and appealing is the fact that when ever a person indulges or try to indulge in some undesirable or immoral act with his hands, the bangle in his hand immediately reminds him that he or she is a Sikh of the Guru and it works as a big resistance and motivates one to desist from doing that act.

5. *Kachhera or Kachha* – An under garment. Sikhs are supposed to wear a somewhat peculiarly designed and stitched an undergarment called Kachhera. It acts as a hindrance in facing and acting in the circumstances of strong provocations for indulging in instant sexual acts with any person of the opposite sex. In Sikhism any sexual indulgence with any person out of marriage is strictly prohibited and is one of the religious taboos attracting severest condemnation and punishment. Kachhera in itself is a big deterrent for such immoral acts.

j) Panj Takhats :

Most of us are aware that Sikhism as started by Guru Nanak, was based on the principles of love for all and wishing well for all (Sarbat Da Bhalla), worship of one God or 'Akaal Purakh', sans all types of Brahminical rituals, fasts etc, equal status and respect for women and above all on the principle of a casteless society.

Society as it existed at that time could not swallow these pills with ease and there was an all-round opposition to the same. The rulers, the priests and clergy of different religions objected to this revolutionary thinking of the Guru Jote. The seeds of opposition grew to such an extent that Guru Arjan Dev, the fifth Guru, the compiler of Adi Guru, Guru Granth Sahib, the author, the composer of Sukhmani Sahib and allied 'banis', was tortured to death on flimsy grounds with an aim to

put an end to the shop of Sikhism that was running on the principle of falsehood as per an insertion by Emperor Jahangir himself, in his own autobiography 'Tauzik-e-Jahangiri'.

Sikhs and the subsequent Sikh Gurus who were working on a well set agenda, could not tolerate it. Guru Hargobind Sahib started presiding on a Takhat – a Throne – much bigger in size and higher in height from that of Delhi Takhat of the Emperor himself. The place was originally known as 'Akaal Bunga', and was later named as Akaal Takhat. He started issuing commands from there. Even he was settling some of the disputes of the Sikh Sangat. He started issuing 'Hukam namas', edicts from there and made preparations for the wars etc, those were fought by him and subsequently by Guru Gobind Singh Sahib with the tyrannical and communal rulers of the day. Thus a concept of 'Miri' – a temporal power emerged along with the concept of 'Piri' a spiritual power that was started by Guru Nanak Sahib.

With the passage of time four more Takhats have been added, thus making the total number of Takhats or thrones to five. These five are enumerated as under.

1. **Akaal Takhat, Sri Amritsar Sahib**
2. **Takhat Sri Harmandir Ji, Patna Sahib**
3. **Takhat Sri Kes Garh Sahib, Anand Pur Sahib**
4. **Takhat Sri Hazoor Sahib, Nanded -Maharashtra**
5. **Takhat Sri Damdama Sahib – Saabo Ki Talwandi – Bhatinda.**

A brief description of each Takhat is given hereunder.

1. **Sri Akaal Takhat Sahib:** In addition to the description given above we may say that it is located in the Harmandir Sahib complex at Amritsar. It was built by Bhai Gurdass and Bhai Buddha Ji with extreme dedication and devotion. It has been a source of guidance and inspiration to Khalsa Panth, ever since it has been established and is treated as the supreme institution of the Sikhs. It has seen many periods of turmoil. It has been attacked and razed several times by the rulers of the day, but in the course of times culprits themselves faced the music and The Akaal Takhat, the abode, the throne of God Almighty remained intact and with every attack reached new heights of its glory.

- 2. Takhat Sri Harmandir Ji, Patna Sahib:** This Takhat, is historically second accepted and acknowledged Takhat of our religion. It is the place of advent (Parkash) of Dasmesh, the 10th Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh Sahib. Guru Nanak Dev Sahib and Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib also visited this place. It was at this place where Pir Bhikham Shah tested the impartiality of newly born child Gobind Rai. 'Patna Sahib' is the center for propagating Sikhism in the Eastern part of India.
- 3. Takhat Sri Keshgarh Sahib:** The third place having the importance of being the Throne or the Takhat of Khalsa Panth is Keshgarh Sahib. This is the place where the Khalsa was born out of the sword of Guru Gobind Singh Sahib, on Baisakhi day of 1699. This is located at Anand Pur Sahib in Punjab. The town was initially developed and named as 'Nanaki Chak' by Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib. It later came to be known as 'Guru Ka Chak', and finally as Anand Pur Sahib. Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib made this town as his headquarters. Guru Dasmesh also made this place as his epicenter for most part of his life. It is the place from where Guru Gobind Singh Sahib fought different battles with the Hill Rajas and Mughal forces. While giving 'Khande Baate Di Pahul, when Guru Gobind Singh Sahib declared Khalsa as his son, he also said that every Gursikh would be called a resident a 'Vaasi' of Anand Pur Sahib. Keeping in view the sanctity of the place and the importance given to it by Guru Sahib himself, the Panth has declared this place as one of the Takhats of the Khalsa.
- 4. Takhat Sachkhand Sri Hazoor Sahib Nanded:** As the name suggest, the place is located in Nanded, Maharashtra. This is the last place where Guru Gobind Singh Sahib put his foot on this earth and merged his soul in the Almighty before declaring Guru Granth Sahib as the Immortal 'Shabad' Guru of the Khalsa Panth. It was at this place where he met Madho Dass Bairagi, made him as Banda Singh Bahadur after giving him the Pahul and sent him to Punjab to carry over the crusade against the tyrannical rulers of the day and to punish the culprits of the Guru Ghar and the Khalsa. It was here from

where he sent his 'Hukamnamas', edicts to the Sikhs in Punjab.

In view of its location, it is the main center for the spread of Sikhism in southern and western part of India. It is also a very important pilgrimage center for the Sikhs.

- 5. Takhat Sri Damdama Sahib Talwandi Sabo:** This is the fifth Takhat of Khalsa Panth. It is located at a short distance from Bhatinda in Punjab. Its importance for the Sikhs is varied one. It is here where Guru Dasmesh took some rest after he had fought all the battles of Anand Pur Sahib, Chamkaur and Mukatsar, after the martyrdom of all the four Sahibzadas. It is the place where Sikhs thronged from several places in thousands as the news spread of the arrival of 'Panth da Wali' and people came to know, the heroic martyrdom of the elder sahibzadas and the torturous and barbaric killings of the younger ones at the hands of the Nawab of Sarhind. Soon the place was full of vibrant activity and thousands were given 'Khande Baate Di Pahul' and the Panth was re-born with a new zeal.

Another very important milestone established here by Guru Sahib was that, on the refusal of the Dhir Mallias to hand over 'Pothi Sahib' to him, he rewrote the entire 'Granth Sahib', out of his own divine powers and in the process also added the Baani of Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib at the appropriate places. Bhai Mani Singh and Baba Deep Singh played a pivotal role in writing Granth Sahib and in writing Gutkas etc for the spread of Gurbaani. A Taksal for the spread, understanding and the propagation of baani was also established and Baba Deep Singh was given its charge.

Every Takhat has an independent status and works quite independently of the other in their day-to-day affairs, yet in the overall Panthic affairs, they all work in quite cohesion under the overall supervision of Akaal Takhat Sahib and arrive at decisions right in the democratic traditions as set by the Khalsa Panth.

k) Panj Senses or Powers:

There are five senses in every human being. Working of all together in a balanced manner and in a collective way determine the over all mental and physical position of a person.

These five senses are

1. **Smelling Sense**
2. **Touching Sense**
3. **Tasting Sense**
4. **Seeing Sense**
5. **Hearing Sense**

l) 'Panch 'dusht' or Doot'- Five Detractors

Then there are five such detractors those often obstruct or come in the way of a right thinking person. If they over power the goodness of a person he or she shall deviate from the path of truth and may be mislead into turning out to be a devil from his angel like position.

These detractors are

1. **Sexual urge or Kaam Vaashna**
2. **Anger or Karodh**
3. **Greed or Lobh**
4. **Attachment or Moh**
5. **Ego or Ahankaar**

It may also be mentioned that whereas all these five are quite essential for running a good, balanced and healthy life and a total absence of any one shall render a man totally unfit for the society, yet excess of either any one or all of them shall make one unworthy of being called even a human being. When they try to over power the working of a person, one loses one's mental balance, one's sense organs cease working in a normal way, one is not able to differentiate between good or bad, right or wrong, desirability or otherwise of the means etc. One is just interested in the results those one wants to achieve by adopting any method or tactics.

m) 'Panj Khand' :

As per Gurbani doctrine, there are five stages, in the growth of righteous, religious, or divine life. Guru Nanak Sahib has dealt at length in Japji Sahib about these different stages. He explains in a most simple and lucid way as to how a person with His grace and blessings passes through these stages and ultimately merges oneself in Him. The five stages are listed below.

1. **Dharam Khand**
2. **Gyan Khand**
3. **Saram Khand**
4. **Karam Khand**
5. **Sach Khand**

At the first stage one develops some awareness about religious or divine life. He reflects upon the purpose of his life. One realizes that all the 'Moh- Maya' or worldly relations and attachments are false and are not going to stand with one, at the 'crucial hour'. With His grace one comes to know that one is rewarded by the Akaal Purakh as per one's performance in this world. The worldly honours or dishonours have no value over there.

At the second stage 'gyan' or knowledge about the vast creations of the Creator is developed and one tries to find and explore more and more about Him. With this knowledge, one feels a sense of happiness, spiritual enjoyment and satisfaction in one self. One's knot of 'selfishness' is broken. One starts looking beyond one self, one's family and other near and dears. With the 'knowledge' so attained he understands and appreciates the vast creation of the 'Timeless and Limitless' Creator. One enjoys a sense of happiness contentment and satisfaction that one was hither to fore missing while running after worldly pursuits. In the course of spiritual flights this stage is known as 'Gyan Khand'.

Then one enters the performance stage or the 'Saram Khand'. Mere understanding or the knowledge is not sufficient for attaining eternal happiness. One has to do a continuous and sustained labour to attain the goal. One acts as per Guru's teachings. He wakes up in the wee hours i.e. early in the morning, contemplates upon 'Baani and Naam' while sitting in a contemplative and meditative mood and does

good deeds as the same are must to reach the goal, as Guru Sahib says

ਚੰਗਿਆਈਆ ਬੁਰਿਆਈਆ ਵਾਚੈ ਧਰਮੁ ਹਦੂਰਿ॥

ਕਰਮੀ ਆਪੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਕੇ ਨੇੜੈ ਕੇ ਦੂਰਿ॥

ਜਿਨੀ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਇਆ ਗਏ ਮਸਕਤਿ ਘਾਲਿ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਤੇ ਮੁਖ ਉਜਲੇ ਕੇਤੀ ਛੁਟੀ ਨਾਲਿ॥੧॥

(ਜਪੁ ਜੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ)

CHANGIYAAN BURIYEEAN VAACHE DHARMA HADOOR,

KARMI AAPO AAPNI KE NERE KE DOOR

JINNI NAAM DHIAYAA GAI MUSHAQAT GHAAL

NANAK TE MUKH UJJALE KETI CHHUTTI NAAL

This stage is called 'Saram Khand', or labour stage.

Now one enters the fourth stage that is known as the state of 'Karam Khand'. With One's labour one gets the blessings of the Lord. One accelerates one's efforts to feel Him in one self. With His blessings one gets sufficient strength to have a control upon one self. One is not attracted towards the evil deeds. One sees all around him 'the Creator'; the 'Karta Purakh' only. One always has a longing to have a glimpse of Him. One is liberated of the fear of life and death. One is always in a happy and cheerful mood.

Last stage is the stage of Sach Khand. One enters this stage with continuous devotion and dedication but with His blessings and grace only. After crossing through all the four stages mentioned above, one becomes one with Him. One reaches right in the Creator's court or darbar, who looks after all of his Creations and whose 'Hukam' or edict or directions prevails all around.

If we summarise the last three stages we can say that in the third stage one does labour to reach 'Him'. He or she acts as per directions of Guru's teachings, such as rising up in the wee hours, meditating upon him, 'do naam simran', contemplates upon Gurbaani, do good deeds etc. At the fourth stage by virtue of his labour or 'saram' in life, God's blessings 'Karam' are bestowed upon him and he further accelerates upon his mission of reaching 'Him' and to be one with 'Him'. Ultimately at the final stage, with the continuous devotion and dedication – one becomes 'One with Him' and it amounts to reaching 'Sach Khand'.

n) Some pertinent provisions in *Sikh Rehat Maryada* :

'Chaar Kurehtan', or four Taboos : The great event of starting 'Khande baate di Pahul' has been described above in a brief manner, as the readers of this small informative book are not supposed to go into the entire procedure, event, process or the ceremony in quite detail.

However, it may be mentioned that there is not a big list of do's and don'ts for 'Amritdharis', or Guru Ke Sikhs. Besides living a truthful and honest life, to rise a bit early in the morning (Amrit Vela), to do some Naam Simran along with Paath of Nit Nem baanis and to have five Kakaars as articles of faith, are some basic features of a Sikh.

In addition certain things rather four taboos have been enumerated by Guru Sahib, indulging in which is clearly prohibited and if some Singh or Kaur indulges in them either willingly or inadvertently, he or she is supposed to reappear before the 'Five', explain and openly admit of having committed the 'Kurehat', seek pardon and accept the punishment to be awarded by the Five in a prescribed procedure, to be re-inducted into the KHALSA fold as a Gursikh.

Four Kurahets (Taboos) are enumerated as under:

To remove any misgivings or errors of presentation, I quote below from the *Sikh Rehat Maryada* verbatim.

'The under mentioned four transgressions (tabooed practices) must be avoided :

- (1) Dishonouring the hair (ਰੇਮਾਂ ਦੀ ਬੇ ਅਦਬੀ ਕਰਨਾ)
- (2) Eating the meat of an animal slaughtered the Muslim way.
(ਕੁਠਾ ਮਾਸ ਖਾਨਾ)
- (3) Cohabiting with a person other than one's spouse. (ਪਰ ਨਾਰੀ ਜਾਂ ਪਰ ਪੁਰਸ਼ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਭੋਗ ਕਰਨਾ)
- (4) Using Tobacco. (ਤੰਬਾਕੂ ਦਾ ਸੇਵਨ ਕਰਨਾ)

In the event of the commission of any of these transgressions, the transgressor must get re-baptised. If a transgression is committed unintentionally and unknowingly, the transgressor shall not be liable to punishment.'.

‘You must remain fully aligned to the Khalsa brotherhood in accordance with the principles of Khalsa faith. If you commit transgression of the Khalsa discipline, you must present yourself before the congregation and beg pardon, accepting whatever punishment is awarded. You must also remain watchful against defaults in the future.

The following individuals shall be liable to chastisement involving automatic boycott:

- (1) Anyone maintaining relations or communion with elements antagonistic to the Panth including the minas (reprobates), the ‘masands’ (agents once accredited to local Sikh communities as Guru’s representatives, since discredited for their faults and aberrations), followers of Dhirmal or Ram Rai; etc., or users of tobacco or killers of female infants.
- (2) One who eats/drinks left-over of the non-baptized or fallen Sikhs;
- (3) One who dyes his beard;
- (4) One who gives off son or daughter in matrimony for a price or reward;
- (5) Users of intoxicants (*hemp, opium, liquor, narcotics, cocaine etc.);
- (6) One holding, or being a party to, ceremonies or practices contrary to the Guru’s way;
- (7) One who defaults in the maintenance of Sikh discipline.

o) Some other vital points -

Sikh Rehat Maryada Article XVI

- “(e)The Khalsa should maintain its distinctiveness among the professors of different religions of the world, but should not hurt the sentiments of any person possessing another religion.
- (f) A Sikh should pray to God before launching off any task.
 - (g) Learning Gurmukhi (Punjabi in Gurmukhi script) is essential for a Sikh. He should pursue other studies also.
 - (h) It is a Sikh’s duty to get his children educated in Sikhism.

- (i) A Sikh should in no way, harbour any antipathy to the hair of the head with which his child is born. He should not temper with the hair with which the child is born. He should add the suffix “ Singh” to the name of his son. A Sikh should keep the hair of his sons and daughters intact.
- (k) Piercing of nose or ears for wearing ornaments is forbidden for Sikh men and women.
- (l) A Sikh should not kill his daughter; nor should he maintain any relationship with a killer of daughter.
- (m) The true Sikh of the Guru shall make an honest living by lawful work.
- (n) A Sikh shall regard a poor person’s mouth as the Guru’s cash offering box. (ਗਰੀਬ ਦਾ ਮੂੰਹ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਕੋਲਕ)
- (o) A Sikh shall not steal; form dubious associations or engage in gambling.
- (p) He who regards another man’s daughter as his own daughter, regards another man’s wife as his mother, has cohabitation with his own wife alone, he alone is a truly disciplined Sikh of the Guru. A Sikh woman shall likewise keep within the confines of conjugal rectitude.
- (q) A Sikh shall observe the Sikh rules of Conduct and Conventions from his birth, right unto the end of his life.
- (r) A Sikh, when he meets another Sikh, should greet him with “Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh” This is ordained for Sikh women and men both.
- (s) It is not proper for a Sikh woman to wear veil or keep her face hidden by veil or cover.
- (t) For a Sikh, there is no restriction or requirement as to dress except that he must wear Kachhehra and Turban. A Sikh woman may or may not tie turban.”

ਤੂ ਠਾਕੁਰੁ ਤੁਮ ਪਹਿ ਅਰਦਾਸਿ॥
ਜੀਉ ਪਿੰਡੁ ਸਭੁ ਤੇਰੀ ਰਾਸਿ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ ੨੬੮)

p) Our Ardass ਸਾਡੀ ਅਰਦਾਸ

Collective or individual benign prayer

One of the most important gifts our forefathers have given us is our Ardass – our daily prayer that may be performed individually or collectively at any time and / or at any place. It has a format and a standard form. While some Parts of it are mandatory others are optional and are subject to change as per the circumstances, period or the purpose of the prayer etc. Then the contents may be abridged and expanded as per the requirement. The set standard or format of the Ardass as published by Shiromani Gurdwara Prabhandhak Committee in Sikh Rehat Maryada is reproduced below. Both the versions, Punjabi as well as English, have been reproduced.

The thing to be appreciated or that deserves the special attention of the curious readers is the fact that a glance at the contents of the format of 'Ardass' shall reveal that whereas a few parts of it relate to actual prayer, it is actually over all a mini sketch of Sikh history. Its wordings are so well drafted that it starts from mentioning of Guru Nanak as our founder Guru. It traverses through different pages of Sikh history and covers in brief all the major events of last more than 500 years in a very touching manner. If one is attentive or puts his mind into the Ardass, while standing with Guru in his horizon or vision, he will have insight into our history and shall recall the glorious feats, performances, sacrifices of our Gurus, great martyrs, the launch and the history of different 'morchas', happening of different holocausts, sagas etc. While through Ardass, one peeps into the past, there is more and more awakening and awareness in the Sikh mind about the greatness of Sikhi Swaroop and Gursikhi principles.

As published in Sikh Rehat Maryada, issued by the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabhandhak Committee, Sri Amritsar, the format of the 'Ardass' is given hereunder.

(ਸ਼ਰੋਮਣੀ ਗੁਰਦਵਾਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਵਲੋਂ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਿਤ ਸਿੱਖ ਰਹਿਤ

੩. (ੳ) ਅਰਦਾਸ ਇਹ ਹੈ:-



ੴ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਫਤਹਿ॥



ਸ੍ਰੀ ਭਗੋਤੀ ਜੀ ਸਹਾਇ॥

ਵਾਰ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਭਗੋਤੀ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ ੧੦॥

ਪ੍ਰਿਥਮ ਭਗੋਤੀ ਸਿਮਰਿ ਕੈ ਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਈਂ ਧਿਆਇ॥ ਫਿਰ ਅੰਗਦ ਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਅੰਮਰਦਾਸੁ ਰਾਮਦਾਸੈ ਹੋਈਂ ਸਹਾਇ॥ ਅਰਜਨ ਹਰਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਨੋ ਸਿਮਰੋ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਹਰਿਰਾਇ॥ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਹਰਿਕ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਨ ਧਿਆਇਐ ਜਿਸ ਡਿਠੈ ਸਭਿ ਦੁਖ ਜਾਇ॥ ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਸਿਮਰਿਐ ਘਰ ਨਉ ਨਿਧਿ ਆਵੈ ਧਾਇ॥ ਸਭ ਥਾਂਈ ਹੋਇ ਸਹਾਇ॥ ਦਸਵਾਂ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ! ਸਭ ਥਾਂਈ ਹੋਇ ਸਹਾਇ॥ ਦਸਾਂ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਜੋਤ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਪਾਠ ਦੀਦਾਰ ਦਾ ਧਿਆਨ ਧਰ ਕੇ ਬੋਲੋ ਜੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ !

ਪੰਜਾਂ ਪਿਆਰਿਆਂ, ਚੌਹਾਂ ਸਾਹਿਬਜ਼ਾਦਿਆਂ, ਚਾਲ੍ਹੀਆਂ ਮੁਕਤਿਆਂ, ਹਠੀਆਂ, ਜਪੀਆਂ, ਤਪੀਆਂ, ਜਿਹਨਾਂ ਨਾਮ ਜਪਿਆ, ਵੰਡ ਛਕਿਆ, ਦੇਗ ਚਲਾਈ, ਤੇਗ ਵਾਹੀ, ਦੇਖ ਕੇ ਅਣਡਿੱਠ ਕੀਤਾ, ਤਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਪਿਆਰਿਆਂ, ਸਚਿਆਰਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਕਮਾਈ ਦਾ ਧਿਆਨ ਧਰ ਕੇ, ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜੀ ! ਬੋਲੋ ਜੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ !

ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਸਿੰਘਣੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਧਰਮ ਹੇਤ ਸੀਸ ਦਿੱਤੇ, ਬੰਦ ਬੰਦ ਕਟਾਏ, ਖੋਪਰੀਆਂ ਲੁਹਾਈਆਂ, ਚਰਖੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਚੜ੍ਹੇ, ਆਰਿਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਚਿਰਾਏ ਗਏ, ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਲਈ ਕੁਰਬਾਨੀਆਂ ਕੀਤੀਆਂ, ਧਰਮ ਨਹੀਂ ਹਾਰਿਆ, ਸਿੱਖੀ ਕੇਸਾਂ ਸੁਆਸਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਨਿਬਾਰੀ, ਤਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਕਮਾਈ ਦਾ ਧਿਆਨ ਧਰ ਕੇ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜੀ ! ਬੋਲੋ ਜੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ !

ਪੰਜਾਂ ਤਖਤਾਂ, ਸਰਬੱਤ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਿਆਂ ਦਾ ਧਿਆਨ ਧਰ ਕੇ ਬੋਲੋ ਜੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ !

ਪ੍ਰਿਥਮੇ ਸਰਬੱਤ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਅਰਦਾਸ ਹੈ ਜੀ, ਸਰਬੱਤ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜੀ ਕੋ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ, ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ, ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਚਿਤ ਆਵੇ, ਚਿੱਤ ਆਵਨ ਕਾ ਸਦਕਾ ਸਰਬ ਸੁਖ ਹੋਵੇ। ਜਹਾਂ ਜਹਾਂ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਤਹਾਂ ਤਹਾਂ ਰਛਿਆ ਰਿਆਇਤ, ਦੇਗ ਤੇਗ ਫਤਹ, ਬਿਰਦ ਕੀ ਪੈਜ, ਪੰਥ ਕੀ ਜੀਤ, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਸਹਾਇ, ਖਾਲਸੇ ਜੀ ਕੇ ਬੋਲ ਬਾਲੇ, ਬੋਲੋ ਜੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ !

ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਦਾਨ, ਕੇਸ ਦਾਨ, ਰਹਿਤ ਦਾਨ, ਬਿਬੇਕ ਦਾਨ, ਵਿਸਾਹ ਦਾਨ, ਭਰੋਸਾ ਦਾਨ, ਦਾਨਾਂ ਸਿਰ ਦਾਨ, ਨਾਮ ਦਾਨ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਇਸ਼ਨਾਨ, ਚੌਕੀਆਂ, ਝੰਡੇ, ਖੰਗੇ, ਜੁਗੇ ਜੁਗ ਅਟੱਲ, ਧਰਮ ਕਾ ਜੈਕਾਰ, ਬੋਲੋ ਜੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ !!!

ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਮਨ ਨੀਵਾਂ, ਮਤ ਉੱਚੀ ਮਤ ਦਾ ਰਾਖਾ ਆਪਿ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ।

ਹੇ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਆਪਣੇ ਪੰਥ ਦੇ ਸਦਾ ਸਹਾਈ ਦਾਤਾਰ ਜੀਓ ! ਸ੍ਰੀ ਨਨਕਾਣਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਿਆਂ ਗੁਰਧਾਮਾਂ ਦੇ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਪੰਥ ਨੂੰ ਵਿਛੋੜਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ, ਖੁਲ੍ਹੇ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਦੀਦਾਰ ਤੇ ਸੇਵਾ ਸੰਭਾਲ ਦਾ ਦਾਨ ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ ਜੀ ਨੂੰ ਬਖਸ਼ੋ।

ਹੇ ਨਿਮਾਣਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਮਾਣ, ਨਿਤਾਣਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਤਾਣ, ਨਿਓਟਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਓਟ, ਸੱਚੇ ਪਿਤਾ, ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ! ਆਪ ਦੇ ਹਜ਼ੂਰ.....ਦੀ ਅਰਦਾਸ ਹੈ ਜੀ ।

ਅੱਖਰ ਵਾਧਾ ਘਾਟਾ ਭੁੱਲ ਚੁੱਕ ਮਾਫ਼ ਕਰਨੀ। ਸਰਬੱਤ ਦੇ ਕਾਰਜ.ਰਾਸ ਕਰਨੇ।

ਸੇਈ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਮੇਲ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਮਿਲਿਆਂ ਤੇਰਾ ਨਾਮ ਚਿਤ ਆਵੇ।

ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮ ਚੜ੍ਹਦੀ ਕਲਾ, ਤੇਰੇ ਭਾਣੇ ਸਰਬੱਤ ਦਾ ਭਲਾ।

- (ੳ) ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਉਪਰੰਤ ਅਰਦਾਸ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹੋਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਸਾਰੀ ਸੰਗਤ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਅੱਗੇ ਅਦਬ ਨਾਲ ਮੱਥਾ ਟੇਕੇ ਅਤੇ ਫਿਰ ਖੜ੍ਹੇ ਹੋ ਕੇ ‘ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕਾ ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ, ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਫਤਹਿ’ ਬੁਲਾਵੇ। ਉਪ੍ਰੰਤ ‘ਸਤਿ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ’ ਦਾ ਜੈਕਾਰਾ ਗਜਾਇਆ ਜਾਵੇ ।
- ਅ) ਅਰਦਾਸ ਹੋਣ ਸਮੇਂ ਸੰਗਤ ‘ਚ ਹਾਜ਼ਰ ਸਾਰੇ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਪੁਰਸ਼ਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਹੱਥ ਜੋੜ ਕੇ ਖਲੋਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ । ਜੇ ਸੱਜਣ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਤਾਬਿਆ ਬੈਠਾ ਹੋਵੇ, ਉਹ ਭੀ ਉੱਠ ਕੇ ਚੌਰ ਕਰੇ।
- ੲ) ਅਰਦਾਸ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਸਨਮੁੱਖ ਖੜ੍ਹੇ ਕੇ, ਹੱਥ ਜੋੜ ਕੇ ਅਰਦਾਸ ਕਰੇ। ਜੇ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਨਾ ਹੋਣ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਪਾਸੇ ਮੂੰਹ ਕਰਕੇ ਅਰਦਾਸ ਕਰੋ, ਪ੍ਰਵਾਨ ਹੈ।
- ੳ) ਜਦੋਂ ਕੋਈ ਖਾਸ ਅਰਦਾਸ ਕਿਸੇ ਇਕ ਜਾਂ ਵਧੀਕ ਆਦਮੀਆਂ ਵਲੋਂ ਹੋਵੇ, ਤਾਂ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਸੰਗਤ ਵਿਚ ਬੈਠੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਉਠਣਾ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਨਹੀਂ ।

English Version as published by SGPC

(a) The text (This is a model of the Ardass. It may be adapted to different occasions and for different purposes. However, the initial composition with “Pritham Bhagauti.....” and the concluding phrases commencing “Nanak Nam” must not be altered) of the Ardass : LIT. Supplication or prayer. In reality, it is a litany comprehending very briefly the whole gamut of Sikh History and enumerating all that Sikhism holds sacred. Portions of it are invocations and prayer for the grant of strength and virtue. It concludes with : O Nanak, may the Nam (Holy) be ever in ascendance : in Thy will, may the good of all prevail!

One absolute Manifest; victory belongeth to the Wondrous

Destroyer of darkness. May the might of the All-powerful help!

Ode to his might by the tenth lord.

Having first thought of the Almighty's prowess, let us think of Guru Nanak. Then of Guru Angad, Amardas and Ramdas - may they be our rescuers! Remember, then, Arjan, Hargobind and Har Rai. Meditate then on revered Har Krishan on seeing whom all sufferings vanish. Think then of Teg Bahadar, remembrance of whom brings all nine treasures. He comes to rescue everywhere. Then of the tenth Lord, revered Guru Gobind Singh, who comes to rescue everywhere. The embodiment of the light of all ten sovereign lordships, the Guru Granth - think of the view and reading of it and say, "Waheguru (Wondrous Destroyer of Darkness)".

Meditating on the achievement of the dear and truthful ones, including the five beloved ones, the four sons of the tenth Guru, forty liberated ones, steadfast ones, constant repeaters of the Divine Name, those given to assiduous devotion, those who repeated the Nam, shared their fare with others, ran free kitchen, wielded the sword and overlooked faults and shortcomings, say "Waheguru", O Khalsa.

Meditating on the achievement of the male and female members of the Khalsa who laid down their lives in the cause of Dharma (religion and righteousness), got their bodies dismembered bit by bit, got their skulls sawn off, got mounted on spiked wheels, got their bodies sawn, made sacrifices in the service of the shrines-(Gurdwaras), did not betray their faith, sustained their adherence to the Sikh faith with unshorn hair up till their last breath, say 'Waheguru', O Khalsa.

Thinking of the Five Thrones (of Sikh religious authority) and all Gurdwaras, say 'Waheguru' ("Wondrous Destroyer of darkness"), O Khalsa.

Now it is the prayer of the whole Khalsa, May the conscience of the whole Khalsa be informed by Waheguru, Waheguru, Waheguru and, in consequence of such remembrance, may total well being obtain. Wherever there are communities of the Khalsa, may there be Divine protection and grace, the ascendance of the supply of needs and of the holy sword, Protection of the tradition of grace, victory of the Panth, the succour of the holy sword, ascendance of the Khalsa. Say, O Khalsa, 'Waheguru', "Wondrous Destroyer of darkness."

Unto the Sikhs the gift of the Sikh faith, the gift of the untrimmed hair, the gift of the discipline of their faith, the gift of sense of discrimination, the gift of trust, the gift of confidence, above all, the gift of meditation on the Divine and bath in Amrita (holy tank of Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar). May hymns-singing missionary parties, the flags, the hostels, abide from age to age. May righteousness reign supreme. Say, 'Waheguru' ("Wondrous Destroyer of darkness"). May the Khalsa be imbued with humility and high wisdom! May Waheguru guard its understanding!

O Immortal Being, eternal helper of Thy Panth, benevolent Lord, bestow on the Khalsa the beneficence of unobstructed visit to and free management of Nankana Sahib (Pakistan) and other shrines and places of the Guru from which the Panth has been separated.

O Thou, the honour of the humble, the strength of the weak, aid unto those who have none to rely on, True Father, 'Waheguru', ("Wondrous Destroyer of darkness"), we humbly render to you (Mention here the name of the scriptural composition that has been recited or, in appropriate terms, the object for which the congregation has been held.) Pardon any impermissible accretions, omissions, errors, mistakes. Fulfil the desires (purposes), of all.

Grant us the association of those dear ones, on meeting whom one is reminded of Your name. O Nanak, may the Nam (Holy) be ever in ascendance! In Thy will may the good of all prevail!

b) On the conclusion of the Ardass, the entire congregation participating in the Ardass should respectfully bow before the Guru, by touching their forehead the ground, facing Guru Granth Sahib, if Ardass is being performed in full view 'Hazoori' of Sri Guru Granth Sahib. Even if Guru Sahib is not there the congregation, the sangat, should bow down as if Guru Sahib was there, touching the forehead the ground, (genuflect), then stand up and call out, 'Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh'. (The Khalsa is of the 'Waheguru', Wondrous Destroyer of darkness: victory also is His.) The Congregation should, thereafter, raise the loud spirited chant of Sat Sri Akal (True is the timeless Being).

c) While the Ardass is being performed, all men and women in congregation should stand with hands folded. The person in attendance

of Guru Granth Sahib should keep waving the whisk standing.

d) The person who performs the Ardass should stand facing Guru Granth Sahib with hands folded. If Guru Granth Sahib is not there, performing the Ardass facing any direction is acceptable.

e) When any special Ardass for and on behalf of one or more persons is offered, it is not necessary for persons in the congregation other than that person or those persons to stand up.

(Note : The writers do not concur with the translated version of some parts of Ardass. Particularly the meaning of 'Waheguru', 'dekh ke andith Kita, Gurdwaras in Pakistan, 'Path athwa kirtan di Ardass'. Etc. However it is for the SGPC, to have a re-look on the entire issue.)

q) Fasts & Rituals and Sikhism :

This is an issue that I thought needed a special mention here. In Sikhism stress has been made right from Guru Nanak Sahib on wards that we believe in God Almighty, 'Akaal Purakh, the Karta', the Creator, as the ultimate deliverer and that he is reached to through the Guru and with his grace or 'parsad' only. We have been told that we don't believe in, any in between agents, known as different gods, goddesses, or idols. We have been ordained by Dasam Pita to take Guru Granth Sahib, The Shabad Guru', as the Eternal Guru. While leaving his mortal body at Nanded, he directed the Khalsa to do '**Puja Akal Ki, Parcha Shabad Ka, Deedar Khalse Ka.**'

While this was the last message from him, yet our revered Gurus through out the period of 239 years, when they were physically present on this planet, preached against religious dogmas, rituals and practices those had no meaning in their eyes. Guru Nanak Sahib at a very tender age, straight away refused to wear the so-called sacred thread, 'Janeau', that was mandatory for him as per the prevalent religious and social practices. Then he stood against 'sharadhs', those were there to send some food and other basic necessities to the forefathers, who were dead and had gone to the next world. The agents, the Pandits were there, who were working as conduit pipes and were sending the said articles with the help of some 'mantras' to them while enjoying the

feasts and the articles of gifts themselves.

Guru Nanak deprecated in very clear-cut terms, the system of Pittar Puja by inviting Brahmans and presenting them gifts and serving them with lavish foods. A quote from Gurbani (Aasa Di Vaar as is daily recited in Gurdwaras) is given below.

‘ਜੇ ਮੋਹਾਕਾ ਘਰੁ ਮੁਹੈ ਘਰੁ ਮੁਹਿ ਪਿਤਰੀ ਦੇਇ ॥
ਅਗੈ ਵਸਤੁ ਸਿਵਾਣੀਐ ਪਿਤਰੀ ਚੋਰ ਕਰੇਇ ॥
ਵਢੀਅਹਿ ਹਥ ਦਲਾਲ ਕੇ ਮੁਸਫੀ ਏਹ ਕਰੇਇ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਅਗੈ ਸੋ ਮਿਲੈ ਜਿ ਖਟੇ ਘਾਲੇ ਦੇਇ ॥ ੧ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੭੨)

As a satire, he says that if the thing that is presented to the Brahman, has been stolen by the giver and that too from the house of a person, whose forefathers are with his forefathers in the other world, and if that thing reaches the forefathers in the other world as per the Brahmanical versions, the forefathers of the other person shall be able to recognize the thing as belonging to their house. This shall immediately render the receivers of the goods as thieves or the forefathers of the thief, as the thing or the article they had received was stolen from their house and sent to them.!

Bhagat Kabir does not lag behind in his criticism of the system. He says that the children do not care for their elders when they are alive and after their death they serve the Pandits and do the ‘sharadhs’ for them. He says what do the forefathers get, the crows and the dogs eat it.

‘ਜੀਵਤ ਪਿਤਰ ਨ ਮਾਨੈ ਕੋਊ ਮੁਏਂ ਸਿਰਾਧ ਕਰਾਹੀ ॥
ਪਿਤਰ ਭੀ ਬਪੁਰੇ ਕਹੁ ਕਿਉ ਪਾਵਹਿ ਕਊਆ ਕੂਕਰ ਖਾਹੀ ॥ ੧ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੩੨)

Bhai Gurdass has also rated the ‘sewa’ the service of parents at the top, over and above all other types of worships, offerings ‘pujas’, donations etc. A quote from his writings is given below.:

ਮਾਂ ਪਿਉ ਪਰਹਰਿ ਸੁਣੈ ਵੇਦੁ ਭੇਦੁ ਨ ਜਾਣੈ ਕਥਾ ਕਹਾਣੀ ॥
ਮਾਂ ਪਿਉ ਪਰਹਰਿ ਕਰੈ ਤਪੁ ਵਣਖੰਡਿ ਭੁਲਾ ਫਿਰੈ ਬਿਬਾਣੀ ॥
ਮਾਂ ਪਿਉ ਪਰਹਰਿ ਕਰੈ ਪੂਜੁ ਦੇਵੀ ਦੇਵ ਨ ਸੇਵ ਕਮਾਣੀ ॥
ਮਾਂ ਪਿਉ ਪਰਹਰਿ ਨ੍ਰਾਵਣਾ ਅਠਸਠਿ ਤੀਰਥ ਘੁੰਮਣ ਵਾਣੀ ॥
ਮਾਂ ਪਿਉ ਪਰਹਰਿ ਕਰੈ ਦਾਨ ਬੇਈਮਾਨ ਅਗਿਆਨ ਪਰਾਣੀ ॥

ਮਾਂ ਪਿਉ ਪਰਹਰਿ ਵਰਤ ਕਰਿ ਮਰਿ ਜੰਮੈ ਭਰਮਿ ਭੁਲਾਣੀ ॥

ਗੁਰੁ ਪਰਮੇਸਰੁ ਸਾਰੁ ਨ ਜਾਣੀ ॥ ੧੩ ॥

(ਵਾਰ ੩੭, ਪਉੜੀ ੧੩)

Guru Arjan Sahib, the Fifth Nanak says that whatever rituals, 'karam kands', dual or hypocritical acts we indulge in, are all looted by the servants of the 'Jam', the killer. He means by saying so that all such acts are futile and have no standing or utility. He advises to do 'kirtan', to sing praises of the 'Karta' the God - Almighty, a bit of remembering whom, frees one from the cycle of birth and death and one gets salvation.

ਕਰਮ ਧਰਮ ਪਾਖੰਡ ਜੋ ਦੀਸਹਿ ਤਿਨ ਜਮੁ ਜਾਗਾਤੀ ਲੂਟੈ ॥

ਨਿਰਬਾਣ ਕੀਰਤਨੁ ਗਾਵਹੁ ਕਰਤੇ ਕਾ ਨਿਮਖ ਸਿਮਰਤ ਜਿਤੁ ਛੂਟੈ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੪੭)

Similarly indulging in keeping fasts on flimsy grounds, blind convictions and faiths is another evil that is widely prevalent in our society. The major axe of it falls on women. Our Gurus while condemning fasts and other rituals, also raised their voice against the oppression of the women.

First of all Guru Nanak raised a banner of revolt against the existing practices. He categorically said that why to take women as inferiors, who have given birth to the kings, who are universally sought for, without whom there is no birth, no life, no society. 'If one woman dies', he continued, "we go for the second". He said there is none, except God, the Almighty, who does not owe his origin to a woman.

