

GURBANI

ਬੈਰਾੜੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੪

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(ਪੰਨਾ 719-720)

Bairari Mahla 4

Composed in *Bairari* measure (*Rag*) by the fourth Guru. Sri Guru Ram Das ji, the above Sabad enunciates the qualities of a true devotee that he has with the Grace of the Lord, who is the doer and the cause behind all that is.

A true devotee remains immersed in the name of the Lord all the time and in all the circumstances. Even when slandered or denounced without any reason, he does not renounce his merit by forsaking the path of righteousness, nor does he speak or think ill of the slanderer because he knows that God is the doer and the cause of everything and even the slanderer is not excluded from this principle of all pervading Will of Lord. Bestower of all wisdom and intelligence on mankind, He is the force behind all that man says or does. He has created the expanse of universe out of five elements, has joined the five substance (ਰਸ, ਰੂਪ, ਰੀਠਿ ਸਪਰਸ਼, ਸ਼ਬਦ) to these and has filled it with His Own Essence. Thus it is He, the all pervading Lord who in His Supreme Mercy, unites us with the Guru and settles all discord in our mind and other worldly entanglements.

*He is my sultan who rolls down a sea of life in me and asks
not has I spend, but fells it from age to ape out of His own
stores, and floods the soul with fragrant Beauty, and bides
Himself in the limitless expanse!!*

*His voice alone rings in my ears and sweat response shuts
in my eyes, my lips vibrate with passion for the universe !
Hail, Lord!*

*He is the truth to whom if we be loyal in love and faith. We
are safe, or else we die.*

The world where He is not, is death to us.

*The man, woman, bird or beast, in whom we see Him not,
are mere deceptions, pain and death.*

*Devoid of Him, all aims dissipate all desires;
chain the soul and all karma condemn.*

*He visits me in strange guises, strange are His ways;
One seldom can recognise Him, as he assumes different
forms.*

*He comes in wars, in great catastrophies; in pain, in
suffering, in hunger;*

And in the faithlessness of friends and beloved ones.

(Prof. Puran Singh)

EDITORIAL

ORAL EVIDENCE AND SIKH HISTORY

The Sikhs have been known as makers of history. They could not write their history because they had to struggle hard for their very existence. Mostly the history of Sikhs is based on tradition which has been recognised as a valid source of information. Guru Amar Das, the third Sikh Guru has said :

ਬਾਬਾਣੀਆ ਕਹਾਣੀਆ ਪੁਤ ਸਪੁਤ ਕਰੇਨਿ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੫੧)

The accounts of their great elders their worthy scions repeat.

At times tradition has to be verified with other sources of information. There is scarcity of Sikh source material. Consequently there are a number of distortions in Sikh history as it is based mostly on the information provided by the opponents. The problem of sources of information has become acute under the impact of science and technology. Telephone has become a common mode of communication. People in general including Sikhs have been abandoning the habit of diary keeping or letter writing. Thus the future historians are being deprived of two important sources of information. This loss as well as paucity of source material referred to above can be set right with the help of Oral History.

One of our contemporary Punjabi papers of Canada quoting from the Oral History statement published in the *Abstracts of Sikh Studies*, “disagreed with the Editor. There is a system of recording Oral statement. Wherever the Oral History cell is established whether in a University in USA or in Nehru Memorial Museum, New Delhi – The primary thing is to select knowledgeable persons whose reminiscences are to be tape-recorded in connection with particular topic. The statements published in *Abstracts of Sikh Studies* have been recorded after a lot of efforts by the Editor who was founder project officer, Oral History Cell in Punjabi University, Patiala. The Oral History Cell first studies the biographical details of the person concerned along with the events in which he /she has taken part. Then the questionnaire is prepared in such a way as to draw maximum information from the person concerned. That questionnaire is sent to the interviewee. Arrangements are made to tape record the statement according to the questionnaire. Then the tape-recorded statement is converted to a script, which is sent to the person concerned for final approval.

How Oral evidence is helpful in writing of Sikh history can be

illustrated by one example. Operation Blue Star 1984 is watershed in the modern history of the Sikhs. After hundred years or so its official records and tainted media papers (tainted because they are pro-government and not independent due to censor restrictions) will be available for writing its history. Practically no Sikh source material will be available for the event so intimately connected with the Sikhs. It is, therefore, high time that interviews by skilled persons with highly placed knowledgeable individuals should be tape-recorded. And their scripts preserved for the future historians. It is advisable that Oral History Cells may be established at Guru Nanak Dev University, Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar and Punjabi University Patiala Oral History Cell be revived. These centres may have advisory panel of experienced and knowledgeable persons to guide and help them in selection of suitable persons whose reminiscences are to be tape-recorded. In this way necessary source material will be made available to the future historians to arrive almost right conclusions.

At times responsible persons in Government service or even after retirement hesitate to part with the information. In that case Oral History Cell has to convince the interviewee that complete secrecy would be kept about the statement uptill the specified time. In some cases written undertakings may be made to convince the deponent of the secrecy of the statement. One example will not be out of place here. When I went to England in 1964 late Master Tara Singh, the Akali Leader, gave me introductory letter to Maj. J. M. Short who was considered expert in Sikh affairs and had been re-employed to pacify the Sikhs in 1947. He arrived in India in the last week of July 1947. I requested him to give statement on some specific points. He gave his consent on the condition that his statement should be published immediately to which I readily agreed. In his statement he used the word "trim a little" for Sikhs which most probably he meant tehsil Zira, Ferozepur, which were subsequently given to India. In the previous communication to Sir Evan Jenkins, Governor Punjab, these tehsils had been given to Pakistan. In 1964 it was highly controversial whether Punjab Boundary Award had been modified or not. I honoured my words. His statement was published in 1972 in my book *Partition of Punjab* three years after his death in 1969.

In case the Sikhs want to avoid distortion and to present their history in the correct perspective, they must adopt the technique of Oral History for collection of material. Otherwise the Sikh perspective is likely to be lost in the flood of information released by science and technology.

DIAGNOSIS PAR EXCELLENCE

GAJINDER SINGH*

The oft-repeated sermon of Guru Nanak to the devotees who came to him for enlightenment, spiritual solace and worldly worries was:

- *Naam Japo* -Meditate on God, All Pervading, The Doer,
- *Kirt Karo*- Engage in honest earnings
- *Vand Chhako* -Share your wealth, material as well as spiritual, with others.

The congregations in the times of Guru Nanak were made up; as in the present times, of persons harassed by economic and social problems, and some seekers of Truth. They all must have approached him to get answers to their complex as well as simple problems bothering them.

Virle kau sojhi pae.