ਭੰਡਿ ਜੰਮੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਨਿੰਮੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਮੰਗਣੁ ਵੀਆਹੁ ॥

ਭੰਡਹੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਦੋਸਤੀ ਭੰਡਹੁ ਚਲੈ ਰਾਹੁ ॥

ਭੰਡੁ ਮੁਆ ਭੰਡੁ ਭਾਲੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਹੋਵੈ ਬੰਧਾਨੁ ॥

ਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਮੰਦਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਜਿਤੁ ਜੰਮਹਿ ਰਾਜਾਨ ॥

ਭੰਡਹੁ ਹੀ ਭੰਡੁ ਉਪਜੈ ਭੰਡੈ ਬਾਝੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਭੰਡੈ ਬਾਹਰਾ ਏਕੋ ਸਚਾ ਸੋਇ ॥

ਜਿਤੁ ਮੁਖਿ ਸਦਾ ਸਾਲਾਹੀਐ ਭਾਗਾ ਰਤੀ ਚਾਰਿ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਤੇ ਮੁਖ ਉਜਲੈ ਤਿਤੁ ਸਚੈ ਦਰਬਾਰਿ ॥

(ਮਃ ੧, ਪੰਨਾ ੪੭੩)

Guru Amar Dass Sahib, the 3rd Nanak dealt in detail on the evils of the system. He commented against 'sati system', veil practice - 'the

pardah system'. He advocated re marriage. Indian system had never visualized a situation where women could be treated at par with their men folk. Guru Amar Dass Sahib defined the ideal couple and showed the concept of equality between husband and wife for the first time. He not only left the matter just by preaching but put his principles into practice too. To quote him,

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

(ਸਲੋਕੁ ਮਃ ੩, ਪੰਨਾ ੭੮੭)

again

ਧਨ ਪਿਰੁ ਏਹਿ ਨ ਆਖੀਅਨਿ ਬਹਨਿ ਇਕਠੇ ਹੋਇ ॥
ਏਕ ਜੋਤਿ ਦੁਇ ਮੂਰਤੀ ਧਨ ਪਿਰੁ ਕਹੀਐ ਸੋਇ ॥ ੩ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ ੭੮੮)

Resuming our discussion on rituals fasts etc, we give below a 'shabad' from Sri Guru Granth Sahib, which can be treated as a frontal attack on the system. No more clear-cut, straightforward and harsher words can be used, to express one's views on the matter. While describing the importance of food for the maintenance of human body, it says those women who do not take food are hypocrites. They are neither married (with husbands living), nor or the widows.

ਧੰਨੁ ਗੁਪਾਲ ਧੰਨੁ ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ॥ ਧੰਨੁ ਅਨਾਦਿ ਭੂਖੇ ਕਵਲੁ ਟਹਕੇਵ ॥
ਧਨੁ ਓਇ ਸੰਤ ਜਿਨ ਐਸੀ ਜਾਨੀ ॥ ਤਿਨ ਕਉ ਮਿਲਿਬੇ ਸਾਰੰਗਪਾਨੀ ॥ ੧ ॥
ਆਦਿ ਪੁਰਖ ਤੇ ਹੋਇ ਅਨਾਦਿ ॥ ਜਪੀਐ ਨਾਮੁ ਅੰਨ ਕੈ ਸਾਦਿ ॥ ੧ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥
ਜਪੀਐ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪੀਐ ਅੰਨੁ ॥ ਅੰਭੈ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਨੀਕਾ ਵੰਨੁ ॥
ਅੰਨੈ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਜੋ ਨਰ ਹੋਵਹਿ ॥ ਤੀਨਿ ਭਵਨ ਮਹਿ ਅਪਨੀ ਖੋਵਹਿ ॥ ੨ ॥
ਛੋਡਹਿ ਅੰਨੁ ਕਰਹਿ ਪਾਖੰਡ ॥ ਨਾ ਸੋਹਾਗਨਿ ਨਾ ਓਹਿ ਰੰਡ ॥
ਜਗ ਮਹਿ ਬਕਤੇ ਦੂਧਾਧਾਰੀ ॥ ਗੁਪਤੀ ਖਾਵਹਿ ਵਟਿਕਾ ਸਾਰੀ ॥ ੩ ॥
ਅੰਨੈ ਬਿਨਾ ਨ ਹੋਇ ਸੁਕਾਲੁ ॥ ਤਜਿਐ ਅੰਨਿ ਨ ਮਿਲੈ ਗੁਪਾਲੁ ॥
ਕਹੁ ਕਬੀਰ ਹਮ ਐਸੇ ਜਾਨਿਆ ॥ ਧੰਨੁ ਅਨਾਦਿ ਠਾਕੁਰ ਮਨੁ ਮਾਨਿਆ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ ੮੭੩)

Guru Ram Dass Sahib while mentioning the supremacy of the 'Hukam', the edict of The Almighty - said that those who indulge in 'karam kands', such as fasts, other rituals, cleanliness, discipline etc,

without having faith in his 'Naam' and His Hukam are 'Manmukhs' and are indulging in duality and are hypocrites. To quote from Sri Guru Granth Sahib,

ਹੁਕਮ ਵਰਤੁ ਨੇਮੁ ਸੁਚ ਸੰਜਮੁ ਮਨ ਚਿੰਦਿਆ ਫਲੁ ਪਾਏ ॥
ਸਦਾ ਸੁਹਾਗਣਿ ਜਿ ਹੁਕਮੈ ਬੁਝੈ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਸੇਵੈ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਏ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰੇ ਜਿਨ ਉਪਰਿ ਤਿਨਾ ਹੁਕਮੇ ਲਏ ਮਿਲਾਏ ॥ ੧੮ ॥
ਮਨਮੁਖਿ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਨ ਬੁਝੇ ਬਪੁੜੀ ਨਿਤ ਹਉਮੈ ਕਰਮ ਕਮਾਇ ॥
ਵਰਤ ਨੇਮੁ ਸੁਚ ਸੰਜਮੁ ਪੂਜਾ ਪਾਖੰਡ ਭਰਮੁ ਨ ਜਾਇ ॥
ਅੰਤਰਹੁ ਕੁਸੁਧੁ ਮਾਇਆ ਮੋਹਿ ਬੇਧੇ ਜਿਉ ਹਸਤੀ ਛਾਰੁ ਉਡਾਏ ॥
ਜਿਨਿ ਉਪਾਏ ਤਿਸੈ ਨ ਚੇਤਹਿ ਬਿਨੁ ਚੇਤੇ ਕਿਉ ਸੁਖੁ ਪਾਏ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਪਰਚੰਚੁ ਕੀਆ ਧੁਰਿ ਕਰਤੈ ਪੂਰਬਿ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਕਮਾਏ ॥ ੧੯ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੨੩)

Guru Ram Dass Sahib once again stressing on the importance of contemplation upon 'Shabad', and 'Naam' says, that all the rituals, meditations, fasts etc are futile in the absence of the same.

ਜਪੁ ਤਪ ਸੰਜਮ ਵਰਤ ਕਰੇ ਪੂਜਾ ਮਨਮੁਖ ਰੋਗੁ ਨ ਜਾਈ ॥
ਅੰਤਰਿ ਰੋਗੁ ਮਹਾ ਅਭਿਮਾਨਾ ਦੂਜੈ ਭਾਇ ਖੁਆਈ ॥ ੨ ॥
ਬਾਹਰਿ ਭੋਖ ਬਹੁਤੁ ਚਤੁਰਾਈ ਮਨੁਆ ਦਹ ਦਿਸਿ ਧਾਵੈ ॥
ਹਉਮੈ ਬਿਆਪਿਆ ਸਬਦੁ ਨ ਚੀਨੈ ਫਿਰਿ ਫਿਰਿ ਜੂਨੀ ਆਵੈ ॥ ੩ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੩੨)

Guru Arjan Sahib holds,

ਜਪ ਤਪ ਸੰਜਮ ਇਸ ਤੇ ਕਿਛੁ ਨਾਹੀ ॥ ਆਦਿ ਅੰਤਿ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਅਗਮ ਅਗਾਹੀ ॥
ਨਾਮੁ ਦੇਹਿ ਮਾਰੈ ਦਾਸੁ ਤੇਰਾ ॥ ਹਰਿ ਜੀਵਨ ਪਦੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਮੇਰਾ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੦੫)

Thus we can categorically say that all the useless rituals fasts etc have been altogether rejected in our religion. The stress is always on 'contemplation' of Gurbani and 'Naam', Guru's shelter 'Ote' in the hours of need and to accept 'hukam', the edict of the 'Guru - The Lord'.

r) Sikhism & Other Faiths:

Guru Nanak, the first, sowed the seeds of Sikhism. He planted the tree of Sikhism that grew into a full-fledged tree in a total period of 239 years from 1469 to 1708, the period when the ten incarnations of Guru Nanak remained on this earth in their physical form. The foundation of Sikhism was laid on the principles of Oneness of God and his omnipresence, His bestowing of love towards all, all being His own creation, the dignity of human labour as the Gurus stressed for earning livelihood with righteous means. Then we were directed to share our earnings 'wand chhakna' with others. Non-discrimination against women, treating all the human beings as equal with no hatred towards the low, the depressed and the oppressed ones, were some of the other premises on which the Sikhism is based. Then the revered Gurus stood with one voice against cruelty fanaticism, oppression on the part of the rulers, the so called upper class people and above all exploitation by the clergy and the priestly class – by Pundits and Maulvis alike.

Some extracts given below from Gurbani – Gurus' Word –, and Bhai Nand Lal speaks out the Sikh Philosophy and the relationship of Sikhs with the people of the other faiths.

The revered Gurus and all the saints, fakirs, pirs etc whose 'bani' has been included and incorporated in Guru Granth Sahib, always treated all human beings as equal and observed God everywhere. Some excerpts:

ਸੰਤਹੁ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਰਹਿਆ ਸਮਾਹਿਓ ॥

ਪੂਰਨ ਪੂਰਿ ਰਹਿਓ ਸਰਬ ਮਹਿ ਜਲਿ ਥਲਿ ਰਮਈਆ ਆਹਿਓ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੧੭)

SANTHU GHAT GHAT RAHIYA SAMAHIYO,

PURAN POOR RAHIYOO SARAB MEH JAL THAL RAMIYAA AAHIYO.

O Saints, He is pervading and permeating within each and every heart. The Perfect Lord the Ram is completely permeating within every one and is everywhere; He is within the water and upon the land – everywhere.

ਘਟ ਘਟ ਮੈ ਹਰਿ ਜੂ ਬਸੈ ਸੰਤਨ ਕਹਿਓ ਪੁਕਾਰਿ ॥

ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਤਿਹ ਭਜ ਮਨਾ ਭਉ ਨਿਧਿ ਉਤਰਹਿ ਪਾਰਿ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੨੭)

GHAT GHAT MAI HAR JOO BASAI SANTAN KAHI-O PUKAAR.

KAHO NANAK TIH BHAJ MANAA BHOU - NIDH UTREH PAAR.

The Dear Lord abides in each and every heart. The Saints say so very openly and loudly. Says Nanak, meditate and vibrate upon Him, and you shall cross over the terrifying world-ocean.

ਸਭੈ ਘਟ ਰਾਮੁ ਬੋਲੈ ਰਾਮਾ ਬੋਲੈ ॥ ਰਾਮ ਬਿਨਾ ਕੋ ਬੋਲੈ ਰੇ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੮੮)

SABHAI GHAT RAM BOLAI, RAMA BOLAI, RAM BINA KO BOLLAI RAI.

Within all hearts, the Lord speaks, the Lord speaks, and no one speaks other than the Lord.

ਫਰੀਦਾ ਖਾਲਕੁ ਖਲਕ ਮਹਿ ਖਲਕ ਵਸੈ ਰਬ ਮਾਹਿ ॥

ਮੰਦਾ ਕਿਸ ਨੋ ਆਖੀਐ ਜਾ ਤਿਸੁ ਬਿਨੁ ਕੋਈ ਨਾਹਿ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੮੧)

FARIDA KHAALAK KHALAK MAI KHALAK VASAI RAB MAHE,

MANDA KISS NOO AAKHIYE JAN TIS BIN KOI NAHEN.

Fareeda, (O Fareed !) the Creator is in the Creation, and the Creation abides in God. Who can be called ill? There is none other than Him.

ਜਿਮੀ ਜਮਾਨ ਕੇ ਬਿਖੈ ਸਮੱਸਤ ਏਕ ਜੋਤ ਹੈ ॥

ਨ ਘਾਟ ਹੈ ਨ ਬਾਢ ਹੈ ਨ ਘਾਟ ਬਾਢ ਹੋਤ ਹੈ ॥

ZIMI ZAMAN KE BIKHAI SAMAST AIK JOTE HAI;

NA GHAT HAI, NA BADH HAI, NA GHAT BADH HOTE HAI,

(Akal Ustat -Guru Gobind Singh)

In the entire universe – the earth and the sky – there is only one light of eternal God. The same neither diminishes nor is increased ever, it is ever constant and continuous.

ਹਿੰਦੂ ਤੁਰਕ ਕੋਊ ਰਾਫਜ਼ੀ ਇਮਾਮ ਸਾਫੀ

ਮਾਨਸ ਕੀ ਜਾਤ ਸਭੈ ਏਕੈ ਪਹਿਚਾਨਬੋ ॥

(ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ)

HINDU TURK KOU, RAPHZI IMAM SAAFI,

MAANAS KI JAAT SABHE AIKO PEHCHANBO.

Some are Hindus, some are Muslims, some Raphzi, some Imam and some Safi (Persons belonging to different religions enjoying different positions, having similar or dissenting views) – all belong to one human race (and as such), recognize all as one only.

or

ਦੇਹੁਰਾ ਮਸੀਤ ਸੋਈ ਪੂਜਾ ਔ ਨਿਵਾਜ਼ ਓਈ ॥

ਮਾਨਸ ਸਭੈ ਏਕ ਪੈ ਅਨੇਕ ਕੋ ਭ੍ਰਮਾਉ ਹੈ ॥

(ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਬਚਿੱਤਰ ਨਾਟਕ, ਪੰਨਾ ੧੯)

DEHURA MASEET SOI, POOJA AOU NIWAAZ OI.

MAANAS SABHE AIK PAI ANAIK KO BHARMAO HAI.

The Temple and the Mosque are one and the same, The worship of Hindu ways and the Namaz (Prayer as per Islam) are one and the same. All human beings are just one and the same, but there is an illusion of different entities.

ਅਵਲਿ ਅਲਹ ਨੂਰ ਉਪਾਇਆ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਕੇ ਸਭ ਬੰਦੇ ॥

ਏਕ ਨੂਰ ਤੇ ਸਭੁ ਜਗੁ ਉਪਜਿਆ ਕਉਨ ਭਲੇ ਕੋ ਮੰਦੇ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੪੯)

AVAL ALAH NOOR UPAAIYAA KUDRAT KAI SABH BANDAY.

AIK NOOR TAY SABH JAG UPJIYAA KAUN BHALAY KO MANDAI.

First, Allah (God) created the Divine Light; then, by His Creative Power, He made all mortal beings. From the One Light, the entire universe welled up. So who is good, and who is bad ?

Bhai Nand Lal in his Tankha Nama puts the dictates of the tenth master as under:

KHALAK KHAALIK KI JAAN KAI, KHALAK DUKHAVAI NAAHE

KHALAK DUKHAI JO NAND JEE KHAALIK KOPAI TAAHE.

Treat all human beings as Lord's creation and don't hurt any one's feelings and sentiments. Nand Lal says who so ever hurts, causes grief to others, faces the wrath of the Lord.

OR

JAGAT MAAHE, HAI PANTH SU JETE,

KARE NIND NAIHAN KABHUN TETE.

Whichever religions or sects are there in the world, do not ever undermine or condemn any of them.

Thus it is amply clear that there is no place of hatred towards any one in the tenets of Sikh religion. It is all based on love, affection, equal and kind treatment towards all, and coming to the aid of any one, particularly the oppressed, in the hour of need. It stresses for sharing your bounties with the fellow beings on daily basis. Even taking of food, without sharing the same with others is not an approved act. To hurt the feelings of others or to look down upon other religions is strictly prohibited.

s) War Philosophy of Dasmesh:

The study of the basic principles and ingredients of Sikhism won't be complete unless we mention a few words about the 'war philosophy' of Guru Gobind Singh the 10th Master. It has been mentioned above at several places that the Sikh Gurus adhered to their principles, stood for the oppressed and the weak and faced torture at the hands of the rulers of the day. Two of them even were martyred. Several Sikhs also gave their lives and faced torturous treatment.

Guru Gobind Singh, who observed that the rulers of the day did not understand the language of love and sacrifice, prepared his Sikhs for taking up arms against them. Although Guru Har Gobind, the sixth Nanak had fought several battles and became victorious in all, and Guru Gobind Singh himself fought several battles before he created the Khalsa, yet **he was of the view that the followers of the Sikh Panth were to be prepared, so that they could live with dignity, be able to defend themselves against oppression and injustices. While maintaining their entity and identity, they should be prepared to give their lives for the sake of those who were unable to defend themselves. Although he wished that mutual love and understanding should be sufficient instruments to deal with the thorny issues, he justified the use of sword as a measure of last resort.**

In his Zafarnama, a detailed letter of victory to Aurangzeb, against whose tyrannical rule, he fought several battles, sacrificed his father and all the four sons and numerous beloved Sikhs, **he mentioned that he was not willing to take up the arms. But when all other means to settle a matter amicably, failed, it was justifiable to take up the sword (arms) as a last resort.** To quote from Zafarnama it self

ਚੁ ਕਰ ਅਜ ਹਮਾਂ ਹੀਲਤੇ ਦਰਗੁਜ਼ਸ਼ਤ।

ਹਲਾਲਸਤ ਬੁਰਦਨ ਬਾ ਸ਼ਮਸ਼ੀਰ ਦਸਤ ॥

'CHU KAAR AZ HAMA HEELTE DARGUZASHAT,

HALAALAST BURDAN BAA SHAMSHEER DAST'

Thus, those of us who carry an impression that fighting armed

battles was a passion of Guru Dasmesh, can easily get themselves corrected and feel better informed by this very one statement from his own pen.

Part III

Our Prominent Guru Family – Ladies (Mothers, Wives & Daughters)

ਸਾਡੇ ਪ੍ਰਮੁਖ ਗੁਰੂ ਪਰਵਾਰ— (ਮਾਤਾਵਾਂ, ਮਹਲ ਅਤੇ ਬੀਬੀਆਂ)

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INTRODUCTION

In every society, in every civilization, women have a place of distinction. Actually 'the mother' is the first guru, the first teacher and the first guide of a child. Whereas the child, the newly born, has the greatest love and affection for his or her mother, she also showers all her blessings, love etc upon the child. In her this type of relationship with the child, she is instrumental in shaping the brain, growth, development and future course of events of the child.

While studying the lives of our revered Gurus, we find some ladies – mothers, wives, sisters and daughters – had a great influence over the growth of their off springs. Some played a prominent pro - active role, while others played their part in abstract surrender, while remaining passive and submissive. They as such too played an indirect but positive role in the spread of Sikhism and propagation and assimilation of Sikh values.

It may also be mentioned that while we go through the pages of history, we find that adequate coverage has not been given to our 'Guru Women folk', and other prominent women connected in any other way to the spread, and the growth of the Sikh Religion. Important information about their dates of birth, background, parent-hood, native places, their siblings and above all the part they played, the sacrifices they made, towards the growth of the Sikhi is missing in several cases. In this era of 20th and 21st century, when there is a lot of investigative approach to all the disciplines of study, our youth - young boys and girls, our scholars all are vying with one another to find out some thing more and more on the subject. In our endeavor to find out by searching some scattered sources, we may be able to connect several missing threads in our history.

We may, however, mention rather admit, that this being a small book containing an over all information about Sikhism, is not a fit place to cover this extensive topic. Here only a mention of few names is being made, with a brief description. The author plans to take this topic separately and to bring out a separate book in due course.

1. MATA TRIPTA JI

The revered mother was the wife of Kalyan Chand Mehta generally known as Mehta Kalu and the mother of Sat Guru, Guru Nanak Dev Ji. According to Bala Janam Saakhi, she was the daughter of Bhai Rama of village Chahal near Lahore. Her mother was Mata Bhirai. As she was the mother of the First Guru and the Sikhism came into being and grew with the advent and growth of Guru Nanak, it appears quite natural that nothing concrete could be written about her. Yet we must admit that there were occasions of rejoicing and sadness and disappointment in her life.

We know that Guru Nanak Sahib was not a common child who would adhere to the family norms and practices and often revolted against every thing around him. He often faced the wrath and anger of his father Mehta Kalyan Chand (Kalu) as he felt that he was defying him all the times. The mother had to face the odd situations when her only son refused to wear the Janeou, - the sacred Hindu thread -, refused to study from the Pandit and the Maulavi and instead tried to teach them, defied the family doctor (Hakeem), who came to find out the trouble or the disease he was suffering from and tried to cure the same. She faced a very sad situation, when her son spent away the sum of Twenty Rupees on the sadhus, the event that is known as 'Sacha Sauda' in Sikh history.

She even often asked her daughter Bebe Nanaki, the elder sister of Baba Nanak to not to spoil her brother by showing too much affection to him. Like an ordinary mother, she wished that her son should live a happy family life, should play and enjoy like other lads in the neighbourhood, should earn his livelihood by joining some good profession. But overall she bore with the situation with a positive mind. When Guru Nanak went on his sojourns (Udasis), while she felt the pain of separation her self, did not fail in her duty to comfort Mata Sulakhni, the wife of Guru Nanak and looked after her two grand sons, Baba Sri Chand and Baba Lakhmi Chand quite well, particularly after the sudden demise of Bebe Nanaki and her husband Jai Ram in 1518. She departed from this world in 1522 and Guru Nanak Sahib himself performed her last rites.

It was only at the very fag end of her life she was enlightened that she was the mother of Jagat Guru, Guru Nanak.

2. BEBE NANAKI JI

Bebe Nanaki was the elder of the two children of Mehta Kalyan Chand (Kalu), the younger being Baba (Guru) Nanak. She was born in 1464 A.D. and as such was five years older to Guru Nanak. Being the first child of the otherwise well to do parents, she was the loving star of the family, particularly of his uncle Lalu Ram, the younger brother of his father, who was never married and lived with the family, life long.

When she was 11 years of age she was married to one Bhai Jai Ram, who was the son of Patwari Parmanand of Sultan Pur. He had two sisters and a younger brother. The father expired when the children were quite young. Jai Ram followed the footsteps of his father and continued to work as a Patwari, (a revenue officer of the Nawab- the ruler). Subsequent to his marriage he was promoted as 'Mal officer'. Rai Bular, the ruler of Rae Bho Di Talwandi, arranged the marriage

After some years of their marriage, with an intention to engage (Baba) Nanak in some worldly pursuits, the couple on the persuasion and concurrence of his parents and Rai Bular got a job for him as a Modi in the Modi Khana (a ration and a provision store of the Nawab Daulat Khan of Sultan Pur Lodhi) and as a consequence thereto Baba Nanak too settled over there for some time i.e. till the famous Vaien Nadi incident.

On seeing Baba Nanak involved and absorbed in his job, the 'sister' Nanaki wanted to see him happily married. All around including Mehta Kalyan Chand and Mata Tripta, were also eagerly awaiting for the auspicious occasion. Here too 'Bhaaiya' Jai Ram (as he was often called – the literal meaning of the word being sister's husband), played his role. He talked to Mool Chand Khatri another Patwari by profession, of village Pandhian of Gurdaspur district, who readily agreed to give his daughter Sulakhni's hand to Nanak. The marriage was arranged and solemnized in a befitting manner with Rai Bular and Nawab Daulat Khan accompanying the Marriage party.

The elder sister of Guru Nanak Sahib, Bebe Nanaki was perhaps the first lady, or even the first person, who recognized the

Godly qualities of her brother. She from the very childhood, by intuition or otherwise, realized that her younger brother was not an ordinary person. At the time of Sacha Sauda, when Mehta Kalu, could not control himself and even slapped his son, it was Bebe Nanaki, who cried for her brother.

Then as said above she was instrumental in getting her a job with the Modi and it was she who with the support of her husband Bhai Jai Ram, arranged the marriage of Guru Nanak. It was she who during the most of the Udasi period of Guru Nanak, looked after the family of her brother. Bebe Nanaki, who was elder by five years to Guru Nanak, breathed her last in 1518. A D roughly 21 years before Guru Nanak Sahib left this world. Though she remained issueless, she loved children all around and had immense love for the sons of his brother. Mutual love and affection of the brother and sister was unique and well known in every Sikh home.

3. MATA SULAKHNI JI

Our first Guru Mother – Wife of Guru Nanak Dev Ji. She was born as a daughter in the house of Mool Chand Khatri and Mata Chando in or around 1473, in a village Pakhoke, in district Gurdaspur. Her father was also ‘a patwari’, a revenue officer of the government. It is mentioned that Bhai Jai Ram, husband of Bebe Nanaki settled the marriage of Guru Nanak Sahib with Mata Sulakhni when the former was about 18 years of age and the marriage took place in the year 1487.

Guru Nanak Sahib lived with his family for about 12 years, (before going on his long sojourns - Udasis) initially at Talwandi Rae Bhoie Ki and later at Sultan Pur Lodhi when he was in the service of the Nawab in his Modi Khana. During this period two sons Baba Sri Chand and Baba Lakhmi Dass were also born to the couple.

Period of separation started when Baba Nanak embarked upon his ‘Udasis’, sojourns those were spread into a period of about 25 years. This long period of separation was a testing period for Mata Sulakhni. Though she was to face all types of challenges in life all alone, yet she had a great support in Bebe Nanaki, who knew her pains of separation, her responsibilities towards her growing children, and stood by her through out this period. The sudden and untimely death of the couple – Bebe Nanaki and Bhai Jai Ram in 1518 within a period of three days left a great vacuum in her life. Yet she did not lose heart. She had more or less come to know that she was the wife of a super soul, as the people were often narrating his stories to her as well as were discussing the same amongst themselves. She was even reciting his hymns, doing ‘Kirtan’, and even with responsibility was serving langar to the devotees who were visiting the town.

When Guru Nanak finally settled at Kartar Pur in 1521, she fully realized her responsibility and also often felt elevated being the Guru wife or Guru mother for the Sikhs. She looked after their comfort and langar too. Like a normal mother she questioned the decision of her husband of appointing Bhai Lehna as his successor, but she did not stand in the way of the decision. But even thereafter she continued to

live at Kartarpur and was contributing her lot in the propagation and spread of Sikh values till she breathed her last.

She extended quite active or sometimes passive support, to Guru Nanak throughout her life, and helped him in accomplishing his mission of spreading the 'Naam of Akaal Purakh,' throughout the country and even abroad.

4. MATA KHIVI JI

She was the wife of Guru Angad Dev Sahib. The only Guru-woman that found a mention in Sri Guru Granth Sahib through the pen of Balwand – one of the Raagis or ‘kirtaniyaas’ in Guru Darbar. She was the mother of Baba Datu Ji, Baba Dasu Ji, Bibi Amro Ji and Bibi Anokhi Ji.

When Guru Gaddi was bestowed upon Bhai Lehna by Guru Nanak, say Satta Balwand, Guru Angad took the load and the responsibility of the entire earth in spreading the message of Guru Nanak. He says that while Guru Angad was spreading Guru’s message with full responsibility, Mata Khivi was found serving in and supervising the langar (free food kitchen) and was serving Kheer prepared in Ghee (butter Oil). To quote from Sri Guru Granth Sahib

ਬਲਵੰਡ ਖੀਵੀ ਨੇਕ ਜਨ ਜਿਸੁ ਬਹੁਤੀ ਛਾਉ ਪਤਾਲੀ ॥
ਲੰਗਰਿ ਦਉਲਤਿ ਵੰਡੀਐ ਰਸੁ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਖੀਰਿ ਘਿਆਲੀ ॥
ਗੁਰਸਿਖਾ ਕੇ ਮੁਖ ਉਜਲੇ ਮਨਮੁਖ ਬੀਏ ਪਰਾਲੀ ॥
ਪਏ ਕਬੂਲੁ ਖਸੰਮ ਨਾਲਿ ਜਾਂ ਘਾਲ ਮਰਦੀ ਘਾਲੀ ॥
ਮਾਤਾ ਖੀਵੀ ਸਹੁ ਸੋਇ ਜਿਨਿ ਗੋਇ ਉਠਾਲੀ ॥ ੩ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ ੯੬੭)

BALVAND KHEEVEE NAIK JAN JIS BAHUTEE CHHAO PATRAALEE.

LANGAR DAULAT VANDEEAI RAS AMRIT KHEER GHIAALEE.

GURSIKHA KAY MUKH UJLAY MANMUKH THEEAE PARAALIE.

PAYAE KABOOL KHASAMM NAAL JAAN GHAAL MARDEE GHAALIE.

MAATA KHEEVEE SAHO SOIY JIN GOIAY UTHAALIE.

Balwand described mother Khivi as a very gentle, noble soul and compared her to a tree with dense, long leaves giving shade to all the passer byes, sitting under it. She supervised the preparation of Langar and personally distributed the same with Kheer made with Ghee. With her sense of service and affection all the Gursikhs, felt proud and brightened, and the Man Mukhs – the non-believers or the rivals who were going astray due to jealousy of Guru Ghar – were found having gloomy faces. The mother Khivi had a husband who was carrying the load of the entire world upon his shoulders

and she was identified as acceptable as she was doing all man like struggles or in other words she was performing the duties with her husband shoulder to shoulder.

Mata Khivi was born in 1506 A.D. His father was Bhai Devi Chand Khatri and mother Mata Karan Devi. She was married to Bhai Lehna at the age of 13 years and 20 years before he was bestowed Guru Gaddi by Guru Nanak. Bhai Lehna her husband was one of the richest man of the town and as such her life was full of luxury and pleasure and as such she enjoyed a lot of respect in the society.

When Bhai Lehna became Guru Angad, her life style also changed drastically. There were innumerable callers to the Guru's house. During their stay at Khadoor it was Guru Darbar that was to look after their daily essential requirements. Mother Khivi whole heartedly put herself in the 'Sewa', service of the 'sangat'. She personally supervised the langar and assured that best possible food was served to all.

Mata Khivi lived thirty years beyond the physical life of her husband Guru, Guru Angad Dev and she continued to serve the Guru's house even during that period. For a short while, Datu, her son, who was not given the Guru Gaddi by his father, out of frustration, established a parallel gaddi. But it so happened that he developed an incurable severe headache. Mother Khivi persuaded him to close his shop and seek pardon from Guru Amar Dass, the 3rd Nanak. When she took him to Guru Ji, and Guru Amar Dass was informed of the same, he himself came half way to welcome them to the Guru's House. All was forgiven and all his headaches were no more.

Mata Khivi had the distinction of meeting five Gurus. She lived to the age of 75 and left this world in the year 1582. Guru Arjun Dev Sahib attended her funeral.

5. BIBI AMRO JI

Bibi Amro daughter of Guru Angad Dev Ji was born in 1532 at village Khadur near Amritsar. She had two brothers, Datu and Dassu and one younger sister too Anokhi by name. It was in the nature of Guru Angad Dev Sahib to love the young children. He himself taught his children Gurmukhi Script that was re-written by him under the direct guidance of Guru Nanak Dev Sahib. Bibi Amro also learnt sacred Gurbani hymns of Guru Nanak and also those by her father Guru. She had a melodious voice and was often singing the same in the wee hours and singing in 'Kirtan form' too.

She was married to Bhai Jasoo of Basarke village. Bhai Jasoo was the son of Bhai Manak Chand, a younger brother of Baba Amar Dass. She was not only the daughter of Guru Sahib but was a devout Sikh too and loved Gurbani and other Sikh values. As said above she loved recitation of Gurbani, particularly in the wee hours. It was through her recitation of the bani in the early morning hours Baba Amar Dass, her uncle, father in law (father in law's brother), at the advanced age of sixty years was attracted to the Guru's house. He became Guru's Sikh, served the Guru not caring for his worldly relationship and while so doing became one with him and ultimately sat at Guru Nanak's throne as third Nanak - GURU AMAR DASS.

In course of time, she developed so much love for Gursikhi that she became a preacher and was allotted a 'manji' a 'diocese', by Guru Amar Dass.

A 'manji dar', (a head of a preaching center) was not only responsible for religious preachings but also looked after the revenue collection, took all the decisions relating to the management and administration of the diocese as well. He or she was to be in direct touch with the headquarters and was to remit the surplus funds with sufficient details over there to facilitate a smooth central administration. In allotting her a Manji whereas Guru Amar Dass gave recognition to her devotion dedication and capabilities, by so doing he also displayed that when he preached for a proper and elevated status

for women in society, he was not only saying like that but was putting his sayings into practice too. In addition to Bibi Amro, he appointed one or two other women as 'Manjidars'.

The area of her diocese included Basarke village as well, where even today a pond in the name of Bibi Amro exists. It is named as Bibi Amro Da Talab. Even in Khadoor Sahib right in the vicinity of Darbar Sahib (Gurdwara Angeetha Sahib), a deep well exists in her name. It is mentioned that keeping in view the acute scarcity of water, at the request of Bibi Amro, Guru Angad Dev Sahib himself got the well dug over there.

6. MATA MANSA DEVI JI

Mata Mansa Devi was the wife of Guru Amar Dass Sahib, the 3rd Nanak. As Guru Amar Dass came in contact with Guru's house quite late at the age of plus sixty and ascended to Guru's throne at the age of 72 years, much is not known about the couple's earlier life except that they were very religious and pious persons and were quit generous in giving charities. Otherwise they belonged to a well to do business class family. It is also known that Baba Amardass had no inclination or aptitude for marriage. He was all along avoiding being married but ultimately agreed for the same after a lot of persuasion. He was married at the age of 28 years after all of his siblings had tied their nuptial knots.

Mata Mansa Devi was the daughter of Bhai Devi Chand Behal of village Sankhara – a village at a distance of about sixty miles from Basarke, the village to which Bhai Tej Bhan , the father of Guru Amar Dass belonged.

The couple was blessed with four children, two sons and two daughters. Sons were Baba Mohan and Baba Mohri and daughters were Bibi Bhani and Bibi Dani. As Bhai Amar Dass, before coming in touch with Guru Darbar was going on pilgrimage to Hardwar, twice a year, Mata Mansa Devi was looking after the family affairs in his absence. Then when Baba Amardass went to Khadur in the darbar of Guru Angad Dev Sahib and served the Guru for about 12 long years and was out of the home for long spells of time, she even passed that testing period and looked after the family with a lot of patience.

When Guru Angad Dev Sahib was approached by Goinda to develop Goindwal city, he directed Bhai Amar Dass to move to Goindwal and take up the project in hand. Baba Amar Dass shifted alongwith his family from Basarke to that town. Mata Mansa Devi participated in the Kar Sewa. Several other women followed her. She in accordance with the Guru family tradition looked after the 'langar' too and was often found cleaning the utensils. Despite her advanced age she never lagged behind in 'sewa', of the sangat.

Being a woman, she was quite conversant with the over all miserable plight of women in the society. She was much concerned about the worries and the pains of the widows, who were often thrown out of the homes and were treated very badly both by their parents and the in laws.

It is said that she was instrumental in shaping the thinking and the ideology of Baba Amar Dass, who when ascended to the throne of Guru Nanak and having Guru Nanak's Jote in him, raised his voice for the emancipation of women through his 'Bani'. He took up their cause very seriously and was at the forefront in creating a congenial atmosphere for their uplifting. He was most outspoken in this regard and composed several verses 'Gurbani' that showed his concern for women. He campaigned against Sati system, advocated re-marriage of the widows, preached and practiced against 'pardah' system. He even allotted 'manjis' dioceses to some of the women and gave them full authority for the spread of Sikhism in their allotted area.

The magnanimity of Mata Mansa Devi is also revealed by the fact that when Guru Amar Dass Sahib picked up Bhai Jetha, later Guru Ram Dass as his son in law, a groom for their daughter Bibi Bhani, knowing fully well his background and poor financial position, did not raise any hue and cry but bowed to the selection of her husband, taking the same as the edict and will of God and in the interest of her daughter. Who knew at that time that the selected lad would one day become Sódhi Sultan Guru Ram Dass?

Thus when we sing the saga of Guru Amar Dass 'Bhale Amar Dass gun tere, teri upma tohe ban Aawe,' we are automatically attracted towards the benevolent qualities of Mata Mansa Devi as well, the revered mother Mansa Devi, oldest of all our Guru wives.

n) Some pertinent provisions in Sikh Rehat Maryada :

‘Chaar Kurehtan’, or four Taboos : The great event of starting ‘Khande baate di Pahul’ has been described above in a brief manner, as the readers of this small informative book are not supposed to go into the entire procedure, event, process or the ceremony in quite detail.

However, it may be mentioned that there is not a big list of do’s and don’ts for ‘Amritdharis’, or Guru Ke Sikhs. Besides living a truthful and honest life, to rise a bit early in the morning (Amrit Vela), to do some Naam Simran along with Paath of Nit Nem baanis and to have five Kakaars as articles of faith, are some basic features of a Sikh.

In addition certain things rather four taboos have been enumerated by Guru Sahib, indulging in which is clearly prohibited and if some Singh or Kaur indulges in them either willingly or inadvertently, he or she is supposed to reappear before the ‘Five’, explain and openly admit of having committed the ‘Kurehat’, seek pardon and accept the punishment to be awarded by the Five in a prescribed procedure, to be re-inducted into the KHALSA fold as a Gursikh.

Four Kurahets (Taboos) are enumerated as under:

To remove any misgivings or errors of presentation, I quote below from the *Sikh Rehat Maryada* verbatim.

‘The under mentioned four transgressions (tabooed practices) must be avoided :

- (1) Dishonouring the hair (ਰੋਮਾਂ ਦੀ ਬੇ ਅਦਬੀ ਕਰਨਾ)
- (2) Eating the meat of an animal slaughtered the Muslim way.
(ਕੁਠਾ ਮਾਸ ਖਾਨਾ)
- (3) Cohabiting with a person other than one’s spouse. (ਪਰ ਨਾਰੀ ਜਾਂ ਪਰ ਪੁਰਸ਼ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਭੋਗ ਕਰਨਾ)
- (4) Using Tobacco. (ਤੰਬਾਕੂ ਦਾ ਸੇਵਨ ਕਰਨਾ)

In the event of the commission of any of these transgressions, the transgressor must get re-baptised. If a transgression is committed unintentionally and unknowingly, the transgressor shall not be liable to punishment.’.

'You must remain fully aligned to the Khalsa brotherhood in accordance with the principles of Khalsa faith. If you commit transgression of the Khalsa discipline, you must present yourself before the congregation and beg pardon, accepting whatever punishment is awarded. You must also remain watchful against defaults in the future.

The following individuals shall be liable to chastisement involving automatic boycott:

- (1) Anyone maintaining relations or communion with elements antagonistic to the Panth including the minas (reprobates), the 'masands' (agents once accredited to local Sikh communities as Guru's representatives, since discredited for their faults and aberrations), followers of Dhirmal or Ram Rai; etc., or users of tobacco or killers of female infants.
- (2) One who eats/drinks left-over of the non-baptized or fallen Sikhs;
- (3) One who dyes his beard;
- (4) One who gives off son or daughter in matrimony for a price or reward;
- (5) Users of intoxicants (*hemp, opium, liquor, narcotics, cocaine etc.);
- (6) One holding, or being a party to, ceremonies or practices contrary to the Guru's way;
- (7) One who defaults in the maintenance of Sikh discipline.

o) Some other vital points -

Sikh Rehat Maryada Article XVI

- “(e)The Khalsa should maintain its distinctiveness among the professors of different religions of the world, but should not hurt the sentiments of any person possessing another religion.
- (f) A Sikh should pray to God before launching off any task.
 - (g) Learning Gurmukhi (Punjabi in Gurmukhi script) is essential for a Sikh. He should pursue other studies also.
 - (h) It is a Sikh's duty to get his children educated in Sikhism.

- (i) A Sikh should in no way, harbour any antipathy to the hair of the head with which his child is born. He should not temper with the hair with which the child is born. He should add the suffix “ Singh” to the name of his son. A Sikh should keep the hair of his sons and daughters intact.
- (k) Piercing of nose or ears for wearing ornaments is forbidden for Sikh men and women.
- (l) A Sikh should not kill his daughter; nor should he maintain any relationship with a killer of daughter.
- (m) The true Sikh of the Guru shall make an honest living by lawful work.
- (n) A Sikh shall regard a poor person’s mouth as the Guru’s cash offering box. (ਗਰੀਬ ਦਾ ਮੂੰਹ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਗੋਲਕ)
- (o) A Sikh shall not steal; form dubious associations or engage in gambling.
- (p) He who regards another man’s daughter as his own daughter, regards another man’s wife as his mother, has cohabitation with his own wife alone, he alone is a truly disciplined Sikh of the Guru. A Sikh woman shall likewise keep within the confines of conjugal rectitude.
- (q) A Sikh shall observe the Sikh rules of Conduct and Conventions from his birth, right unto the end of his life.
- (r) A Sikh, when he meets another Sikh, should greet him with “Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh” This is ordained for Sikh women and men both.
- (s) It is not proper for a Sikh woman to wear veil or keep her face hidden by veil or cover.
- (t) For a Sikh, there is no restriction or requirement as to dress except that he must wear Kachhehra and Turban. A Sikh woman may or may not tie turban.”

ਤੂੰ ਠਾਕੁਰੁ ਤੁਮ ਪਹਿ ਅਰਦਾਸਿ ॥
ਜੀਉ ਪਿੰਡੁ ਸਭੁ ਤੇਰੀ ਰਾਸਿ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ ੨੬੮)

p) Our Ardass ਸਾਡੀ ਅਰਦਾਸ

Collective or individual benign prayer

One of the most important gifts our forefathers have given us is our Ardass – our daily prayer that may be performed individually or collectively at any time and / or at any place. It has a format and a standard form. While some Parts of it are mandatory others are optional and are subject to change as per the circumstances, period or the purpose of the prayer etc. Then the contents may be abridged and expanded as per the requirement. The set standard or format of the Ardass as published by Shiromani Gurdwara Prabhandhak Committee in Sikh Rehat Maryada is reproduced below. Both the versions, Punjabi as well as English, have been reproduced.

The thing to be appreciated or that deserves the special attention of the curious readers is the fact that a glance at the contents of the format of ‘Ardass’ shall reveal that whereas a few parts of it relate to actual prayer, it is actually over all a mini sketch of Sikh history. Its wordings are so well drafted that it starts from mentioning of Guru Nanak as our founder Guru. It traverses through different pages of Sikh history and covers in brief all the major events of last more than 500 years in a very touching manner. If one is attentive or puts his mind into the Ardass, while standing with Guru in his horizon or vision, he will have insight into our history and shall recall the glorious feats, performances, sacrifices of our Gurus, great martyrs, the launch and the history of different ‘morchas’, happening of different holocausts, sagas etc. While through Ardass, one peeps into the past, there is more and more awakening and awareness in the Sikh mind about the greatness of Sikhi Swaroop and Gursikhi principles.

As published in Sikh Rehat Maryada, issued by the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabhandhak Committee, Sri Amritsar, the format of the ‘Ardass’ is given hereunder.

(ਸ਼ਰੋਮਣੀ ਗੁਰਦਵਾਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਵਲੋਂ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਿਤ ਸਿੱਖ ਰਹਿਤ

ਮਰਯਾਦਾ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ)

੩. (ੳ) ਅਰਦਾਸ ਇਹ ਹੈ:-



ੴ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਫਤਹਿ॥



ਸ੍ਰੀ ਭਗੋਤੀ ਜੀ ਸਹਾਇ॥

ਵਾਰ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਭਗੋਤੀ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ ੧੦॥

ਪ੍ਰਿਥਮ ਭਗੋਤੀ ਸਿਮਰਿ ਕੈ ਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਈਂ ਧਿਆਇ॥ ਫਿਰ ਅੰਗਦ ਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਅੰਮਰਦਾਸੁ ਰਾਮਦਾਸੈ ਹੋਈਂ ਸਹਾਇ॥ ਅਰਜਨ ਹਰਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਨੋ ਸਿਮਰੈ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਹਰਿਰਾਇ॥ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਹਰਿਕ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਨ ਧਿਆਇਐ ਜਿਸ ਡਿਠੈ ਸਭਿ ਦੁਖ ਜਾਇ॥ ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਸਿਮਰਿਐ ਘਰ ਨਉ ਨਿਧਿ ਆਵੈ ਧਾਇ॥ ਸਭ ਥਾਂਈ ਹੋਇ ਸਹਾਇ॥ ਦਸਵਾਂ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ! ਸਭ ਥਾਂਈ ਹੋਇ ਸਹਾਇ॥ ਦਸਾਂ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਜੋਤ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਪਾਠ ਦੀਦਾਰ ਦਾ ਧਿਆਨ ਧਰ ਕੇ ਬੋਲੋ ਜੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ !

ਪੰਜਾਂ ਪਿਆਰਿਆਂ, ਚੌਹਾਂ ਸਾਹਿਬਜ਼ਾਦਿਆਂ, ਚਾਲੀਆਂ ਮੁਕਤਿਆਂ, ਹਠੀਆਂ, ਜਪੀਆਂ, ਤਪੀਆਂ, ਜਿਹਨਾਂ ਨਾਮ ਜਪਿਆ, ਵੰਡ ਛਕਿਆ, ਦੇਗ ਚਲਾਈ, ਤੇਗ ਵਾਹੀ, ਦੇਖ ਕੇ ਅਣਡਿੱਠ ਕੀਤਾ, ਤਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਪਿਆਰਿਆਂ, ਸਚਿਆਰਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਕਮਾਈ ਦਾ ਧਿਆਨ ਧਰ ਕੇ, ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜੀ ! ਬੋਲੋ ਜੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ !

ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਸਿੰਘਣੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਧਰਮ ਹੇਤ ਸੀਸ ਦਿੱਤੇ, ਬੰਦ ਬੰਦ ਕਟਾਏ, ਖੋਪਰੀਆਂ ਲੁਹਾਈਆਂ, ਚਰਖੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਚੜ੍ਹੇ, ਆਰਿਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਚਿਰਾਏ ਗਏ, ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਲਈ ਕੁਰਬਾਨੀਆਂ ਕੀਤੀਆਂ, ਧਰਮ ਨਹੀਂ ਹਾਰਿਆ, ਸਿੱਖੀ ਕੇਸਾਂ ਸੁਆਸਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਨਿਬਾਰੀ, ਤਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਕਮਾਈ ਦਾ ਧਿਆਨ ਧਰ ਕੇ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜੀ ! ਬੋਲੋ ਜੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ !

ਪੰਜਾਂ ਤਖਤਾਂ, ਸਰਬੱਤ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਿਆਂ ਦਾ ਧਿਆਨ ਧਰ ਕੇ ਬੋਲੋ ਜੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ !

ਪ੍ਰਿਥਮੇ ਸਰਬੱਤ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਅਰਦਾਸ ਹੈ ਜੀ, ਸਰਬੱਤ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜੀ ਕੋ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ, ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ, ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਚਿਤ ਆਵੇ, ਚਿੱਤ ਆਵਨ ਕਾ ਸਦਕਾ ਸਰਬ ਸੁਖ ਹੋਵੇ। ਜਹਾਂ ਜਹਾਂ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਜੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਤਹਾਂ ਤਹਾਂ ਰਛਿਆ ਰਿਆਇਤ, ਦੇਗ ਤੇਗ ਫਤਹ, ਬਿਰਦ ਕੀ ਪੈਜ, ਪੰਥ ਕੀ ਜੀਤ, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਸਹਾਇ, ਖਾਲਸੇ ਜੀ ਕੇ ਬੋਲ ਬਾਲੇ, ਬੋਲੋ ਜੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ !

ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਦਾਨ, ਕੇਸ ਦਾਨ, ਰਹਿਤ ਦਾਨ, ਬਿਬੇਕ ਦਾਨ, ਵਿਸਾਹ ਦਾਨ, ਭਰੋਸਾ ਦਾਨ, ਦਾਨਾਂ ਸਿਰ ਦਾਨ, ਨਾਮ ਦਾਨ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਇਸ਼ਨਾਨ, ਚੌਕੀਆਂ, ਝੰਡੇ, ਬੁੰਗੇ, ਜੁਗੋ ਜੁਗ ਅਟੱਲ, ਧਰਮ ਕਾ ਜੈਕਾਰ, ਬੋਲੋ ਜੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ!!!

ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਮਨ ਨੀਵਾਂ, ਮਤ ਉੱਚੀ ਮਤ ਦਾ ਰਾਖਾ ਆਪਿ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ।

ਹੇ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਆਪਣੇ ਪੰਥ ਦੇ ਸਦਾ ਸਹਾਈ ਦਾਤਾਰ ਜੀਓ ! ਸ੍ਰੀ ਨਨਕਾਣਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਿਆਂ ਗੁਰਧਾਮਾਂ ਦੇ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਪੰਥ ਨੂੰ ਵਿਛੋੜਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ, ਖੁਲ੍ਹੇ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਦੀਦਾਰ ਤੇ ਸੇਵਾ ਸੰਭਾਲ ਦਾ ਦਾਨ ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ ਜੀ ਨੂੰ ਬਖਸ਼ੋ।

ਹੇ ਨਿਮਾਣਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਮਾਣ, ਨਿਤਾਣਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਤਾਣ, ਨਿਓਟਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਓਟ, ਸੱਚੇ ਪਿਤਾ, ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ! ਆਪ ਦੇ ਹਜ਼ੂਰ.....ਦੀ ਅਰਦਾਸ ਹੈ ਜੀ ।

ਅੱਖਰ ਵਾਧਾ ਘਾਟਾ ਭੁੱਲ ਚੁੱਕ ਮਾਫ ਕਰਨੀ। ਸਰਬੱਤ ਦੇ ਕਾਰਜ ਰਾਸ ਕਰਨੇ।

ਸੇਈ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਮੇਲ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਮਿਲਿਆਂ ਤੇਰਾ ਨਾਮ ਚਿਤ ਆਵੇ।

ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮ ਚੜ੍ਹਦੀ ਕਲਾ, ਤੇਰੇ ਭਾਣੇ ਸਰਬੱਤ ਦਾ ਭਲਾ।

(ੳ) ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਉਪਰੰਤ ਅਰਦਾਸ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹੋਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਸਾਰੀ ਸੰਗਤ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਅੱਗੇ ਅਦਬ ਨਾਲ ਮੱਥਾ ਟੇਕੇ ਅਤੇ ਫਿਰ ਖੜ੍ਹੇ ਹੋ ਕੇ ‘ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕਾ ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ, ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਫਤਹਿ’ ਬੁਲਾਵੇ। ਉਪ੍ਰੰਤ ‘ਸਤਿ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ’ ਦਾ ਜੈਕਾਰਾ ਗਜ਼ਾਇਆ ਜਾਵੇ ।

ਅ) ਅਰਦਾਸ ਹੋਣ ਸਮੇਂ ਸੰਗਤ ‘ਚ ਹਾਜ਼ਰ ਸਾਰੇ ਇਸਤਰੀ ਪੁਰਸ਼ਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਹੱਥ ਜੋੜ ਕੇ ਖਲੋਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ । ਜੇ ਸੱਜਣ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਤਾਬਿਆ ਬੈਠਾ ਹੋਵੇ, ਉਹ ਭੀ ਉੱਠ ਕੇ ਚੌਰ ਕਰੇ।

ੲ) ਅਰਦਾਸ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਸਨਮੁੱਖ ਖੜ੍ਹੇ ਕੇ, ਹੱਥ ਜੋੜ ਕੇ ਅਰਦਾਸ ਕਰੇ। ਜੇ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਨਾ ਹੋਣ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਪਾਸੇ ਮੂੰਹ ਕਰਕੇ ਅਰਦਾਸ ਕਰੇ, ਪ੍ਰਵਾਨ ਹੈ।

ੳ) ਜਦੋਂ ਕੋਈ ਖਾਸ ਅਰਦਾਸ ਕਿਸੇ ਇਕ ਜਾਂ ਵਧੀਕ ਆਦਮੀਆਂ ਵਲੋਂ ਹੋਵੇ, ਤਾਂ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਸੰਗਤ ਵਿਚ ਬੈਠੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਉਠਣਾ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਨਹੀਂ ।

English Version as published by SGPC

(a) The text (This is a model of the Ardass. It may be adapted to different occasions and for different purposes. However, the initial composition with “Pritham Bhagauti.....” and the concluding phrases commencing “Nanak Nam” must not be altered) of the Ardass : LIT. Supplication or prayer. In reality, it is a litany comprehending very briefly the whole gamut of Sikh History and enumerating all that Sikhism holds sacred. Portions of it are invocations and prayer for the grant of strength and virtue. It concludes with : O Nanak, may the Nam (Holy) be ever in ascendance : in Thy will, may the good of all prevail!

One absolute Manifest; victory belongeth to the Wondrous

Destroyer of darkness. May the might of the All-powerful help!

Ode to his might by the tenth lord.

Having first thought of the Almighty's prowess, let us think of Guru Nanak. Then of Guru Angad, Amardas and Ramdas - may they be our rescuers! Remember, then, Arjan, Hargobind and Har Rai. Meditate then on revered Har Krishan on seeing whom all sufferings vanish. Think then of Teg Bahadar, remembrance of whom brings all nine treasures. He comes to rescue everywhere. Then of the tenth Lord, revered Guru Gobind Singh, who comes to rescue everywhere. The embodiment of the light of all ten sovereign lordships, the Guru Granth - think of the view and reading of it and say, "Waheguru (Wondrous Destroyer of Darkness)".

Meditating on the achievement of the dear and truthful ones, including the five beloved ones, the four sons of the tenth Guru, forty liberated ones, steadfast ones, constant repeaters of the Divine Name, those given to assiduous devotion, those who repeated the Nam, shared their fare with others, ran free kitchen, wielded the sword and overlooked faults and shortcomings, say "Waheguru", O Khalsa.

Meditating on the achievement of the male and female members of the Khalsa who laid down their lives in the cause of Dharma (religion and righteousness), got their bodies dismembered bit by bit, got their skulls sawn off, got mounted on spiked wheels, got their bodies sawn, made sacrifices in the service of the shrines (Gurdwaras), did not betray their faith, sustained their adherence to the Sikh faith with unshorn hair up till their last breath, say 'Waheguru', O Khalsa.

Thinking of the Five Thrones (of Sikh religious authority) and all Gurdwaras, say 'Waheguru' ("Wondrous Destroyer of darkness"), O Khalsa.

Now it is the prayer of the whole Khalsa, May the conscience of the whole Khalsa be informed by Waheguru, Waheguru, Waheguru and, in consequence of such remembrance, may total well being obtain. Wherever there are communities of the Khalsa, may there be Divine protection and grace, the ascendance of the supply of needs and of the holy sword, Protection of the tradition of grace, victory of the Panth, the succour of the holy sword, ascendance of the Khalsa. Say, O Khalsa, 'Waheguru', "Wondrous Destroyer of darkness."

Unto the Sikhs the gift of the Sikh faith, the gift of the untrimmed hair, the gift of the discipline of their faith, the gift of sense of discrimination, the gift of trust, the gift of confidence, above all, the gift of meditation on the Divine and bath in Amrita (holy tank of Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar). May hymns-singing missionary parties, the flags, the hostels, abide from age to age. May righteousness reign supreme. Say, 'Waheguru' ("Wondrous Destroyer of darkness"). May the Khalsa be imbued with humility and high wisdom! May Waheguru guard its understanding!

O Immortal Being, eternal helper of Thy Panth, benevolent Lord, bestow on the Khalsa the beneficence of unobstructed visit to and free management of Nankana Sahib (Pakistan) and other shrines and places of the Guru from which the Panth has been separated.

O Thou, the honour of the humble, the strength of the weak, aid unto those who have none to rely on, True Father, 'Waheguru', ("Wondrous Destroyer of darkness"), we humbly render to you (Mention here the name of the scriptural composition that has been recited or, in appropriate terms, the object for which the congregation has been held.) Pardon any impermissible accretions, omissions, errors, mistakes. Fulfil the desires (purposes), of all.

Grant us the association of those dear ones, on meeting whom one is reminded of Your name. O Nanak, may the Nam (Holy) be ever in ascendance! In Thy will may the good of all prevail!

b) On the conclusion of the Ardass, the entire congregation participating in the Ardass should respectfully bow before the Guru, by touching their forehead the ground, facing Guru Granth Sahib, if Ardass is being performed in full view 'Hazoori' of Sri Guru Granth Sahib. Even if Guru Sahib is not there the congregation, the sangat, should bow down as if Guru Sahib was there, touching the forehead the ground, (genuflect), then stand up and call out, 'Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh'. (The Khalsa is of the 'Waheguru', Wondrous Destroyer of darkness: victory also is His.) The Congregation should, thereafter, raise the loud spirited chant of Sat Sri Akal (True is the timeless Being).

c) While the Ardass is being performed, all men and women in congregation should stand with hands folded. The person in attendance

of Guru Granth Sahib should keep waving the whisk standing.

d) The person who performs the Ardass should stand facing Guru Granth Sahib with hands folded. If Guru Granth Sahib is not there, performing the Ardass facing any direction is acceptable.

e) When any special Ardass for and on behalf of one or more persons is offered, it is not necessary for persons in the congregation other than that person or those persons to stand up.

(Note : The writers do not concur with the translated version of some parts of Ardass. Particularly the meaning of 'Waheguru', 'dekh ke andith Kita, Gurdwaras in Pakistan, 'Path athwa kirtan di Ardass'. Etc. However it is for the SGPC, to have a re-look on the entire issue.)

q) Fasts & Rituals and Sikhism :

This is an issue that I thought needed a special mention here. In Sikhism stress has been made right from Guru Nanak Sahib on wards that we believe in God Almighty, 'Akaal Purakh, the Karta', the Creator, as the ultimate deliverer and that he is reached to through the Guru and with his grace or 'parsad' only. We have been told that we don't believe in, any in between agents, known as different gods, goddesses, or idols. We have been ordained by Dasam Pita to take Guru Granth Sahib, The Shabad Guru', as the Eternal Guru. While leaving his mortal body at Nanded, he directed the Khalsa to do '**Puja Akal Ki, Parcha Shabad Ka, Deedar Khalse Ka.**'

While this was the last message from him, yet our revered Gurus through out the period of 239 years, when they were physically present on this planet, preached against religious dogmas, rituals and practices those had no meaning in their eyes. Guru Nanak Sahib at a very tender age, straight away refused to wear the so-called sacred thread, 'Janeau', that was mandatory for him as per the prevalent religious and social practices. Then he stood against 'sharadhs', those were there to send some food and other basic necessities to the forefathers, who were dead and had gone to the next world. The agents, the Pandits were there, who were working as conduit pipes and were sending the said articles with the help of some 'mantras' to them while enjoying the

feasts and the articles of gifts themselves.

Guru Nanak deprecated in very clear-cut terms, the system of Pittar Puja by inviting Brahmans and presenting them gifts and serving them with lavish foods. A quote from Gurbani (Aasa Di Vaar as is daily recited in Gurdwaras) is given below.

‘ਜੇ ਮੋਹਾਕਾ ਘਰੁ ਮੁਹੈ ਘਰੁ ਮੁਹਿ ਪਿਤਰੀ ਦੇਇ ॥
ਅਗੈ ਵਸਤੁ ਸਿਵਾਣੀਐ ਪਿਤਰੀ ਚੋਰ ਕਰੇਇ ॥
ਵਢੀਅਹਿ ਹਥ ਦਲਾਲ ਕੇ ਮੁਸਫੀ ਏਹ ਕਰੇਇ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਅਗੈ ਸੋ ਮਿਲੈ ਜਿ ਖਟੇ ਘਾਲੇ ਦੇਇ ॥ ੧ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੭੨)

As a satire, he says that if the thing that is presented to the Brahman, has been stolen by the giver and that too from the house of a person, whose forefathers are with his forefathers in the other world, and if that thing reaches the forefathers in the other world as per the Brahmanical versions, the forefathers of the other person shall be able to recognize the thing as belonging to their house. This shall immediately render the receivers of the goods as thieves or the forefathers of the thief, as the thing or the article they had received was stolen from their house and sent to them.!

Bhagat Kabir does not lag behind in his criticism of the system. He says that the children do not care for their elders when they are alive and after their death they serve the Pandits and do the ‘sharadhs’ for them. He says what do the forefathers get, the crows and the dogs eat it.

‘ਜੀਵਤ ਪਿਤਰ ਨ ਮਾਨੈ ਕੋਊ ਮੁਏਂ ਸਿਰਾਧ ਕਰਾਹੀ ॥
ਪਿਤਰ ਭੀ ਬਪੁਰੇ ਕਹੁ ਕਿਉ ਪਾਵਹਿ ਕਊਆ ਕੂਕਰ ਖਾਹੀ ॥ ੧ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੩੨)

Bhai Gurdass has also rated the ‘sewa’ the service of parents at the top, over and above all other types of worships, offerings ‘pujas’, donations etc. A quote from his writings is given below.:

ਮਾਂ ਪਿਉ ਪਰਹਰਿ ਸੁਣੈ ਵੇਦੁ ਭੇਦੁ ਨ ਜਾਣੈ ਕਥਾ ਕਹਾਣੀ ॥
ਮਾਂ ਪਿਉ ਪਰਹਰਿ ਕਰੈ ਤਪੁ ਵਣਖੰਡਿ ਭੁਲਾ ਫਿਰੈ ਬਿਬਾਣੀ ॥
ਮਾਂ ਪਿਉ ਪਰਹਰਿ ਕਰੈ ਪੂਜੁ ਦੇਵੀ ਦੇਵ ਨ ਸੇਵ ਕਮਾਣੀ ॥
ਮਾਂ ਪਿਉ ਪਰਹਰਿ ਨੁਾਵਣਾ ਅਠਸਠਿ ਤੀਰਥ ਘੁੰਮਣ ਵਾਣੀ ॥
ਮਾਂ ਪਿਉ ਪਰਹਰਿ ਕਰੈ ਦਾਨ ਬੇਈਮਾਨ ਅਗਿਆਨ ਪਰਾਣੀ ॥

ਮਾਂ ਪਿਉ ਪਰਹਰਿ ਵਰਤ ਕਰਿ ਮਰਿ ਜੰਮੈ ਭਰਮਿ ਭੁਲਾਣੀ ॥

ਗੁਰੁ ਪਰਮੇਸਰੁ ਸਾਰੁ ਨ ਜਾਣੀ ॥ ੧੩ ॥

(ਵਾਰ ੩੭, ਪਉੜੀ ੧੩)

Guru Arjan Sahib, the Fifth Nanak says that whatever rituals, 'karam kands', dual or hypocritical acts we indulge in, are all looted by the servants of the 'Jam', the killer. He means by saying so that all such acts are futile and have no standing or utility. He advises to do 'kirtan', to sing praises of the 'Karta' the God - Almighty, a bit of remembering whom, frees one from the cycle of birth and death and one gets salvation.

ਕਰਮ ਧਰਮ ਪਾਖੰਡ ਜੋ ਦੀਸਹਿ ਤਿਨ ਜਮੁ ਜਾਗਾਤੀ ਲੂਟੈ ॥

ਨਿਰਬਾਣ ਕੀਰਤਨੁ ਗਾਵਹੁ ਕਰਤੇ ਕਾ ਨਿਮਖ ਸਿਮਰਤ ਜਿਤੁ ਛੂਟੈ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੪੭)

Similarly indulging in keeping fasts on flimsy grounds, blind convictions and faiths is another evil that is widely prevalent in our society. The major axe of it falls on women. Our Gurus while condemning fasts and other rituals, also raised their voice against the oppression of the women.

First of all Guru Nanak raised a banner of revolt against the existing practices. He categorically said that why to take women as inferiors, who have given birth to the kings, who are universally sought for, without whom there is no birth, no life, no society. 'If one woman dies', he continued, "we go for the second". He said there is none, except God, the Almighty, who does not owe his origin to a woman.

ਭੰਡਿ ਜੰਮੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਨਿੰਮੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਮੰਗਣੁ ਵੀਆਹੁ ॥

ਭੰਡਹੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਦੋਸਤੀ ਭੰਡਹੁ ਚਲੈ ਰਾਹੁ ॥

ਭੰਡੁ ਮੁਆ ਭੰਡੁ ਭਾਲੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਹੋਵੈ ਬੰਧਾਨੁ ॥

ਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਮੰਦਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਜਿਤੁ ਜੰਮਹਿ ਰਾਜਾਨ ॥

ਭੰਡਹੁ ਹੀ ਭੰਡੁ ਉਪਜੈ ਭੰਡੈ ਬਾਝੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਭੰਡੈ ਬਾਹਰਾ ਏਕੋ ਸਚਾ ਸੋਇ ॥

ਜਿਤੁ ਮੁਖਿ ਸਦਾ ਸਾਲਾਹੀਐ ਭਾਗਾ ਰਤੀ ਚਾਰਿ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਤੇ ਮੁਖ ਉਜਲੇ ਤਿਤੁ ਸਚੈ ਦਰਬਾਰਿ ॥

(ਮਃ ੧, ਪੰਨਾ ੪੭੩)

Guru Amar Dass Sahib, the 3rd Nanak dealt in detail on the evils of the system. He commented against 'sati system', veil practice - 'the

pardah system'. He advocated re marriage. Indian system had never visualized a situation where women could be treated at par with their men folk. Guru Amar Dass Sahib defined the ideal couple and showed the concept of equality between husband and wife for the first time. He not only left the matter just by preaching but put his principles into practice too. To quote him,

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

(ਸਲੋਕੁ ਮਃ ੩, ਪੰਨਾ ੭੮੭)

again

ਧਨ ਪਿਰੁ ਏਹਿ ਨ ਆਖੀਅਨਿ ਬਹਨਿ ਇਕਠੇ ਹੋਇ ॥
ਏਕ ਜੋਤਿ ਦੁਇ ਮੂਰਤੀ ਧਨ ਪਿਰੁ ਕਹੀਐ ਸੋਇ ॥ ੩ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ ੭੮੮)

Resuming our discussion on rituals fasts etc, we give below a 'shabad' from Sri Guru Granth Sahib, which can be treated as a frontal attack on the system. No more clear-cut, straightforward and harsher words can be used, to express one's views on the matter. While describing the importance of food for the maintenance of human body, it says those women who do not take food are hypocrites. They are neither married (with husbands living), nor or the widows.

ਧੰਨੁ ਗੁਪਾਲ ਧੰਨੁ ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ॥ ਧੰਨੁ ਅਨਾਦਿ ਭੂਖੇ ਕਵਲੁ ਟਹਕੇਵ ॥
ਧਨੁ ਓਇ ਸੰਤ ਜਿਨੁ ਐਸੀ ਜਾਨੀ ॥ ਤਿਨ ਕਉ ਮਿਲਿਬੋ ਸਾਰੰਗਪਾਨੀ ॥ ੧ ॥
ਆਦਿ ਪੁਰਖ ਤੇ ਹੋਇ ਅਨਾਦਿ ॥ ਜਪੀਐ ਨਾਮੁ ਅੰਨ ਕੈ ਸਾਦਿ ॥ ੧ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥
ਜਪੀਐ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪੀਐ ਅੰਨੁ ॥ ਅੰਭੈ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਨੀਕਾ ਵੰਨੁ ॥
ਅੰਨੈ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਜੋ ਨਰ ਹੋਵਹਿ ॥ ਤੀਨਿ ਭਵਨ ਮਹਿ ਅਪਨੀ ਖੋਵਹਿ ॥ ੨ ॥
ਛੋਡਹਿ ਅੰਨੁ ਕਰਹਿ ਪਾਖੰਡ ॥ ਨਾ ਸੋਹਾਰੇਨਿ ਨਾ ਓਹਿ ਰੰਡ ॥
ਜਗ ਮਹਿ ਬਕਤੇ ਦੂਧਾਧਾਰੀ ॥ ਗੁਪਤੀ ਖਾਵਹਿ ਵਟਿਕਾ ਸਾਰੀ ॥ ੩ ॥
ਅੰਨੈ ਬਿਨਾ ਨ ਹੋਇ ਸੁਕਾਲੁ ॥ ਤਜਿਐ ਅੰਨਿ ਨ ਮਿਲੈ ਗੁਪਾਲੁ ॥
ਕਹੁ ਕਬੀਰ ਹਮ ਐਸੇ ਜਾਨਿਆ ॥ ਧੰਨੁ ਅਨਾਦਿ ਠਾਕੁਰ ਮਨੁ ਮਾਨਿਆ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ ੮੭੩)

Guru Ram Dass Sahib while mentioning the supremacy of the 'Hukam', the edict of The Almighty - said that those who indulge in 'karam kands', such as fasts, other rituals, cleanliness, discipline etc,

without having faith in his 'Naam' and His Hukam are 'Manmukhs' and are indulging in duality and are hypocrites. To quote from Sri Guru Granth Sahib,

ਹੁਕਮੁ ਵਰਤੁ ਨੇਮੁ ਸੁਚ ਸੰਜਮੁ ਮਨ ਚਿੰਦਿਆ ਫਲੁ ਪਾਏ ॥
ਸਦਾ ਸੁਹਾਗਣਿ ਜਿ ਹੁਕਮੈ ਬੁਝੈ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਸੇਵੈ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਏ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰੇ ਜਿਨ ਉਪਰਿ ਤਿਨਾ ਹੁਕਮੇ ਲਏ ਮਿਲਾਏ ॥ ੧੮ ॥
ਮਨਮੁਖਿ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਨ ਬੁਝੇ ਬਪੁੜੀ ਨਿਤ ਹਉਮੈ ਕਰਮ ਕਮਾਇ ॥
ਵਰਤ ਨੇਮੁ ਸੁਚ ਸੰਜਮੁ ਪੂਜਾ ਪਾਖੰਡਿ ਭਰਮੁ ਨ ਜਾਇ ॥
ਅੰਤਰਹੁ ਕੁਸੁਧੁ ਮਾਇਆ ਮੋਹਿ ਬੇਧੇ ਜਿਉ ਹਸਤੀ ਛਾਰੁ ਉਡਾਏ ॥
ਜਿਨਿ ਉਪਾਏ ਤਿਸੈ ਨ ਚੇਤਹਿ ਬਿਨੁ ਚੇਤੇ ਕਿਉ ਸੁਖੁ ਪਾਏ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਪਰਪੰਚੁ ਕੀਆ ਧੁਰਿ ਕਰਤੈ ਪੂਰਬਿ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਕਮਾਏ ॥ ੧੯ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੨੩)

Guru Ram Dass Sahib once again stressing on the importance of contemplation upon 'Shabad', and 'Naam' says, that all the rituals, meditations, fasts etc are futile in the absence of the same.

ਜਪੁ ਤਪ ਸੰਜਮ ਵਰਤ ਕਰੇ ਪੂਜਾ ਮਨਮੁਖ ਰੋਗੁ ਨ ਜਾਈ ॥
ਅੰਤਰਿ ਰੋਗੁ ਮਹਾ ਅਭਿਮਾਨਾ ਦੂਜੈ ਭਾਇ ਖੁਆਈ ॥ ੨ ॥
ਬਾਹਰਿ ਭੇਖ ਬਹੁਤੁ ਚਤੁਰਾਈ ਮਨੂਆ ਦਹ ਦਿਸਿ ਧਾਵੈ ॥
ਹਉਮੈ ਬਿਆਪਿਆ ਸਬਦੁ ਨ ਚੀਨੈ ਫਿਰਿ ਫਿਰਿ ਜੂਨੀ ਆਵੈ ॥ ੩ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੭੩੨)

Guru Arjan Sahib holds,

ਜਪ ਤਪ ਸੰਜਮ ਇਸ ਤੇ ਕਿਛੁ ਨਾਹੀ ॥ ਆਦਿ ਅੰਤਿ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਅਗਮ ਅਗਾਹੀ ॥
ਨਾਮੁ ਦੇਹਿ ਮਾਰੈ ਦਾਸੁ ਤੇਰਾ ॥ ਹਰਿ ਜੀਵਨ ਪਦੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਮੇਰਾ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ ੧੦੦੫)

Thus we can categorically say that all the useless rituals fasts etc have been altogether rejected in our religion. The stress is always on 'contemplation' of Gurbani and 'Naam', Guru's shelter 'Ote' in the hours of need and to accept 'hukam', the edict of the 'Guru - The Lord'.

r) Sikhism & Other Faiths:

Guru Nanak, the first, sowed the seeds of Sikhism. He planted the tree of Sikhism that grew into a full-fledged tree in a total period of 239 years from 1469 to 1708, the period when the ten incarnations of Guru Nanak remained on this earth in their physical form. The foundation of Sikhism was laid on the principles of Oneness of God and his omnipresence, His bestowing of love towards all, all being His own creation, the dignity of human labour as the Gurus stressed for earning livelihood with righteous means. Then we were directed to share our earnings 'wand chhakna' with others. Non-discrimination against women, treating all the human beings as equal with no hatred towards the low, the depressed and the oppressed ones, were some of the other premises on which the Sikhism is based. Then the revered Gurus stood with one voice against cruelty fanaticism, oppression on the part of the rulers, the so called upper class people and above all exploitation by the clergy and the priestly class – by Pundits and Maulvis alike.

Some extracts given below from Gurbani – Gurus' Word –, and Bhai Nand Lal speaks out the Sikh Philosophy and the relationship of Sikhs with the people of the other faiths.

The revered Gurus and all the saints, fakirs, pirs etc whose 'bani' has been included and incorporated in Guru Granth Sahib, always treated all human beings as equal and observed God everywhere. Some excerpts:

ਸੰਤਹੁ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਰਹਿਆ ਸਮਾਹਿਓ ॥

ਪੂਰਨ ਪੂਰਿ ਰਹਿਓ ਸਰਬ ਮਹਿ ਜਲਿ ਬਲਿ ਰਮਈਆ ਆਹਿਓ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੬੧੭)

SANTHU GHAT GHAT RAHIYA SAMAHIYO,

PURAN POOR RAHIYOO SARAB MEH JAL THAL RAMIYAA AHHIYO.

O Saints, He is pervading and permeating within each and every heart. The Perfect Lord the Ram is completely permeating within every one and is everywhere; He is within the water and upon the land – everywhere.

ਘਟ ਘਟ ਮੈ ਹਰਿ ਜੂ ਬਸੈ ਸੰਤਨ ਕਹਿਓ ਪੁਕਾਰਿ ॥

ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਤਿਹ ਭਜ ਮਨਾ ਭਉ ਨਿਧਿ ਉਤਰਹਿ ਪਾਰਿ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੨੭)

GHAT GHAT MAI HAR JOO BASAI SANTAN KAHI-O PUKAAR.

KAHO NANAK TIH BHAJ MANAA BHOU - NIDH UTREH PAAR.

The Dear Lord abides in each and every heart. The Saints say so very openly and loudly. Says Nanak, meditate and vibrate upon Him, and you shall cross over the terrifying world-ocean.

ਸਭੈ ਘਟ ਰਾਮੁ ਬੋਲੈ ਰਾਮਾ ਬੋਲੈ ॥ ਰਾਮ ਬਿਨਾ ਕੋ ਬੋਲੈ ਰੇ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੮੮)

SABHAI GHAT RAM BOLAI, RAMA BOLAI, RAM BINA KO BOLLAI RAI.

Within all hearts, the Lord speaks, the Lord speaks, and no one speaks other than the Lord.

ਫਰੀਦਾ ਖਾਲਕੁ ਖਲਕ ਮਹਿ ਖਲਕ ਵਸੈ ਰਬ ਮਾਹਿ ॥

ਮੰਦਾ ਕਿਸ ਨੋ ਆਖੀਐ ਜਾ ਤਿਸੁ ਬਿਨੁ ਕੋਈ ਨਾਹਿ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੮੧)

FARIDA KHAALAK KHALAK MAI KHALAK VASAI RAB MAHE,

MANDA KISS NOO AAKHIYE JAN TIS BIN KOI NAHEN.

Fareeda, (O Fareed !) the Creator is in the Creation, and the Creation abides in God. Who can be called ill? There is none other than Him.

ਜਿਮੀ ਜਮਾਨ ਕੇ ਬਿਖੈ ਸਮੱਸਤ ਏਕ ਜੋਤ ਹੈ ॥

ਨ ਘਾਟ ਹੈ ਨ ਬਾਢ ਹੈ ਨ ਘਾਟ ਬਾਢ ਹੋਤ ਹੈ ॥

ZIMI ZAMAN KE BIKHAI SAMAST AIK JOTE HAI;

NA GHAT HAI, NA BADH HAI, NA GHAT BADH HOTE HAI.

(Akal Ustat -Guru Gobind Singh)

In the entire universe – the earth and the sky – there is only one light of eternal God. The same neither diminishes nor is increased ever, it is ever constant and continuous.

ਹਿੰਦੂ ਤੁਰਕ ਕੋਊ ਰਾਫ਼ਜ਼ੀ ਇਮਾਮ ਸਾਫੀ

ਮਾਨਸ ਕੀ ਜਾਤ ਸਭੈ ਏਕੈ ਪਹਿਚਾਨਬੋ ॥ (ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ)

HINDU TURK KOU, RAPHZI IMAM SAAFI,

MAANAS KI JAAT SABHE AIKO PEHCHANBO.

Some are Hindus, some are Muslims, some Raphzi, some Imam and some Safi (Persons belonging to different religions enjoying different positions, having similar or dissenting views) – all belong to one human race (and as such), recognize all as one only.

OR

ਦੇਹੁਰਾ ਮਸੀਤ ਸੋਈ ਪੂਜਾ ਔ ਨਿਵਾਜ਼ ਓਈ ॥

ਮਾਨਸ ਸਭੈ ਏਕ ਪੈ ਅਨੇਕ ਕੋ ਭ੍ਰਮਾਉ ਹੈ ॥

(ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਬਚਿੱਤਰ ਨਾਟਕ, ਪੰਨਾ ੧੯)

DEHURA MASEET SOI, POOJA AOU NIWAAZ OI.

MAANAS SABHE AIK PAI ANAIK KO BHARMAO HAI.

The Temple and the Mosque are one and the same, The worship of Hindu ways and the Namaz (Prayer as per Islam) are one and the same. All human beings are just one and the same, but there is an illusion of different entities.

ਅਵਲਿ ਅਲਹ ਨੂਰ ਉਪਾਇਆ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਕੇ ਸਭ ਬੰਦੇ ॥

ਏਕ ਨੂਰ ਤੇ ਸਭ ਜਗੁ ਉਪਜਿਆ ਕਉਨ ਭਲੇ ਕੋ ਮੰਦੇ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ ੧੩੪੯)

AVAL ALAH NOOR UPAAIYAA KUDRAT KAI SABH BANDAY.

AIK NOOR TAY SABH JAG UPJIYAA KAUN BHALAY KO MANDAI.

First, Allah (God) created the Divine Light; then, by His Creative Power, He made all mortal beings. From the One Light, the entire universe welled up. So who is good, and who is bad ?

Bhai Nand Lal in his Tankha Nama puts the dictates of the tenth master as under:

KHALAK KHAALIK KI JAAN KAI, KHALAK DUKHAVAI NAAHE

KHALAK DUKHAI JO NAND JEE KHAALIK KOPAI TAAHE.

Treat all human beings as Lord's creation and don't hurt any one's feelings and sentiments. Nand Lal says who so ever hurts, causes grief to others, faces the wrath of the Lord.

OR

JAGAT MAAHE, HAI PANTH SU JETE,

KARE NIND NAIHAN KABHUN TETE.

Whichever religions or sects are there in the world, do not ever undermine or condemn any of them.

Thus it is amply clear that there is no place of hatred towards any one in the tenets of Sikh religion. It is all based on love, affection, equal and kind treatment towards all, and coming to the aid of any one, particularly the oppressed, in the hour of need. It stresses for sharing your bounties with the fellow beings on daily basis. Even taking of food, without sharing the same with others is not an approved act. To hurt the feelings of others or to look down upon other religions is strictly prohibited.

ਤਬ ਹਮ ਜਨਮ ਕਲੁ ਮਹਿ ਲੀਯਾ ॥

TAT MAT MUR ALAKH ARADHA.

BHU BIDH JOG SADHNA SADHA.

TIN JO KRI ALAKH KI SEWA.

TA TE BHAI PARSANN GUR DEVA.

TIN PRABH JAB AAIS MOHE DIYA,

TAB HAM JANAM KLU MAI LIYA.

'My parents meditated on 'Almighty, the God'. They did Yoga and 'Sadhana' in different ways. The manner they served the God, He became very pleased with them. Then He directed me, and I took birth in this Kalyug.'

Mata Gujri is one of the most revered mothers of the Khalsa Panth. Being the pious wife of Sri Guru Teg Bahadur, the 9th Nanak and the revered mother of Dasam Patshah Guru Gobind Singh Sahib, she drew and continues to draw utmost respect from the Sikh Panth. But it has been observed that she is known in the 'Sikh Jagat' only for the above two factors. But her own role, her own contribution and her own crucial importance at different turns of her life is generally not known to or appreciated by an ordinary person.

The first stage of her long patience and forbearance ended when Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib was bestowed Guru Gaddi in 1664 as per the edict of the 8th Nanak Guru Harkrishan Sahib issued at Delhi and (Guru) Teg Bahadur was brought on the forefront by Makhn Shah Lubana. Here too Dhir Mal and his men created a lot of trouble and even one of the masands shot at Guru Teg Bahadur, who was miraculously escaped.