Rare ones get enlightened.

SGGS 62

It is also obvious that many of them considered a visit, a dialogue with the Great Master of immense contentment for straight and abiding solutions, since his path was simple and factual. The available literature of his times, in Janam Sakhis depicts Guru Nanak as an outstanding miracle-man, showing super-natural feats at every turn. People in those days valued the super-natural and expected a holy man to exhibit miracles, to prove his worth. This was the essential test which, both Hindus and Muslims had adopted to evaluate a man of God. This yard-stick is still applicable to common people that God-men must demonstrate miracles. In Christianity, Catholics 'decide to confer sainthood on the basis of miracles performed. The emphasis and urgency of the super-natural in Janam Sakhis and other accounts may be seen in this light.

Guru Nanak started a crusade five hundred years ago to purge superstition ridden society of any false expectations, magical solutions and practices which were harming their inherent energies and dampening their

* 2983, Phase VII SAS NAGAR-I60062

capacity to improve their social and family lives. He started by denouncing division of men into tight compartments of practice religion - Hinduism and Islam. He declared himself neither Hindu nor Muslim. His campaign was to usher in a new social order for the people, who were stumbling for light and knowledge in the dark, in ignorance and fear psychosis, as imposed by pseudo god men.

*Man-hath budhee ketia kete Bed bichar
Kete bandhanjia ke gurmukh mokh duar ;
Sachoh aure sabh ko upper sach achar*

SGGS 62

*How many wisdoms cross the mind~ how many discuss the Vedas
How many bindings are there on Mind, but Guru's Way leads to Release
Truth is high, but higher still is Truthful Living.*

The three point formula of Guru Nanak demolished the edifice of Hindu karam-kand and rituals and Muslim set of prohibitions and approvals. Foremost, he held the merger of individual ego with the Creator, the All Pervading Doer as the unquestioned duty and life's function of one and all. Yet, he held equally important, the ideal of honesty and sincerity in personal and public dealings, for ushering in a clean social order as well as fraternity of willing and motivated persons who would uplift the down-trodden. Perhaps a willing cooperative atmosphere would succeed where draconian state imposed laws on equality of opportunity have already tottered and failed.

Therefore, of the three point plan of Guru Nanak, the first is for spiritual upgrading, while the remaining two are closely related to the practical behaviour. of a spiritually enlightened and uplifted soul. In Guru Nanak's religion, honest and clean living is more important than customary devotion to God. A person who meditates on God but remains dishonest in his profession is a greater sinner than the ego-centric who goes by that label. This was a complete break with the existing systems which expected a person to complete formalities of his religious duties and indulge in mundane life as best it suited to his gainful pursuits. The dogma of "Give to God what is his, and unto Caesar what is his due" was rejected by Guru Nanak. Honesty in life and in actions and intent was to be total, and uncompromising. This is the aspect of doctrine of Miri-Piri, which is seen so suspiciously by those who want to confine religion as an individual's personal matter. As a man becomes strictly truthful, and draws back from fraud in his daily functions and behaviour, he sheds from his personality, deceit, self-advancement at the cost of others, ruthless selfishness, betrayal on small and big matters. When good intentions prevail over greed, anger

and lust, society is upgraded. This was the utopia and the programme placed by the Guru before the Sikhs congregating in his guidance, in building a Sikh's life style.

Sabhe sanjhval sadain. koi n disey bahra lea.

SGGS 97

*All are called our co-sharers,
No body is perceived as stranger.
Refer to the famous couplet o IX Nanak:
Bhey kahu ko del neh
Na bheymanat aan.*

SGGS 1428

Frighten none Fear none.

When Guru Nanak set out to show his grand design to the people who had been blindly and unquestioningly observing fixed rituals for centuries in this country and abroad, he met with stiff resistance. There were Brahmins, Maulvis, Quazis, tantriks, magicians, thugs, power hungry siddhas, arrogant yogis, mendicants, who opposed and criticised him.

Koi aakhey bhutna, ko kahe betala

SGGS 991

*Koi akhey admi Nanak vichara
Some call him a demon, others as discordant
Some say, Nanak is a poor soul.*

Guru Nanak reflected and observed that there were very few who would be God-centric and be committed Sikhs.

Virle ko Cur sabad sunaya

SGGS 16

Rare ones listen to Guru's Word.

Today, we look at matters as an organised group of Sikhs and have set values of our religion. In those days, there were very few who heard and joined the faith on Guru Nanak's terms. The semi-converts, five hundred years ago, must have tried to compromise their existing values with Sikh terms. It is still the game of common Sikhs to circumvent and adapt Guru's wisdom to their own requirements and beliefs. It is sad that it has become a ritual to place Guru Granth Sahib in a distant corner of a house where the paid granthis meekly read through as a duty for wages, coming and going through prancing and dancing drunken house holders, at birth, weddings and on other auspicious occasions. Alternative is to pay costs to a gurdwara where a reading is organised without involving the family who indulge in their merry making. The hapless priests can be replaced if they decline the

recitation by a set of more docile pathis.

Sakt jaye niveh Cur Gage

SGGS 312

The ego-centric bow before the Master, their minds fraudulent and sham

When Guru asks them to rise, they sit mingling like cranes

True Master resides in the hearts of True devotees, He picks them out,

They try hiding themselves, but cannot conceal their rapacity

Their kind belongs not there, they are content in company of sheep

If you feed and care for the egoist, he spits out poison!

For God sake, do not associate with egoist, they are cursed by All Mighty.

The point is that Guru Nanak, in those initial days must have borne with such people patiently, while we common mortals do not have such forbearance for hypocrites and egocentrics.

Nichan ander neech jati neechu hon atneech

Nanak tin ke sang saath vadian sean kya rees

SGGS 15, 1348

Nanak is companion of the lowly among the lowest

Why to imitate the high and mighty?

God is gracious to those who protect the lowly.

It is a challenge to make saints out of sinners. Doors of Guru are always open to all whom Guru's Call beckons. It seems that the fault lies more with those who are expected to set tradition of exemplary behaviour but instead are totally ineffective, whereas Gurus and the good Sikhs of yore did not preach but set examples by their own lives and sacrifices.

We have the puritans who are wrapped up in their spirituality which happens to be one of the three precepts of Guru Nanak's Plan. The other two, of social behaviour and promotion have been generally given the go-bye. Guru Nanak persuaded the Sidhhas staying in deep mountains to return to active participation in uplifting the dredges of society. Priority was given by Guru to an honest, fruitful career, a happy home and service of the have-nots. These were the three pillars of his ideology; a balance was all important to strike so that one did not sway towards anyone side at the cost of the other two. Guru has warned us to use worldly materials and situations as necessary attachments under control of our good senses. Guru Hargobind, the Sixth Nanak explained the point with clarity when objection was raised by Samrath Guru Ramdass of Maharashtra on his life style of a monarch. He proclaimed that Guru Nanak had renounced Maya, Illusion, and not the

world.