She had an occasion of great rejoicing and happiness, when she was conceived after 33 years of her marriage at the age of 42 at Paryag (Triveni), and delivered her only son Gobind Rai at Patna in 1666. She nourished the child for a period of 4 years at Patna when Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib was away on tour of eastern India. When he came back, he directed the family to reach Lakhnour at Ambala, where he would meet them, and himself adopted some different route to Delhi as he was busy in spreading the message of Guru Nanak.

Year 1675, again was the beginning of the period when her endless agonies started. The Pundits came from Kashmir when Gobind Rai on seeing the pensive mood of his father, asked him as to who was the

super soul better than that of his father who could save the religion of the poor pandits. Guru Teg Bahadur started for Delhi on his mission on 11th July 1675 and on the 11th November 1675, he actually made the supreme sacrifice. **Then what a horrible occasion was for her, when the slain rather martyred head – sans body - of Guru Teg Bahadur was brought to the family at Anand Pur Sahib by Bhai Jaita Rangretta who narrated to the Guru family the events those took place at Delhi including those of Martyrdom of Bhai Mati Dass, Bhai Sati Dass and Bhai Dayala. They were also informed as to how and where the headless body of Guru Sahib was cremated at Delhi by Bhai Lakhi Shah Vanjara.**

From 1675 to 1699 onwards she was very actively associated and involved in the actions and the struggles of his son Guru, Guru Gobind Rai. Despite Bhangani war and other hostile acts of tyrannical Mughal rulers and Hill Rajas she never lost heart and gave any hour of despair to her son. She was always found standing by him in his decisions and was always in high spirits 'charhdi kala'.

Mata Gujri and her two younger grandsons were arrested on 8 December 1704 and confined in *Sarhind* Fort, which is referred to in Sikh circles as 'Thanda Burj, the cold tower'. As the children were summoned to appear in court from day to day, the grand mother kept urging them to remain steadfast in their faith. The mother narrated to them the events about the heroic acts of the martyrdom of their grand father Guru Teg Bahadur at Delhi and great grand father (The grand father of their grand father - Guru Arjan Sahib), at Lahore, the great deeds of their father, the Father of Khalsa Panth and filled in them such a type of zeal and guts that they did not budge an inch to the threats and embraced martyrdom brought to them in a most heinous way.

Some people say that on hearing the news of the tragic end of the little kids, she gave away her life, but Principal Satbir Singh has categorically mentioned that when the messenger went to deliver the tragic news to her, she had already breathed her last, knowing fully well that she had done her duty. ***Mother Gujri who lived a long life of about eighty years was having in her a spirit of dedication, devotion and a commitment for the cause and spread of Gursikhi. She was an embodiment of service and sacrifice. She was a witness to a long period of upheaval, that went through in the growth of Sikhism, right***

from the period of Guru Hargobind Sahib to the Sarhind Saga of the martyrdom of younger Sahibzadas – Sahibzada Zorawar Singh and Sahibzada Fateh Singh. As said above she is also known as mother of martyrs in Sikh history as her husband was a martyr, her only son was a martyr, all the four grand sons were martyrs and she herself sacrificed her life for the dignity of Guru Nanak's mission so dear to her husband and to her loving son Guru Gobind Singh Sahib – 'Dasmesh Pita, Panth Da Waali, Neele Da Shah Sawar, Kalgian Wala, Bajan wala, Sarbans Daani, Aape Gur Chela' and having innumerable such titles tagged to his name by his beloved Khalsa – that he created on the Baisakhi day of 1699.

We all must express our gratitude to revered mother Mata Gujri, as it was she who due to her mega role, tall stature, firm beliefs, conviction and teachings that she inspired her little grandsons and thousands of martyrs who gave their heads and not their faith.

At Fatehgarh Sahib, there stands a Gurdwara in the name Mata Gujri (Thanda Burj). This is the place where Mata Gujri spent the last four days of her life. About one kilometer to the south east of it is the Gurdwara Joti Sarup, marking the cremation site of the Sahibzadas and the grand, old, grand mother.

17. MATA JEETO JI

There is some confusion about Mata Jeeto Ji. Several writers hold the view that Guru Gobind Singh Sahib, keeping in view the tradition of Guru's house did not have more than one wife. According to them Mata Jeeto, was the paternal name of Mata Sundri. As she was very beautiful, she was given the name 'Sundri' by Guru Dasmesh himself. But some people hold that Mata Jeeto was there with a separate entity, as she breathed her last during the life time of Dasmesh and there is a separate 'Angeetha' of her at Anand Pur Sahib and a Gurdwara stands at Agam Pur, Anand Pur, the place where her last rites were performed.

Though exact date of her marriage is not clear, yet many have mentioned that the marriage was solemnised at a new city, temporarily got established by Dasmesh and the same was named as Guru Ka Lahore. As Mata Jeeto Ji belonged to Lahore, her father Bhai Harjas desired that the marriage party be brought to Lahore. As Guru Sahib felt that the conditions for going to Lahore were not congenial for him, so he established a new city and named the same as Guru Ka Lahore and the nuptial knots were tied over there. It is also not clear as to whether this story is related to the marriage of Mata Jeeto Ji or that of Mata Sundri with the Tenth Master. Principal Satbir Singh holds that this relates to the marriage of Mata Sundri, the daughter of Bhai Ram Saran a resident of Kamrav. He has given the name of Mata Sundri 'Sunder Sarup' i.e. a beautiful figure. (As mentioned in his 'Purakh Bhagwant' - page 75).

Then there is confusion as to whether Mata Jeeto ji was the first wife or Mata Sundri was the first one. According to some Mata Jeeto was the first one, while Principal M.K. Gill takes Mata Sundri as the first wife as she gave birth to the eldest son Sahibzada Ajit Singh at Paonta Sahib. But this conclusion again does not hold good as the period of delivery of a child first, does not make one consort as senior to the other, if there are more than one wife of a person. Three sons Sahibzada Jhujhar Singh, Sahibzada Fateh Singh and Sahibzada Zorawar Singh were born to Mata Jeeto Ji at Anand Pur Sahib.

Mata Jeeto ji breathed her last in 1700 A.D. at Anand Pur Sahib and an 'Angeetha' stands there in her memory.

But it may once again be mentioned that there is no concrete evidence other than the Angeetha Sahib that shows that Mata Jeeto Ji was a separate entity, other than Mata Sundri. Another incident mentioned by Principal Satbir Singh indirectly but clearly shows that Guru Sahib was having only one wife. He has mentioned that once in 1691 during the Vaisakhi celebrations, Rani Padma of Chamba came to have his glimpse 'Darshan' and blessings. Guru Ji as usual and as per his practice blessed her with the touch of his arrow. She requested and stressed, as she was her 'devout', he should bless her with his benign hands. Guru Ji replied that he had never touched any woman other than his 'wife', with his hands. (Purakh Bhagwant –Page 114). This incident whereas on the one hand show the exemplary character of Dasmesh, also signifies that he used the word 'Dharam Patni', wife and not wives. Thus it is not difficult to conclude that he was having only one wife. Yet in view of one or two facts mentioned above, the matter requires some further research.

18. Mata Sundar (Sundri) Kaur Ji & 19. Mata Sahib (Devan) Kaur Ji

At the outset it may be mentioned that both the mothers were not only the passive contributors or observers of the turmoil that was there during the physical life span of Dasmesh being closely connected to Guru's house, but actually played quite an active role in shaping our destiny after Guru Sahib left this mortal world. Whereas Guru Sahib had a physical life span of about 42 years and left in 1708, the mothers lived beyond about 40 years and guided the Sikh nation in the period of crisis. They were witness to Banda Bahadur's episode, massacre of several innocent Sikhs –men, women and children in Delhi and Lahore and turmoil at Amritsar between different factions of the Khalsa. They had an eminent role in the collecting and compilation of the bani of Guru Sahib in the form of 'Dasam Granth'. Now let us have a systematic study of their lives and character.

Mata Sundar (Sundri) Kaur:

Mata Sundri had her birth in 1671 A.D. Her father Bhai Ram Saran, a Khatri was from Lahore now in Pakistan. He was a rich person. Bhai Ram Saran was a Sikh and had been to Anand Pur Sahib earlier too to have a 'darshan' (to pay his obeisance to) of Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib. When he visited Anand Pur Sahib again to have a glimpse (Darshan) of Guru Gobind Rai, he was so impressed with his towering personality and stature that he proposed his daughter to him. The proposal was accepted with a small condition that wedding party shall not go to Lahore, - perhaps due to political conditions – and the marriage would be solemnized at Anand Pur Sahib. When Bhai Ram Saran insisted that as he belonged to Lahore, the wedding should be solemnized at Lahore. Guru Sahib assured him that he would create a Lahore near Anand Pur Sahib for the purpose.

A small township was specially created near Anand Pur Sahib and was named as 'Guru Ka Lahore'. Markets were created. Crafts men were called. People in large numbers went for shopping as well. In this Guru ka Lahore the marriage was solemnized. The marriage was solemnized in 1684. In 1686 Sahibzada Ajit Singh was born to her.

Till 1704, i.e. till the Chamkaur war, nothing special about Mata Sundri appears to have been recorded by the historians.

Just during the fourth and the last war of Anand Pur Sahib, when Guru Dasmesh surrounded by the enemy on all the sides decided to leave Anand Pur Sahib in the darkness of night on the advise of his revered mother Mata Gujri and some other Gursikhs whose opinion or advice he valued, he divided his people in different groups including his family. In one group were two elder Sahibzadas, he himself and some warrior Singhs. Mata Sundri Ji, Mata Sahib Devan Ji accompanied by Bhai Mani Singh were sent to Hardwar and from there they went to Delhi. In the third group were Mata Gujri two younger Sahibzadas with some escorting Singhs. While crossing over the inundated Sirsa River, in the darkness of night the family and almost all the groups were separated from each other. The revered Mother Gujri and two younger Sahibzadas when stranded were taken by Kuma Mashki (water carrier), to his house. He gave shelter to them for a night and then Gangu Brahmin took them with him.

When all the wars were over and Sahibzadas were martyred, Mata Sundri and Mata Sahib Devan reached back at Damdama Sahib to reunite with the family and here they came to know the tragic end of all the four Princes. Guru Gobind Singh tried to console them by saying

**'IN PUTTRAN KE SIS PAR VAR DIYE SUT CHAAR,
CHAAR MUYE TO KAYA HUVA, JEEWAT KAI HAZAR'.**

Meaning thereby 'I have sacrificed the four sons over the heads of these sons. What if four have died several thousands are living'. He was pointing towards the Khalsa present there, who were his foster sons. This was a big test for the mothers who had lost their sons and the old pious mother, Mata Gujri under tragic circumstances. But being not only the mother of the four sons, they were the mothers of the entire Khalsa and as such withstood the test of times.

Now after a short stay of about one year at Damdama Sahib Talwandi Saabo, when Guru Sahib decided to go to the South at the invitation and insistence of the Mughal Ruler, Mata Sahib Devan accompanied him; Mata Sundri was advised to stay at Delhi. After a very short gap, Mata Sahib Devan was also sent back to Delhi to live with Mata Sundri. Both never met Dasmesh again.

This small description was considered very essential as from now onwards and from Delhi itself, they took over the reign of the Khalsa. They guided the destiny of the Khalsa Panth for about forty long years and the guidance given and precedents set by them have an impeccable effect on the whole community.

The first issue that came up before the revered mother, Mata Sundri, was the rift between the Bandai Khalsa and the Tat Khalsa. It is a well known fact that Guru Dasmesh sent Baba Banda Singh Bahadur from Nanded to lead the Khalsa Panth in the hours of turmoil and to continue the crusade against the tyrannical rulers who were instrumental in the brutal killings of the younger Sahibzadas, Pir Buddhoo Shah, a beloved devout and friend of Guru Sahib, and the executors of Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib. **Baba Banda Bahadur came with such a fierce spirit and high speed that he not only took revenge from almost all the culprits by eliminating them, he also established Khalsa Raj in a part of Punjab and issued Khalsa**

currency too.

But in the process it is alleged that he transgressed the authority and the brief that he had from Guru Sahib, and declared himself as Guru. Though the fact, that he proclaimed himself as Guru, is not confirmed by several historians, yet some people believe that he did so and several people emerged in Punjab who declared themselves as Bandai Khalsa (Khalsa of Banda Bahadur) and against them were those Sikhs who were known as Tat Khalsa (The essence of Khalsa). A rift arose between them as to who would control the future course of events of the Khalsa Panth. Both groups wanted to have the control of Harmandir Sahib – the apex religious seat. The daggers were drawn.

Here the intervention of Mata Sundar Kaur brought out a positive result. She had appointed Bhai Mani Singh, a learned scholar, a close associate and a contemporary of Guru Dasmesh as the Granthi of Sri Darbar Sahib Amritsar. He was in direct contact with the revered mother and was seeking her guidance in several matters. When this matter came before him, he suggested a solution to both the warring factions. He suggested two papers with the name written of each faction, be placed before Sri Guru Granth Sahib and one of them might be picked up by some unknown neutral person. The winner was to be the group whose paper was thus picked up. Some people hold that the papers were put into the holy Sarovar (holy water Tank), with the condition that the paper, with whatever name, shall continue to float will triumph and the other whose paper shall sink would forgo their claim. Both the parties agreed and Tat Khalsa was declared victorious. Thus the rift ended with the wisdom of the mother and Bhai Mani Singh Ji. The bloodshed was averted and the matter was settled amicably.

Second major achievement of the revered mother was the collection and compilation of the poetic works (Bani) of Guru Gobind Singh Sahib. The Sirsa flood as faced by Khalsa forces lead by Dasmesh at the time of leaving Anand Pur Sahib, whereas was instrumental in separation of the family and some beloved Sikhs from Guru Sahib, also resulted in the loss of immense literature including his own compositions 'Banis', as well as of his court poets. The entire works were drowned in the river. Mata Sundar Kaur devoted a lot of time, energy and even money, involved Gursikhs and Gur Sangats at

several places including Patna Sahib for the purpose. She and other several Sikhs knew that some beloveds of Guru Sahib were having copies of his writings and also the writings of various court poets. She searched for them, traced them out, obtained the material and passed on the same to Bhai Mani Singh after a close scrutiny. Bhai Mani Singh also collected the works at his level at Amritsar. Both exchanged the finds, and accepted as genuine only after revered mother put her seal of approval. Thus a complete Granth was compiled which was named as 'Dasam Patshah Ka Granth'. –The Granth of the Tenth (Emperor) – Master, and was later renamed as Dasam Granth.

S. Lal Singh in his book 'Chonvi Bani, Dasam Granth' has mentioned that though the authenticity and hundred percent undiluted contents of Dasam Granth like Sri Guru Granth Sahib cannot be claimed yet its total authenticity cannot be challenged as the same was compiled by Bhai Mani Singh, who was throughout associated with Dasmesh Pita in his entire life. Mohinder Kaur Gill writes that whatever Bhai Mani Singh included in the Granth did so only after the same was sent and shown to the revered mother and her tacit approval obtained. Thus the revered mother did a monumental and a yeoman service in the timely collection and compilation of the immense Bani of spiritual and literary value of Guru Gobind Singh Sahib. Had it not been done the irreparable and heavy loss might have been caused to Sikhs and Sikhism.

While studying the life of the revered mother one more aspect of her character that came to light is that of a very strong and responsible mother of the Khalsa Panth. The readers will recall that when Ram Rai the elder son of Guru Har Rai Sahib, succumbing to the pressure as well as the allurements from Aurangzeb, played with the Bani of Guru Nanak by just altering one verse to appease the Mughal Emperor of the day, Guru Har Rai passed the order and directed him not to come back and show his face to him. Even when he repented, came back to the town and sent some missives showing his repentance and begged for a pardon, Guru Sahib, who was other wise so cool and it is said that he even never plucked a flower throughout his life, was so firm and steadfast that he directed him to go back to the place from where he had come.

Similar was the case and the stand and the character of our

revered mother viz a viz her adopted son. After the martyrdom of the Sahibzadas, she adopted one Ajit Singh as a son. It is said that even Guru Dasmesh, before his departure from this world sounded her about the folly she was going to commit in adopting him as he was of the opinion that he would prove to be as an unfit son and Sikh. Mother who was having a heart of a mother adopted him with the hope that he will not turn bad. It so happened that he fell into bad company, spoiled his habits and resorted to criminal acts and drinking too. He touched the lowest ebb of his character when he disowned Sikhi and had a hair cut. The cool, soft hearted and old mother became so furious and hard that she vowed not to see his face.

He too repented. His habits made him penniless and he virtually turned out to be just a man on the street. The Sikhs pleaded for him to the mother. The mother was the wife of Guru Gobind Singh and was aware of the complications that might arise for the entire Sikh community for her one act of weakness. She turned out to be very strong and stood like a rock on her decision. She, as a mother, yielded to pay him some money as monthly expenses to meet his bare needs but as a mother of the Khalsa and wife of Guru Gobind Singh Sahib did not agree to see his face – the face of a ‘patit’ fallen Sikh.

Even when his men killed one saintly figure, Benava, the Government of the day deputed certain officials to the mother who pleaded that her son had taken the revenge of the killing of Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib and as such the revered all powerful mother should pardon the Government for the crime of killing the ninth Guru.¹ The mother point blank refused and did not plead for mercy for her son. She saw her tragic end in an unnatural manner but could not tolerate his abandoning of faith in Sikhi, a Sikhi that was so dear to her husband, her sons and to her as well. Thus when she was facing a dilemma of her love of a mother and affection for a son on one hand and her role as a mother of the Khalsa she valued her latter role of much more importance as compared to the first one.

Some other important landmarks those were set up by her included

¹ MAHINDER KAUR GILL – GURU MEHAL GAATHA- PP 96

the establishing of a Gurbani meanings and interpretation Taksal 'center' at Amritsar. As has been mentioned above she appointed Bhai Mani Singh as 'Granthi' of Darbar Sahib Amritsar. Then she directed him to open a 'Taksal' over there. This was in line with the step taken by Guru Dasmesh in establishing a Taksal at Damdama Sahib, Talwandi Sabo, that later came to be known as 'Damdami Taksal'. Both the centers have rendered very useful service in the field and have produced scholars of very high caliber besides training 'Granthis', 'Paathis' and 'Sevadars.'

Then she encouraged several Sikhs to copy out the Gurbani 'gutkas' and distribute the same amongst the aspirants and send them to distant places. Keeping her self always alert, abreast and at the forefront for the spread of Gur Sikhi she was occasionally issuing Hukam Namas to the Sikhs individually and to the sangat collectively at different places and was directing them to do certain acts. She was directing them to send the money collected to Guru Darbar for 'langar' etc. She even did not forget a Gur Sikh whose daughter was to be married. She directed in one Hukamnama to give certain amount as a token of gesture 'sagan' on the marriage of his daughter. Her role i.e. of issuing hukamnamas whereas clearly reflects the responsibilities assumed by her, due to the sudden and abrupt exit of Guru Dasmesh from the scene, it also shows that the Sikhs wherever they were, were bowing to towering authority of the revered mother with no reservation at all.

The revered mother spent about 43 years at Delhi. She stayed at a mansion specially bought for her by the Sikhs of Delhi and got registered in her name, outside Turkaman Gate, Delhi. In this place are now housed Gurdwara Mata Sundri and a Girls College in her name is also running. The mother breathed her last in 1747 A.D. Her mortal body was cremated with full respects at the place where mortal remains of child Guru, Bala Pritam, Guru Har Krishan were consigned to flames at Gurdwara Bala Sahib, on the banks of Yamuna and her Samadhi was created. Thousands of heads bow to her in reverence daily even today.

*

Mata Sahib Kaur

If one aspires to find a solitary example of a symbol of dedication, devotion, and selfless -ness and with no aspirations at all, one ought to look towards revered mother of the Khalsa, Mata Sahib Kaur. If one has to find a young girl who was married to Guru Gobind Singh Sahib at the age of 16 with a condition that after marriage she would not have any marital relations with her husband, she was Mata Sahib Kaur. And she stood to her word and remained an unmarried wife (Kuara Dola) till she breathed her last at the age of 66 years, at Delhi, roughly 43 years after Guru Dasmesh merged his soul with the Almighty.

Daughter of Bhai Ramu Bassi and Jas Devi, Sahib Devan was born in Rohtas area, district Jehlam, now in Pakistan in 1685 A.D. The area as such being in Pothohaar was full of dedicated and committed Gursikhs who were always seeking blessings of the Gurus and were always ready to do any service to the Guru. It is said by one historian that Mata Sahib Devan was born with the blessings of Guru Sahib and as such was named as 'Sahib Devan'. And her parents just at her birth had made up their mind to present her to Guru Sahib when she was to come up of age.

Another writer has dealt with the subject in a different way. She says that Sahib Devan was very beautiful, very sweet natured and was drenched in Gur Sikhi right from her childhood. She learnt Gurmukhi script, memorized several 'paths', (Gurbani compositions), and was always busy serving the Sangat. Otherwise too she was so beautiful and had such attractive and unique features that her parents could not find a suitable match for her. Ultimately they decided to present her to Guru Sahib in marriage. When they shared their decision or even the idea with some other friends or relatives, the news spread like wild fire and people started taking Sahib Devan as their mother and started showing their reverence to her.

Now time came when the parents accompanied by some other Gursikhs, presented themselves in Guru Darbar and put forth the proposal to Guru Sahib with utmost reverence. They were confident that Guru Sahib would not turn down their proposal. But Guru Dasmesh declined the offer point blank saying that as he was already married, he was not going in for another marriage. The parents pleaded

again and again with folded hands in a most humble way and said that since they have made up their mind long ago and all the people around them were aware of their decision, no body would take her as his wife as they were taking her as their mother and were showing reverence to her. They even requested that as Sahib Devan wanted to serve Guru Sahib she might not be deprived of her zeal of service.

Seeing the dilemma of the parents, Guru Gobind Singh Sahib relented to the extent that he could marry her with the condition that she would live in Anand Pur Sahib and would only serve him but he would not have any marital relations with her. The girl and the parents had a sigh of relief. The parents' wish to present their daughter to Guru Sahib and the girl's desire to serve him through out his life by living very close to him were fulfilled.

Another very strange factor has been pointed out. Normally it is the system in Punjab that bridegroom goes to the bride's place for marriage along with a marriage party. Guru Sahib though did not go to Lahore in the earlier case due to some political reasons, but he established a separate town and called it Guru Ka Lahore and went there for marrying Mata Sundri. But in this case it was just the opposite. The bride and her people came to the bridegroom's place fully prepared. Guru Sahib advised them to stay and wait for a few days.

They were also directed to take Amrit during their that period of stay and be baptized before the marriage was solemnized. This condition reflected another very important but determining state of affairs of Dasmesh's mind, a precedent set by him, which continued in the Panthik arena just till quite recently. This precedent was that no marriage of Sikhs could be solemnized unless they had taken 'Khande di Pahul', and were baptized. After, all the people including the girl, the bride, got the Amrit from the five beloved ones, the marriage was solemnized and the parents and other friends and relatives who accompanied them returned to their place after leaving the bride in the custody of Guru Sahib.

Now Guru Gobind Singh Sahib, the husband, in order to keep her vow allotted her a separate house to live in, where she started living in the company of some Sikh women of trust. She had also taken another

vow and that was that she would not touch (eat or drink) any thing in the morning without having a glimpse 'Darshan' of her 'beloved', Guru and husband. To enable her to live up to her vow Guru Sahib made his program in such a way that daily early morning he was paying a visit to her at her dwelling place. Then all day long she was busy in reciting bani, Naam and serving Guru Sahib, attending to his daily requirements.

A HISTORICAL DECISION: Another memorable time that came after some time of their marriage that made Mata Sahib Kaur immortal, needs to be mentioned here. Once while when she was absorbed in the service of Dasmesh, her beloved Guru- husband, Guru Sahib saw a few tears in her eyes, the eyes of her dedicated and devoted, beloved wife. He asked about the cause of her agony, and expressed surprise as he never expected any thing of that sort from her as she was having a very strong mind.

Seeing the proper time and opportunity she opened up, cried and begged that she also needed a child who would call her 'mother', as without that her womanhood would remain incomplete. **Guru Sahib, who was perhaps aware of her state of mind, surprised her with a new and strange announcement. He told her that she was asking for one son, she would be bestowed with lakhs of sons and her such sons would never die, live for ever who would become immortal and along with them she and her name shall also remain alive for ever. And he announced rather issued an edict that thence forth all the persons at the time of baptizing who were hitherto fore were given the name of Guru Gobind Singh as their father shall, simultaneously say and take 'Mata Sahib Kaur' as their mother.** Listening to such an astounding statement in the form of a boon, from the 10th Master, the revered mother became very happy and as cheer full as she was always found to be, expressed her gratitude to Dasmesh, her loving Husband as well as Guru and put her self in his service as usual.

From then onwards, Sikhs at the time of baptizing are told by the 'Panj Piyaare' the five beloved ones, that whereas they would be given the name of Guru Gobind Singh as their father, they shall be known as the sons/daughters of Mata Sahib Kaur, who shall be their foster mother.

Another historical misconception that needs to be corrected here is the fact that whereas Mata Jito Ji put the sweet Patashas 'sugar round balls' in the Amrit that was initially prepared by Dasmesh in 1699, at the time of the creation of the Khalsa, the declaring of Mata Sahib Kaur as the mother of the Khalsa was done at quite a later date. The fact that their very marriage took place one year after the Khalsa was created testifies this statement. And the fact, as stated above, that Guru Sahib directed all the persons who had come from Rohtas area of Pothohaar for the purpose including the bride, to get baptized first and the marriage would take place afterwards bears another testimony to the fact of her being declared as the foster mother of the Khalsa and the Khalsa as her adopted son 'Nadi Puttar', at some later date.

Another fact that I intend to share with the readers is that the common period of physical life of Guru Dasmesh as well as of Mata Sahib Kaur was very short one. Their marriage took place in 1700 A.D. and the 10th master merged himself in the light eternal in 1708 A.D. Again this short period of about eight years was also full of turmoil. There were wars, martyrdoms, sacrifices etc. The period of wars started from 1701, with the exception of Bhangani Yudh that was fought in 1686 at Paonta Sahib. The same continued up to 1705 and during this period Guru Sahib had to fight 12 battles, out of which six were centered at Anand Pur and the other six were scattered to different other places. In 1705 after the 'sarbans daani' had lost all his four sons and several of the loving Sikhs in the battles, he settled for a while at Damdama Sahib, Talwandi Sabo, took in hand several incomplete works, including the rewriting of Ad Guru, Guru Granth Sahib, put a new spirit into the Khalsa; several thousands new Sikhs were baptized here and the strength of the Khalsa that had been considerably depleted during the battles was regained and restored.

There after he went to the South for good and never returned. Before the Sarsa Turmoil, - when the entire family got separated (Parivar Vichhorha ho gaya), - Guru Dasmesh had directed Bhai Mani Singh to escort Mata Sundar Kaur and Mata Sahib Kaur to Delhi. Both the mothers stayed at Delhi for about a year and so and then they were called back by Guru Sahib at Talwandi Sabo in 1705. The mothers got the tragic news about the four 'sahibzadas' and the old grand mother Mata Gujri at this place in 1705.

Then Guru Sahib moved to the South. Mata Sahib Kaur accompanied him whereas Mata Sundar Kaur was advised to stay at Delhi. After some times even Mata Sahib Kaur was also sent back to Delhi to live with Mata Sundar Kaur. Before separating she humbly pleaded to her husband – Guru not to send her away as she would not be able to live to her pledge that she won't eat anything without having a glimpses 'darshan' of her husband Guru. Guru Dasmesh gave her five of her beloved Arms 'shastar' to keep with her and asked her that through their glimpses, after her morning bath, she would be able to see him. He also gave her his seal (Mohar) and authorized her to use the same whenever she felt necessary. This authority to use the seal was only given to Mata Sahib Kaur. Mata Sahib Kaur bowed to the decision without any reservation and came to Delhi.

Mata Sahib Kaur lived at Delhi from 1707 onwards till she breathed her last. She spent about 40 years of her life in the company of Mata Sundar Kaur. As has been stated above that Mata Sundar Kaur lead the Panth in the turbulent period that was there due to the sudden exit of Guru Sahib from this mortal world, Mata Sahib Kaur was with her in this new role and fully assisted her in the collection and compilation of Bani of Guru Dasmesh, in the settlement of Panthic disputes and in issuing directions 'Hukam Namas' to the Panth from time to time. It is on record that 9 'Hukam Namas' each were issued both by Mata Sundar Kaur and Mata Sahib Kaur in this period during their stay at Delhi. Mata Sahib Kaur who was given the title of the 'mother of the Khalsa', was fully alive to her duty as the mother during this period and guided the Sikh Nation with humility but with sagacity and determination and Khalsa Panth also bowed to her edicts with full reverence.

Both the revered mothers lived in Delhi till they left for heavenly abode, barring an exception of about two years. When Ajit Singh, the adopted son of Mata Sundar Kaur was killed by tying to the trunk of an elephant, in the streets, of Delhi for being involved in the killing of a Mohammedan saint (faqir), the political environment of Delhi turned for the worst and as such the mothers moved to Mathura, where a Jaipur Maharaja got built a house for them and also allocated some 'Jagir' (property) to the house for meeting their day to day expenses. After about two years when the situation improved both of them

returned to Delhi.

Both of the mothers breathed their last in Delhi within a short interval of each other's date of leaving this world.

Both the revered mothers enjoyed a lot in the company of Dasmesh, faced the circumstances jointly with him in the years of turmoil, felt his absence for a very long time, but did not turn away from the realities and attended to their responsibilities towards Khalsa Panth and guided the fate of the community for a long period of about 40 years, jointly. Both were cremated at the site of Gurdwara Bala Sahib, New Delhi.

The place where they lived in Delhi for such a long period is now known as Gurdwara Mata Sundari, at Mata Sundri Road, New Delhi and an educational institution for women as 'Mata Sundri College for Women', has also been established at this site.

Part IV

The Sikhism and Martyrdoms

ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਅਤੇ ਸ਼ਹੀਦੀਆਂ

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GENERAL

Sikhism, initially started by Guru Nanak Sahib, though on the principles of living a spiritual and peaceful life, was having the seeds of revolt since very beginning. Guru Nanak himself, though, a Guru, a saint, and 'Aap Naraian Kala Dhar, Jag Maahen Parvario', raised the banner of revolt against several of the social practices prevalent in the society. He stood against most of the religious dogmas those were being practiced by the clergy of both the prevalent religions viz, Hinduism and Islam at the cost of the poor, the illiterate, the semi literate and the simple but ignorant followers of their respective religions. He openly stood up against the tyrannical and oppressive policies of the rulers and the invaders of the day.

He was well aware, that the oppressors and the exploiters would not take up his wake up call lightly. Though he was a perfect peaceful 'Super Soul', yet he subscribed to the theory,

ਜਉ ਤਉ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਖੇਲਣ ਕਾ ਚਾਉ ॥ ਸਿਰੁ ਧਰਿ ਤਲੀ ਗਲੀ ਮੇਰੀ ਆਉ ॥

ਇਤੁ ਮਾਰਗਿ ਪੈਰੁ ਧਰੀਜੈ ॥ ਸਿਰੁ ਦੀਜੈ ਕਾਣਿ ਨ ਕੀਜੈ ॥

(ਸਲੋਕ ਵਾਰਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਵਧੀਕ ਮਹਲਾ ੧, ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੧੨)

'JOU TAU PREM KHELAN KA CHAO SIR DHAR TALI GALLI MERI AAO,

IT MAARG PAIR DHARIJAE. SIR DEEJAE KAAHN NA KEEJAE.'

He told his followers, the Sikhs, the persons who showed some interest in his sayings and teachings that in case they wished to play the game of love as proposed by him, come to his path always prepared for death. Your head must always be in your hand. And once you embark upon the path, give away your head and do not hesitate from doing the same.

Bhagat Kabir, though universally acclaimed as a saint, and highly docile person, also defined a warrior, a brave person. He too, said that the time had come when the brave, the strong soldiers had to fight. He said a brave person, when in the field, does not desert the same, even if he is cut limb-by-limb or cut to pieces.

ਸਲੋਕ ਕਬੀਰ ॥ ਗਗਨ ਦਮਾਮਾ ਬਾਜਿਓ ਪਰਿਓ ਨੀਸਾਨੈ ਘਾਉ ॥
 ਖੇਤੁ ਜੁ ਮਾਂਡਿਓ ਸੂਰਮਾ ਅਬ ਜੂਝਨ ਕੋ ਦਾਉ ॥
 ਸੂਰਾ ਸੋ ਪਹਿਚਾਨੀਐ ਜੁ ਲਰੈ ਦੀਨ ਕੇ ਹੇਤ ॥
 ਪੁਰਜਾ ਪੁਰਜਾ ਕਟਿ ਮਰੈ ਕਬਹੂ ਨ ਛਾਡੈ ਖੇਤੁ ॥

'GAGAN DAMAMA BAAJIYO PIRYOO NEESAANAE GHAO,
 KHET JOO MAANDHIO SOORMA AB JOOJHAN KO DAO,
 SOORA SO PEHCHAANIYEE JU LARAI DEEN KE HET,
 PURZA PURZA KAT MARAI KABHOON NA CHHADE KHET.'

It is a matter of history that Guru Nanak Sahib openly said that Babar, the first Mughal ruler and invader was a 'Jaabar' - an oppressor one. He also said 'Paap ki janj lai Kaablon Dhiyaa, Jori Mange daan ve Lalo', meaning thereby that Babar, the bridegroom has brought a marriage party of sinners from Kabul and was forcibly seeking donations, gifts etc. For saying so he was imprisoned too. Guru Angad Sahib did not bow to Emperor Humaayoon and Guru Amar Dass Sahib and Guru Ram Dass Sahib to Emperor Akbar. Jahangir became so jealous of the growing influence of the House of Guru Nanak that he barbarically tortured to death Guru Arjan Dev Sahib.

Thus Guru Arjan became the first martyr in Sikh history, to be followed by Guru Teg Bahadur, his grandson. In between some Sikhs like Bhai Mati Dass, Bhai Sati Dass and Bhai Dayala were also brutally tortured to death. Then an endless chain of martyrs and warriors started. The Sikhism or the Sikh nation, it self now is being called as a Qaum or a community (religion) of martyrs.

A major reason for getting such treatment by the revered Gurus and their beloved Sikhs, at the hands of the then rulers, was their practice and preaching of Sikhism.

There was a direct conflict and clash of interest. The fanatic rulers or the aggressors and invaders were working with zeal and under a program to spread Islam. In their mission, they adopted all fair and foul means. From giving allurements for attracting the masses to their religion, to the destruction of property and temples and other places of pilgrimage interest, levying of different types of taxes, putting various restrictions and even torturing and beheading the opposers were all justified means for their purpose and as per their thinking.

Sikh Gurus on the other hand stood and preached for freedom

of thought and freedom of religion. They propounded, preached, practiced and professed a way of life free from fear, free from hatred, worship of one God - the Almighty, love for humanity at large with the slogan 'sarbat da bhalla', wishing well being of all'. Then they preached for earning one's livelihood with fair means and hard labour - 'Haq Hallal Di Kamai', or Dasan Nauhan Di Kirat - and sharing one's earnings or the meals with the others particularly the needy. In addition, they practiced and worked towards a caste-less and class-less society, by introducing 'sangat and pangat' concept and later adding to 'Khande Baatte Di Pahul' or Amrit that was freely available to all, with the condition that all aspirants would take the same from the same bowl. The other condition was that all their castes, surnames etc should be buried for good after they took 'amrit' and they would become and emerge as 'Singhs' or 'Kauras' only.

These preachings those lead to the new enlightenment of the masses taken together were a clear-cut attack on the prevalent practices. The Brahmins and the Maulvis alike, could not take them lying down. Whereas, the proposed reforms were welcome by a vast majority of people as they were able to unload themselves of the heavy weight of various rituals, dogmas, fasts, good or bad omens, fears and wraths of various gods and goddesses 'Devis and Devtas' they were hitherto fore carrying on their heads, the same were resisted by the priest 'the Pujari' class as their very existence and means of livelihood were in danger. The new ruling class too was facing the greatest obstacles in their mission of spreading Islam with the spread of Sikhism.

The resistance by the Sikh Gurus and their followers prompted their en masse killings – putting them to death on flimsy grounds. Sometimes charges of treason, of helping the enemy, of revolt against the rulers of the day, of putting obstructions in the spread of Islam by instigating and encouraging people against it and sometimes for preaching against social practices, castes etc. All these factors mainly played their parts those lead to an endless wave and a chain of martyrdoms the Sikhs faced in the last more than four hundred years, starting from Guru Arjan Sahib's martyrdom that took place in 1606, at Lahore now in Pakistan.

On every page of Sikh history, particularly starting from Guru Arjan Dev Sahib, one will find saga of Sikh warriors and Sikh martyrs. The flow continued incessantly during the period of Guru Gobind Singh Sahib and for about hundred years thereafter. And then on any possible occasion when the circumstances warranted, Sikhs never lagged behind. The motivation behind the martyrdom of almost all the Gursikhs might be for the cause of defense of Gursikhi principles, values, for the defense or liberation of any Gurdwara, nation, or for overall reforms and changes or even at the command of one's immediate master.

We may also mention that there were a number of Gursikhs, contemporaries of Guru Gobind Singh Sahib, who were baptized by him and who played a crucial role in shaping the destiny of Khalsa Panth. Guru Panth shall always feel highly indebted to Baba Banda Singh Bahadur, Bhai Mani Singh and Baba Deep Singh for their varied contribution and supreme sacrifices made for us. Bhai Gurbax Singh, Nawab Kapoor Singh, Bhai Baj Singh, Bhai Sukhha Singh and Bhai Mehtab Singh, Bhai Bota Singh and Bhai Garja Singh, Bhai Taru Singh, Bhai Subeg Singh and Shahbaz Singh made the supreme sacrifices in their own way while holding high the flag, the Kesari Nishan of Dasmesh Pita. Besides there were innumerable Sikhs – Men women and children who gladly accepted their annihilation without slightest grudge or reservation or were massacred in several massacres (Ghalugharas) and Holocausts.

From 1708 onwards when Guru Gobind Singh Sahib left this mortal world and till 1801, i.e. the beginning of the Khalsa Raj – the rule of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in Punjab, the period for the Sikhs was full of turmoil, crusades, massacres struggles and sacrifices un - heard of in human history. This was the most crucial and testing time for the Sikhs. There was an open war. The Mughal rulers and other invaders were bent upon finishing and eliminating the Sikhs from this soil as they considered them as their sole enemies and an open danger to their existing or prospective regimes.

These were just some by the way and out of context observations and remarks. Let us continue with the saga of martyrs.

Before we proceed further let us try to know as to who is a true martyr. We all know death is imminent and every person who so ever has taken birth must die. Then people die out of old age, by suffering from various diseases or there may be accidental deaths. But when a person embarks upon a mission, not directly connected to his personal interest and embraces death for a noble, social or a religious cause that is dear to him, dearer than his life, he is said to be a martyr.

Then martyrs may be of different categories. We have soldiers and the armies in every country. Whenever there are clashes and wars, wrath falls upon the men in the field. The soldiers who die in action are called martyrs of the nation.

There are persons who are caught in some riots, become targets of mob frenzy and are killed in the process. Some times there are rallies, processions, public meetings and killings occur due to firing by the authorities or due to the stampede that follows, leading to the death of several persons. These victims are also known as martyrs. Some people take part in certain activities, marches, agitations, demonstrations, apprehending fully well that the situation at the spot may turn for the worse leading to the injury or killing of some people and he may be one of the victims. Such victims are also termed as martyrs.

Although every death is a death and every martyr is a martyr, we are primarily concerned here with a special class of martyrs not discussed so far. **Sometimes a person actively takes part in some activity and does something intentionally, or even otherwise, the ruling authorities pass a death sentence for him on any flimsy grounds. Then before executing the sentence he is given some options. He may be asked to desist from his path that led to the passing of the sentence against him. He may be set free in case he succumbs to certain allurements or his sentence may be remitted or reduced to an extent if he agrees to any other conditions put before him. But in case having all the options before him, he opts for death for the cause he or his organization is fighting for, he becomes a 'martyr', and he is a martyr in the truest sense of the term.**

In Sikhism, though there are martyrs in all the categories discussed above and all have their place in history, yet we find it is this last

category of martyrs, that is found sufficiently in large numbers. The faith and inbuilt strength of our martyrs and their being the predominance in numbers, have given our community, the title of a community of martyrs.