The outcome of sidhas, Buddhist and Jain detachment and renunciation was a collapse of social and political order which cost India its freedom to the marauding hordes of Muslim invaders.

During the brief Sikh rule in Northern India, the imbalance of the three precepts of Guru Nanak's religion played havoc. It was, otherwise, a meticulously well oiled machinery of administration created and nurtured by Maharaja Ranjit Singh, civil or military, which collapsed like a house of cards leading to total disarray. It is a sad record of deceit, fraud, chicanery with blood curdling villainy, as Sikhs got embroiled in selfish power games, totally retracting from those hallowed maxims of Guru Nanak.

Whenever, Sikhs forsake God's name, honesty and common weal from their character and attitude, the aura and energy infused by Guru will diminish or terminate. Then there will not be any difference between a Sikh and non-Sikh.

There are more Sikhs today in the world than ever before, there are more research papers and Sikh seats world-wide in the universities on Sikh Faith, more Gurdwaras are being set-up, more akhand paths are being performed, more money is being spent on magnificence of architecture of Gurdwaras, more sant-deras attracting crowds of inquisitive seekers and more questions being posed by depleted faithful to get to the crux of Sikhism. Yet all these efforts are missing the mark. Guru Nanak's emphasis unquestioningly was on the practical application of the knowledge and essence of the three pronged formula for a balanced life style.

The second precept of honestly working is the backbone of any economic order. All or any of the qualifications possessed by a man cannot measure up to sincerity and honesty. The fruit of honest labour builds a happy contented home as well as a benign society.

Be gum pura sehr ko nao

Sharing one's earnings is very different to the vedic concept of danG as it is not a ritualistic or customary alms giving exercise which the donor does to earn merit hereafter and as per dictates of his dharma. Guru Nanak asked the Sikhs to adopt sharing as a common habit and normal activity for the erni and common weal. As all Sikhs responded enthusiastically, every one is benefitted and enjoys the amity of sharing, without exploitation or expectancy of a good deed done for its future trurts hereafter.

Hereafter is, for a devout Sikh, his merger with the Creator and unlike other systems, he does not look over his shoulder for the list of merits or de-merits in his balance sheet.

ONE GURU, ONE MOVEMENT*

LATE BHAI ARDAMAN SINGH BAGRIAN

Some pseudo critics have criticised and even satisfied their ego by passing judgement on Sikhism and the Gurus without taking the trouble to have a look at the whole concept of Sikhism and the Satguru's teachings, not to speak of a critical study. It is especially so in case of the 10th Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh, and also the Sixth.

The Scripture and Sikh History being two sources of information, we shall have to test even the anecdotes of history on the touchstone of the Scripture, if we want to get correct conclusions. The Sikhs Scripture, as embodied in the Guru Granth Sahib, is the only Scripture in the world that is written directly under the personal supervision of the Founder who revealed the Word, and signed and confirmed it.

In the words of Sadhu T L Vaswani, "Yes the living spirit of the Guru speaketh, today, in the Words of this Ever living Book, this inspired Testament of the Saints, which the tenth Nanak with the last benediction of his earthly life, left to his disciple as their perpetual Enlightner."

To get the right appraisal it is necessary to understand and keep always in mind the most important point on which the whole conception of the Satguru's mission and teaching hinges. It is the continuity of the guru in ten human forms and finally his Guru's) omnipresence and dynamic existence among us as the guiding and driving force and spirit in the knowledge (gyan) adumbrated in the Bani (The Shabad - the Word) in the Guru Granth Sahib.

ਸਬਦ ਗੁਰੂ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਹੁਨਿ ਚੇਲਾ ॥ (ਰਾਮ ਕਲੀ ਸਿੱਧ ਗੋਸਟ ਮ: ੧)

The 10th Satguru repeats :

ਗਿਆਨ ਗੁਰੂ ਆਤਮ ਉਪਦੇਸਹੁ (ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਪ: ੧੦)

We come across very clear and definite injunctions of the Satguru himself about this continuity, such as :-

ਇਕਾ ਬਾਣੀ ਇਕੁ ਗੁਰਖੁ ਇਕੋ ਸਬਦੁ ਵੀਚਾਰਿ । (ਵਾਰ ਸੋਰਠ ਮ: ੩)

ਜੋਤਿ ਓਹਾ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਸਾਹਿ ਸਰਿ ਕਾਇਆ ਫੇਰਿ ਪਲਟੀਐ । (ਵਾਰ ਸੱਤਾ ਬਲਵੰਡ)

An instance to illustrate this continuity can be given from the writer's own family history. In the month of Baisakh 1630 A.D. Bhai Rup Chand and

* Article considered by Bhai Ashok Singh

his father Bhai Sadhu were getting the Rabi Crop harvested. When they touched the water in hanging goat-skin to quench their thirst, they found it so cold that they thought it worth offering to the Guru and would not touch it themselves although the heat of the day made them unconscious. The 6th Nanak, Guru Hargobind Sahib, was at Daroli at that time. Feeling attracted by his devotee's love and plight, he rushed to them, brought them back to senses and took water. He got so pleased with their devotion that he bestowed upon them his sword and robes and a horse and took them out to the place where he founded a village for his devotees and named it Bhai Rupa, now in Bhatinda district. On the way he noticed that the sword and the robes that he had bestowed, were being carried on their heads and the horse being led. On being asked Bhai Sadhu and his son Bhai Rup Chand said that the gifts were too sacred for them to wear or ride upon. This further pleased the Guru who gave them the most coveted title of Bhai (his own brother) and put them incharge of his mission in the Cis Sutlej area. At that time he told the Bhais to keep his gifts bestowed on them, in trust for the Guru and he will get them back when the time came. And this he Sixth Nanak did when as Guru Gobind Singh (Tenth Nanak) he reached Dina, near village Bhai Rupa, from Chamkaur and asked for his entrusted weapons, robes and horse.

Guru Nanak was the great Architect, who with a Divine Vision prepared and chalked out the Master Plan in every meticulous detail, which his eight successors implemented and developed and the tenth Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh, finally brought to perfection and completed the edifice.

The first Satguru in his four main tours to spread the Light visited the snowclad Kialash Parbat and Tibet in the North, the Far East in the East, Ceylon in the South, and Mecca touching the Red Sea and the Mediterranean, in the West. The development of Sikh Organisations and missionary centres were set in motion by the 1st Nanak. Bhai Lalo in Northern Punjab, Kauda in Central India, Sajjan at Tulamba near Multan in the West. This gave the movement a forceful start. We find Sangats coming to have the Darshan of the Satgur from Kabul and Qandhar during the time of the 5th Nanak, and bringing offerings of Persian, Iraqi, and Arabian horses. During the time of the 6th Nanak. And so was the case during the 10th Nanak's time. This shows that all those centres worked as dynamic and living organisations although the later Gurus did not personally visit those far flung areas. The missionary centres during the 3rd Nanak's time developed into 22 Manjis, which in the 5th Nanak's time came to be called Masands (from Persian word Masnad). During the tenth Nanak's time when it was found that they had become corrupt, the *Masands*, who lacked in character also, were punished with an iron hand, and the institution was wholly abolished, because then Khalsa had come to its own and could function directly everywhere in all spheres of life.

The 1st Satguru set the example not to bow before brute force but to

resist aggression and tyranny, by courting arrest himself at Saidpur during Babar's invasion of India. He not only protested against the tyranny of the invader but also remonstrated with the subjects (public) for not realizing their responsibilities and surrendering like coward sheep and dead men, and with the Pathan rulers of Delhi for not being able to protect and defend the jewel of country that was in their charge. He also remonstrated with the Creator direct and straight.

To the people he pointed out their weakness and shook them up to awake and arise. Here are some excerpts:

ਨੀਲ ਵਸਤੁ ਪਹਿਰਿ ਹੋਵਹਿ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ ॥ (ਆਸਾ ਮ: ੧)
ਧਰਿ ਘਰਿ ਮੀਆ ਸਭਨਾ ਜੀਆਂ ਬੋਲੀ ਅਵਰ ਤੁਮਾਰੀ । (ਬਸੰਤ ਮ:੧)
ਅਪੀ ਰਯਤਿ ਗਿਆਨ ਵਿਹੂਣੀ ਭਾਹਿ ਭਰੇ ਮੁਰਦਾਰੁ ਸੋ ॥ (ਵਾਰ ਆਸਾ ਮ: ੧)

Similarly frank and outspoken were his feelings about the rulers.

The rulers had lost all thought of God in joy; in spectacles, and in pleasures.

ਸਾਹਾ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਗਵਾਈਆ ਰੰਗਿ ਤਮਾਸੇ ਚਾਇ ।
ਬਾਬਰ ਵਾਣੀ ਫਿਰਿ ਗਈ ਕੁਇਰੁ ਨ ਰੋਟੀ ਖਾਈ । (ਆਸਾ ਮ: ੧)

He gave the clarion call :

ਜਉ ਤਉ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਖੇਲਣ ਕਾ ਚਾਉ ।
ਸਿਰੁ ਧਰਿ ਤਲੀ ਗਲੀ ਮੇਰੀ ਆਉ ।
ਇਤੁ ਮਾਰਗ ਪੈਰੁ ਧਰੀਜੈ ।
ਸਿਰੁ ਦੀਜੈ ਥਾਣਿ ਨ ਕੀਜੈ । (ਸਲੋਕ ਵ: ਵ: ਮ: ੧)

This call was made and promise demanded, which his followers freely and spiritedly fulfilled, when at Anandpur Sahib the 10th Nanak in 1699 repeated this call and the Pyaras (the beloved ones) came forth prepared literally with "heads on palms of their hands".

Sikhism is Guru Nanak's way of life, that he guided us to tread for living this human span of life successfully, effectively, actively, purposefully, usefully, forcefully, and in accordance with and in tune with the will of the Master, who ordained us to live this life, and in such a way that we may earn His pleasure and blessing. It was this way of life, (Marg-Panth) which was owned and finally brought to perfection by the 10th Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh, about which he himself says in Bachittar Natak :-

ਤਿਨ ਇਹ ਕਲਿ ਮੇ ਧਰਮ ਚਲਾਯੋ ॥ ਸਭ ਸਾਧਨ ਕੋ ਰਾਹੁ ਬਤਾਯੋ ॥
ਜੋ ਤਾਕੇ ਮਾਰਗ ਮਹਿ ਆਏ ॥ ਤੈ ਕਬਹੂੰ ਨਹੀਂ ਪਾਪ ਸੰਤਾਏ ॥
ਜਜੋ ਜੇ ਪੰਥ ਤਵਨ ਕੇ ਪਰੇ ॥ ਪਾਪ ਤਾਪ ਤਿਨ ਕੋ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਹਰੇ ॥
ਦੂਖ ਭੁਖ ਕਬਹੂੰ ਨ ਸੰਤਾਏ ॥ ਜਾਲ ਕਾਲ ਕੇ ਬੀਚ ਨ ਆਏ ॥

Here the words *Tin*, *Tan ke*, and *Tavan ke* are significant. They mean clearly and definitely "His", that is Guru Nanak's Marg, Panth.

This way of life, i.e. Sikhism, is not based on any set of mantras, rituals, formalism, or talismans, postures of worship yogic asans, fasts, or penances, signs or symbols, ablutions or trances. There is no place in Sikhism for any

Karam Kand, pilgrimages, austerities, giving up family life, or renunciation of the world. Mere reading of scriptures, or mechanical repetition of prayers, attainment of supernatural powers (such as *Ridhis* and *Sidhis*), or physical exercises, and show of miracles, or magic, have no place in Sikhism. Sikhism is not based on dogmas or a set of commandments. Principles of *Varnashrama*, Incarnations and Idol worship are repudiated in Sikhism :

ਸੇ ਮੁਖੁ ਜਲਉ ਜਿਤੁ ਕਹਹਿ ਠਾਕੁਰੁ ਜੋਨੀ । (ਭੈਰਉ ਮ: ੫)

Recitation of hymns and numbering of prayers, aims and even charities, giving up of food and going naked, do not help to solve the basic problem.

No amount of hard thinking, or stoppage of mentation or possession of worldly goods, science or technology or any system of hollow philosophies or institutionalized religion, regimented society, planning or compulsion, social and moral laws, or any kind of imposition, can quench the basic human hunger. All these things only fan and inflate the ego and do not show the right path.