This book being a small as well as a general book is not supposed to deal with the noble and loving Saga of martyrs in detail. (An exclusive book on the issue is in the pipeline and it is hoped that the same shall be in the hands of the readers within a short time). Here, however names of some prominent martyrs with brief details including the background and the remote or the direct cause of their laying down lives at the hands of the killers of the humanity, shall suffice to meet the curiosity of the readers and to broaden a bit their insight and horizon about Sikhism.

ਤੇਰਾ ਕੀਆ ਮੀਠਾ ਲਾਗੈ ॥ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਪਦਾਰਥੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਮਾਂਗੈ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੯੪)

'TERA KIYA MEETHA LAAGE, HAR NAAM PADARTH NANAK MAANGE'

1. GURU ARJAN DEV SAHIB

A mention about his martyrdom has been made under the caption, 'Martyrdom Day of Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji at pages 21-26. Any thing to be said in detail here shall amount to sheer repetition. But when we talk of martyrs of and martyrdoms in Sikhism, we cannot skip the name and the importance of our revered Guru, Guru Arjan Sahib, the 5th Nanak, who not only laid down the foundation of Harmandir Sahib (through Saaen Mian Meer), not only gave us the Eternal Guru, Jugo Jug Attal, Shabad Guru, Guru Granth Sahib, not only gave us Sukhmani and other melodious, sweet and solace giving Banis (divine poetical compositions), but also was the first martyr of Sikhism and as such laid the foundation of martyrdoms, by not yielding to the pressures of the then ruler, Emperor Jahangir and the men around him. The path that he adopted, is continuously being followed by innumerable Sikhs since then.

He was martyred in a most inhumane way by making him sit on a burning iron plate, with fire under the same and putting hot sands on his body in the burning heat of June in the city of Lahore now in Pakistan. Sikhs around just watched their beloved Guru being tortured in this manner quite helplessly. Incidentally it may, however, be mentioned that the fire of sacrifice ignited by him became a path setter subsequently. The principles on which he stood as firm as a rock are continuously being followed by innumerable Sikhs since then.

Different causes have been attributed that lead to his martyrdom. One of the major factors was his refusal of accepting daughter of Chandu, a functionary of the Emperor for his son (Guru) Hargobind, at the instance and in deference to the wishes of 'the sangat', who could not bear the derogatory remark passed by Chandu against Guru Nanak's House. Then Prithi Chand, his elder brother, who was deprived of the Guru Gaddi by his father – Guru, Guru Ram Dass

Sahib, having not been considered a fit person by virtue of his habits and other attributes, to preside over the House of Guru Nanak, that was based on very noble principles, was continuously making representations to the emperor and also was lodging false complaints against him. Then a trumped-up charge was framed against him that he helped Khusro, the rebel son of the Emperor by giving him shelter for a day or for a few hours while he was on the run to Afghanistan. But the real factor that Jahangir himself mentioned in 'Tauzik-e-Jahangiri'- his own autobiography, was, that he was observing for a long time that how this shop of falsehood (Gursikhi of Guru Nanak) was spreading. He was noting that several Hindus and some ill informed or innocent Muslims were also joining the fold. As such he was contemplating to get the shop closed forever and keeping that in mind, he passed the death sentence against him.

It clearly showed that the tyrannical and fanatic rulers of the day could not bear that any other ideology or religion should spread that would put up a resistance of spreading Islam in India, in the country under their occupation.

Guru Sahib was handed over to Chandu for taking his revenge and unprecedented and savage type treatment was meted out to the Noble Soul at Lahore and he was martyred on 30th May 1606.

For a more detailed and vivid description please see the pages referred to above.

2. GURU TEG BAHADUR SAHIB

Protector of the religion and sheet (cover) of India.

Another unique martyrdom in Sikh religion is that of Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib. His martyrdom is not only unique for Sikh religion, but is unparallel and unmatched till date in the history of mankind.

The warriors, the brave, the martyrs, give away their lives and make supreme sacrifices for the causes, for the values they cherish, but if one has to find a supreme sacrificer, who offered and gave his head for the values, he and his forefathers, had discarded long ago but were too dear to the helpless people, the victims of the fanatic policies of the then rulers and who came to him for a protective hand, it was Guru Teg Bahadur, the 9th Nanak. It is an admitted fact that Guru Nanak Sahib declined to wear the customary ‘Janeau’, the sacred thread of the Hindus at the tender age of nine, as he asked for a specific type of ‘janeau’. The Pundit, who was there with the sacred thread, had no answer to the queries of Guru Nanak.

How paradoxical does it look that the same Guru Nanak in his 9th ‘Jama’, incarnation, told the Pundits who had come to him for the protection of their sacred thread, to tell the emperor and his functionaries that in case Guru Teg Bahadur, was ready to convert to Islam, they would follow suit. The Emperor Aurangzeb received the message through his officials. He sent for the Guru. Some chroniclers say that Guru Sahib was arrested and brought to Delhi while some hold the view that he himself came to Delhi via Agra along with a few of his companions - loving Gur Sikhs, three of whom also made the supreme sacrifice along with Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib at Delhi. (Note: The saga of their martyrdom just follows this chapter).

Some materials about the martyrdom of revered Guru Sahib has been placed at pages 27-31, under the caption ‘Martyrdom Day Guru

Teg Bahadur' and need not be repeated here. It is sufficient here to say that Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib stood by his words given to the Pundits and did not let them down. In fact his is the first supreme sacrifice for 'a right of freedom of religion' – a right for which we are talking so loudly in the 20th and 21st century.

For his sacrifice it has been rightly said,'

ਬਾਹਿ ਜਿਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਪਕੜੀਏ, ਸਿਰ ਦੀਜੈ, ਬਾਹਿ ਨ ਛੋੜੀਏ।

ਗੁਰੁ ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਬੋਲਿਆ, ਧਰ ਪਈਐ, ਧਰਮ ਨ ਛੋੜੀਏ॥

BAANHAE JINA DE PAKARIYEE, SIR DIJEY BAAHNEY NA CHHORIYEA,

GURU TEG BAHADUR BOLIA DHAR PAYIEEA DHARM NA CHHORIYEE.

Meaning thereby that who so ever's hand we hold (in distress), we should not leave him or them (in lurch), even though we have to give away our head. Guru Teg Bahadur said that we may fall down upon the earth (may die or might be killed), but we ought not surrender or leave our religion or the duty.

And

Guru Gobind Singh Sahib, the 10th Nanak, said about his sacrifice as under.

ਠੀਕਰਿ ਫੋਰਿ ਦਿਲੀਸਿ ਸਿਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਪੁਰ ਕੀਆ ਪਯਾਨ।

ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਸੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਆ ਕਰੀ ਨ ਕਿਨਹੂੰ ਆਨ॥

'THEEKAR PHOR DILEES SIR PRABH PUR KIYA PAYAAN

TEGH BABAHDUR SI KIRYA KARHI NA KINHOON AAN.'

He left this mortal world and went to the Land of the Lord by breaking his head at the door of the Ruler at Delhi. No one has ever acted and performed the feat like that of Guru Teg Bahadur.

3-5. Bhai Mati Dass, Bhai Sati Dass & Bhai Dayala

ਜਿਸੁ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਸਿਉ ਨੇਹੁ ਤਿਸੁ ਆਗੈ ਮਰਿ ਚਲੀਐ ॥

ਪ੍ਰਿਗੁ ਜੀਵਣੁ ਸੰਸਾਰਿ ਤਾ ਕੈ ਪਾਛੈ ਜੀਵਣਾ ॥ ੨ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ ੮੩)

JIS PAYARE SIO NEHUN, TIS AAGE MAR CHALIYEE.

DHRIG JEEWAN SANSAAR, TA KAE PAACHHE JEEWANA'.

The above verse of Gurbani by Guru Angad Dev Sahib (Mahalla Dooja), appears quite appropriate for the heroic martyrdom of the captioned three souls. They did not succumb to the pressures of the Mughal Ruler of Delhi and obtained martyrdom while laying down their lives in a most heinous way at the hands of the executors. All the three had accompanied Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib to Delhi and were mercilessly executed in the very presence and before the eyes of Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib.

After the martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev Sahib in 1606, who was barbarically martyred on the orders of Emperor Jahangir, Bhai Mati Dass, Bhai Sati Dass and Bhai Dayala, are perhaps the three names in Sikh History, who made the supreme sacrifice at the hands of the fanatic Emperor Aurangzeb in the year 1675. Several devout Sikhs laid down their lives while fighting with Guru Hargobind Sahib in the battlefield, but those were the martyrdom of 'soldiers' while fighting with the enemy. The first sacrifice in a peaceful and non-violent manner amongst the Sikhs started from the three great martyrs under reference.

It is said that when Guru Teg Bahadur started for Delhi to court arrest, these three Sikhs along with some others accompanied him. While these three courted arrest, others were not permitted by Guru Sahib to do so and instead were asked to watch the situation from outside and remain in touch with Anand Pur Sahib. It is also mentioned that when the royal functionaries wanted to arrest Guru Teg Bahadur at

Agra, these brave Sikhs came forward and stressed that they be arrested first, before their beloved and revered Guru was touched.

Then at the time of execution, they were contemplating to uproot the tyrannical rule by using the divine powers, which they had acquired by the grace of the Guru, but were desisted from doing so by the 9th Nanak himself.

Since they did not oblige the rulers to show miracles or to convert to Islam they were ordered to be put to death in a most barbaric manner. Bhai Mati Dass was made to stand erect in between two wooden logs and was cut into two by a saw moving from his head to the heel. Bhai Sati Dass was wrapped in cotton and burnt alive. Bhai Dayala was thrown alive into a big can full with boiling oil. This all took place in full view of the Guru and was done to scare him so that he may abandon his path and convert to Islam.

Before the sentences were executed all three were asked about their last will. All of the three desired that while executing the sentence, their face must be kept towards their beloved Guru. **What Great Gurmukhs they were!**

6-7 . SAHIBZADA AJIT SINGH & SAHIBZADA JUJHAR SINGH

ਮਰਣੁ ਮੁਣਸਾ ਸੁਰਿਆ ਹਕੁ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਹੋਇ ਮਰਨਿ ਪਰਵਾਣੋ ॥
ਸੂਰੇ ਸੇਈ ਆਗੈ ਆਖੀਅਹਿ ਦਰਗਹ ਪਾਵਹਿ ਸਾਚੀ ਮਾਣੋ ॥

(ਵਡਹੰਸ ਮਹਲਾ ੧, ਪੰਨਾ ੫੭੯)

'MARN MUNSA(N) SURIYAN HAQ HAI, JAE HOE MAREN PARVANO.
SOORE SAE AAKHIYHAI DARGEH PAAVEH SAACHI MAANO.'

Born in 1686 Sahibzada Ajit Singh was brought up as a strong saint soldier. "He matured into a powerful young man who was well versed in Sikh way of life. Under Guru Gobind Singh's guidance, he learnt the art of war and wielded weapons skillfully. He was also an adept rider, a natural leader and a forceful commander."² In his infancy he was made well versed to Gurbani. He learnt the Sikh History and the Philosophy. He became an expert and unmatched warrior as he mastered the manly arts such as horse riding, swordsmanship, archery. As the years passed he turned out to be young, handsome, tall, strong and natural leader. He got 'Khande Baate di Pahul' right in March - April 1699, when the first batches of Khalsa were being baptized immediately after the Khalsa was born On 30th March 1699.

All of us are aware that Sahibzada Ajit Singh obtained his martyrdom, while fighting in Chamkaur in 1704 when he entered the fray with the Blessings of Dasmesh. That was the culmination point of his great life.

His intelligence and calibre was first put to test by Guru Sahib when he was just 12 years of age. Sikh 'Sangat' coming from Pothohar, in the north west of Punjab (now in Pakistan), was looted by Ranghars of Nuh, near Anand Pur Sahib. Guru Sahib on getting the news deputed the Sahibzada with 100 Sikh- soldiers to take on the

² Dr. Santokh Singh – the Guru's Word and Illustrated Sikh History pp.176.

Rangarhs. The Khalsa force under his command reached the village Nuh on 23rd May 1699, severely punished the culprits and brought back the looted property.

Again on 15 March 1701, another group of devotees coming from Darap area (present Sialkot, Pakistan) was looted by Gujjars and Ranghars. They were also taught a lesson by the Sahibzada.

At another such incident where one young Brahmin came crying to Guru Darbar saying that his newly wedded wife was taken away by force by a Pathan of Bassi, near Hoshiarpur, Sahibzada came forward for help. On 7th march 1703, he took 100 horsemen along with him and bounced upon the Pathans of Bassi. He recovered the wife of the Brahmin, caught hold of the culprits and presented them in Guru Darbar in Anand Pur Sahib, where severe punishment was meted out to them. Brahmin's wife was honourably restored to him.

He fought a full fledged battle as a commander and a soldier in August 1700, when the Hill chiefs supported by the Mughal forces attacked Anandpur Sahib. Sahibzada Ajit Singh was assigned the duty of defending the Taragarh fort that became the first target of attack. He forcefully and successfully repulsed the attack.

He also showed his hands in the Nirmohgarh battle in October 1700.

In the last battle of Anandpur Sahib in 1704 too, Sahibzada Ajit Singh displayed his valour, qualities of courage and steadfastness.

There was a testing time for the Khalsa, when for various reasons Anand Pur city and forts were vacated in December 1704, and Guru Sahib along with his family and soldiers headed for Ropar.

Guru Sahib formed two groups of his men. In the first group were his aged mother Mata Gujri, wives Mata Sundar Kaur, and Mata Sahib Kaur, two younger sons, Sahibzada Zorawar Singh and Sahibzada Fateh Singh, and other women of the household. The second group comprised of Guru Sahib, two elder Sahibzadas Baba Ajit Singh and Baba Jujhar Singh, 'Panj Piyaare' (five beloved ones) and 400 Sikh soldiers.

After vacating the fort of Anand Pur Sahib, crossing through all odds and obstacles in the way when Guru Sahib reached Chamkaur he

was only having forty Singhs with him, including his Sahibzadas and the beloved ones. He at the request of one Chaudhry Buddhi Chand, occupied his 'mud' Garhi or a Kaccha Fort and prepared himself for facing the strong army of the enemy - Ten lakhs in strength. The figure of ten lakhs has been confirmed by many chroniclers, including the writers of Gur Sobha, Gur Bilas Patshahi Dasveen, and by Guru Ji himself in his Zafarnamah to Aurangzeb. The strange and unique battle took place on 22nd December 1704.

One thing worth mentioning here is that Khuwaja Mehmood Ali sent one messenger to Guru Sahib with a message. When after delivering a message, he used some derogatory words against the honour and prestige of Guru Sahib, Sahibzada Ajit Singh drew out his sword and warned him that in case he uttered a single word more, his head would be separated from his neck. He told him to run away immediately, and warned him that he would be seen in the battlefield. "In how high spirits was Guru's -Sahibzada."³!

The next morning there was a fierce battle. Whereas the force on the side of the Khalsa was dwindled due to Anand Pur Sahib war and the Sirsa mishap, the enemy's forces were further reinforced and swelled as troops from Malerkotla and Sirhind and from among the local Ranghars and Gujjars, joined them and threw a tight ring around Chamkaur.

Sahibzada Ajit Singh himself came forward and requested for permission from his Guru - father for showing his feats in the battlefield. Guru ji patted him and gladly sent him to face the enemy.

Sahibzada Ajit Singh while going out in the field was accompanied by eight Singhs including Bhai Mohkam Singh, one of the five beloved ones. Sahibzada started his attack with arrows and with his thunder like attack, several of the enemy troops perished in no time. When the stock of arrows exhausted he started his attack with the spear. When he attacked a Mughal Sardar, the spear cut through the shield he was wearing and in no time he met his fate. But as the edge of

³ Principal Satbir Singh -Purakh Bhagwant pp.181. Quoting Mohammad Latif, he writes, "utter another word and I will smite your head from your body. I cut you to pieces, for daring so to address our chief. PP. 265-66.

the spear got entangled in the iron shield it could not be brought out. The Sahibzada 'GURU KA LAL' resorted to attack by 'talwar' double-edged sword. While riding a horse he entered into the cluster of the enemy. All the Sikhs accompanying him had already obtained martyrdom. He was also attacked by a spear, but he saved the attack but in the process his horse was injured. Then he resorted to foot fighting and swerved his Talwar very swiftly. In the spontaneous and combined attack resorted to by the enemy, he faced martyrdom. *Gurdwara Qatalgarh now marks the spot where he fell.*

Guru Sahib was watching the feats of his son from the mud fort (Katchi Haveli or Garhi). On seeing him falling down in the field and obtaining martyrdom, he himself raised the 'Jaikara', 'Bole So Nihal-Sat Sri Akaal'. **One wonders in how high spirits he was even at such a grim situation ! THE 'CREATOR' HAS YET TO CREATE A FATHER LIKE HIM.**

Thus this was perhaps the first martyrdom of a young son before the eyes of his father. The martyrdom was not only before the eyes of the father but actually was inspired by him. This to date is the unique example in world history. Yet this was not the end but a beginning. What happened next. We shall see it with more curiosity now onwards, under the caption 'Sahibzada Jujhar Singh.

'Sahibzada' Jhujhar Singh

BABA JHUIHAR SINGH was the second son of Guru Gobind Singh Sahib. He was born on 27th September 1690 at Anand Pur Sahib. At the time of Chamkaur War he was just in the fifteenth year of age. But having got 'Khande Baate Di Pahul in March/April 1699 along with his elder brother and other Khalsa brotherhood, he was also in very high spirits.

He too learnt at the very early age, martial arts including horse riding, archery and swordsmanship 'Gatka' etc. He was also well versed 'in Gurmat Gyaan' and 'Gurbani' study. While crossing Sirsa river he showed his strength by facing the enemy and by crossing the river while riding a horse. Then in Chamkaur, when Guru Sahib was defending the 'haveli' or kachha fort, and was providing cover to the fighting 'Sant Sipahis' in the open field, by raining the showers of

arrows upon the enemy forces, Sahibzada Jujhar Singh was fully assisting him and was also carrying over attack upon the enemy with the arrows.

His inherent qualities and characteristics as Guru Gobind Singh's worthy son came to the fore when his elder brother Sahibzada Ajit Singh fell, very much before his eyes, in the battle field. He felt the pain of martyrdom when he saw his elder brother falling while facing a locust or a swam of the enemy. Principal Satbir Singh writes, seeing his elder brother getting martyred, Baba Jhujhar Singh was fully inspired and loudly uttered , "O brother! wait a while, I am also coming".

Then he came to his father, his commander, his Guru, 'Faujan Wala Guru' and asked for his benign permission to follow the foot steps of his brother. It was seeking permission to die in the battlefield, because in the circumstances whosoever might have gone in the field with whatever equipment and ammunition, the martyrdom was imminent. What a great courage, determination, will - power and zeal to fight, the young lad of 14 years might be having in his heart.

It was a testing time for the father too. Was he in a dilemma as he had lost his eldest son just a few minutes before? To permit a young son to die just before his eyes was not an easy test for a loving father. But Guru Dasmesh who was on a divine mission could not be found wanting. Guru, the father, said, please wait for a while, then he kissed him, hugged him and sent him into the field with his blessings.

Guru Dasmesh sent two out of the five beloved ones, Bhai Himmat Singh and Bhai Sahib Singh and three more Singh's, alongwith Sahibzada Jujhar Singh.

Baba Jujhar Singh entered the battle field with full vigour and took his spear in his hands. He was surrounded by the enemy but he continued his crusade with his spear and put several of the enemy ranks on the ground. He pierced their chests with unprecedented power and courage. Then he used his Khanda (double edged sword – a Sikh insignia) extensively. When he was closely encircled by the enemy, Guru Sahib showered arrows from the fort, the result of which was the circle around Sahibzada was broken. Sahibzada continued his attack. He was again encircled. Principal Satbir Singh holds that in the hoards

of the enemy how long could Six Singhs continue. But they showed to the world as to how they stood to the word of Guru Sahib,

ਸਵਾ ਲਾਖ ਸੇ ਏਕ ਲੜਾਉਂ ॥

ਤਬੈ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਾਮ ਕਹਾਉਂ ॥

SWAA LAAKH SE AIK LADHAAOON,

TABHAI GOBIND SINGH NAAM KAHAAOON.

'If I am able to pit my one Sikh, against One lakh and twenty five thousand, only then I shall (be justified in calling) call my name as Gobind Singh'. Such was the spirit inculcated in the Khalsa by its creator.

Ultimately the inevitable happened and Sahibzada fell in the field, and became a part of the list, of the brave Sikh soldiers, who fought against the tyrannical and fanatic forces against whom the Sikh Gurus starting from Guru Nanak were carrying over the crusade to liberate the people and the country.

What happened next, is still more unprecedented, unbelievable and unique in nature, and as we proceed to the next chapter, we shall be able to conclude that this could only happen in a Sikh way of life and Sikhi spirit as imbibed in the Khalsa by Dasmesh only.

8-9. SAHIBZADA ZORAWAR SINGH & SAHIBZADA FATEH SINGH viz a viz DADI MAAN GUJRI

‘ਨਿਕੀਆਂ ਜਿੰਦਾਂ ਵੱਡੇ ਸਾਕੇ’ ਅਤੇ ‘ਵਡੀ ਮਾਂ ਦਾ ਵਡਾ ਜੇਰਾ’

‘NIKIYAAN JINDAAN, VADDE SAAKE’ ate

‘VADDI MAAN DAA VADDA JERA’

All the standards, all the norms, all the concepts of humanity and civilization feel ashamed when the brutal and torturous death caused to little buds of six and nine years of age is brought out in black and white on the surface of a paper. The little kids of Guru Gobind Singh Sahib, were buried alive in a wall, just because they happened to be the sons of Guru ‘Kalgian Wala’, and who even at that tender age and at the stage of innocence refused to budge from their **stand of non – conversion to Islam and did not succumb to pressures and threats, and even to allurements for abandoning ‘Sikhism’.**

The sequence of events may be briefly discussed as under.

It has been mentioned above (page 66) that while crossing swollen river Sirsa, the family and Sikhs of Guru Sahib were separated and his mother Gujri along with her two younger grand sons lost their way and were spotted by Kuma Mashki, one of their sevadars (servants), and took them to his house and provided them shelter for a night. On the next day they were taken to the village Heri by Gangu Brahmin, who happened to be their ex - cook. Some jewellery of the grand old mother that she was carrying with her was stolen during the night. She just told the same to Gangu Brahmin, the next day morning. Although the mother knew that Gangu himself took the same away, yet she, keeping in view the circumstances, did not blame him. But Gangu, feeling that

he has been blamed; just in a most treacherous manner informed the local Mughal authorities about their presence in his house. The authorities immediately came into action, arrested them and sent them to the Nawab of Sarhind, who was directly involved in the fights with Guru Gobind Singh Sahib.

The Nawab took them as a 'prized catch'. He imprisoned them and put them in the open and that too at the top of a 'minaret', known in common language as 'Thanda Burj' in cold December nights. Next day morning, the kids were summoned to his court. He put before them the alternatives of either conversion to Islam and offered them several allurements and in the alternative threatened them to face death. The children opted for the latter. They were given time to think over again and again. The process continued for two or three days.

The little kids of Guru Dasmesh did not yield and were ultimately bricked alive in a wall on the sentence 'fatwa' issued by a Qazi at the instigation of Dewan Sucha Nand. It may however, just be mentioned that a Nawab, Sher Mohammad Khan, of Malerkotla objected to the gruesome killings, but his voice was not heard.

The grand old mother who was instrumental in putting in the little kids the spirit of Gursikhi that made them strong enough to embrace martyrdom at that budding age, also breathed her last, after she last sent them to the Darbar, but before the news of the tragic end of the tiny souls reached her.

A few lines those appear on page 47-48 of the book are reproduced below for the convenience of the anxious but valued readers as the same directly touch and reflect upon the great character of our most revered grand mother Mata Gujri. She was not only a martyr by herself but was also at the root of several martyrdoms of her times and many of the subsequent martyrs were also directly or indirectly driven by the inspiration that they received from the great old lady.

Words fail to describe the torture, the agony, the pain, the trauma the elderly, fragile grandma (Dadi – the grand mother), Mata Gujri had to bear, when she prepared them to face death in the hands of their tyrannical captives and to not to succumb to the pressures put on them and the allurements given to them for converting to Islam.

When faced with the grim situation, in the cold high Minarat (Thanda Burj) of Sarhind, she took them in her lap and narrated them the story of the great sacrifice of their grand father, - her husband Guru Teg Bahadur. She told them as to how he and then his grand father Guru Arjan Dev had faced similar situations in the hands of the tyrannical rulers and gave the supreme sacrifice. She told them the stories of innumerable Sikhs, who too did not lag behind. She told them the stories of the valiant Sikhs who fought in various battles. She filled in them, a spirit, a passion, to not to surrender at any cost. They were told not to budge even if they were to make the supreme sacrifice. The exercise continued for two to three days. During the days, the young kids were being tortured and grilled in the court of the Nawab and during nights the little souls were to face the temperature below zero degree in the cold nights of December of Punjab, high up in the air, on an floor that was open on all the four sides and that too without having any woolen clothes on them. Their only protection was the grand old mother Mata Gujri, the mother of Dasam Pita, who was in her eighties, slim and weak in body as she had faced several agonistic scenes in her life. But and I repeat, the entire human history might not have seen any woman of her conviction, her determination, or will power, who might have seen virtually a wiping out of her entire family, and yet was fully determined to not to succumb and also not let his grand sons succumb to the adverse circumstances and sent them herself to face the most heinous death, that they were put to by the culprits.

10 -12. Guru Piaara Bhai Sahib Singh, Guru Piaara Bhai Himmat Singh & Guru Piaara Bhai Mohkam Singh (Three of the Panj Piyaare' five beloved ones)

ਜਿਸ ਕੀ ਬਸਤੁ ਤਿਸੁ ਆਗੈ ਰਾਖੈ ॥ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕੀ ਆਗਿਆ ਮਾਨੈ ਮਾਥੈ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੨੬੮)
'JIS KE VAST TIS AAGE RAAKHE, PRABH KI AGYA MAANE MAATHE.'

The Sikh Panth knows that at the time of the Creation of the Khalsa, on the Baisakhi day of 1699, five Sikhs turned up at the call of the Guru, who offered their heads. All the five together, are known as 'Panj Piyaare' or the five beloved ones. All the five stood by Guru Dasmesh as fully committed Saint Sipahis. In all the battlefields, they were always at the forefront. While two of them viz. Bhai Daya Singh and Bhai Dharam Singh were with him till he departed from this mortal world, the other three, Bhai Himmat Singh, Bhai Sahib Singh and Bhai Mohkam Singh, obtained martyrdom while fighting at Chamkaur.

At Chamkaur, when Sahibzada Ajit Singh jumped into the battlefield with the blessings from his father – Guru, eight Sikhs including Bhai Mohkam Singh accompanied him and faced the enemy forces. The strength of the enemy forces has been given by many chronicles as of more than Ten Lakhs (one million). Eight or nine Guru Ke Sikhs were facing one million! How does it look? Just see how does it show the new spirit and the strength that was filled and inculcated in the Khalsa by their beloved Guru. All the Sikhs including 'Guru Piyaara' Mohkam Singh and 'Guru Puttar' Ajit Singh faced martyrdom after causing heavy casualties in the enemy forces.

Then 'Guru Piyaare' Bhai Sahib Singh and Bhai Himmat Singh accompanied Sahibzada Jujhar Singh in the field after the batch of warriors, as mentioned above had obtained martyrdom. They also laid down their lives over there but did not look back even for a moment.

Thus they not only offered their head at Anandpur Sahib when the Sikhs were put to test by 'Amrit Data Guru', but also actually gave their head for the cause of the honour of Sikhi at Chamkaur Sahib.

***Note:* Some bio details about the Panj Piyaaras have been given at pages 67-69 under the caption 'Five beloved ones'.**

13. BHAI BACHITTER SINGH

‘ਚਿੜਿਓਂ ਸੇ ਮੈਂ ਬਾਜ ਤੁੜਾਉਂ ॥
ਤਥੈ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਾਮ ਕਹਾਉਂ ॥
*Chirhiyon se main baaj turdhaaun,
Taabhe Gobind Singh Naam Kahaun*

Son of Bhai Mani Singh, who himself was a person of a unique character a great ‘Panthic scholar cum martyr’, Bhai Bachittar Singh, performed a most memorable feat in the second battle of Anand Pur Sahib, that took place in July – August 1699.

Guru Gobind Singh as a matter of strategy had built Lohgarh fort and was fighting the enemy by placing his forces strategically within the fort and the enemy had encircled the fort.

The Hill Rajas thought of a plan to get the fort vacated. They planned to bring out an elephant and after intoxicating it to send it to the gate of the fort for gate crashing.

Guru Sahib got the information very timely. He prepared one Bhai Duni Chand, a strong man with him to face the elephant. But Duni Chand apprehending imminent death slipped away from the battle field by jumping the wall of the fort at night. In the next morning there was an all out search for Duni Chand, but there were no traces of him anywhere.

Now Guru Sahib was looking for an alternative. Bhai Bachitter Singh was spotted for the purpose. He rather offered himself. He was given blessings by Guru Sahib along with a lance and a horse.

As the elephant, fully intoxicated, approached the gate, Bhai Bachitter Singh came forward, while riding his horse. The tiger, in the form of ‘Surma’ Bachitter Singh, was in the field. In no time both were facing each other, with both having a killing instinct. As the elephant approached Bachitter Singh and was about to bounce, he with his full force attacked him with his lance ‘nagani’ and pierced his trunk and made a powerful thrust piercing the plate and injuring the animal in the

forehead. The wounded elephant ran back creating havoc in the besiegers' ranks. It became furious, amuck, out of control, and while rushing back in a maddened state pierced into and trampled and crushed the army of Hill Rajas themselves under its feet. Bachitter Singh returned victorious in the fort and was highly blessed by Guru 'Dusht Daman.'

But he was destined to have a martyr's end. He performed some more commendable and memorable feats before he attained martyrdom. He fought valiantly in Nirmohgarh and Basali battles.

In December 1704, when after the last battle of Anand Pur Sahib, Guru Sahib vacated Anand Pur Sahib and was supposed to cross, swollen Sirsa river, Bachitter Singh was given the duty to guard the Khalsa forces, so that the enemy might not follow and attack, and they were caught unawares. It just happened the same as was expected. The enemy came from the Ropar side and Bhai Bachitter Singh while guarding the forces as per the orders of his commander Guru Gobind Singh Sahib was grievously wounded. Two days later, he succumbed to the injuries and had his martyrdom. This happened on 8th December 1704.

14. BHAI UDAI SINGH

We have already sung the saga of Shaheed Bachitter Singh above. Now we are going to say something about another great legendary martyr Bhai Udai Singh.

Udai Singh and Bachitter Singh had so many things in common. Both were the sons of another legendary figure, a unique scholar, a great scribe and an unmatched martyr of Khalsa Panth, Bhai Mani Singh.

Bhai Udai Singh had the same zeal and the spirit of sacrifice for the Guru and Gursikhi as Bhai Bachitter Singh had in him. He had the necessary vigour and physique too. Guru Dasmesh had a confidence and trust in his devotion, dedication, determination and commitment. His attributes are confirmed by several incidents recorded in history. One of such event is being cited below.

Once Guru Gobind Singh Sahib, accompanied by some Sikhs including Bhai Udai Singh was on a hunting expedition. They were confronted by two Hill Rajas, Balia Chand and Alam Chand who were also having some men accompanying them. Hill Rajas taking them in an advantageous position, in a surprise move, attacked Guru Sahib's contingent. Bhai Alam Singh, bounced upon Alam Chand and cut off his right arm with a single stroke of his sword. Bhai Udai Singh used his gun and seriously injured Balia Chand. Seeing their both the chiefs seriously wounded, the men accompanying them had a hasty retreat into the jungle and in the process carried away their rulers along with them. Guru Sahib highly spoke of the brave and sharp acts of his warrior Gur Sikh soldiers in the 'sangat' congregation.

Then Bhai Udai Singh took an active and concrete part in almost all the wars and battles Guru Gobind Singh Sahib fought particularly in the post Khalsa creation era. But his feat in second battle of Anand Pur Sahib is memorable and it is his this performance and some acts those followed, have made him immortal in Sikh History.

It was the second battle of Anand Pur Sahib when all the Hill Rajas in a joint move decided to attack, 'Anand Pur Sahib Wala', and force him to vacate Anand Pur Sahib, the town they claimed to be belonging

to them, as falling in their territory. They pooled their forces, sources, supplies, equipment, weapons and the ammunition. They adopted the 'do or die' or 'once for all' approach.

Guru Dasmesh also made full preparation and strategically deployed his men in the best possible manner in and around the forts of Fateh Garh and Loh Garh. The fort of Fateh Garh was placed in the charge of Bhai Sher Singh and Bhai Nahar Singh while Loh Garh was placed under the command of Bhai Udai Singh with Bhai Duni Chand to assist him.

When the allied forces sent the drunkard elephant for gate crash, Bhai Bachitter Singh was sent to face it in the battlefield who pierced his trunk and plate that maddened him and he ran amuck and trampled the allied forces under its feet, seeing this Raja Kesari Chand head of the Jaswal Hill State and the supreme commander of the allied forces attacked with a renewed zeal. After obtaining Guru Sahib's blessings and a pat on the back, Udai Singh bounced upon the enemy forces like a hawk. He and his men, in the lightening attack put to death several of the enemy's soldiers and there was none to look after the bodies of the dead.

When Kesari Chand was about to flee Bhai Udai Singh challenged him and shouted at him as to why he was running like a jackal. He instigated him for a one to one fight." Uday Singh's taunts infuriated Kesari Chand; he discharged an arrow, which lodged in Uday Singh's saddle cloth. Uday Singh dashed forward and attacked Kesari Chand with a long spear. He pierced his neck with spear and threw him off his horse. Then Uday Singh jumped from his horse and with one stroke of his sword, slashed Kesari Chand's head off. Poising the fallen head on the spear, Uday Singh galloped his horse towards the Anand Pur fort. Seeing the fall of Kesari Chand, the Sikhs rallied, cutting off the hill army's foot soldiers those remained."⁴ Bhai Udai Singh was declared hero of that battle.

The last battle of Anand Pur that was fought in 1704 was quite crucial as it changed the entire course of Sikh History and shaped the course of events those followed.

It is a well-known fact that Guru Sahib due to various reasons was

⁴ Santokh Singh – The Guru's Word and Illustrated Sikh History, pp.170.

advised by Guru mother Mata Gujri and several other Gursikhs to leave Anand Pur Sahib and the forts. Guru Sahib while leaving formed two groups of his men. In the first group were his aged mother Mata Gujri, wives Mata Sundar Kaur, and Mata Sahib Kaur, two younger sons, Sahibzada Zorawar Singh and Sahibzada Fateh Singh, and other women of the household. The manuscripts of all the literature produced by Guru Sahib and his scholars were also entrusted to this group. The brave Uday Singh was given 200 Sikh – soldiers too, to protect this group and to ensure the safe journey of the same.

When the Khalsa was to cross the Sirsa River, it found that it was overflowing due to heavy floods and torrential rains. The enemy forces violating all the solemn pledges and the vows of Koran and Gita attacked Khalsa forces. There was a fierce battle on the banks of Sirsa with Guru Sahib's group, amidst rain cold and darkness. Sahibzada Ajit Singh was there to face the challenge and the combined attack of the enemy. He and the men at his command fought fiercely and inflicted heavy casualties upon attacking forces. Soon the other group joined the fray. Bhai Udai Singh, Bhai Daya Singh, Bhai Alam Singh and several other Sikh soldiers, under the command of 'Sahibzada' Ajit Singh kept the enemy forces at bay so that the river could be crossed. In the darkness of night some laid down their lives while fighting with the enemy, some were able to cross the river, while some were drowned in the water and in heavy currents of the highly flooded river in the extreme cold of December nights. While entire family and forces of Dasmesh just got separated from one another, Bhai Udai Singh and several others laid down their lives, fighting for their Guru and for the cause so dear to their Guru.

Bhai Udai Singh laid down his life as a martyr. He made the supreme sacrifice, fighting against a cruel and treacherous regime.

Bhai Udai Singh's life, dedication and devotion to the Guru and his ultimate sacrifice has made him immortal in Sikh history and the examples set by him shall continue to inspire the Khalsa and its future generations in the times to come.

15. BHAI JAITA RANGRETTA

Or

BHAI JEEWAN SINGH

We all know that Bhai Jaita took the severed head of Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib, after the latter was martyred at Chandni Chowk, Delhi on 11th November 1675, to Kirat Pur Sahib and placed the same before revered mother Mata Gujri and Guru Gobind Rai, the child Guru, who was just nine years old at that time. 'Bala Pritam' embraced him and blessed him by saying, 'RANGRETTE – GURU KE BETE' meaning thereby that Rangrettas were Guru's sons. Most of us are quite ignorant about his feats and sacrifices subsequent to this courageous event.

It is mentioned that Bhai Jaita was one of the five beloved Sikhs of Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib. He also accompanied Guru Sahib when the latter was arrested enroute to Delhi. He was sent back by Guru Sahib with great persuasion, perhaps as he was destined to play some bigger and more important role after the historic martyrdom.

We have been told that Bhai Jaita just hoodwinked the Mughal guards in the storm that followed the execution of Guru Sahib and lifted the head of the beloved Guru and took the same to Kirat Pur Sahib. No doubt this was a heroic and very bold act, but what price did he pay for this act, we are quite ignorant of the same. Rai Bahadur Kanahiya Lal writes that Bhai Jaita told his father that the head must be lifted at all costs. They contemplated that Guru Sahib's head must be replaced by some other head, to hood wink the guards. Bhai Agya Ram offered his head for the purpose. The son agreed to the suggestion of his father and cut his head and placed the same at the spot where Guru Sahib's head was lying. Professor Puran Singh has also endorsed this fact in his book 'The Ten Masters.'⁵ The renowned Hindi Poet Maithli Sharan Gupt, in the chapter on Guru Kaand of his epic Bharat Bharati has confirmed this episode. He has, however, mentioned that the old man

5. Ibid, page 74.

himself severed his head from his body.

'SWAYANM VRIDH NE SIR KATA,
KAR JEE MAIN JAPJI KA PATH.
BETA CHAOUNK PARHA,
JHAT USS NE VAHIN BAAP KO KIYA PARNAAM.
PHIR GUR SIR LAIKAR BACH AAIYA

Guru kul Paanna 116.

The old man cut his head himself, after reciting Path of Jap Ji. The son was quite taken aback; he immediately bowed to his father in reverence. He lifted the Guru's sacred head and moved in a zigzag way while saving himself from the guards.

Poet Kankan another poet has also endorsed the said view. While recording the sentiments of the father, he writes, that on getting the suggestion, he offered his head for the purpose. He writes:

"SIS GURU KI SEWA LAGE
HUM SE KAUN HOWE WADBHAGE,
TAHE SIS DIO JHUKAE,
BHAJ JAITA HUKAM BAJAAE
LE KAR GAIO TE THAAE JEH SAT GUR KI DEH RAHAAE.

If my head is used in the service of the Guru, who else is greater blessed than me? He bowed his head and offered the same then and there and Bhai Jaita obeyed the orders. He lifted the head and took the same to the spot where Guru's body was lying.

Bhai Jaita has himself written:

JEY KO PREET KI BAAT KARE HEY
MUR PIT SUM PREET NIBHE
KAAT DAARA SIR PRABH CHARNAN MEH.
PREET TABHI AAYE BARMAN MEH.

If some body talks of love and dedication, he should come up to the level of my father. He cut his head and put the same in the feet of the Guru (God). It was only after that the passion of love arose in my mind.

It has also been mentioned by some historians that some other important persons deeply attached to Guru Ghar, but close confidants of the Mughal durbar, too helped Bhai Jaita in his mission of

exchanging the head and lifting the sacred head from the Katilgah, the place of execution in a planned manner. Zebonisa, a daughter of Aurangzeb, Khwaja Abdullah of Chandni Chowk, Delhi, and Dewan Shiv Narain were some of them.

From then onwards Bhai Jaita did not look back and stayed permanently with Guru Sahib. He was appointed as 'Nagarchi', a drum beater of Guru Sahib's drum – RANJIT NAGARA. He learnt martial skills and became a great marks man. He also trained Sahibzada Ajit Singh and Sahibzada Jujhar Singh in swordsmanship, archery and horse riding.