The Satguru Says :-

ਸੋਚੈ ਸੋਚਿ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ ਜੇ ਸੋਚੀ ਲਖ ਵਾਰ ॥
 ਚੁਪੈ ਚੁਪ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ ਜੇ ਲਾਇ ਰਹਾ ਲਿਵ ਤਾਰ ॥
 ਭੁਖਿਆ ਭੁਖ ਨ ਉਤਰੀ ਜੇ ਬੰਨਾ ਪੁਰੀਆ ਭਾਰ ॥
 ਸਹਸ ਸਿਆਣਪਾ ਲਖ ਹੋਹਿ ਤ ਇਕ ਨ ਚਲੈ ਨਾਲਿ ॥

ਅੰਨ ਤੇ ਰਹਤਾ ਦੁਖੁ ਦੇਹੀ ਸਹਤਾ ॥
 ਹੁਕਮ ਨਾ ਬੂਝੇ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਮਮਤਾ ॥
 ਬਿਨੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕਿਨੈ ਨ ਪਾਈ ਪਰਮ ਗਤੇ ॥ (ਪ੍ਰਭਾਤੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੫)

I read the holy texts and dwelt on the Vedas, and controlled my breath and cleansed my inner system.

ਭਾਠ ਪੜਿਓ ਅਰੁ ਬੇਦ ਬੀਚਾਰਿਓ ਨਿਵਲਿ ਭੁਅੰਗਮ ਸਾਧੇ ।

But I abandoned not the society of five desires and was bound to ego-hood more and more.

ਭੰਚ ਜਨਾ ਸਿਓ ਸੰਗ ਨ ਛੁਟਕਿਓ ਅਧਿਕ ਅਹੰਬੁਧਿ ਬਾਧੇ ।

My mind's cravings led me to abide at the holy places:

Yea, I chose to be sawn alive.

ਨ ਕਾਮਨਾ ਤੀਰਥ ਜਾਇ ਬਸਿਓ ਸਿਰਿ ਕਰਵਤ ਧਰਾਏ ।

But the mind's scum was cleansed not thus, howsoever I tried.

Sikhism, the Satguru's way, is based purely on rational understanding, intellectual argument, realization of the Truth, and enlightenment through knowledge (*gyan*) and interpretation of the Word in actual life. Deeds and not the creed are essential. It is based only on: -

ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਨਮ ਜਪਿ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਕਰਮੁ । (ਗਉੜੀ ਸੁਖਮਨੀ ਮ: ੫)

This includes every thing worthwhile in Sikhism.

When Ram Das Samarath, the Maratha Saint, met the 6th Nanak, Guru Hargobind Sahib, at Srinagar in 1634, the Satguru imparted to him the teaching that the essence of Sikhism is to be an ascetic within (ਬਾਤਨ ਫਕੀਰੀ), and prince

without (ਬਾਹਰ ਅਮੀਰੀ). Arms means protection to the weak and poor, and destruction to the tyrant, for Guru Nanak's teaching was to transcend the little ego and the appearances but not to renounce the world. It should be noted that later on Ramdas became the spiritual guide of the great Shivaji:

To explain his teachings the Satguru did not create any mythology and did not take cover behind any miracles or show of supernatural powers. Repudiating mythology (as also symbolic ritualism), the Guru presented Word (shabad) as symbol. Words are symbols only because they convey a condition of knowledge and information -word are symbols of their meaningfulness. Thus words become the paramount carriers of knowledge (shabad and gyan), Realization comes through knowledge of shabad thus shabad is the Guru. It is therefore the purest of symbols. It cannot be bogged down by mundane associations and mis-interpretable mythological symbolism. Shabad therefore becomes the purest vehicle of noblest experiences. To put it in modern terminology, the Guru used the 'myth of the language' which is the most potent, rich and effective form of communication.

In Sikhism we have then shabad in the form of *kirtan*, Words (shabad) set to music and rhythm, utilizing the experience communicating quality of singing, objectified emotional character of *Raag*, the infinite concept of Tal (ਤਾਲ) and the purposeful, meaningful, rationalizable and commonly understandable character of *Bani* (ਬਾਣੀ) in the form of *shabad*.

Sing pure *Keertan* in praise of the Creator

ਨਿਰਬਾਣ ਕੀਰਤਨ ਗਾਵਉ ਕਰਤੇ ਕਾ

Repudiating any claim of sanctity of any particular language, the Satguru used the language of the masses, making free and generous use of Persian, Arabic, Sanskrit words and Hindi in Punjabi and appealed direct to the heart and intellect in simple words and phrases. Thus bypassing any intermediary priest class, he saved the people from exploitation and subjugation by the priesthood, both Hindu and Moslem and created a contact direct with the masses. The Tenth Nanak had as many as 52 poets, under his patronage and in his service at Paonta and Anandpur. Some of these men of letters he deputed to go to Banaras and other places to acquire all kind of knowledge and master the Shastras and scriptures of other religions. He then got all the Shahstras and classes and old mythological books translated from Sanskrit and other obsolete languages into the everyday language and made them available to the masses. It is regrettable that this cart-loads of literature was mostly lost during the evacuation of Anandpur. Only some was left, a portion of which was incorporated later on in the Dasam Granth. Thus the Tenth Nanak's contribution in this respect also was unique.

The Word, the Gurshabd, is always and at all times being broadcast. Any one who wishes to listen and take lesson, has just to tune his mind to that wave length.

Nanak, the Guru, hath instructed all in this divine wisdom, and whosoever heareth it is ferried across.

ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਉਪਦੇਸੁ ਕਹਿਤ ਹੈ ਸੁਨੈ ਸੋ ਪਾਰਿ ਪਰਾਨਬ ।
(ਮਾਰੂ ਮ: ੫)

I have not come across any where, said or written, by the Guru, that his Teachings and the examples he set are meant for any special class or set of people, or for any particular community, nation, or country. When seeking Divine help to spread Dharam and root out evil and punish evildoers the Satguru said :-

“The religion shall prevail in the world when thou vouchsafest assistance.
ਪੰਥ ਚਲੈ ਛਬ ਜਗਤ ਮੈ ਜਬ ਤੁਮ ਕਰਹੁ ਸਹਾਇ ।

(ਬਚਿਤਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਪਾ: ੧੦)

Significantly the word here used is *Jagat*. It does not mean Punjab or India or any other area. It only means the World.

Sikhs as a whole are also known as and called the Panth. Panth includes all sorts of Sikhs whether perfect or imperfect, whether still novice or fully. Responsible, whether *Sehajdhari* or of any other Samparda. Any one who believes in the Guru and the Gurbani and has faith in no one else, cannot be denied to be a Sikh and therefore is a member of the Panth. For every Sikh there is a bar which he has to cross for elevation to the selection grade. When he has crossed this bar he becomes a Khalsa, a member of Akalpurkh's Fauj, the 'Suicide squad', who offer their heads and are tested and consecrated with the Sword, a class of God conscious men, out to protect the good and spread goodness and punish evildoers. The Tenth Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh, defines a Khalsa in these words:

He who keeps alight the unquenchable torch of truth, and never swerves from the thought of one God.