Bhai Jaita, Bhai Jeewan Singh after he took Amrit at Anand Pur Sahib, was always at the forefront in all the battles that Guru Gobind Singh Sahib faced and fought with Hill Rajas and Mughal Royal forces. In the severest battle fought at the banks of Sirsa river, in the darkness of night and in most adverse circumstances. Sahibzada Ajit Singh surrounded by the enemy fought tirelessly. First Bhai Udai Singh came to his rescue and while fighting valiantly faced martyrdom. Then Bhai Jiwan Singh took his place. The battle was so fierce that it is said that he held the reins of his horse in his mouth and moved the sword with both the hands to repel the enemy attack. Whereas Sahibzada was saved unharmed, Bhai Jeewan Singh faced martyrdom in this war. Mata Premo, his mother too, was washed away by swollen currents of the Sirsa.

Thus ended the saga of Bhai Jeewan Singh and his father. Both the son – Bhai Jaita and his father have carved out a unique place in the pages of Sikh History.

His father-in-law, Bhai Sujan Singh Riar, brother Bhai Sangat Singh, sons Bhai Sewa Singh and Bhai Sukha Singh also laid down their lives for the 'Guru-Ghar'.

16-17. BHAJ SANTS SINGH & BHAJ SANGAT SINGH

The 'Shaheedee' martyrdom of Bhai Sant Singh and Bhai Sangat Singh is unique and shall remain unique forever, and the event cannot be repeated. It emanated from the Command to the Guru by the Sikhs and culminated from the Command of the Guru to the Sikhs. How unique, perplexing and confusing the sentence looks like. But it is a fact of history and it was caused out of the command issued to the Guru Dasmesh by the Khalsa.

We all are aware that at Chamkaur battle Guru Gobind Singh Sahib faced Ten Lakh (one million) enemy force just with 40 Singhs including two Sahibzadas and at the end of the day only five Sikhs, besides him, survived on the fateful evening of 22nd December 1704. Guru Sahib found that the forces of the enemy around the fortress were still in thousands; he decided to go in the field next day morning himself on the resumption of the battle after the lull of the night and face martyrdom. He had around him two of the five beloveds Bhai Daya Singh and Bhai Dharam Singh besides three other Gursikhs Bhai Maan Singh, Bhai Sant Singh and Bhai Sangat Singh. They all pleaded, appealed and requested in their humble way to Guru Sahib to escape in the darkness of night and let them face the enemy at the fortress. They based their plea on the ground that in case Guru Sahib's life was saved, he would again be able to strengthen and consolidate the Khalsa and would be able to continue his struggle against tyranny and injustice and shall be able to liberate the people from the yoke of slavery of fanatic rulers. But Guru Sahib was not willing to leave his beloved ones in the lurch and shirk from facing the enemy when the hour for the same came. Khalsa was in a fix.

Ultimately an idea came to somebody's mind. They were reminded that at the time of initiation of Khande Baate Di Pahul ceremony on Baisakhi Day of 1699, Guru Gobind Singh Sahib 'Aape

Gur Chela', while asking for Amrit from the Khalsa, had said that thence forth 'the Five Singhs' collectively would act as Guru and even he would abide by their command.

He had also said,

'KHALSA MERA SATGUR POORA',

And

'REHANI RAHE SOI SIKH MERA, OH SAHIB MAEN US KA CHERA'

'YA MAIN, MUJH MAIN TAAS MAIN RANCHAK NAAHI BHED,'

'PANCH MIL REHAAT JO KAHEN, TAN TO OH DRIRH KAR LAHAEN'.

They sat together and thought of a plan, to get Guru Sahib leave the fortress. They adopted the posture of 'five' and called 'Gobind Singh - the Sikh' in their presence as 'Guru'. They said 'Gobind Singh! Khalsa orders you to leave the fortress in the darkness of night.'

Now Khalsa was working as a Guru and (Guru) Gobind Singh 'Aape Gur Chela' had no option. No doubt he was on Guru Gaddi,- 'Gaddi', the Throne of Guru Nanak, for the last about thirty years commanding great respects yet he was bound by his own declarations, pronouncements, commitments etc. howsoever, unique and unheard of the same were. He had to agree to vacate because to not to abide by the command of the Khalsa was to invite some more punishments, which he might not have been ready to face.

He reluctantly agreed to leave. He requested the Khalsa, the Guru, to allow him to leave by declaring in the open at the top of his voice that he was going challenging the enemy to confront him if possible. The 'Guru', the Khalsa agreed because they knew that Guru Dasmesh could accomplish any thing.

Then a scheme was drawn out. It was decided that two Singhs shall remain in the fort and three would accompany Dasmesh. Bhai Daya Singh, Bhai Dharam Singh, the two of the five beloved ones who had survived the Sirsa and the Chamkaur battles, along with Bhai Maan Singh were to accompany Guru Sahib while Bhai Sant Singh and Bhai Sangat Singh were to remain in the fort to face the enemy next day morning. Bhai Sant Singh, whose face and personality just resembled 'Guru Paatshah', was given the 'Kalgi' of Dasmesh, along with his, 'bana' dress to hoodwink the enemy. As both were sure to be attacked

next day morning and were sure to get the martyrdom, while fighting with the enemy, the enemy on approaching the dead bodies, would feel very happy and overjoyed by seeing and taking the dead body of Bhai Sant Singh as that of Dasam Guru. While they would celebrate the finishing of 'the Guru of the Sikhs,' Guru Sahib would be putting new life in the Khalsa by rejuvenating the same. Guru Sahib would be getting time to re-consolidate his forces and shall prepare them for a fresh attack in furtherance of their mission.

The scheme was put into action. Guru Sahib in his usual high spirits rode his steed, and amidst drum beatings he shouted at the top of his voice in the darkness of night '**Peer - e - Hind maen Ravad.**' There was an unusual action and confusion in the enemy ranks. They ran after the Guru. There was rain of arrows. In the confusion that prevailed for some time, the mughal army killed their own men, but Guru Sahib was successful in hoodwinking them, while keeping his word that he would not go un-noticed, silently like a thief or a culprit.

The inevitable happened next day morning. There was usual beating of drums 'Ranjit Nagara' at the roof of the fortress. That was to be taken as per the dictates of Guru Sahib. The enemy attacked the fort. First Bhai Sangat Singh emerged, and faced the onslaught of the enemy. By showing his valour, amidst 'Jaikaras', he got his martyrdom. Then came out Bhai Sant Singh, the man with 'Kalgı' and Guru Sahib's 'Bana', repeated the act, killed several of the enemy's soldiers and then bade a fare well to this world while laying down his life.

What a spirit was imbibed in the Khalsa ! Khalsa showed

'JIS MARNE TAI JAG DARAI, MERE MAN ANAND.

MARNE HE TE PAIYEE PUURAN PARMANAND'.

The Khalsa, Bhai Sant Singh and Bhai Sangat Singh along with the other three commanded Guru Dasmesh to give them a right of martyrdom and they obtained the same again under the command or as per the dictates and will of the Guru. 'Dhan Sikhi, Dhan Sikhi, Dhan Sikhi'.

18. BABA BANDA SINGH BAHADUR

No doubt Guru Dasmesh had a small physical or mortal life of about 42 years as apparently the same was abruptly cut short by the conspirators, he had prepared Banda Singh Bahadur, to whom he met at Nanded in South, to proceed to Punjab, to consolidate the Khalsa and carry forward the struggle against cruel and tyrannical rulers. Baba Banda Bahadur, who was a born Rajput, but had become a 'Bairagi', a Recluse, due to certain circumstances, after listening to the tales of atrocities, perpetrated upon the Guru family and Guru's beloved Sikhs, was so over whelmed and perturbed that he immediately offered himself to Guru Dasmesh as his 'Banda', man or slave for taking revenge from the culprits.

Guru Gobind Singh Sahib, even before, the assassins attacked him, had prepared Banda Bahadur for the purpose. He appointed Banda Singh Bahadur, as a Commander of Khalsa forces and sent him to Punjab after giving him his blessings, some arrows, one 'Nagara', a sword and some other signs of identity along with a letter in the form of a 'Hukamnama' (edict) in the name of the Khalsa to join Banda Bahadur to carry over the crusade against the Mughal regime. Five of his beloved Sikhs viz. Bhai Binod Singh, Bhai Kahan Singh, Bhai Baj Singh, Bhai Daya Singh and Bhai Rann Singh were also sent with him, as his advisors, along with some more Sikhs.

Baba Banda Bahadur reached Delhi along with his associates, with a new zeal, vigour and with a passion to take revenge from the culprits of the Guru Family. He put his camp in Kharkhoda near Delhi and sent messages to the Sikhs in Punjab and elsewhere. He informed them that he had come as per the dictates of Guru Gobind Singh and shall target the murderers of Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib and the young sons, the Sahibzadas and the innumerable beloved ones of the Guru. Sikh masses those were already in anger and were in the mood of taking revenge from the perpetrators of atrocities upon the innocent children were waiting for a call from a great leader.

His first target was the town of Samana, the place where lived

Jallal Ud Din – Jallad. He was the professional executioner and it was he who beheaded Guru Teg Bahadur at Delhi. And it was his son who did the same job in the case of younger Sahibzadas. Ali Hussain the Mughal agent, responsible for persuading Guru Gobind Singh Sahib in vacating Anand Pur Sahib under false pretexts also belonged to this place. The town was known as a city of butchers. When Banda Bahadur reached this site his supporters and his army of ‘Sikh Surme’, had reached to several thousands. Sikhs were thronging his ranks like any thing. Even local population was extending all possible support. Banda attacked this town on 26th November 1709.

Samana was the district town and had nine Parganas attached to it. Samana was the first territorial conquest and the first administrative unit of Banda. It was placed under the charge of Fateh Singh. Thus a history was created as such. The subjects, the oppressed ones of yesterday or rather from centuries became sovereigns. It was just after ten years of the creation of Khalsa, the Khalsa rule was established by the ruled ones and the oppressed ones.

The second major target of Banda Bahadur was Sidhaura. He was to take the revenge of the cruel killing of cutting into pieces of Pir Buddhu Shah, a great friend of Guru Dasmesh. He sacrificed his all including his sons and followers ‘Murids’, while fighting on the Guru’s side. Usman Khan its chief was responsible for the brutal killing of the holy man. Banda Bahadur attacked the town with such a force and bang that all the Muslims shut themselves in a big house to save themselves from his attack and the onslaught. The entire house ‘haveli’, was massacred and it later came to be known as ‘Katal Garhi.’

Then he reached Sarhind, his final but real target. The battlefield was Chhappar Chiri, a small place just 29 Kilometers away from Sarhind. Sher Mohammad Khan, Nawab of Malerkotla, Sucha Nand, took the field by the side of Nawab Wazir Khan, the main culprit on the Mughal side; whereas Banda Bahadur, Binod Singh and Baj Singh were on the Khalsa side.

Sucha Nand who directly faced Baj Singh could not withstand his ferocity. Baj Singh fought with such valour that Sucha Nand and his forces were soon vanquished. Sher Mohammad Khan was killed by a bullet from the ‘Jatha’ being lead by Binod Singh. His men fled away

from the field. Baj Singh and Binod Singh with their men joined Banda Singh Bahadur and they all jointly fought the bloody fierce battle against Wazir Khan, the Nawab and killed him.

The enemy fled like anything. The Sikhs fell upon them and there was a terrible carnage. Nawab's family and many Muslim nobles fled to Delhi. The governor's treasury was looted and moved to Lohgarh. Such was the impact of punishing the crime committers and killing of the Nawab Wazir Khan by the Sikhs, who stuck up his head on a spear and entered the city in broad day light while carrying the same on his own elephant, that several Muslims saved their lives by embracing Sikhism. Dindar Khan son of Jalal Khan Rohilla became Dindar Singh. The official news writer of Sarhind Mir Nasir-ud-din changed his name to Mir Nasir Singh. (Yar Mohammad, Dastur-ul insha, page 37, Persian).

The Sikhs captured Sarhind on 14th May 1709 and Bhai Baaj Singh was appointed the Nawab of Sarhind and Bhai Aali Singh was appointed his deputy. Sikh kingdom was established. This was the climax or height of glory of the Sikh religion, as several non – Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims, suo motto adopted Sikhism.

Immediately after taking over, Banda issued certain proclamations. He abolished the Zamindari system prevailing under the Mughals in the Punjab. He declared the actual cultivators as the owners of land. He struck coins in the name of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh. He issued orders, those were accepted as law. He was a great reformer. He broke down the barriers of caste, creed and religion.

But the movement received a set back. The emperor himself along with his huge forces attacked the Sikhs. He was determined to end the Sikh community from the root and every Sikh who so ever was sighted any where was to be killed. He directed all Hindus to get their beard shaved, to distinguish themselves from the Sikhs, who were being targeted by him. Banda Singh Bahadur fought heroic battles for more than six years. King at Delhi died during the period. His brother Jahandar Shah who captured the throne was also assassinated in February 1713 and Farukhseer started his brief spell as the Emperor of Delhi, as he was also assassinated on 17th April 1719.

It was during his period the Sikhs had their first mass massacre at the hands of the rulers. This massacre is known as 'A CHHOTA

GHALOOGHARA'. He ordered the Governor of Lahore to wipe out the Sikhs from the country. Thousands of Sikhs were killed in the battles. After continuous eight months of siege of a fort like Haveli in Garhi Nangal, Banda along with his forces was captured. The historians have given the figure as of 740. They were brought in chains to Delhi and leading them were the royal forces who were having about 2000 slaughtered Siki heads with them and which were being displayed all along the way right on top of their spears and even on the bamboo sticks.

At Delhi some 694 Sikhs were handed over to a 'kotwal' for executing 100 persons every day. Johan Sermon the British ambassador wrote to Governor Bengal the incident as under.

"There are one hundred each day beheaded. It is not a little remarkable with little patience they undergo their fate, and to the last it has not been found that one has apostatized from the new formed religion.⁶

It is also mentioned that one of the arrested persons a young child was not a Sikh. His mother pleaded that being a non-Sikh his life be spared. The king agreed. But the child openly said that his mother was telling a lie and he was as much a Sikh as his other brethren were and he pressed to be sent to the other world alongwith them. As a result, he too was executed along with the others.

Baba Banda Singh Bahadur and some of his other commanders and generals who were kept separate from him were brutally killed on 19th June 1716. Banda was asked to kill his own four-year-old son, but he refused. The child was cut into two and was thrown on his face and thereafter he was tortured with hot plusses and his flesh was dragged (ਉਸ ਦੇ ਮਾਸ ਨੂੰ ਗਰਮ ਜੰਬੂਰੇ ਨਾਲ ਨੋਚਿਆ ਗਿਆ 'Uss de mass nun garam jamboore naal nochia gaya'). He was subjected to several other torturous acts. **The historians have said that with the bravery and spirit he attacked the enemy, fought the battles and removed the culprits of the Sikh family from the scene of this world, with the same spirit and bravery he embraced his death.**

In his tribute to Banda Singh Bahadur and his contribution to the glory of the nation, Dr. Santokh Singh writes, "Banda Singh

⁶ Wheeler, Early records of British India, 180.

brought a national awakening for the liberation of the country. He laid the foundation for the political sovereignty of the Sikhs.Banda Singh showed the Sikhs their power as a self-governing people.From 1710 to 1715, he defeated and crushed many Mughal oppressors. This led to the gradual decline of the Mughal Empire, which disintegrated over the next 50 years. By 1765, the Khalsa ruled their own state, the state of Punjab.⁷

⁷ The Guru's Word and Illustrated Sikh History, pp.198.

19. BHAI BAAJ SINGH

GURU Dasmesh while singing the praise of the Khalsa said,

ਸਵਾ ਲਾਖ ਸੇ ਏਕ ਲੜਾਉਂ ॥
ਤਬੈ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਾਮ ਕਹਾਉਂ ॥

**'SAWA LAAKH SE AIK LADHAAOON,
TABHAI GOBIND SINGH NAAM KAHAAOON.'**

'If I am able to pit my one Sikh, against One lakh and twenty five thousand, only then I shall (be justified in calling) call my name as Gobind Singh' and while looking into the performance and the feats of the Khalsa in different battle fields one can easily judge there was no exaggeration in his statement. There were several instances in Guru Sahib's period and thereafter when a handful of Sikhs faced thousands and even lakhs of men on the opposite side. Here we are going to discuss one such unsung hero Martyr Baaj Singh, whose life sketch as such could not be found in ordinary available history books. Whatever brief information could be obtained is being given hereunder in token of respect and paying of a tribute to the great warrior.

It has been discussed above under the caption, 'Baba Banda Singh Bahadur', as to how after getting the dictate from Dasam Guru at Nanded, he alongwith his associates, advisors and other Sikhs who were determined to take revenge of Guru Teg Bahadur, Sahibzadas, and other Sikh martyrdoms and massacres, punished almost all the culprits and sent them to the next world.

Now another landmark of great importance was established. The prophecy of Dasmesh, 'Raj Karega Khalsa,' and 'in Sikhan Ko Doon Patshahi' had become a reality within a period of two years of his physical departure from this mortal world. The Mughal rulers fled away. There was a vacuum. Banda Singh Bahadur was there to rule. But Banda took himself a Banda only. He was there to fight and punish the guilty. When the time to rule came he entrusted the same to his lieutenants.

Greatly impressed by the feats of bravery of Bhai Baaj Singh, Banda Bahadur appointed him as the Nawab of Sarhind and Bhai Aali Singh as his deputy. Sikh kingdom was established and Khalsa currency was issued along with the State Seal.

Sarhind and Lahore were the two seats of power in Punjab in those days. Both the seats had separate governors. Sarhind had twenty-eight paraganas those extended from Sutlej to Jamuna and from the Shivalik Hills to Kunjpura, Karnal to Kaithal.

Baaj Singh, the Governor was specially warned by Banda to remain vigilant and guard against the Mughal troops, who were likely to come from Lahore and Jammu. But as the history shows, the Sikh forces and their leaders could not withstand for long the mighty forces of the Mughal Empire. Soon they were over powered at Gurdass Nangal and brought to Delhi. Details have been discussed in chapter relating to Banda Bahadur. Here we have to mention one particular event, which specifically relates to our Hero, Baaj Singh.

“On June 10, 1716, when Baaj Singh and Fateh Singh were being executed at Qutab Minar, in Delhi, emperor Farukh Siyar was himself present at the site of execution. He sarcastically asked if Baaj Singh, with his so called unmatched valour was present there. Baaj Singh proudly came forward showed his presence and demanded to be freed from his shackles if his valour was to be tested. As soon as his chains were removed, Baaj Singh snatched a sword from a Mughal soldier, pounced upon the surrounding soldiers, and sent them running for their lives. He slashed the heads of seven guards before they could act. Emperor Farukh Siyar had a narrow escape.”⁸

Thus was the valour, courage and in built conviction and strength of Baaj Singh, the Governor, the warrior and the martyr.

⁸ Santokh Singh – Guru’s Word and Illustrated Sikh History, pp. 204.

20. BHAI MANI SINGH

ਸੂਰਾ ਸੋ ਪਹਿਚਾਣੀਏ ਜੋ ਲੜੈ ਦੀਨ ਕੇ ਹੇਤ।

ਪੁਰਜਾ ਪੁਰਜਾ ਕਟ ਮਰੇ ਕਬਹੂੰ ਨ ਛਾਡੇ ਖੇਤ ॥

SURA SO PEHCHANIYE, JO LARAI DEEN KE HET.

PURZA PURZA CUT MARE KABH HUN NA CHHADED KHET.

So far we have gone through several heart piercing stories of different martyrs. Every story appeared to be quite unique, unheard of and full of heroic or sacrificial acts. Some were warriors, who laid down their lives fighting in the battlefield for the Sikh cause and for protecting the Sikh values. Some were caught alive and tortured to death later. Some offered themselves to the killers and sacrificed themselves for the values they loved most.

But now the life and personality we are going to discuss had all possible ingredients of sacrifice, warrior like qualities, dedication, devotion and submission to Sikh principles and values. In addition we may say he was not only a warrior or sacrificer, he was a great scholar too of Gurbani, a great scribe, who rewrote (Guru) Granth Sahib at the instance, direction and dictation of Guru Gobind Singh Sahib. He rewrote Dasam Guru Ka Granth in consultation with and under the guidance of Mata Sundar Kaur Ji – consort of Guru Gobind Singh Sahib long after Guru Sahib had left this mortal world, as the same was lost in Sirsa river. Bhai Mani Singh whose life and character we are discussing also served as a Head Granthi, at Darbar Sahib, Sri Harmandir Sahib. He with his wisdom avoided a catastrophe between Bandai Khalsa and the Tat Khalsa. It was he who with his wisdom prevented a much heavier mass murder of Sikhs, that was done by Lakhpat Rai at the behest of Nawab Zakaria Khan of Lahore.

Above all, his sacrifice, his martyrdom is perhaps of the oldest man on this earth, as he was cut to pieces limb by limb, in a most heinous way at the age of 90 years.

One more feature that should not skip the attention of the readers is perhaps that Bhai Mani Singh is the person whose grand father Bhai Ballu Rao, laid down his life while fighting with the

forces of Shah Jahan at the time of 6th Nanak Miri Piri Wale Guru Hargobind Sahib. Then Bhai Dayala, who was boiled alive before the very eyes of Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib at Delhi, was his brother. He had eleven brothers (besides him) and seven sons and all of them laid down their lives for the Sikh values those were so dear to all of them.

Again Bhai Mani Singh entered Guru's house and was in the service of the Guru right from Guru Har Rai Sahib when he was just 13 years of age. He was born in 1644 and as such was 22 years elder to Guru Dasmesh in age. He also worked as a Dewan (chief minister) in the court 'Darbar' of Guru Dasmesh. Being a contemporary and a senior in age to the 10th Nanak, he was a close confidant of Guru Sahib. During the different periods of turmoil, it was he who escorted Guru wives – Mata Sundar Kaur and Mata Sahib Kaur to safer places – Delhi, Mathura or Talwandi Sabo.

He was born on 10th March 1644 A.D. in the village Alipur, District Muzaffargarh (now in Pakistan). His original name was Manik, which was changed to Mani Singh in 1699 A.D. when he took 'Khande Baate Di Pahul'. At the age of 15, he was married to Bibi Seeto, daughter of Bhai Lakhi Rai.

Bhai Mani Singh as a great soldier and warrior fought bravely in Bhangani war. Bhai Hari Chand, one of his brothers attained martyrdom in this battle. Bhai Bachitter Singh and Bhai Udai Singh whose sagas of bravery and sacrifice we have discussed in the preceding pages were his sons. Bhai Mani Singh was named Dewan of Guru's court after the battle of Nadaun in which he showed his qualities of a fearless and a brave warrior.

We have hinted above that Bhai Sahib settled a matter very wisely that had become a bone of contention between Bandai Khalsa and Tat Khalsa. Let us mention the facts very briefly for the information of the readers. After the martyrdom of Banda Singh Bahadur, some of his followers started his worship as a Guru and had even changed the cherished Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh, with Fateh Darshan. The said faction lead by Bhai Mahant Singh even tried to have the control of Harmandir Sahib. The Tat Khalsa or the real Khalsa vehemently opposed it. The swords were drawn. Bhai Sahib under the advise of Mata Sundar Kaur, settled the matter by putting two pieces of paper in the 'Sarovar'. On one paper was written 'Fateh Darshan' and

on the other was written 'Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh.' The condition was whosever's paper shall float first or re-appear on the surface of water shall be the winner and shall have the control of Harmandir Sahib. Paper with Guru's Fateh appeared first and so the Fateh Darshan people withdrew from the scene. Thus with his wisdom an imminent bloodshed was averted.

Now let us discuss in brief the sequence of events those lead to his martyrdom.

The Khalsa or the Panth was celebrating Dewali and Baisakhi two festivals every year at Harmandir Sahib, but for that purpose in those critical days a permission from the government was required for which the Khalsa had to pay some tax. In 1733, when Dewali was to be celebrated, the Government granted permission on payment of a sum of Rupees five thousand as Tax. It was agreed that the tax would be paid after the celebrations were over. Bhai Sahib agreed to the condition, having conviction that the Sikhs who would gather in large numbers, would present their offerings (Bhent) in the Guru Darbar and the tax amount would be paid.

But governor of Lahore Zakaria Khan and his Dewan Lakhpat Rai had some different intentions. Just before the celebrations they had encircled the entire city of Amritsar with their forces and wanted to do a mass killing of the Sikhs who would assemble at Amritsar, with an aim to finish the entire community. Bhai Sahib got inkling in advance. He sent the messages on all the sides telling the Sikhs to avoid coming to Amritsar for the celebrations as he apprehended a big trouble. As a result most of the Sikhs did not come and the stipulated amount could not be collected. Lakhpat Rai who was also expecting large contingents of Sikhs, at the celebrations and was there to put them to death by firing etc felt frustrated but still killed many persons while they were having a bath in the holy Sarovar.

Bhai Mani Singh an old man of 90 years was arrested by the Governor, and was given the option either to pay the stipulated amount, or convert to Islam or face death by cutting limb by limb (ਬੰਦ ਕਟਵਾਣਾ). Bhai Mani Singh opted for the third and readily agreed to face the martyrdom. It is said that when the executioner attempted to cut his arm, he stopped him and asked him to obey the orders passed by his master that he be cut limb by limb. All present were stunned by the fearlessness and conviction and faith he had in his Guru and in his

principles. As such he was martyred by cutting limb by limb –a most heinous end caused to a saintly scholar figure.

Some of the Sikhs, who stood by him or were otherwise involved in any way, were also mercilessly butchered to death.

21. BABA DEEP SINGH

ਜੇ ਜੀਵੈ ਪਤਿ ਲਥੀ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਸਭੁ ਹਰਾਮੁ ਜੇਤਾ ਕਿਛੁ ਖਾਇ ॥

ਮਹਲਾ ੧ (੧੪੨)

JE JEEWAE PAT LATHI JAAE, SABH HARAAM JETA KICCH KHA AE.

We have discussed above the saga of Shaheed Bhai Mani Singh. Now we are going to discuss the personality and the martyrdom of Baba Deep Singh. Both the great lives have many things in common.

Both were contemporaries of Guru Gobind Singh Sahib but with a difference of about 38 years in age, Bhai Mani Singh having been born in 1644, whereas Shaheed Baba Deep Singh took his birth in 1682 and Guru Dasmesh having stepped into this world in 1666. Both took 'Amrit', 'the Khande Baate Di Pahul,' from Dasmesh either directly from him or from his beloved, 'Five Sikhs', in his presence. Then, although Baba Deep Singh got most of his education and knowledge from Bhai Mani Singh, and both were having a teacher and taught relationship, yet both were the scholars and scribes of the top order. Then both performed as Granthis, the former being at Amritsar Sahib and the latter at Damdama Sahib Talwandi Saabo. Both were scholars of Gurbani and did 'katha', interpretation and explaining program of 'Gurbani and Gur Itihaas', at their respective places. Both headed the two Taksals, those were established to teach and train the 'parchaarks, the kirtanias, kathavaachaks' etc. They were having several more common features. The only difference was that whereas Bhai Mani Singh faced martyrdom after he was given punishment for not paying the stipulated amount of tax and was cut limb by limb (ਬੰਦ ਬੰਦ ਕਟਿਆ ਗਿਆ) at the ripe age of 90 years, Baba Deep Singh got martyrdom while fighting in the field with holding his wounded neck with one hand and swerving his 10 feet long 'Khanda' double edged sword weighing 18 seers (32 pounds), at the ripe age of 75 years for the liberation of and for restoring the sanctity of Sri Harmandir Sahib.

Baba Deep Singh was born in village Pahuwind, district Amritsar in 1682. His parents, father Bhagto Sandhu and mother Jeoni Bai were

devout Sikhs of the Gurus and after getting Amrit in 1700 became baptized Sikhs. In the year 1700, when went to Anandpur Sahib, their son, Deep Singh was also with them and he too took 'Khande Baate Di Pahul'. When parents were returning home, Deep Singh stayed back at the directions of Guru Sahib himself. Now he came in contact with Bhai Mani Singh Ji from whom he started learning Gurmukhi, recitation, understanding and interpreting the bani of (Guru) Granth Sahib, Sikh philosophy etc. Besides Punjabi (Gurmukhi) he learnt several other languages from Bhai Mani Singh and other Sikh scholars.

He also learnt the art of 'Gatka', weaponry, archery, horse riding etc. In 1702, again at the instance of Guru Dasmesh, he returned to his village to be with his parents, where he got himself married in 1704.

When he came to know that the two elder Sahibzadas obtained martyrdom at Chamkaur, he rushed back to Talwandi Sabo, where he also learnt about the tragic end of the younger Sahibzadas at Sarhind, at the hands of Nawab Wazir Khan.

When he reached there, Guru Sahib was busy in dictating and re writing entire (Guru) Granth Sahib, to Bhai Mani Singh. He helped Bhai Mani Singh in writing and making copies of the same.

In 1706, Guru Sahib made him head Granthi (incharge) of Damdama Sahib, while Bhai Mani Singh was made head priest of Harimandir Sahib in Amritsar. Baba Deep Singh spent many years at Damdama Sahib and kept himself involved in training, teaching and preaching of Sikh thought to Guru Ke Sikhs and other aspirants. He was always ready to serve those in need and to fight for justice. Baba Ji also continued to prepare copies of Sri Guru Granth Sahib and was also writing gutkas (small books of hymns).

After the exit of Guru Dasmesh from this world (physically only), in 1708, Deep Singh, a young man of 26 years fully dedicated himself to the Sikh cause. He was tall, strong, and uncommonly brave Sikh who was a bold and fearless saint-soldier, ever ready to risk his life for the Panth.

He joined Banda Singh Bahadur in 1709, when he attacked Sadhaura and Sarhind, as per the dictates of the Guru. It was he who beheaded Wazir Khan, the Nawab of Sarhind, the main culprit, who was directly responsible for taking the lives of innocent Sahibzadas, while burying them alive in the walls.

Again it has been mentioned that in 1716, a big rift erupted between two factions of the Khalsa – the Tat Khalsa and the Bandai Khalsa. Here too Baba Deep Singh used his wisdom and acumen in amicably solving the dispute.

Although Baba Ji was involved in battles and wars from time to time, yet we may say that from 1705 to 1728 he was primarily involved in the writing work and he and Bhai Mani Singh produced a number of hand written copies of Guru Granth Sahib for distribution among the Sikhs.

Skipping some pages of Sikh History, as the same are not directly linked to Baba Deep Singh we would like to mention that when Sikh forces were reorganized into twelve misls (groups), Baba Deep Singh was appointed in charge of one division. While fighting at the head of his misl he achieved numerous victories. The name 'Misl Shaheedan' was given to it after the martyrdom of Baba ji.

Now let us come to his martyrdom, for which he is well known in Khalsa Panth.

After the attack of 1755, Ahmad Shah Abdali, after looting several cities of India was going back to Kabul with his booty and several hundreds of abducted young girls and ladies to be sold in the bazaars of Afghanistan, when the Sikh 'surme sipahis', attacked his forces, recovered back the booty, freed the women and sent them safely and honourably to their respective homes, Ahmed Shah became furious and ordered his son Taimur Shah, who was appointed the governor of Lahore and Jahan Khan his General, to finish the Sikhs to the last and destroy their holy place Sri Harmandir Sahib at Amritsar- their main and the only source of inspiration.

Jahan Khan in 1757, after getting the orders desecrated and demolished the holy place, filled the sarovar with dirt and debris, killed the few Sikhs who were there and objected to his act. All the type of nefarious activities started at that place. It was closed to all the Sikhs.

Baba Deep Singh was at Damdama Sahib. When he heard of the same his blood started boiling. He did not allow his advanced age to come in his way of his determination of punishing and expelling the culprits. Baba Deep Singh prayed to Sat Guru Satche Patshah for giving him the required strength and vowed before the Guru that he would not

come back alive without achieving his mission.

He gathered a large group of Sikhs and advanced towards Sri Harimandir Sahib. By the time they reached the town of Tarn Taran, about ten miles from Amritsar, their numbers had risen to about five thousands. Emphasizing the seriousness of the purpose and the prevailing situation, Baba Ji drew a line on the ground with his 'Khanda', and asked his men to cross the line only if they were willing to die for the cause they had come. All the Sikhs crossed the line eagerly and without any reservation.

On getting the news Jahan Khan also came forward at Tarn Taran with a 20000 strong force. Baba Deep Singh's army intercepted Jahan Khan's forces near the village of Goharwal, about five miles from Amritsar. At this point, there was a clash between both sides. Baba Deep Singh Ji fought with his 18 'Ser' khanda (weighing about 32 lbs.). Each Sikh fought with such great valour and courage that the enemy was almost defeated.

During the midst of battle, a large army of reinforcements arrived for Jahan Khan's men, turning the odds against the Sikhs. Yet, the Sikhs with Baba Deep Singh as their head continued fighting and advancing towards Amritsar. **Just at that point of time Baba Deep Singh received an attack on his neck and he was seriously wounded and fell down. Seeing this a Sikh warrior called out Baba Ji, and reminded him of his pledge of putting his head in the feet of the Guru at Harmandir Sahib. Baba Deep Singh immediately stood up, holding his head on his left palm while holding his 'Khanda' upright in his right hand. He then continued fighting and moving towards Sri Harimandir Sahib. Upon seeing the state and the face (Physical appearance) of Baba Deep Singh, most of the men in the Mughal army fled away in terror. Baba Deep Singh was able to continue fighting and reached Sri Harimandir Sahib. He bowed his head at the 'prikarma' (rectangular walk way) of Sri Harimandir Sahib and laid there as a martyr.**

Some people, however, hold the opinion that the head and neck was not completely severed from the body but was only badly wounded. Baba ji, as he was mentally, spiritually as well as physically very strong, he supported his head and neck with his left hand and fought the enemy with the right hand with double the

vigour. Seeing very uncommon as well as a frightening scene the enemy fled like any thing.

Baba Deep Singh reached the 'Parikarma' of Harmandir Sahib, laid down his head there and went for eternal peaceful sleep. By his undaunting courage, valour, devotion, dedication and commitment, he liberated our revered Sri Harmandir Sahib. His towering personality and unprecedented sacrifice shall always remain a guiding star for the entire community – the young and the old alike.

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22. BHAI TARU SINGH

‘ਸੇਵਕ ਕਉ ਸੇਵਾ ਬਨਿ ਆਈ ॥ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਬੁਝਿ ਪਰਮ ਪਦੁ ਪਾਈ ॥
ਇਸ ਤੇ ਉਪਰਿ ਨਹੀ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ॥ ਜਾ ਕੈ ਮਨਿ ਬਸਿਆ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੁ ॥
ਬੰਧਨ ਤੋਰਿ ਭਏ ਨਿਰਵੈਰ ॥ ਅਨਦਿਨੁ ਪੂਜਹਿ ਗੁਰ ਕੇ ਪੈਰ ॥
ਇਹ ਲੋਕ ਸੁਖੀਏ ਪਰਲੋਕ ਸੁਹੇਲੇ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਭਿ ਆਪਹਿ ਮੇਲੇ’ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ ੨੯੨-੯੩)

‘SEWAK KO SEWA BAN AAYEE, HUKAM BOOJH PARAM PAD PAAYEE
ISS TE OOPAR NAHIN BEECHAAR, JAA KE MAN BASIYA NIRANKAAR
BANDHAN TORE BHAI NIRVAIR, UNDIN POOJEH GUR KE PAER
EH LOK SUKHIYEE PARLOK SUHELE, NANAK HAR PRABH AAPE MAILE.’

Sometimes when we have a glance at the history and story relating to the martyrdom of certain Sikh Heroes or ‘Sant Sipahis’ ‘saint-soldiers’, the naked eye refuses to believe the truth behind the same. Some just declare the same as ‘myths’ and cannot appreciate that the event could ever happen practically in this world and any human being can withstand the test, that he is stated to have been put to, in that story. Bhai Taru Singh’s heroic martyrdom is one of such stories. Can one imagine particularly in the present era, that when, one was being compelled to get his hair cut and convert to Islam, he told the executioner that instead of cutting his hair he could remove his scalp (Khopri)! Normal people cannot withstand such a type of test or pressure. They surrender to the wish of the executioners. But Sikhs of yester years, particularly like that of Bhai Taru Singh, were made of some different matter. They believed in the concept ‘ਮੇਰਾ ਸਿਰ ਜਾਏ ਤਾਂ ਜਾਏ, ਮੇਰਾ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਸਿਦਕ ਨ ਜਾਏ,’ ‘Mera sir jaae tan jaae, Mera Sikhi sidak na jaae’. If my head goes, let it go, (Let I be killed), but I should not be deprived of my Sikh faith and convictions.

Bhai Taru Singh opted for this punishment that lead to his torturous martyrdom for no fault of his. If there was any, it was supplying food and some other help to the poor, to the needy, to the brave Sikhs, who were compelled to leave their homes and hearths in the 18th century. Just because they were Sikhs of Guru Nanak - Guru Gobind Singh they were living in forests - with horse backs as their homes and the jungle vegetation as their food to live in.

As we all know and as is apparent from the stories of martyrs

discussed so far, the Sikhs were not having a congenial atmosphere to live peacefully in most part of the 18th century. The Muslim governments of the day influenced by their clergy and some self centered and ulterior intentioned Hindus, were suspecting an imminent threat to their very existence from the new Religion that surfaced out of the teachings of Guru Nanak and subsequent Gurus and as the same emerged out of Baisakhi of 1699. The Sikhs were being ordered to be killed to the finish. They were tortured to death on flimsy grounds. Despite all the odds against them, the Khalsa of Dasmesh was always in ‘ਚੜ੍ਹਦੀ ਕਲਾ’ high spirits.

Bhai Taru Singh was a Sikh of the Gurus and was living in village Puhla district Kasoor now in Pakistan. His father died when Bhai Sahib was still a child. His mother brought her up and filled in him Sikh values. He grew up as a very popular and well sought of person as he was liked by all around him, be they be, Hindus, Muslims or Sikhs. He was in the habit of helping all irrespective of one’s caste, creed or religion. Out of his this popularity, he was living in the village and had not shifted to the jungles around. He however, was visiting his brethren Sikhs in the jungles and was trying to share with them his earnings by supplying them some food or other articles of daily requirement.

People with ulterior motives could not tolerate his this helping nature. One such person in the history has been mentioned as Har Bhagat Niranjania. He also lived in the vicinity and was also an informer of the government. He lodged a false complaint with the Governor Zakaria Khan that he was helping the terrorist Sikhs who were living in jungles and were preparing themselves to revolt against the government. The governor passed the orders to arrest him and for producing him in his court.

When Bhai Taru Singh, was produced before him, he asked for his offence. He told him that he was a hard working farmer. He has never defaulted and was regularly paying all the taxes to the government. He was helping all the needy irrespective of their religion. Zakaria Khan on listening to him is reported to have said that since he was a good and a popular person, he must belong to Islam, as such he should embrace Islam. Several lucrative allurements were also offered to him. In the alternative he was asked to face a torturous death.

When the governor repeated his proposal with a firm order that Bhai Taru Singh had to choose either death or Islam, Bhai Sahib asked him, if he could assure that he was never to die after embracing Islam,

he was ready to do the same but in case the death was imminent and he has to die one day why to do away with his Sikh Faith so dear to him. He further asked the governor that being a Muslim was he sure that he would never face death. The governor had no answer.

Then the executioners were asked to cut his hair forcibly. Bhai Sahib said that his hair not be touched instead his entire scalp (ਬੋਧੜੀ) could be removed. The Nawab ordered for the removal of the hair together with the entire scalp. The Nawab's orders were carried on June 27, 1745. In full view of the people his scalp was removed. People around, seeing the blood oozing all around, from the left over portion of the head and the scalp instantly got frightened and cried in pain whereas Bhai Sahib was at peace as usual.

Immediately thereafter a strange event happened. The Nawab instantly developed an acute pain and his urinary system stopped functioning. All the 'Hakims', doctors around could not help. Ultimately somebody advised that he should seek a pardon from Bhai Taru Singh, who was still alive. The Khalsa, when approached, sent a message through Bhai Subeg Singh that in case the Nawab is given a beating on his scalp with the shoe of Bhai Taru Singh he might get a respite from the pain. The Nawab had no choice. He even agreed to the same.

The shoe of Bhai Sahib, who was still alive and survived for a number of days despite his scalp having been removed, was loaned to the governor for the purpose. When the shoe beating of the scalp started, his pain started receding and ultimately he passed the urine. But he was so terrified, worried and afraid of his dastardly act of removing the scalp of Bhai Sahib, that he met his end within a couple of days. He died on July 1, 1745. Bhai Sahib after being informed of his passing away too breathed his last on the same day.

Bhai Sahib was martyred in Naulakha Bazaar, Lahore. A Gurdwara in his memory stands at the place of his martyrdom with its door carrying an inscription "Gurdwara Shaheed Ganj Bhai Taru Singh Ji."

Bhai Taru Singh's Martyrdom is quite unique in Sikh history. He should be taken as a role model for the youth of the day who are having a wavering mind and are non-committal to their religion and its values by virtue of their sheer ignorance of its past heritage.

24. BHAI MEHTAB SINGH & BHAI SUKHA SINGH

These two 'Surbir', warrior, 'Singhs', have another unparalleled story of bravery, wisdom, planning, strategy devising and acumen. They punished without any loss of blood, a big culprit of the Sikh community, Massah Rangarh, who had desecrated our holiest place Sri Harmandir Sahib in 1740s.

(Note: I would like to mention at the very outset that this is perhaps the first historical event that has been penned down by a direct descendant – grand son, Rattan Singh Bhangoo - of the hero of this event Shaheed Mehtab Singh. Rattan Singh Bhangoo the author of Pracheen Panth Parkash was the son of Bhai Rai Singh, who was the son of Shaheed Mehtab Singh. As we move forward we shall come to know that at some point even Bhai Rai Singh was at the center stage of the event. My purpose of writing this note is just to emphasize that element of hearsay or confusion, here is virtually nil as it has come from most reliable source.)

As it has been mentioned above the 18th century period was very crucial for the very existence of the Sikhs. Guru Gobind Singh Sahib had most of his decisive battles with the tyrannical and fanatic rulers right in the very beginning of the 18th century after the creation of the Khalsa in 1699.

Then Baba Banda Bahadur came on the scene. He took the revenge from the main cuprites of the Gurus and their beloved Sikhs by giving them the due punishment. He fought fierce battles and also in the process looted and plundered different areas where the enemies of the Sikhs were concentrated. He established Sikh Kingdoms at Samana and Sarhind. He introduced Khalsa currency and the seal. He abolished Zamindari system and gave the tenancy rights to the cultivators. Ultimately the Mughals fell upon Sikhs with much greater vigour and force, killed them mercilessly in large numbers. They captured Banda

Singh Bahadur and a number of Sikhs, brought them to Delhi and carried out a big massacre in a most heinous but planned way. The clashes between the valiant Sikhs and the Muslim rulers continued for a number of years thereafter. Innumerable Sikhs – men women and children, were caught and put to death. Various martyrdoms, some of them described above took place in this period.

A particular instance of much historical importance took place in 1740 that directly caused the event relating to Bhai Mehtab Singh and Bhai Sukha Singh that we are going to discuss now.

In 1740, Ahmed Shah Abdali attacked India and looted a lot of property and captured a number of men and women with a purpose of making them slaves and selling them in the bazaars of Ghazni. When his caravan with the booty was going back it was suddenly attacked by the Sikhs. They recovered back the looted property and also rescued the captured men and women. Then because of the values put into them by the revered Gurus, they honourably restored the captured women to their respective families. People had a sigh of relief. While retreating Abdali who was taken aback with this happening, just asked Zakaria Khan the governor of Lahore as to who those men were who attacked his forces and what was their source of inspiration. Zakaria Khan told him that they were Sikhs, having their houses on the saddles of their horses, and their source of strength was Harmandir Sahib at Amritsar. Abdali told him to be careful of them as he apprehended that the day was not far off when they would rule over the land.

There were standing orders of the rulers to annihilate the Sikhs at all costs and the same were there since the times of Emperor Bahadur Shah when he faced the onslaught of Banda Singh Bahadur. Sikhs had made jungles and ravines as their hideouts. Informers were there who were providing the information about the whereabouts of the Sikhs and were getting adequate rewards from the rulers.

Zakaria Khan after getting the cue from Abdali appointed Massah Rangarh as the Kotwal of Amritsar and asked him to keep a watch around Amritsar of Sikh devotees. Massah Rangarh was a very fanatic Muslim, he entered Harmandir Sahib, desecrated it to the extreme by putting his cot in the center sanctorum, resorted to

drinking, along with getting the prostitutes dance over there. All the Sikhs around were killed and there was no one to check his nefarious activities.

Once one Sardar Bulakha Singh visited Harmandir Sahib in the darkness of night to have a dip in the sacred Sarovar. He had a look on the state of affairs at Harmandir Sahib. Then the house of one Tej Ram, a Hindu was looted on the pretext that he was helping the Sikhs. Both of them went to Bikaner and informed the Sikhs of the sad state of affairs at Harmandir Sahib.

Sardar Sham Singh, who was the Jathedar, the leader of the Sikhs over there, asked his men as to whether there was any Sikh present in the sangat who would behead Massah Rangarh and restore the sanctity of the holy Harmandir Sahib.

One Mehtab Singh son of Hara Singh Bhangu of Meerankot stood up accepted the challenge, and Sukha Singh of Mari Kamboki sought permission to accompany him. The Ardass for the success of the noble mission was carried out and both proceeded on the mission via Damdama Sahib, in high spirits.

At Damdama Sahib, they disguised themselves as two officials ‘Lambardars’ of Patti. They wore Muslim dresses and tied Pathans style turbans. They collected two donkey loads of broken clay chips and other stone pebbles and put them in gunny bags and loaded them on their horses.. Then they proceeded to Amritsar. They told the guards who were guarding Harmandir Sahib entrance that they had come to pay the land revenue . The unsuspecting guards permitted their entry.

Massah Rangarh inside was engaged in the shrine in his nefarious activities as usual. He was smoking ‘Hookah’, ‘hubble–bubble’ drinking wine and was enjoying the company of the prostitutes, the dancing girls. On seeing the scene both the Singhs felt a lot of pain and anger. But keeping in view the delicacies of the situation, both suppressed their feelings. They placed the load of ‘revenue bags’, on the floor. As Massah Rangarh, looked down towards the bag, in a flash Mehtab Singh, severed his head from the neck. Putting the same in the gunny bag, that they had emptied of the ‘revenue receipts’, the broken clay pieces and the stone pebbles and rode back quite uninterrupted and unhindered in a lightening speed. This incident took place on 11th August 1740.

Next day morning they placed the head before their leader Sham Singh at Budha Johar and announced the liberation of Harmandir Sahib. All the Sikhs present there welcomed them with Jaikaras of 'BOLE SO NIHAL', SAT SRI AKAAL.' And congratulated them.

Back at Amritsar, there was a big hue and cry after the happening. The Mughal forces searched the 'culprits', 'The Brave Sikhs' all around but could not get a cue.

Later one, Aqil Dass Jandiala, a government informer informed the governor that Sukha Singh and Mehtab Singh had killed Massa Rangarh and took away his head. They were living in Bikaner but were absconding at that time. He also informed that Sukha Singh was not married but Mehtab Singh's wife and seven years old son, Rai Singh were living at Mirankot whom he had left in the care of Natha Khaira, the headman of village before going underground. The governor sent his commander with the army to Mirankot immediately for catching and bringing the culprits to him. He also asked the commander that if he was not there his son be brought over. **At the demand of the Commander, Natha Khaira did not hand over Rai Singh to him but preferred to fight and attain martyrdom along with his son, nephew and two servants to save his friend's son. During the skirmish Rai Singh was badly wounded and left for dead but he later recovered. Natha Khaira and his son attained martyrdom. There was no trace of Mehtab Singh.**

Later on Rai Singh's son Bhai Rattan Singh wrote Panth Parkash. He has mentioned that five years later, on receiving the news of the arrest of Bhai Taru Singh he surrendered himself voluntarily to die by his side. With the orders of the Governor of Lahore, he was tortured, broken on the wheels and thus martyred in June 1745 A.D.

Bhai Sukha Singh too did not fall into the hands of the killers .He obtained his martyrdom while fighting the forces of Nadir Shah Durani near Lahore in 1753.

25. A BRIEF NOTE

Thus in this part of the book we have tried to cover the heroic deeds and stories of some of the great martyrs of our religion. But we must admit that this is not even a tip of the iceberg. The history of Sikhism is a continuous story of martyrdoms that continued uninterrupted since the martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev Sahib.

Several known and unknown warriors obtained martyrdom while fighting wars with Guru Hargobind Sahib. Then the 10th Guru fought many battles and thousands of Sikhs died in the field. Out of many '40 Mukte' the forty liberated ones receive a special mention, then we cannot forget the heroic deeds of the five sons of Bibi Veero – the only daughter of the 6th Guru. Pir Buddhu Shah, his sons and several mureeds died while fighting for their 'beloved'. Bhai (Pundit) Lal Singh of Panjokhra fame also laid down his life in the battlefield. Bhai Bota Singh, Bhai Garja Singh, Bhai Subeg Singh and Bhai Shahbaj Singh are some other examples.

Then we see there were 'Chhota and Vadda Ghaloogharā', small and big mass massacres of the Sikhs, where Sikh men, women and children were butchered alike in thousands. Then there were various movements and massacres, which cannot be ignored. We have recently seen in our lives heinous killings of the Sikhs during Partition and Operation Blue Star. Post Indira Gandhi mass and inhumane killings of the Sikhs, with or without the help and connivance of the Government machinery is the latest trauma the Sikhs have faced.

It is needless to mention that our Sikh Religion or the Faith has its base, foundation and the pillars in the form of great martyrs. It has grown and continues to have inspiration from the lives and deaths of such unsung heroes of the day.

Note : A discussion and even mere mention of all of these and many more such events need an independent volume on martyrs. As already mentioned above time permitting and with the grace and blessings of 'Sat guru', perhaps I may be able to bring out the same in due course.

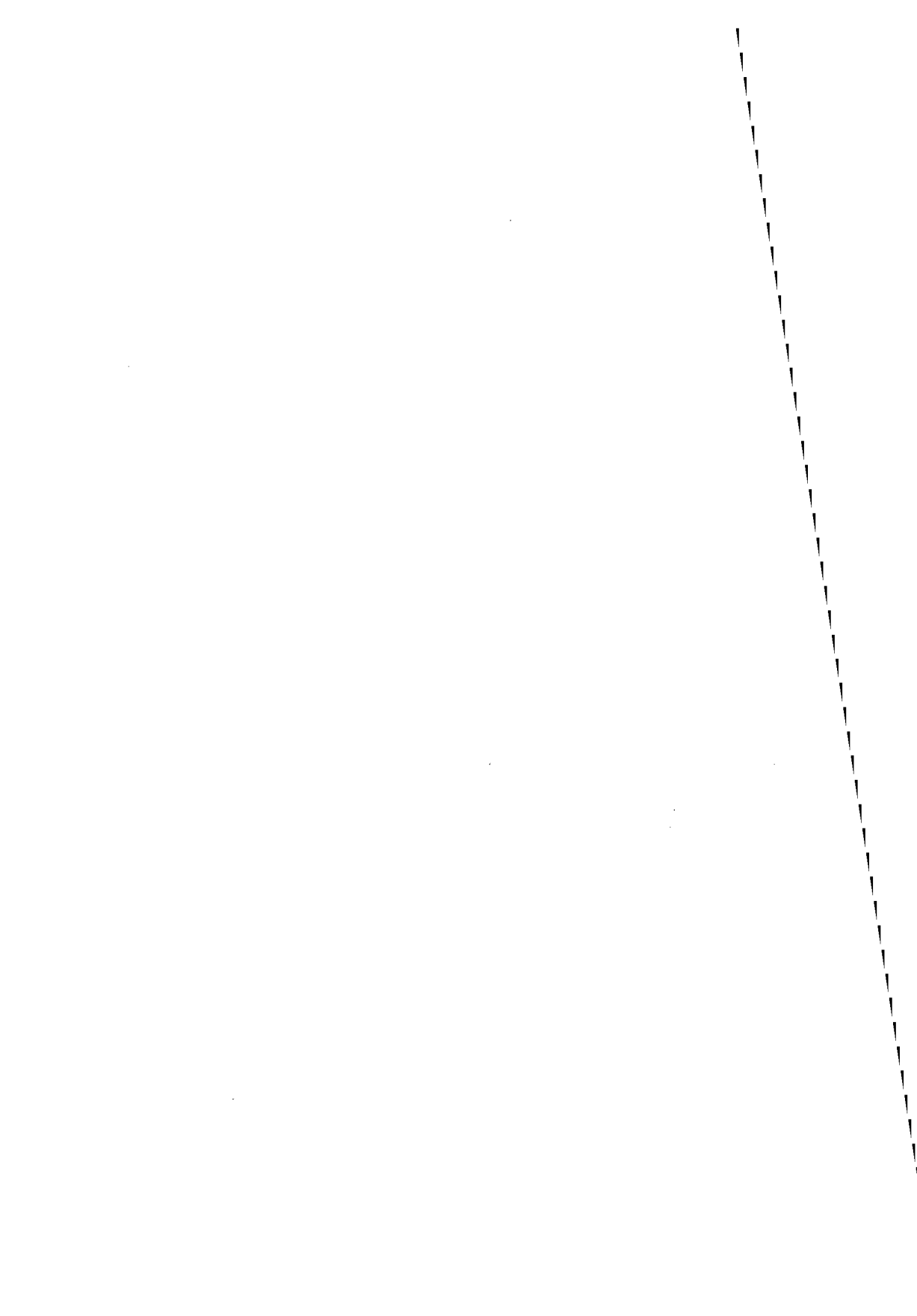
QAUM NOO ENAA SHAHEEDAAN TE MAAN HAI',
QAUM DA ENAA SHAHEEDAAN NOO LAKH LAKH PARNAAM HAI .

*'Khalsa love and respect their hair
They may be murdered, butchered,
Burnt alive, boiled, cut to pieces,
They do not care'.*

Part V
**Our Historical
Gurudhams, Gurdwaras**
ਸਾਡੇ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਿਕ ਗੁਰਧਾਮ, ਗੁਰਦਵਾਰੇ

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Part V

Our Historical Gurudhams, Gurdwaras

ਸਾਡੇ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਿਕ, ਗੁਰਧਾਮ, ਗੁਰਦਵਾਰੇ

GENERAL

Below are given a few of the Gurdwaras, those speak of our origin, our past, our heritage etc. If we intend to know something about our Gurus, our ancient Sikhs – Guru Piyaaras, our selves, our identity and our principles we are supposed to have some information about these historical and holy places. Although I am not mentioning the same from pilgrimage point of view, as several modern scholars often object by saying that pilgrimage centers have virtually no importance in our religion, yet, I hold the opinion and no body shall differ on this point that, we must be aware of our past, our Gurus and other Gur Sikh heroes, who laid down their lives and established other land marks those shall remain as guiding stars for us for the times to come.

Even otherwise too Gurbani lays down,

ਜਿਥੈ ਜਾਇ ਬਹੈ ਮੇਰਾ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਸੋ ਥਾਨੁ ਸੁਹਾਵਾ ਰਾਮ ਰਾਜੇ ॥

ਗੁਰਸਿਖੀ ਸੋ ਥਾਨੁ ਭਾਲਿਆ ਲੈ ਧੂਰਿ ਮੁਖਿ ਲਾਵਾ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੪੫੦)

'JITHE JAI BAHE MERA SATGURU, SO THAAN SUHAVA RAAM RAAJE.

GURSIKHIN SO THAAN BHAALIYA, LAI DHOOR MUKH LAAVA.'

Or

ਘਰ ਘਰ ਅੰਦਰ ਧਰਮਸਾਲ ਹੋਵੇ ਕੀਰਤਨ ਸਦਾ ਵਿਸੋਆ।

ਗੁਰਮੁਖ ਕਲਿ ਵਿਚ ਪਰਗਟ ਹੋਆ ॥ (ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ)

GHAR GHAR ANDER DHARMSAAL HOVE KIRTAN SADA VASOA

GURMUKH KAL VICH PARGAT HOA.

Or

ਸਾ ਧਰਤੀ ਭਈ ਹਰੀਆਵਲੀ ਜਿਥੈ ਮੇਰਾ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਬੈਠਾ ਆਇ ॥

ਸੇ ਜੰਤ ਭਏ ਹਰੀਆਵਲੇ ਜਿਨੀ ਮੇਰਾ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਦੇਖਿਆ ਜਾਇ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੩੧੦)

'SA DHART BHAI HARIYAWALI, JITHE MERA SATGURU BAITHA AYE.
SE JANT BHAEE HARAYAVALE JINNI MERA SATGURU DEKHIYA JAAE'

For a true Guru Piara, Guru touched places become highly sacred and every Gur Sikh, he or she is longing to have a 'darshan' or glimpse of the same.

a) Gurdwaras in Pakistan

It is needless to mention that Pakistan comes only next to India, when we consider the number of our historical Gurdwaras. The reason being that Sikhism started with the advent of Guru Nanak Dev Sahib from that part of Punjab, which later India had to surrender at the time of the Partition and it became a part of Pakistan. Several towns of Pakistan are connected to Sikhism by way of birth or visits of significance by several of the Guru Jotes.

Guru Nanak had his advent at Rai Bhoie Ki Talwandi, district Sheikhpura, that later was re-named as Nanakana Sahib. Guru Ram Dass had his Parkash at Lahore. Several kiths and kin of Guru Jotes were born in that part of Punjab. Several other prominent Sikhs, Bhagats, Piores, Sufi Saints, etc owed their origin or prominent fields of activity or places of establishing land marks in that area. Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Sahib, Bhai Taru Singh and of innumerable Sikhs at the time of Baba Banda Bahadur and 'Ghalughaaras, Sakaas' such as Nanakana Sahib and Panja Sahib, took place over there.

One of the first and important thing the Panth did after partition was to incorporate a prayer to 'Akaal Purakh' in our 'Ardass' to restore to Khalsa Panth the darshan, care and service of the Gurdwaras, Guru Dhaams, from whom the Khalsa Panth has been separated. The exact words are

‘ਹੇ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਆਪਣੇ ਪੰਥ ਦੇ ਸਦਾ ਸਹਾਈ ਦਾਤਾਰ ਜੀਓ! ਸ੍ਰੀ ਨਨਕਾਣਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਿਆਂ ਗੁਰਧਾਮਾਂ ਦੇ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਪੰਥ ਨੂੰ ਵਿਛੋੜਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ, ਖੁਲ੍ਹੇ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਦੀਦਾਰ ਤੇ ਸੇਵਾ ਸੰਭਾਲ ਦਾ ਦਾਨ ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ ਜੀ ਨੂੰ ਬਖ਼ਸ਼ੋ’।

'Hae Akaal Purakh aapne Panth de sada Sahai Datar Jio! Sri Nanakana Sahib te hor Gurdwarian, Gurdhamaan de, Jinnaan ton panth noon vicchoriya gya hai, khulle darshan deedar, te sewa sambhal da daan Khalsa ji noon bakhsho'.

As this small book is not designed or aimed to deal in detail with this subject, we are only mentioning below only a few of the important and well known historical Gurdwaras, in Pakistan, India, and some other countries for information of the valued readers.

Talwandi Rai Bhoie Ki

The Town of Talwandi Rai Bhoie Ki was re-named as Nankana Sahib – being the town of the advent of Guru Nanak Sahib This is the most sacred Sikh place in Pakistan.

Nankana Sahib or Gurdwara Janam Asthaan is the most prominent Gurdwara of this place. Besides Gurdwara Janam Asthaan, several other Gurdwaras, those depict some of the vital aspects of the message and the life history of our founder ‘Aad Guru’, Guru Nanak Sahib, such as **Gurdwara Bal Lila, Gurdwara Patti Sahib, Gurdwara Mall Ji Sahib, Gurdwara Kiara Sahib, and Gurdwara Tambu Sahib** are located here.

Then some other prominent Gurdwaras associated to Guru Nanak Sahib’s name in Pakistan are **Gurdwara Sacha Sauda (Chuharkana), Gurdwara Panja Sahib (Hasan Abdal), Gurdwara Rori Sahib (Aimanabad), Gurdwara Kartar Pur Sahib (Narowal, distt. Sialkot).**

Gurdwara Panja Sahib is the site where Guru Nanak Sahib stopped the rock with his hand and the palm print is impressed on the rock. **Kartar Pur Sahib** is the place from where he left this mortal world after bestowing Guru Gaddi upon Bhai Lehna by making him **Guru Angad Sahib.**

Lahore :

Like Nanakana Sahib, **Lahore** another important city of **Pakistan** has several important historical Gurdwaras, such as,

Gurdwara Dehra Sahib, (martyrdom place of Guru Arjan Dev Sahib),

Gurdwara Parkash Asthaan Guru Ram Dass Sahib,

Shahid Ganj Bhai Taru Singh,

Gurdwara Shahid Ganj Singhian,

Shahid Ganj Bhai Mani Singh,

Dharamshala Sri Guru Ram Dass,

**Gurdwara Baoli Sahib Guru Arjan Dev,
Gurdwara Bhai Budhu Da Awa,
Gurdwara Lal Khooh,
Gurdwara Paatshahi Chhevin, Gurdwara Shikar Garh
Patshahi Chhevin.**

Besides above there are several Gurdwaras of significant historical importance at Aimnabad, Kasur, Sialkot, Multan, Pak Pattan, Okara, Quetta, Larkana, Karachi, Rawalpindi, Hafizabad, Dera Ismaeil Khan etc.

b) Gurdwaras in India:

India though considerably reduced in size, as a result of partition in 1947, is still a very vast country. As our revered Gurus, particularly Guru Nanak Sahib, Guru Hargobind Sahib, Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib and Guru Gobind Singh too, traveled far and wide, several important Gurdwaras have been established at the places those were visited or even touched by them. Then several important centers of Gursikhi were established during the physical span of the Gurus, those continue to have the gravitational pulls for the Sikhs across the globe. Several Gurdwaras have also been established at different places associated with the Gurus' loving Sikhs, commemorating their names and the deeds performed by them.

Again whereas it is virtually not possible to count and enlist all such Gurdwaras, at this place, an attempt is being made to give below a list of some very important Gurdwaras those are there in this part of India.

i) Gurdwaras in Punjab:

Amritsar

Sri Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple): Our most important pilgrimage center. Built in a very congenial and serene atmosphere within a Sarovar (Water Pool). Surrounded by water on the three sides and the fourth one connected with the land, that enables Gursikhs and others including tourists to have a glimpse of the 'Guru Asthaan'. The work at the sarovar was initiated and completed by Guru Ram Dass Sahib and the Harimandir was built by the fifth Guru, Guru Arjan Dev Sahib. It has also been mentioned by some historians that even Guru

Nanak visited this serene place and prophesized that the place would become one day a great pilgrimage center.

The land for the site was purchased by Guru Amar Dass Sahib on a payment of Rupees seven hundred from Mughal Emperor Akbar. Maharaja Ranjit Singh covered the building with gold plates and it came to be known as GOLDEN TEMPLE, the world over. Every Sikh prays for 'Sri Amritsar Ji ke Darshan Ishnaan', in his daily prayer (Ardass).

As far as its daily routine, we may say that it is totally spiritual and religious. No political activity, no announcements, no Katha or explanations or interpretation of Shabad Gurbani is allowed. The routine starts with Kirtan at the wee hours (early morning) and ends with Kirtan late at night around 9.00 P.M., to be followed by cleaning Sewa of the entire premises including vast 'parikarma' – the walking place around the sarovar.

The routine is distinct and unique in one another aspect as well. It is in this Gurdwara only where Kirtan starts before the arrival of the Swaari Sahib, 'Guru Granth Sahib', for 'Parkash'. There are no introductory or concluding 'shabads' before or after the daily 'ardass'. It starts with 'Bolo Ji Waheguru' and ends with, 'Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh'.

Sri Akaal Takhat Sahib: The institution was established by sixth Guru, Guru Hargobind Sahib, as a temporal seat (Miri) for the Sikhs. In the after noon 'deewans' (congregations) Guru Sahib used to address the Sikhs. 'Vaars' were sung by the 'dhaadis', to inculcate a spirit of pride, dignity, self confidence among the Sikhs. Guru Sahib was listening and adjudicating upon the daily petty issues and problems of the Sikhs. He was accepting presents from them in the form of arms, ammunitions, horses, elephants etc.

Even today, it is our supreme Takhat (out of the five), headed by a Jathedar. Routine for addressing to our political problems is the same as that established by Guru Sahib. Dhaadhi Vaars are sung. Political directions are also given from here. Every Sikh who commits an act of religious sacrilege has to appear at this Takhat for accepting punishment or for pleading his innocence and asking for forgiveness.

Another thing of significance to be mentioned is that 'Sukhasan

Asthan' (Resting Place) of Sri Guru Granth Sahib, is here for the Guru Swaroops, those are put at sanctum sanctorum ('jinha da parkash keeta jaanda hai.') at Sri Harmandir Sahib.

Gurdwara Guru ki Wadali, Amritsar: This is the advent (birth) place of Guru Hargobind Sahib. It is located in village Wadali, near Amritsar. It is said to avoid the onslaught of Prithi Chand and his wife Karmo, Guru Arjan Sahib decided to send his wife 'Mata Ganga Ji' and mother 'Mata Bhani Ji' to this place for a safe delivery of the child.

Gurdwara Guru Ke Mahal: This is the birth place of Sri Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib and is located in Guru Bazar, Amritsar.

Gurdwara Mata Kaulan, Amritsar: It is just at the boundary or within the precincts of Sri Harmandir Sahib. It has been built to commemorate the memory of Bibi Kaulan, the daughter of a Mohammedan Qazi, who when refused to marry a Mohammedan of the choice of her father, as she was a devout of Guru Hargobind Sahib, was awarded a death sentence. Her mother succeeded in safely sending her to Guru Darbar, in the company of Saaien Mian Mir. She lived at this place all through her life in deep devotion, meditation and 'bhakti', of Guru Hargobind Sahib.

Gurdwara Baba Attal: This is a nine storey tall building just within the vicinity of Harmandir Sahib, commemorating the memory of Baba Attal Rai, a nine year old son of Guru Hargobind Sahib, whose just speaking a few words from his mouth became a miracle and the same were not welcomed by his father Guru, as he said that they were not there to show the miracles. He took a sheet of cloth, lied down at this spot, never to rise up again.

Gurdwara Shaheed Ganj- Baba Deep Singh Shaheed: This Gurdwara is in memory of Baba Deep Singh Shaheed who was cremated at this spot. Despite his advanced age of 75 years, Baba Deep Singh valiantly and forcefully fought against the Durani forces, to liberate Harmandir Sahib from their sacrilegious possession. Baba Deep Singh laid down his life along with hundreds of Sikh Warriors, while fighting with Jahan Khan, commander of Ahmad Shah Durani's forces and was successful in getting Harmandir Sahib freed from the clutches of Durani even though they had to pay a very high price for the same. The Gurdwara was built by S. Jassa Singh Ramgarhia to

commemorate the memory of Martyrs – Baba Deep Singh and the Singhs who laid down their lives while fighting under his command.

Gurdwara Ram Sar: A huge sarovar and a Gurdwara was built here by Guru Arjan Dev Sahib, originally in memory of Guru Ram Dass Sahib. Initially Sukhmani Sahib was composed at this fascinating place and later on entire Guru Granth Sahib was dictated to Bhai Gurdass by Guru ji himself at this site.

At present a huge multi storeyed building having a magnificent Gurdwara with a printing press in the basement for printing facilities of Sri Guru Granth Sahib keeping in view the observance of complete sanctity is housed here. Gurmat literature of high standard is also printed at this place.

Besides the city of Amritsar has several other Historical Gurdwaras. A special mention may, however, be made of **Gurdwara Bibek Sar** (built by Guru Hargobind Sahib) and **Gurdwara Manji Sahib** – started by Guru Arjan Dev Sahib when Harmandir Sahib was being built.

Khadur Sahib

Khadur Sahib is a place of great significance, when we count the places or towns of importance, where several milestones were laid towards the growth of Sikhism. The town is located quite near to Amritsar, Goindwal Sahib, Taran Taran or even Kartar Pur Sahib, Pakistan. At the directions of Guru Nanak Dev Sahib, Guru Angad, the second Nanak, had his head quarters at Khadur.

This is the town where eight out of Ten Guru Jotes, in physical form, put their foot. It was here, the Janam Saakhi, the first historical description of Guru Nanak Sahib's life was written. It was here Gurmukhi Lipi was given the final shape by Guru Angad Dev Sahib. It was at this very town the emphasis was laid on the education and the physical and healthy growth of the Sikhs, by establishing 'Mal Akhaaras' for wrestling, by teaching the children themselves by the revered Guru, Guru Angad Dev Sahib.

Guru Angad Dev Sahib even prepared small booklets of Gurmukhi Language and distributed the same amongst the children. **It was here the langar system as introduced by Baba Nanak at Sacha Sauda and continued by Mata Sulakhni at Kartar Pur was strengthened**

by Mata Khivi by personally serving the ‘Kheer’ prepared in ghee or butter oil, to the devotees – a mention of which has been made in Guru Granth Sahib itself. The tradition established is still continuing with full vigour.

The town has a number of important and magnificent Gurdwaras. The prominent among them being

Gurdwara Sri Darbar Sahib (Angeetha Sahib)

Gurdwara Sri Tapiyana Sahib

Memorial Bhai Bala Ji

Gurdwara Tap Asthan Guru Angad Dev Ji

Gurdwara Mai Bhaarai

Gurdwara Mal Akhaarha Sahib

Gurdwara ‘Tharha’ Sahib,

‘Khuh’ (well) Bibi Amro Ji

In the langar hall in the name of Mata Khivi Ji, the langar that is served invariably contains ‘Kheer’ as well.

Recently a wonderful, computerized touch screen museum has been built. A magnificent nine storey building of stone is being built and has been named as a ‘Nishan – e – Sikhi’. An all round development of the city took place in 2004, when Khalsa Panth celebrated the 500th birth anniversary of Guru Angad Dev Sahib. The projects started are at different stages of implementation. Keeping in view the call of the hour, an emphasis has been made on the development of the infrastructure, planting trees on a large scale and re - laying of the markets and residential areas.

Goindwal Sahib

Like Khadoor Sahib, Goindwal Sahib has also a place of reckoning in our history. As Guru Angad Sahib came to Khadoor at the directions of Guru Nanak Sahib, Baba Amardass was given the duty of establishing the town of Goindwal Sahib by Guru Angad Dev Ji. Goindwal Sahib remained headquarters of Sikhism during the period of Guru Amar Dass Sahib and a part of the period of Guru Ram Dass Sahib.

It came to be known as the first pilgrimage center of the Sikhs. It was from here the directions were issued by Guru Sahib to celebrate

Baisakhi and Dewali as the days of special congregations. It was from here Guru Amardass Sahib established different Manjis (seats) for the spread of Gur-Sikhi in all the corners of the country.

Gurdwara Baoli Sahib: At this very town Guru Amar Dass Sahib got built a big Baoli (a roofed well) to meet the basic requirement of water for the local inhabitants keeping in view an over all social interest. It is also said that Guru Sahib blessed on the completion of the Baoli Sahib that have 84 steps that who so ever will recite one Path of Jap Ji Sahib with complete devotion and dedication at each step after taking a bath in the Baoli Sahib after each Path, shall be freed from the cycle of life and death.

The entrance to the Baoli has been artistically decorated. There is a row of frescoes, depicting scenes from Sikh history. Adjoining the Baoli, a magnificent Gurdwara has been built. Besides, there is 'Langar' the famous community kitchen of Guru Amar Das, where each visitor is offered food. It is a well-known fact that even Emperor Akbar was asked to have langar, while sitting in 'Pangat' along with 'Sangat', before he was allowed a glimpse of Guru Sahib.

Taran Taran

Gurdwara Harmandir Sahib : The Gurdwara Sahib with a huge Sarovar and wide parikarma was built by Guru Arjan Dev Sahib. A dispensary, on a large scale, was also set up by him for curing the people around, suffering from different ailments.

Kirat Pur Sahib

The town of Kirat Pur was established by Baba Gurditta Ji, the eldest son of Guru Hargobind Sahib and father of Guru Har Rai Sahib. The town remained head quarter of Gursikhi during the periods of Guru Har Rai Sahib, Guru Harkrishan Sahib and a part period of Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib. The town has several Gurdwaras including Gurdwara Shish Mahal, 'Parkash Asthaan', of Guru Har Rai and Guru Harkrishan Sahib.

Ropar

Sri Anand Pur Sahib: Like Amritsar, Anand Pur Sahib is also a

town of great importance for the Sikhs. As Khalsa Panth was born here in 1699, every Amritdhari Sikh is supposed to be a resident of this great town. The town was established by Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib as Chak Nanaki, in the name of his revered mother. **The ‘Sis’ (Head) of Sri Guru Teg Bahadur that was brought from Delhi by Bhai Jaita Rangretta was cremated here and a Gurdwara Sis Ganj Sahib was built at the spot. Three out of four Sahibzadas (princes- sons of Guru Gobind Singh Sahib) were born here. The eldest, Sahibzada Ajit Singh was born at Paonta Sahib.** A number of battles with hill rajas and Mughal forces were also fought at this town by Guru Dasmesh.

Takhat Sri Kes Garh Sahib is also situated here. It was at this site Guru Dasmesh tested the devotion, dedication and the abject surrender of his Sikhs by making a call for their heads on Baisakhi day of 1699 and established the Khalsa Panth.

Besides **Anand Pur Sahib, Chamkaur Sahib** is also located in Ropar district. **Gurdwara Kattal Garh Sahib (Shaheed Ganj)** is located here that signifies the spot where Sahibzada Ajit Singh and Sahibzada Jujhar Singh, three of the five Piyaaras – Bhai Mohkam Singh, Bhai Himmat Singh and Bhai Sahib Singh and some other beloved Sikhs of the Guru laid down their lives while fighting valiantly in the battle field.

Gurdwara Parivar Vicchorha Patshahi Dasveen, Gurdwara Sri Bhatha Sahib and Gurdwara Pataal Puri are also located in Ropar district.

Talwandi Saabo, Distt, Bathinda

Takhat Sri Damdama Sahib, is located here. It is the place where Guru Gobind Singh Sahib, after fighting all the wars/battles and after losing all the near and dears including all the four sons, revered mother and three of the five beloved ones, stayed here for about a year and made the town as his headquarter. It was here that he dictated the entire Guru Granth Sahib to Bhai Mani Singh with his divine powers and insight. It was here the Khalsa was rejuvenated and recreated. The depleted strength of the Khalsa due to the continuous struggles and wars was more than restored with the fresh call and undying spirit of Guru Sahib. It was here Baba Deep Singh was entrusted the task of

writing, explaining and teaching Gurbani to the Sikhs. The Taksaal was established. Khalsa Panth has given the status of the Fifth Takhat to this Place.

Mukatsar

Sri Darbar Sahib, is another very important Gurdwara of Punjab, signifying the heroic battle the forty Singhs fought under the leadership of Bhai Mahan Singh and Mata Bhag Kaur, as a consequence of which Guru Sahib tore away the letter of desertion (Bedawa), which was given by them to him earlier and had gone back to their homes where they were not accepted by their woman folk as they termed them as cowards who had deserted their Guru in his hour of need.

Sarhand

Gurdwara Sri Fateh Garh Sahib: This Gurdwara commemorates the place where ‘Chhote Sahibzade – Sahibzada Zorawar Singh and Sahibzada Fateh Singh obtained martyrdom when they were bricked alive in the wall. Mata Gujri, our revered mother also breathed her last in the ‘Thanda Burj’, that is still there standing intact.

Gurdwara Jyoti Saroop, Fateh Garh Sahib: This is the place where the Sahibzadas and Mata Gujri were cremated, when the land for the same was paid for by Bhai Todar Mal by paying Gold Mohars to the Mughal tyrannical Nawab Wazir Khan, covering the entire space - the land that was required for the cremation.

Some other Gurdwaras of great historical importance are just listed below as vivid description of all may make the topic endless

Gurdwara Guru Ki Dhab, Faridkot

Gurdwara Gang Sar, Jait

Gurdwara ‘Achal Sahib’ Batala

Gurdwara Kandh Sahib, Batala

Sri Darbar Sahib, Dera Baba Nanak

**Gurdwara Sri Charan Kanwal Sahib, Maachhiwarha,
Ludhiana**

**Gurdwara Manji Sahib, Patshahi Dasveen Aalmgir,
Ludhiana.**

Gurdwara Nabha Sahib, Patiala.

Gurdwara Sri Dookh Niwaran Sahib, Patiala.

Gurdwara Paatshahi Naouwin, Bahadurgarh

Besides above, there are several more Gurdwaras of historical importance in Punjab – the land that is otherwise also known as ‘Guruan Di Dharti’, the land of the Gurus.

ii) Haryana

Haryana, a small State, of India was born just in 1966, as a result of further partition of Punjab, the first having been done in 1947, at the time of division of the country. A number of our historical Gurdwaras were in this part of Punjab, viz, in the districts of Kurukshetra, Ambala, Jind, Karnal etc., and the same have now been classified as being in Haryana. Some of the Gurdwaras of paramount importance are listed as under.

Gurdwara Kapal Mochan,

Gurdwara Paatshahi Dasveen, Jagadhri, Yamuna Nagar

Gurdwara Manji Sahib, Gurdwara Sis Ganj,

Gurdwara Sri Panjokhara Sahib district Ambala,

Gurdwara Naadha Sahib, district Panchkula

Gurdwara Bangla Sahib, Rohtak

Gurdwaras Paatshahi Pehli (First), Teejee (Third),

Chhainween (Sixth), Nauveen (Ninth) and

Dasween (Tenth) at Kurukshetra

iii) Himachal Pardesh:

The State of Himachal Pardesh has also some important Gurdwaras. A few of them are listed below.

Gurdwara Sri Kalgi Dhar Sahib, Bilaspur, on Kullu Manali Road, Himachal Pardesh. It has been built in memory of Guru Gobind Singh Sahib’s visit to that place at the invitation of Raja Bhim Chand, in the pre – Bhangani war period.

Another Gurdwara of great significance is Gurdwara Paonta Sahib, Distt Sirmour. It is at this place Guru Gobind Singh Sahib stayed for more than four years and created soul searching and morale boosting literature. He was having 52 poets and some other literary figures in his court. It is said that on the complaint of some writers that

in Jamuna's roaring noise, they were not in a position to recite and narrate their poems, Guru Sahib directed Jamuna to pass on silently from that place. Thereafter there was a complete noise free and serene atmosphere.

Some other Gurdwaras are

Gurdwara Dasveen Patshahi - Nadaun Distt. Kangra

Gurdwara Rawalsar Distt. Mandi

Gurdwara Manikaran Distt. Kullu

Gurdwara Barru Sahib Distt. Sirmaur,

Gurdwara Padal Sahib, Mandi,

Gurdwara Guru Gobind Singh Sahib –Nahan

Gurdwara Guru Ka Lahore -Bilaspur

iv) Delhi

Delhi, though a small state is very important for Sikhs as some very important historical Gurdwaras are located here. The city being capital of the country has a significant impact on the cultural, political, religious and social lives of the people. The physical span period of our Gurus and the Mughal dynasty was almost identical. Babar, the first Mughal came during Guru Nanak Sahib's period and Aurangzeb all powerful and virtually last emperor of any reckoning, died during Guru Gobind Singh Sahib's life. As the message of Gursikhi was spreading to every home, the fanatic rulers could not tolerate the same as they were working with some different intentions. There were long spells of confrontations. There were sacrifices, martyrdoms, wars and battles. Ultimately the Mughal rule ended and British took over from them. But in Punjab, the Khalsa was able to establish its own Raj. Banda Bahadur sowed the seeds and took the revenge from the culprits of our Gurus, Sahibzadas and dear Gursikhs. Then Sikh Misls came followed by Khalsa 'Sarkar' of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The English ruled over Punjab for about 100 years, but were not allowed to sit in peace through out this period, particularly from the Jallianwala Bagh episode.

This all implied that during all this period Sikhs were especially associated with Delhi. Several significant events took place here and accordingly some very important historical Gurdwaras have been established here. **Moreover, Delhi is the only city out of Punjab, that**

was visited by five out of ten Sikh Gurus. Delhi has the touch of the feet of Guru Nanak, Guru Hargobind, Guru Harkrishan, Guru Teg Bahadur and Guru Gobind Singh Sahib. Guru Harkrishan Sahib left his mortal body on this part of the earth and Guru Teg Bahadur was martyred here. Mata Sundri (Sundar Kaur) and Mata Sahib Kaur stayed here for about forty years and guided the Panth, after Guru Dasmesh, their husband, left this world for good. Baba Banda Bahadur was also brutally tortured at this place, before he was killed, by the tyrannical rulers of the day. Today Delhi has the largest Sikh population, as compared to any other city in the world.

Below are given the names of the historical Gurdwaras with a brief description.