ਜਾਗਤੋ ਤਿ ਜਪੈ ਨਿਸ ਬਾਸਰ ਏਕ ਬਿਨਾ ਮਨ ਨੈਕ ਨ ਆਨੈ ।

He who has full love and confidence in God, does not put his faith, even by mistake, in fasting or the graves of Muslim Saints, Hindu crematoriums, or Jogi's places of sepulchre;

ਪੂਰਨ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਤ ਸੈਤ ਗੋਰ ਮੜੀ ਮਟ ਭੂਨ ਨਾ ਮਾਨ ।

He who recognises the one God and no pilgrimages, alms giving, non-destruction of life, penance's, or austerities;

ਤੀਰਥ ਦਾਨ ਦਇਆ ਤਪ ਸੰਜਮ ਏਕ ਬਿਨਾ ਨਹਿ ਏਕ ਪਛਾਨੈ ।

And in whose heart the light of the perfect one shines, he is to be recognized as a pure member of the Khalsa.

ਪੂਰਨ ਜੋਤਿ ਜਗੈ ਧਟ ਮੈ ਤਬ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਤਾਹਿ ਨਿਖਾਲਸ ਜਾਨੈ ।

(੩੩ ਸਵਯੇ ਪਾ: ੧੦)

Sikhism asserts that all true religions are not in fact opposed to each other. They are all one, if they come to accept compassion as the fountain head of virtues and consider spiritual elevation, the forging of individual

character and the formation of society of men of God as their aim.

We find in Guru Granth Sahib besides the bani of the Nanak, Banis of 35 other Bhagats and Bhatts etc; who belonged to different ways of life and Religions but who had understood the Master. Their Bani was given equal position to that of the Satguru's, Sikh Scripture thus attains an unparalleled greatness. Sikhism is therefore unequalled in cosmopolitanism, catholicism, and tolerance. No other Scripture in the World can claim this unique and universal position. Originally all the religions are planned to provide the human mind equilibrium, peace, and eternal bliss. All the ways are planned to reach the top. Some of them are circuitous and tough, some are short and straight, and some are difficult, while some are easy to tread. Some of them are full of obstacles and labyrinths while some pass through wilderness and jungles full of ferocious and poisonous predators. Through some, people are able some how to pass, while others get lost.

The Satguru's way is the clearest and the shortest, as well as the straightest. Being a short cut the ascent may be tough, but the way is wide and well defined. The Guru says that all the basic problems can be solved and human hunger quenched by establishing harmony with the Truth, which cannot be achieved by inflating and nursing the ego but can only be achieved by completely submerging it into the Will of the Supreme Beingh (ਹੁਕਮ) and extinction of selfishness (ਹਉਮੈ).

ਹੁਕਮ ਰਜਾਈ ਚਲਣਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਨਾਲ । (ਜਪੁ)

Sikhism therefore does not aim at Salvation or Deliverance, which means a static merger with and reabsorption of the individual soul into the Universal Soul, and get finished with it. This is left entirely to the grace of the Akalpurkh (ਨਦਰੀ ਮੋਖ ਦੁਆਰ) Our duty is confined to right thinking and right actions with pulsating love of the Omnipresent.

There are very clear injunctions about it in the Guru Granth Sahib :

ਰਾਜ ਨਾ ਚਾਹਉ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਨਾ ਚਾਹਉ ਮਨਿ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਚਰਨ ਕਮਲਾਰੇ ॥ (ਦੇਵਗੰਧਾਰੀ ਮ: ੫)

Here again Sikhism stands out as distinct from others.

Sikhism aims at creating a society, a race of men of God who have perfect faith and anchor in God and are enthusiastically out to do good to and serve mankind (ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰ ਉਮਾਹਾ) and thus spiritualize life on earth and lift mankind to a higher plane. it is only a God-conscious man who is animated with an intense desire to do good in this world. A simple of such a God-conscious man was created in the Khalsa means Khalis, pure, and belonging directly to the Master. The Khalsa therefore owes no allegiance to any perishable creature but only and solely to Wah-Guru (God-Guru).

Thus in the Panth is provided a living organism, guided by a channel of rationalism (not edicts) with instruction to grow and prosper and perpetually evolve (thus being ever new and fresh) guided by common sense and Shabad

i.e. omnipresence of the Guru. This took two hundred years to build a nucleus of society capable of propagating itself without waiting for any prophets and Awtars to show up.

Guru Nanak, therefore, got hold of the basic situation. Rather than starting straight away a sect of militant revolutionaries who may not have known the values they would be fighting for, and who would have responded only to fiery slogan and fanatic fervour, he got down to basic resurrection of the spirit of man which had degenerated and decayed to nonentity under centuries of subjugation and exploitation by the priest class (Pandit and Mullah and all) in the name of the church, and by the State, the ruler coming to be considered a representative of the Divinity, and by moneyed class and higher castes, all camouflaging their exactions in the name of God to perpetuate their hold. He undertook first to build the character of man awaken and free his spirit. Thus, there is no institution of religion in Sikhism and there is no "Church" as such. No body, not even the *Panj Pyaras* or for that matter any form of *Gurmat*, the highest authority to legislate can touch the tenets laid down in *Gurbani*. This rule was most strictly observed and enforced. Baba Ram Rai changed only a word (from Muslim to Beiman) in the court of Aurangzeb, and he was at once disowned by the 7th Nanak, Guru Har Rai. Even Maharaja Ranjit Singh ruled in the name of the Khalsa.

Being cut off from his Creator, man was adrift at the mercy and whim of the winds and beaten right and left by the tides. The Satguru thus provided him with an anchor, a tranquilizer and stabilizer. By bringing man into the discipline, i.e. fear of the Fearless One, he emancipated him from all fears—the fear of the priest, the fear of the high class, the fear of the State and the fear of the Ruler, the mental fear created by superstition and institutionalized formalism and ritualism and ritualism of religion, and above all the fear of death itself. The Guru declares:

ਜਿਨ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਜਿਨ ਹਰਿ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਧਿਆਇਆ ਜੀ ਤਿਨ ਕਾ ਭਉ ਸਭੁ ਗਵਾਸੀ ॥

(ਸੋਪੁਰਖ, ਆਸਾ ਮਹਲਾ ੩)

ਨਿਰਭਉ ਸੰਗਿ ਤੁਮਾਰੈ ਬਸਤੇ ਇਹੁ ਡਰਨੁ ਕਹਾ ਤੇ ਆਇਆ ॥ (ਗਉੜੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੫)

ਮਰਣੁ ਮੁਣਸਾ ਸੂਰਿਆ ਹਕੁ ਹੈ ਜੇ ਹੋਇ ਮਰਨਿ ਪਰਵਾਣੇ ॥ (ਵਡਹੰਸ ਮਹਲਾ ੧)

The Guru did not only deliver the Message and laid down postulates and only showed the way; but took the Sikh by the hand and saw that he tread it with full responsibility and self-confidence. We, therefore, find every Sikh, the Khalsa, fighting and functioning as an institution in himself.

To bring about this resurrection and regeneration of the individual, took the Satguru five generations.

When in 1699 the Satguru created the Order of the Khalsa, the Sikhs who were initiated, kept spreading out forming parties of five 'Beloved ones' to continue the initiation further on and on. This chain continued until as

many as 80000 Sikhs were initiated into the Order of the Khalsa on that occasion. Hand written copies could only be very few. Even these could be made use of only by those who could read. It is obvious therefore that every Sikh at that time was not only literate but was fully conversant with the scripture and remembered by heart all the Banis comprising the morning, evening, and night prayers, in which the 'Initiation' Banis are distributed for every day recital. This was necessary as the Satguru knew that God consciousness could be brought about only through education, understanding, knowledge, and culture. the propagation of Sikhism did not stand in need of patronage of any ruler or Emperor. It is a movement of people, of a man and his realization, which regenerated and spread itself, by virtue of its purity and dynamism.

To bring about fraternity and equality, the Satguru founded the two very important institutions of Sikhism, of *sangat* and *pangat*, where every one sits, down irrespective of any caste or class, high or low. The third Nanakenforced it with a definite order that audience would be granted only to that person who had first dined in *pangat* at the Guru's langar. When Emperor Akbar went to meet the Satguru, he scrupulously observed these instructions and first dined in the *pangat* at the *langar*.

The Satguru struck at the roots of Varnashram Dharama, the mainstay of the Hindus, in practice when besides the *sangat* and *pangat*, the third Nanak got dug a Baoli (a large well) at Goindwal in 1559 and the 4th and 5th Nanaks, the tanks at Amritsar and Taran Tarn, where every one, the high castes as well the low, the untouchable, the rich and the poor, all rubbed their naked shoulders together and bathed. This repudiation of the Varnasharam was brought to completion when the 10th Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh, administered Amrit to all irrespective of any distinction of caste; class or status, and made them drink it out of the same iron bowl and partake of the *krah parshad* out of the same dish at the Initiation in 1699.

When this spiritual re-awakening and regeneration of 'man' resurrection of human values, restoration of consciousness of the self and mental, moral and social uplift was complete, the fifth Nanak, Guru Arjan Dev announced (Sri Rag) :

ਮੈ ਬਧੀ ਸਚੁ ਧਰਮ ਸਾਲ ਹੈ ॥
ਗੁਰਸਿਖਾ ਲਹਦਾ ਭਾਲਿਕੈ ॥
ਹੁਣਿ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਹੋਆ ਮਿਹਰਵਾਣ ਦਾ ॥
ਪੈ ਕੋਇ ਨ ਕਿਸੈ ਰਵਾਣਦਾ ॥
ਸਭ ਸੁਖਾਲੀ ਵੁਠੀਆ ਇਹੁ ਹੋਆ ਹਲੇਮੀ ਰਾਜੁ ਜੀਉ

The pinnacle of this achievement was the burning *Jeth Sudi* 4th (May 30th, 1606) when at Lahore he offered Shahadat (death by Yasa).

Guru Nanak had said, (ਹੁਕਮ ਰਜਾਈ ਚਲਣਾ) follow His Will cheerfully, and

in his fifth form the Guru exemplified it. The acceptance, and practice of living in *hukam* was complete.

ਸੇਵਕਿ ਕੀ ਉੜਕੁ ਨਿਬਹੀ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ॥ ਜੀਵਤ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਸੇਵਿਓ ਅਪਨਾ ਚਲਤੇ ਰਾਖਿਓ ਚੀਤਿ
ਜੈਸੀ ਆਗਿਆ ਜੀਨੀ ਠਾਕਰੁ ਤਿਸਤੇ ਮੁਖੁ ਨਹੀ ਮੋਇਓ ॥
ਸਹਜੁ ਅਨੰਦੁ ਰਖਿਓ ਗ੍ਰਿਹੁ ਭੀਤਰਿ ਉਠਿ ਉਆਹੁ ਕਉ ਦਉਰਿਓ ॥

(ਮਾਰੂ ਮਹਲਾ ੫)

He at the same time infused in his successor, the 6th Nanak the outlook and prepared him, (as did the 9th Nanak prepare his son and successor the 10th Satguru (ਦੀਨੀ ਭਾਂਤ ਭਾਂਤ ਕੀ ਸਿਫਾ) who at the time of his accession was only 9 years old) in a manner that on the first movement of his accession at the age of 11, he asked for the Sword; again not one but two Swords. It was only the evolution of the symbol. So the Swords of *Miri and Piri* were separately worn. The final sophisticated form of this symbol was created by the Satguru in his 10th Form. When in his hand the two swords merged into one double-edged Sword called Khanda-Khanda the creator of a liberated new Order, and destroyer of the evil and wrong. Of this Khanda then the Khalsa took the Amrit. And the finality of Guru Nanak's mission was completed on the 1st of Baisakh 1699, when the guru became the Sikh, and the Sikh, the Guru.

ਵਾਹੁ ਵਾਹੁ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਆਪੇ ਗੁਰ ਚੇਲਾ । (ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਦੂਸਰਾ)

The Sikh sword is not meant to be brandished right and left to be struck where it could and at whosoever came in its way. It is a symbol of his *dharma* to resist aggression, tyranny, and injustice. It is a symbol of self-reliance, self-confidence, self-help and self protection. It is meant to sweep aside obstacles that obstruct the performance of his *dharma* (duty) and to uphold what is good, and punish who is bad and bane to human society. It is meant to destroy evil and evil doers and extirpate tyrants and suckers root and branch; The 10th Nanak invokes the Sword thus :-

ਸੁਖ ਸੰਤਾ ਕਰਣੇ ਦੁਰਮਤਿ ਦਰਦੇ ਕਿਲਬਿਖ ਹਰਣ ਅਸਿ ਸਰਣੇ ॥

(ਬਚਿੱਤ੍ਰ ਨਾਟਕ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ ੧੦)

ਸੰਤਾ ਮਾਨਉ ਦੂਤਾ ਡਾਨਉ ਇਹ ਕੁਟਵਾਰੀ ਮੇਰੀ ॥

(ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਕਬੀਰ)

It is like a surgeon's lancet meant to remove soiled parts and amputate gangrened organs. It is a symbol of will and power and determination of a Sikh to live a Sikh life which is to be effective, purposeful, and active.