1. Gurdwara Guru Nanak Piao: This is the first historical Gurdwara in Delhi. Guru Nanak Sahib visited this place during his first Udasi period (1496 to 1509). He camped at this site which was located on a high way that later came to be known as G.T. Road, and at present as G.T. Karnal Road. He himself was offering water to the passer bys, by taking water out from a well, that is still there in a well - preserved form. The site at present has a magnificent Gurdwara building, a large sarovar surrounded by a wide parikarma. The place is abuzz with Kirtan and other programs and thousands of devotees daily throng this place all day long.

2. Gurdwara Majnu Ka Teela: This is another place associated to the visit of Guru Nanak Sahib. It is situated on the banks of Jamuna in North Delhi, on the Outer Ring Road, near Khayber Pass. It is said that Guru Nanak met Majnu, a sufi saint here who was living on a 'teela' over here. During the course of exchange of some views he observed that whereas, Guru Nanak would be remembered by the people for times eternal, his name would be lost soon. Guru Nanak responded by blessing that the said place would be known after his name only. So this is the name. Baba Ram Rai's well, where he showed miracles to the emperor and other royal people, that led Guru Har Rai, his father, to send a message to him that he should not show his face to the Guru and go where ever he wanted, is also located here.

3. Gurdwara Sis Ganj Sahib: It is another sacred place and as such a pilgrimage center for the Sikhs in Delhi. It was here in 1675, the

martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur took place. Guru Sahib was put in a cage for a number of days, was pressurized to embrace Islam, and offered several allurements too. But when, all the tactics could not work, he was beheaded in full view of the public in Chandni Chowk, under the orders of the monarch, at this spot. Before he was beheaded three of his close associate Sikhs, Bhai Mati Dass, Bhai Sati Dass and Bhai Dayala, were tortured to death in a most heinous way in the presence of Guru Sahib to intimidate him, but Guru Sahib stuck to his stand that was later described as

**'BAANHE JINHA DI PAKARIYEE, SIR DEEJEY BAANHEY NA CHHOREYE,
GURU TEG BAHADUR BOLIA, DHAR PAYIEE DHARMA NA CHHORIYEE**

and as said by Guru Gobind Singh Sahib,

**'THEEKAR PHOR DILLIS SIR, PRABH PUR KIYO PIYAAN,
TEG BAHADUR SI KIRYA KARHEE NA KINHOON AAN'**

To commemorate the memory of great martyrs, the associate Gur Sikhs of Sahib Sri Guru Teg Bahadur, the Chowk, the famous crossing that was hitherto fore was known as 'Fountain', Delhi, has been renamed by the government as '**Bhai Mati Dass Chowk**' and a Sikh Museum has been built opposite the building of Gurdwara Sahib in the name of the martyrs, **Bhai Mati Dass, Bhai Sati Dass and Bhai Dayala**. (Note: Their martyrdom has been discussed in part IV – 'The Sikhism and Martyrdom', at pages 157-58).

4. Gurdwara Rakab Ganj Sahib: Gurdwara Rakab Ganj is another Gurdwara that is directly associated to the martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur. In addition it also shows undaunted and heroic courage of a Gursikh Bhai Lakhi Shah Vanjara, who lifted the head less body of Guru Sahib from Chandni Chowk, the place of his execution, to this place despite heavy odds and security arrangements.

He placed the headless body in one of his bullock carts loaded with different types of cargo, reached this site where his house was located, placed the same there and put the house on fire, taking his entire house as a 'pyre' of his revered 'Guru'. A very magnificent high-rise building has been built at this place, **with a vast hall in the name of Bhai Lakhi Shah Vanjara**, to commemorate his name. Off late Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management committee offices have been shifted here.

The vast premises are in the heart of New Delhi, surrounded by Parliament House, Central Secretariat and Rashtrapati Bhawan.

5. Gurdwara Bangla Sahib: This is the place where Guru Harkrishan Sahib, the Bala Pritam, when he was just running in his eighth year, stayed here when he was called to Delhi by the Emperor Aurangzeb. Initially he was reluctant to come as he was aware of the ulterior designs of the Mughal King, and was advised by his father Guru, Guru Har Rai, before the latter left for the heavenly abode, to never to see the emperor in his life, but at the insistence of the Sangat and the courtesy shown by Mirza Raja Jai Singh's messenger that he will be comfortably stayed at Delhi and shall not be compelled to see the emperor, he agreed to visit Delhi.

He was offered this place for his comfortable stay as this was a bungalow, 'a bangla' where Mirza Raja Jai Singh himself was staying with his family.

During Guru Sahib's stay Delhi was engulfed with an epidemic where hundreds were dying daily in pain. Guru Harkrishan despite his tender age entered the arena of service, visited the people at their places, gave them a healing touch. Even people were taking his 'charan amrit' and were getting cured. But Guru Sahib as per destiny, fell seriously ill and breathed his last when he was just eight years old and left his mortal body saying 'Baba Bakaale'.

As on date **Bangla Sahib**, is most sought of pilgrimage center of the Sikhs – perhaps next only to Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar. Thousands of devotees, tourists from all countries and different denominations throng this sacred place daily with figures swelling to hundreds of thousands on Sundays and holidays.

6. Gurdwara Bala Sahib: It is the spot where the mortal remains of Guru Harkrishan Sahib were consigned to flames and his 'Angeetha' was created. Subsequently Mata Sundri and Mata Sahib Devan were also cremated here. Originally it was on the outskirts of Delhi just a few meters away from Jamuna River. With the passage of time and with the explosion in population, it has come within densely populated localities, drawing large 'sangats' in the morning and evening and even during the day too. A large multi facility hospital has been built here quite recently and is expected to meet the highly felt

demand of the poor and low-income patients for proper medical care:

7. Gurdwara Damdama Sahib: It is the sacred Gurdwara built to commemorate the visit of Guru Gobind Singh Sahib, who visited Delhi at the invitation of Emperor Bahadur Shah, son of Aurangzeb. It is located Near Nizamuddin Railway Station in the Southern part of Delhi.

8. Gurdwara Moti Bagh: Situated at a place previously known as 'Mochi Bagh', in South West Delhi near Dhaula Kuan, on Ring Road, is in memory of Dasmesh Pita, who shot an arrow from this place that went straight to Red Fort, Delhi, at a distance of more than 10 kilometers from this spot, and struck the bed of Bahadur Shah, the Emperor. Guru Ji later told and emphasized to him that the same was not a miracle but a skill or physical power that enabled such a performance.

9. Gurdwara Mata Sundri: At this place Mata Sundar Kaur (More popularly known as Mata Sundri) and Mata Sahib Kaur (Sahib Devan) spent about forty years of their lives, together when Dasmesh Pita sent them here escorted by Bhai Mani Singh Ji. He himself proceeded to South where his physical body succumbed to the attack of the assailants. The mothers guided the Panth, helped Bhai Mani Singh in the collection and compilation of the bani of Guru Sahib. They even helped in solving the conflicts between Tat Khalsa and Bandai Khalsa, those erupted and spread like a fire and engulfed the entire Panth soon after its creation.

A large women's college affiliated to Delhi University is functioning at this place since last many years. Besides a Gurmat College has also been started by the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee to spread the education and training of the study of Guru Granth Sahib in the aspirant Gursikhs, irrespective of their age. Certificates and diplomas on the successful completion of the courses are also being issued.

10. Gurdwara Baba Banda Bahadur: This Gurdwara is situated at Mehrauli, New Delhi, about one and a half kilometer away from Qutab Minar. This Gurdwara marks the site of the martyrdom of Banda Singh Bahadur.

Banda Singh Bahadur was earlier known as Madho Das. He was a

Yogi, Madho Dass by name. When Guru Gobind Singh went to Deccan, and met him, he tried to influence Guru Sahib with his occult powers but all his attempts proved futile. He fell at Guru Sahib's feet and became his disciple. Guru Sahib admitted him into the Panth by giving him Khande Baate Di Pahul, named him as Banda Singh Bahadur. When he came to know of the atrocities committed on the Sikh-Gurus, Guru Sahibzadas and 'some beloved and devout Sikhs like Pir Buddhu Shah by the rulers and their clan, his blood started boiling and he offered himself to Guru Sahib for taking revenge from the culprits and paying them back in their coin. He was sent to Punjab, by Dasmesh.

Banda Bahadur with his men and local Gursikh warriors who joined him attacked Samana, Sarhind, Sadhaura and other places and put to death the persons who were instrumental in killing Guru Teg Bahadur, 'the Princes and Syyed Buddhu Shah. He took control of a large part of the territory and established Sikh Raj with his currency and seal.

v) Bihar

Bihar State is a place of quite significance for the Sikhs. Whereas Guru Nanak put his foot on this earth at Nanakana Sahib, Punjab (now in Pakistan), Guru Gobind Singh Sahib the tenth master had his advent at Patna, now named as **Patna Sahib**, in Bihar and spent a few of his early years at this place along with his mother Mata Gujri, a few relatives and Guru's beloved Sikhs. Besides him, Guru Nanak Sahib as well as Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib also visited this place and some other parts of Bihar. Accordingly a number of historical Gurdwaras exist here.

Prominent among all is the **Parkash Place of Guru Dasmesh, named as Takhat Sri Harmandir Ji, Patna Sahib**. It is one of the Five Takhats of Khalsa Panth, and one of the two located outside Punjab. It attracts a huge number of Sikhs and others from across the land and abroad.

Other Gurdwaras of considerable importance are

1. **Gurdwara Bal Lila Maini**
2. **Gurdwara Gai Ghat, Patna**
3. **Gurdwara Guru Ka Bagh (Patna)**

4. **Gurdwara Pakki Sangat (Monghyr)**
5. **Gurdwara Sri Guru Teg Bahadur (Bhagalpur)**
6. **Gurdwara Sri Guru Teg Bahadur (Gaya)**
7. **Gurdwara Bari Sangat Sri Guru Teg Bahadur Chauki**
8. **Gurdwara Handi Sahib**
9. **Gurdwara Taksali Sangat (Sasaram)**

vi) **Karnatka**

Gurdwara Nanak Jhira, Bidar: While traveling to South, Guru Nanak Sahib in his second Udasi visited Nanded too, and on his way to Hyderabad and Golkunda, he visited Bidar. He met Sufi saints Pir Jalaluddin and Yakoob Ali. It is said that Bidar city that was having acute shortage of drinking water, got pure, cool and sweet water just by the touch of his feet on this land. Gurdwara Nanak Jhira is established at this spot and tourists from all over visit this place, particularly when they visit Nanded, Takhat Sri Hazoor Sahib.

There is another Gurdwara as '**Tap Asthan of Mai Bhago**'. She was the last surviving warrior of Mukatsar War and came to Nanded along with Guru Dasmesh. After he left this mortal world she shifted to this place and remained here till her last breath.

Bhai Sahib Singh one of the five beloved ones of Guru Sahib also hailed from this place.

vii) **Jammu & Kashmir**

It is a well known fact that Guru Nanak during his extensive tours of India and some foreign lands also visited Jammu and Kashmir. He even went to Leh Ladakh and Tibet. Thereafter it was Guru Hargobind Sahib, who visited Kashmir during his tours to deliver the message of Sikhism. He also visited **Mata Bhag Bhari**, who inspite of her advanced age and falling eye sight stitched a Kurta (a shirt), for Guru Sahib and waited for years for his visit and offered him the same with complete reverence and dedication when he visited him specially for the purpose. **A Gurdwara is established there to commemorate Guru Sahib's visit.** Other historical Gurdwaras of significance in the area include;

1. **Gurdwara Paatshahi Chhevin, Village Baramulla**
2. **Dukh Nivaran Gurdwara Guru Nanak Dev - Anantnag**

3. **Gurdwara Paatshahi Chhevin, Village Rainawari**
4. **Gurdwara Pather Sahib, Leh**

viii) Maharashtra

State of Maharashtra has a special place for the Sikhs. If Nankana Sahib is the place, where Guru Nanak Sahib put his foot on this earth in 1469, it was from here (Hazoor Sahib, Nanded, in the State of Maharashtra), Guru Gobind Singh Sahib, the 10th Nanak, left this mortal world in 1708, - bringing an end to the period of our revered Gurus in physical and human forms. Then it was here that Guriyae was bestowed upon Jugo jug Attal Sri Guru Granth Sahib, by Dasmesh in 1708, before he departed. Again it was here in Maharashtra where Banda Bahadur met Guru Sahib, and was sent to Punjab with a mission. It was with Banda Bahadur, the saga of wars to take revenge from the culprits of Sikhism started and carried to a logical end, that eventually resulted in uprooting the Mughal rule, first from Punjab and then from the whole of India, even though we had to pay a very heavy price for the same.

The place from where Guru Gobind Singh Sahib left this mortal world, and the place where he bestowed Guru Gaddi to Guru Granth Sahib is now known as

Takhat Sri Hazur Sahib, Nanded : As mentioned above, this place is one of the most sought after place for pilgrimage by the Sikhs across the globe. It is one of the five Takhats of Khalsa Panth, and one of the two, established outside Punjab. Other Gurdwaras located in the vicinity are:

- Gurdwara Baba Banda Bahadur Ghat**
- Gurdwara Bhai Daya Singh**
- Gurdwara Nagina Ghat Sahib**
- Gurdwara Sangat Sahib**
- Gurdwara Shikar Ghat Sahib**

ix) Madhya Pradesh

Madhya Pradesh has also a number of historical Gurdwaras, but Gurdwara of paramount importance is **Gurdwara Bandi Chhorh, at Gwalior**. It was at this town (fort) Guru Miri Piri Wale, 6th Guru, Guru Hargobind Sahib, was imprisoned by Emperor Jahangir, and it was at

this place, when released, he was allowed to bring out 52 Rajas, or native rulers, along with him out of the prison, who were able to hold one each of the 52 strings, those were there with his specially designed long chola (Long shirt), specifically prepared for the purpose. As he got liberated the Rajas from the prison of the emperor, he was given the title of a **liberator Guru, (Guru Bandi Chhorh)**. Since after being freed from here, Guru Sahib reached Amritsar, on Dewali day, special illuminations and celebrations were there. **Since then, Diwali is being celebrated also as a Bandi Chhorh Divas, by the Khalsa Panth.**

Other Gurdwaras of importance are,

Gurdwara Rajghat Sangat Pehli Pathshahi

Gurdwara Bari Sangat -Burhanpur

x) Orissa

The State of Orissa also occupies a special place of importance for Sikhism, as it was here in this state, at its city of Puri that is commonly known as Jagannath Puri, Guru Nanak Sahib gave us one 'shabad' that is recited by every Gursikh at the time of going to bed at night as the shabad has been included in 'Sohila' Baani. The first verse of the 'shabad' is **'Gagan mae thaal rav chand deepak bani, taarika mandal, Janak moti, Doop mal aanlo pawan chavro kare, sagal banrai phoolant joti'... Dhanasri Mahalla Pehla.**

In the city of Puri there is a famous temple of Lord Jagannath. When Guru Nanak Sahib visited this town, the annual celebrations were going on. Thousands of people had assembled. When they were preparing for performing the ritualistic Aarti, Guru Nanak Sahib told them that the Aarti of the Lord, the Akaal Purakh Almighty God is being performed by the entire Universe. They were all singing in the praise of God, and there was no need of any ritualistic 'aarti' worship. He as such recited the 'shabad' as quoted above. **A Gurdwara is established in the town to commemorate this great event.**

There are some more Gurdwaras in the state including

Gurdwara Mangu Math — Puri,

Gurdwara Guru Nanak Datan Sahib, Cuttack

xi) Uttar Khand

The State has a couple of important Gurdwaras, viz Gurdwara

Nanak Mata, Gurdwara Paatshahi Chheween and all famous Gurdwara Hem Kunt Sahib.

Gurdwara Nanak Mata is the place visited by Guru Nanak Sahib, during his third Udasi. It was at this spot where Yogis, the followers of Guru Gorakh Nath were having their abode. The interaction with Baba Nanak brought a change in their thinking. They changed the name of the place from Gorakh Mata to Nanak Mata. But with the passage of time some disciples with the old thoughts re-emerged on the scene re-occupied the place and started the old practices. Baba Almas a devout of Guru Hargobind Sahib called Guru Hargobind Sahib and yogis were evicted from the place and an important Sikh centre was established here. Today there is a **vast Gurdwara, Sarai or an inn having more than 100 rooms, surrounded by Sikh Schools and colleges in the name of Guru Nanak. There is a separate Gurdwara in memory of Guru Hargobind Sahib marking his visit to the place.**

Gurdwara Hem Kunt Sahib needs no introduction. Built on a very high altitude in the Himalayas, it signifies the place where Guru Gobind Singh Sahib meditated in the feet of the LORD for a very long period before he was re- sent by the Almighty to this world, to establish a Panth in His name. Guru Gobind Singh himself has recorded the entire sequence of events in BACHITTER NATAK - his autobiography and something more (as it covers some of the significant events those took place in his physical life in the latter incarnation), for the enlightenment of the readers. It is a separate issue that some modern scholars has started questioning the very authenticity of the Bachitter Natak and the genuineness of its writings. It is needless to mention that the Panth through Akaal Takhat Sahib and the SGPC sticks to its original stand.

xii) Uttar Pradesh

It is a vast state and accordingly has a number of Guru Asthans related to different Guru Jotes. Some of the important Gurdwaras are listed below.

- Gurdwara Mai Thaan, Agra**
- Gurdwara Guru Ka Taal, Agra**
- Gurdwara Pukka Sangat-Allahabad**

Gurdwara Reetha Sahib, Village Champawat
Gurdwara Paatshahi Naunveen, Garh Mukteshwar
Gurdwara Bari Sangat Sri Guru Teg Bahadur-Varanasi
Gurdwara Sri Guru Teg Bahadur - Kanpur
Gurdwara Guru Teg Bahadur, Mathura

xiii) Sikkim

The state of Sikkim has also an important Gurdwara that signifies Guru Nanak Sahib's visit to that area. As Sikkim, has Buddhism as its predominant religion and a Buddhist religious head is known as 'Lama', it appears that Guru Nanak Sahib was also welcomed over there as a Lama. Sikkim Gurdwara is accordingly named as,

Sikkim Gurdwara Nanaklami, Chung Thang, Sikkim, India

xiv) Bengal and Assam

The States of Bengal and Assam were visited by Guru Nanak Sahib as well as by Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib. Gurdwaras have been established in several towns over there as well. A few important Gurdwaras are listed below.

Gurdwara Bari Sangat - Calcutta
Gurdwara Chhoti Sangat
Gurdwara Nima Serai Sri Guru Teg Bahadur.

Howsoever, big effort may be made, no exhaustive list of historical Gurdwaras can be drawn out. Even to list out all the important Gurdwaras and give their historical background it needs a complete encyclopaedia type effort. Yet keeping in view the scope of this small multi dimensional book, an effort has been made to give the readers maximum possible information.

c) Gurdwaras in other countries (Abroad):

As is well known, Guru Nanak Sahib during his sojourns went to several other countries too, to spread the message of One God and to tell the people the futility of empty rituals. To do a little bit of justice to the topic a few of the prominent historical places those he visited, followed by the visit of certain Gursikhs as 'Manji daars' (missionaries) and where Gurdwaras have come up, are listed below.

Afghanistan

Gurdwara Bhai Nand Lal Goya, Ghazni

Gurdwara Kotha Sahib, Ghazni

Gurdwara Baba Nanak Dev Ji, Jalalabad

Gurdwara Baba Nanak, Jade Mewan, Kabul

Gurdwara Baba Sri Chand, Kabul

Gurdwara Guru Har Rai, Shor Bazar, Kabul

Gurdwara Karte Parwan, Mohallah Karte Parwan, Kabul

Gurdwara Khalsa, Shor Bazar, Kabul

Gurdwara Khalsa Diwan, Chashma Sahib, Sultanpur

Gurdwara Kotha Sahib, Kabul Tashkant Road, Aksara, Kabul.

Bangla Desh

Sikh Temple, Punjabi Lane Phahartali, Chittagong

Sikh Temple, Chowk Bazaar, Chittagong

Gurdwara Nanak Shahi, Neelket Road, Ramna, Dacca

Gurdwara Sangat Tola, 14, Suresh Das Lane, Bangla Bazaar, Dacca

Gurdwara Sahib Shivpuri, Mymensingh.

Sri Lanka

Gurdwara Pehli Patshahi (Koti)

KOTI - A town in Sri Lanka, visited by Guru Nanak Sahib and Bhai Mardana. At the time of the visit of Guru Sahib, Koti was an independent State. Dharma Prakarma Bahu IX (1489-1513) ruled it. He gave a warm welcome to Guru Sahib.

Gurdwara Pehli Patshahi (Battikola)

Built to commemorate the visit of Guru Nanak Sahib and Bhai Mardana. At the time of the visit of Guru Sahib, Baticulla was known as Matiakullam. Raja Shiv Nabh ruled it. Bhai Mansukh of Lahore had, earlier, visited this town and had told the ruler about Guru Nanak Sahib. When Guru Sahib visited the town, Raja Shiv Nabh's joy knew no bounds. He requested Guru Sahib to stay at his palace. Guru Sahib visited his palace but stayed at a place, about 20 km from Baticulla, now known as Kurukul Mandap.

Mecca – Madina

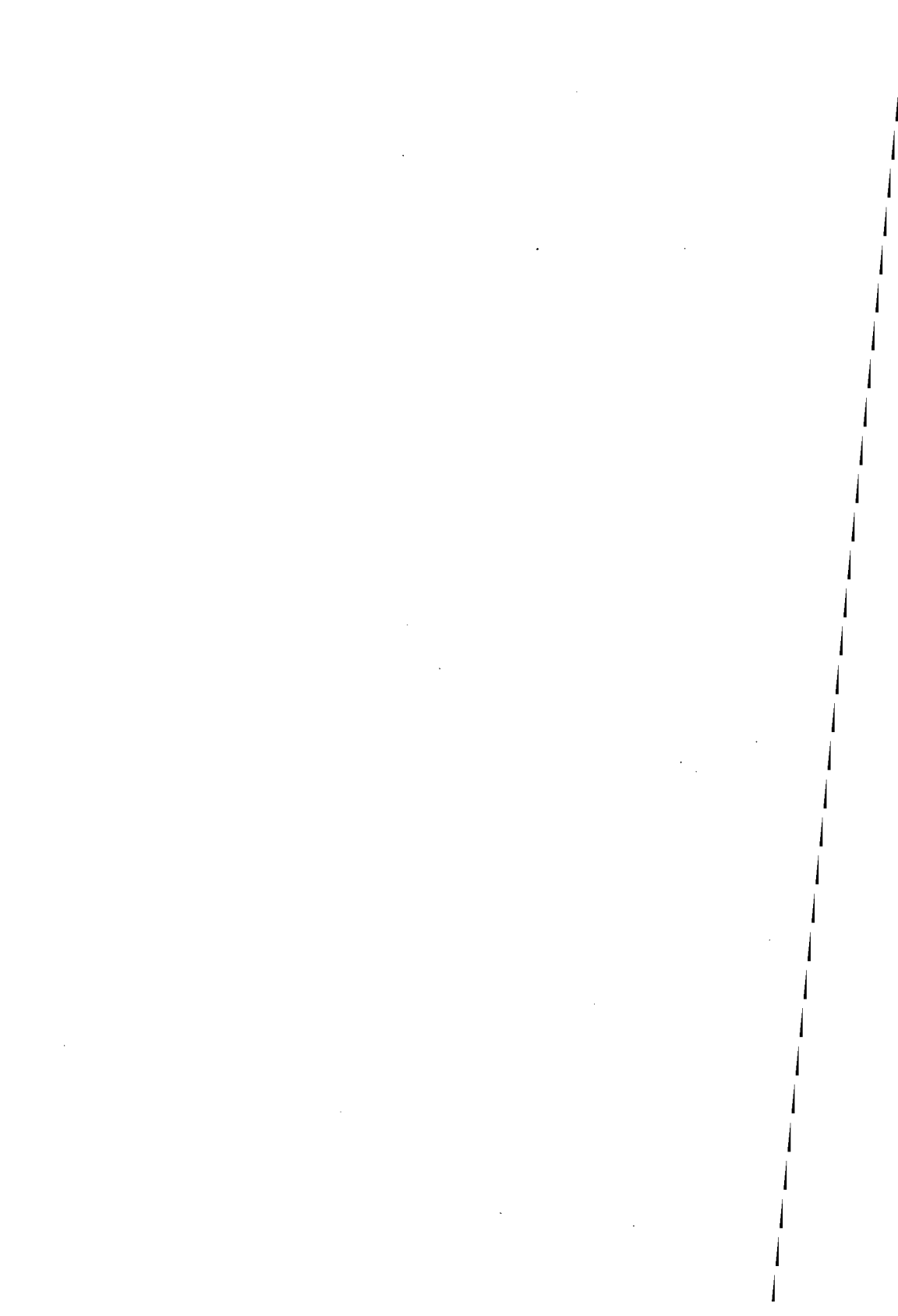
Guru Nanak Sahib visited Mecca - Madina in 1519. Vaaran Bhai Gurdass stand testimony to it. But being, the birth place of Hazrat Mohammad, the founder of Islam, non-Muslims are not allowed to enter this city. Guru Nanak Sahib also visited this place with the dress code of that of a Muslim and with the Islamic gestures. Some monuments do exist those give proof of Guru Sahib's visit, yet no shrine or Gurdwara appears to has been set up there as the same goes against the very concept of Islam.

Baghdad, Iraq

Gurudwara Baba Nanak

Baghdad, capital of Iraq, was visited by Guru Nanak Sahib on his way back from Mecca and Madina. He stayed outside the city of the west of Dajala (Tigris) River, about two kilometers north of Baghdad West railway station. He held discourses with the people around. After the Guru's departure, they raised a memorial in the form of a platform where the Guru sat and discoursed. Sikh soldiers who went to Iraq during the First World War, 1914-18, raised a Gurdwara there, but now only the room exists that is visited by Sikh and non-Sikh Punjabis who have gone to the oil-rich Iraq as workmen since decades. However, as it is located within the graveyard, visitors are banned from staying overnight, cooking meals, holding Langar and Kirtan in view of the sensitivities of the majority of Muslim community.

Address: Near Baghdad West Railway Station (on Baghdad-Samarra rail line), Baghdad (Iraq)



Part VI

**Some Crucial Terms / Words Essential to
Know, in our attempt to study Sikhism**

**ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਦੀ ਸਹੀ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਸਤੇ,
ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ/ਸ਼ਬਦਾਵਲੀ ਦਾ ਗਿਆਨ ਵੀ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ**

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Aape Gur Chela	: One who himself is a Guru and himself is a disciple – Guru Gobind Singh Sahib
Akaal	: Immortal - God
Akal Bunga	: The dwelling place of Immortal God. (Original name of Akaal Takhat)
Akaal Purakh	: Immortal Person - God
Akaal Takhat/Bunga	: Immortal Throne – built at Amritsar by Guru Hargobind Sahib
Akhand Path	: An uninterrupted and without any break recitation (of Sri Guru Granth Sahib) from the beginning to the end.
Amrit	: Ambrosia, The Nectar (As introduced by Guru Gobind Singh Sahib for the Sikhs.
Amrit Data	: The Nectar Giver – Guru Gobind Singh Sahib
Amrit Vela	: The peaceful time in wee hours (early morning hours before Sun rise).
Amrit Dhari	: A person who has taken Amrit and abides by the terms of Amrit
Amritsar	: 1. Name of the city founded by Guru Ram Dass Sahib. 2. The great water body (tank) full of Nectar.
Anand Karaj	: Sikh way of performing marriage ceremony
Anandpur Sahib	: City founded by Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib
Ang	: 1. A limb of the body; 2. A page of Sri Guru Granth Sahib
Ardass	: A systematic Sikh way of rendering Prayer – usually recited while standing with folded hands in front (Hazoori) of Guru Granth Sahib or even otherwise too, by individuals and groups where Sri Guru Granth Sahib is not (Parkashit) established.
Aasa Di Vaar	: Name of a particular Bani (composition of verses). A ‘Bani’ of daily Kirtan ‘recitation with musical instruments’ in almost every Gurdwara in the morning.

Baajaan Wala	: A Guru with Hawks – Guru Gobind Singh
Baani – Vaani	: The holy verses included in Sri Guru Granth Sahib.
Baba Bakaale	: Grand father (Guru) at Bakala, a small town in Punjab
Baba Buddha	: A disciple of Guru Nanak Dev Sahib, had a life of 125 years and served First Six Sikh Gurus in succession, First Head Granthi of Sri Darbar Sahib, Amritsar.
Bachitra Natak	: A composition (a poetic work) of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Sahib of the nature of an autobiography also covering some aspects of his earlier life.
Bala Pritam	: The child Lord – Guru Harkrishan Sahib, sometimes also used for Guru Gobind Singh Sahib.
Banda	: A man, a dedicated slave or supporter – generally refers to Baba Banda Singh Bahadur.
Bandi Chhor	: The saviour, the liberator – Guru Har Gobind Sahib.
Bedawa	: A document of desertion
Bhagauti	: Name of a goddess, a Sword.
Bole So Nihal, Sat Sri Akal	: A war cry or a slogan of joy or of victory of the Khalsa
Braham Giani	: An intellectual who has an insight into the Almighty.
Buddha Dal	: An organisation of the Veterans
Bunga	: A dwelling, a residential place. (Several such places have been built around Sri Harmandir Sahib).
Charhdi Kala	: High Spirits
Damdama Sahib	: Place or a Gurdwara named as such where some Guru Sahib (particularly Guru Gobind Singh Sahib) rested for some time in a period of turmoil or even otherwise in normal times.

Dasam Granth	: A Granth, a scripture, an epic written by the Tenth Guru – Guru Gobind Singh Sahib.
Dasmesh Pita	: Tenth Father - King – Guru Gobind Singh Sahib
Daswandh	: Tenth part
Dhadis	: Singers of heroic deeds in Guru Darbar
Dhan – Dhan	: Great Very Great, Wonderful
Dharam	: Religion, Duty
Dharam da Rakkha	: The Protector of the religion – Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib
Diwan	: A high ranking official of a government
Durbar	: The court of the Guru or a king
Dusht	: Wicked
Dusht Daman Guru	: A Guru – defeater, killer of the wicked – Guru Gobind Singh Sahib
Ek Onkaar	: One Light spread over the entire universe – One Supreme God.
Fateh	: Victory
Fateh Nama	: A letter by Guru Gobind Singh Sahib to Emperor Aurangzeb.
Giani /Gyani	: A person who has knowledge; an intellectual.
Golden Temple	: Supreme spiritual centre of the Sikhs
Granthi	: The person put in charge of Sri Guru Granth Sahib in a Gurdwara, and looks after the routine and ‘The Maryada’.
Gurbani	: Poetic verses (compositions) composed by the revered Gurus
Gurdwara	: The Sikh place of worship, Guru’s door, Guru’s abode.
Gurmukh	: A Person(s) who looks to the Guru and spends his/her life as per the dictates of The Guru.
Gurmukhi	: Script of Punjabi language
Gurpurab	: An auspicious/memorable event related to Guru Sahib.

Gursikh	: A disciple, a follower of the Guru.
Guru	: Religious, spiritual teacher – God, in the strict sense of the Sikh practices
Guru Gyan	: The knowledge emanating from the Guru
Guru Granth Sahib	: The Eternal Guru, the Shabad Guru – Guru Cum Scriptures
Guru Ladho Re	: Guru traced out. An event relating to Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib.
Guru Matt	: Guru's Teachings
Guru Panth	: The religion founded by the Gurus – Sikhism
Guru Piyara	: A beloved of the Guru
Guru Puttar	: Son of a Guru
Guru Rup	: The Sangat (the Khalsa) as a group or as a whole just equivalent to Guru or representing the Guru.
Harmandir Sahib	: The original and all prevalent name of Golden Temple, Amritsar
Haumai	: Self, ego
Hind Di Chaadar	: Sheet (Cover) of India – Guru Teg Bahadur
Hukam	: The Order, the Will of God
Hukamnama	: The Edict
Jallaad	: The executioner, the merciless killer
Japji Sahib	: The name of a composition of Guru Nanak – directed to be recited daily in the morning by every Gursikh.
Jathedar	: Commander or head of an organisation or institution.
Jote	: Light, flame, soul
Joti Jote Samana	: To be merged in eternal light
Jugo Jug Attal	: Everlasting through the ages, immortal – A characteristic attributed to Sri Guru Granth Sahib.
Kaccha/ Kachhera	: An undergarment – prescribed as one of the five essentials and integral part of Sikh way of life – An Article of Faith.

- Kalgi : Plume** : Decorated on the Turban
- Kalgi Wala** : A Guru with a plume - a name or title given to Guru Gobind Singh Sahib.
- Kangha** : A comb meant to clean and dress up the hair - prescribed as one of the five essentials and integral part of Sikh way of life – An Article of Faith.
- Karra** : An iron (steel) bangle – prescribed as one of the five essentials and integral part of Sikh way of life – An Article of Faith.
- Kaur** : Princess – A word to be suffixed with every Sikh woman’s name.
- Kesh** : The hair - The uncut and unshorn hair (from any part of the body) prescribed as one of the five essentials and integral part of Sikh way of life.
- Khalsa, Khalsa Panth** : The Pure one, the title given to a Gursikh – individuals or groups or even to the entire community, by its Creator, Guru Gobind Singh Sahib.
- Khanda** : A double edged steel weapon; The Sikh insignia.
- Khande Baate Di Pahul**: The Amrit introduced by Guru ‘Amrit Data’ – Guru Gobind Singh Sahib for initiating the Sikhs and making them an integral part of Khalsa Panth.
- Khu** : Well
- Kirpan** : A one edged sword – a symbol of kindness and safeguarding of the honour and dignity of self and the weak - prescribed as one of the five essentials and integral part of Sikh way of life – An Article of Faith.
- Kirtan** : To sing praise of the lord with musical instruments.
- Langar** : Free food system open for all irrespective of the caste, colour, creed and religion. It is

- mandatory to partake langar (food) while sitting in a Pangat (a line), without discriminating as to who is sitting next to you and who has prepared or is serving the langar – a unique feature of Sikhism
- Lavan** : Marriage solemnizing – the boy and the girl take four rounds of Sri Guru Granth Sahib, while the Granthi (Gurdwara priest) recites Lavan Path from Sri Guru Granth Sahib and the Ragis (Gurbani Singers with musical instruments), sing the same.
- Maryada** : The limits; the traditions; the rules and regulations framed by The Khalsa Panth for individual as well as for the 'community as a whole', to be adhered to in regular life, (is also known as Gursikh Rehat Maryada).
- Maryada Palak** : Setter and adherer of certain Rules and Practices – Guru Ram Dass Sahib.
- Masands** : The persons of repute, character and understanding appointed by the Gurus, to spread the message of Gursikhi at far flung places and to collect the offerings from the Guru Ki Sangat and deposit the same in Guru Darbar at periodic intervals. The system became a corrupt one and was scrapped by the 10th Guru, Guru Gobind Singh Sahib with giving heavy corporal punishments to the guilty.
- Matha taikna** : To bow with forehead touching the ground or the feet of the Guru or some elderly person out of regards for invoking their blessings and good wishes.
- Miri** : A definition, indications and signs of Royal -ness.
- Miri Piri** : A combination of spiritual and temporal values and qualities.

Miri Piri Waale	: Title given to Sixth Guru – Guru Har Gobind Sahib
Mukte/40 Mukte	: Liberated Ones/40 Liberated Ones (In Mukatsar War)
Naam	: The Name of God, the Almighty.
Naam Simran	: Remembering God by repeating his name, preferably while sitting in meditation mode.
Neele Wala	: A Guru with a Blue Steed (Horse) – a title given to Guru Gobind Singh Sahib.
Neele Da Shah-Swaar	: Royal Rider of the Blue steed – Guru Gobind Singh Sahib.
Nihang	: A typical warrior Sikh in a typical specified blue dress (Bana).
Nirbhau	: Fearless – an attribute of God as per Sikh Philosophy.
Nirmala	: A sect of the Sikhs – The term originally named and used by Guru Gobind Singh for those Sikhs who were sent by him to Kashi, for learning Sanskrit language.
Nirvair	: A person having enmity towards none - synonymous to God, Almighty.
Nishan Sahib	: The Khalsa Flag – of saffron colour with a Khanda on the top and an insignia in the middle too.
Nitnem	: The daily routine of a Gursikh of recitation of prescribed banis.
Ote	: The support, the dependence
Palki	: The Palanquin
Panj Piaare	: The Five Beloved Ones
Panth	: People following a particular way of life, a religion. Here the term connotes to The Khalsa Panth as started by Guru Nanak and as transformed by Guru Gobind Singh.
Parikarma	: 1. Walking and service area around a Sarovar or otherwise in a Gurdwara.

2. Generally used in the sense of having a round of the throne or the place where Sri Guru Granth Sahib is established or 'Parkashit' in any Gurdwara.
- Pir-e-Hind** : The saint (holy person) of India – refers to Guru Gobind Singh in Sikh terminology
- Piri** : Spiritual attributes - qualities
- Prakash Karna** : To place Sri Guru Granth Sahib in and at such a position (To keep opened with a cover on it), so that any one may read Gurbani from it with ease, while sitting in a comfortable but attentive and alert position/posture
- Punjab** : A Province, a State within (in the north of) India
- Raag** : A musical measure
- Ragi** : A person who sings in musical measures with musical instruments.
- Rehat Maryada / Gur Maryada** : Prescribed code of conduct for a Sikh, as an individual, as a community, at home, at a Gurdwara or any where else for any function or daily routine.
- Sach Khand** : A state of mind, a realm of Truth, where only truth prevails.
- Sacha Paatshah** : Real (True) Emperor
- Sach Sangat** : A congregation of holy people, usually assembled in a Gurdwara to listen to religious discourses in the hazoori (presence) of Sri Guru Granth Sahib.
- Sahibzade** : Princes – referred to Four sons of Guru Gobind Singh Sahib.
- Salok** : A couplet
- Sangat** : congregation, company
- Sant Sipahi** : A Saint cum soldier
- Sarbans Dani** : The Guru who sacrificed his entire family – Guru Gobind Singh Sahib.

Sarbat Da Bhalla	: Wishing well of all – a slogan, a phrase given by Guru Nanak Sahib.
Sardar	: Leader, head, a Turbaned Sikh
Sat Guru	: True (spiritual) Teacher. Refers to God in Gurbani.
Sat Sri Akal	: The immortal (God) is true – a salutation of the Sikhs
Seva	: A selfless Service
Sevak	: Servant - a person doing selfless service in true ‘Sikh sense’ of the term
Shabad	: A word or a poetical composition by Gurus and others as incorporated in Guru Granth Sahib
Shabad Guru	: The ‘word’ of the Guru is itself Guru - Guru Granth Sahib
Shahe – Shehan Shah	: King of Emperors.
Shaheed	: Martyr
Shahidi	: Martyrdom
Sikh	: A disciple, particularly a person following Sikhism – the Mission, the religion started by Guru Nanak.
Simran	: Remembering and repeating His Name ‘Naam’.
Singh	: A tiger, A compulsory surname of a Sikh as ordained by Guru Gobind Singh Sahib
Sukhmani Sahib	: One of the sacred, most sweet, sublime and loved composition by Guru Arjan Dev, mostly recited daily in Gurdwaras in wee hours. Otherwise also usually read by Sikhs in groups or individually with dedication and devotion.
Sukh-Assan	: An act and a State of position of keeping Guru Granth Sahib, when not placed in full view of the sangat. Usually in a resting position during night.

Takhat	: A throne.
Talwar	: A sword
Taruna Dal	: An Organisation, an outfit of the Khalsa comprising young persons
Turban	: The head gear of cloth. Tied around the head neatly by the Sikhs to cover their head and hair; A mandatory gear for the Sikhs.
Udasi Period	: A traveling period or a sojourn by Guru Nanak to convey and spread the message of God to the humanity at large.
Updesh	: Sermons
Vaisakhi/ Baisakhi	: A festival of festivity, enjoyment by the peasantry. It falls in the month of April. On this day in 1699, the Khalsa Panth was born.
Vaar Diye Sut Chhar	: Sacrificed the four sons - Statement attributed to Guru Gobind Singh Sahib.
Waheguru	: Almighty God, Wonderful Lord.
Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa	Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh : The Khalsa Panth is of the Almighty God and the Victory is also that of Almighty – Guru Gobind Singh
Yudh	: A war; a battle
Zafar nama	: A victory letter sent to emperor Aurangzeb after the end of the Wars by Guru Gobind Singh Sahib. The long letter is in Persian verse.

APPENDIX I
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