Good actions and values are of two kinds, one that are active and the other passive; one that could be said to be positive, the other negative; that is the acts of commissions and omissions. It is easy not to tell a lie, not to molest a woman, not to snatch away what is another's, not to beat or kill an innocent person etc; though these are values allright. But it requires great courage, skill, and even will and readiness to sacrifice and suffer for another, when you get up and challenge the aggressor who is molesting a woman or like Abdali is carrying away girls to be sold off as slaves, when you get hold of

the person picking another's pocket, or when you volunteer to depose the truth in a court in favour of a person you know to be innocent, or when you go to help and rescue a person being beaten or mercilessly being killed by a highway man; and so on. In Sikhism much higher place is given to values and good acts that are active and positive.

ਵਿਣ ਗਣ ਕੀਤੇ ਭਗਤਿ ਨ ਹੋਇ ॥ (ਜਪੁ)

It has got to be wielded and effectively used when needed. The Satguru has very clearly and definitely laid down :-

ਚੂੰ ਕਾਰ ਅਜ ਹਮਾ ਹੀਲਤੇ ਦਰ ਗੁਜਸਤ ॥
ਹਲਾਲ ਅਸਤ ਬੁਰਦਲ ਬ ਸਮਸੋਰ ਦਸਤ ॥

(ਜ਼ਫਰਨਾਮਾ ਪਾ: ੧੦)

So it has got to be very judiciously used, and only when all other means of argument, persuasion, diplomacy and reasoning etc; have failed. The Sikhs have recently again given a practical proof of this judicious use in last spring last year (1966) when their Religion and Religious places were flouted and attacked by the fanatic anti-Punjabi Suba demonstrators. The shining steel hanging by their side ready at hand was not even once touched and flashed.

For a Sikh, legitimate use of force in defence of human values is not only right but becomes incumbent when occasion arises, because he refuses to submit to brute force.

The 10th Nanak fought fourteen battles. But he always fought when first attacked. This is borne out by his own autobiography, the Bachittar Natak. He wanted to create a society, a nation of men, longing and ever ready to do good and elevate mankind to higher spiritual plane, ever fresh and progressing, marching forward.

ਆਗਾਹਾ ਕੂ ਤ੍ਰਾਘ ਪਿਛਾ ਫੇਰਿ ਨਾ ਮੁਹਡੜਾ ॥ (ਮਾਰੂ ਵਾਰ, ਡਖਣੇ, ਮ: ੫)

Guru Gobind Singh was such a multifacet personality that from any angle one perceives, he gets a fresh Light and new Darshan.

To sum up the salient points of this 'way of Life' it will be worth noting that.

1. It provided the much needed anchor in the doctrine of the Name (ਨਾਮ) which means a trenchant, pure, and unadulterated, monotheism.
ਆਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚੁ ॥ ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਚ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੋਸੀ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ॥
That is :-
ਜੋ ਥਾ ਅਬ ਹੈ ॥ ਅਰ ਆਗੇ ਉ ਹਵੇ ਹੈ ॥ (੩੩ ਸਵੈਯੇ ਪਾ: ੧੦)
2. Next to God is the place of the Guru.
ਗੁਰ ਬਿਨ ਘਰ ਅੰਧਾਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਬਿਨ ਸਮਝ ਨ ਆਵੈ ॥ (ਸਵੈਯੇ ਮ: ੪ ਕੇ)
3. All the godly values and saintly virtues are inherent in us. But they lie dormant. It is the touch of the Guru that energises them.
ਮਤ ਵਿਚ ਰਤਨ ਜਵਾਹਰ ਮਾਣਕ ॥ ਜੇ ਇਕ ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੁਣੀ ॥ (ਜਪੁ)
4. The Satguru's mission, and so the ideal of a Sikh, is summed up by the

10th Nanak in the words :-

ਧਰਮ ਚਲਾਵਨ ਸੰਤ ਉਬਾਰਨ ॥ ਦੁਸਟ ਸਭਨ ਕੋ ਮੂਲ ਉਪਾਰਨ ॥

(ਬਚਿੱਤਰ ਨਾਟਕ ਪਾ: ੧੦)

5. There is to be no trucking with the theory of God's incarnation, Varanasharam, and no compromise with art culture based on mythological tales and gods or goddesses or superstitious practices.
6. Sikhism is a way of life created and set into movement by 200 years of nursing by the guru in ten Forms and fortified and nurtured by the sacrifices and blood of the three Gurus, 5th, 9th and 10th, four Sahibzadas, and innumerable Shahids, with the object lesson of practising the presence of God and betterment of man kind.
7. It is a living organism with the dynamic presence of the Guru in Guru-Shabd functioning the Khalsa and the Panth.
8. Sikhism thus becomes the antithesis of oppression whether spiritual, social, intellectual or political. Sikh's mission, therefore, becomes one of liberation and emancipation from all these and is symbolised in sword (Sri Sahib).
9. A Sikh's living is an integrated whole of spiritual, intellectual, social, and political activity, which aims at a progressive movement on all planes of man-kind towards God-head to be achieved not by Renunciation but in Sangat (Society), participation in life.
10. Since his living is a dynamic movement for emancipation, struggle becomes a part of his life, which he faces with fortitude and when he dies fighting he is consecrated to his noble values.
Then I may die in the thick of the conflict.
ਅਤਿ ਹੀ ਰਣ ਮੈ ਤਬ ਜੁਝ ਮਰੋ ॥ (ਸਵਯਾ ਪਾ: 10)
And it is therefore that when he is called upon to join the cadre of the elite (Khalsa) he comes to join the forces of love with his head on the palm of his hand.
11. There can be no social order without a moral force and ethical sanction. These values are higher than life and have to be protected with life. For such protection negation of force or non-violence in face of physical threat is an absurdity.
Political power depends on force (Weapons).
ਸ਼ਸਤ੍ਰਨ ਕੇ ਅਧੀਨ ਹੈ ਰਾਜ ॥
Without forceful political voice no way of Life (Religion) can flourish.
ਰਾਜ ਬਿਨਾ ਨਹਿ ਧਰਮ ਚਲੈ ਹੈ ॥
12. Guru Gobind Singh preached, practised and administered the nectar of Khanda. We must understand the 'values' which he wanted to be propagated and protected, and for which he wielded the Sword. The

same values for which his father, the 9th Nanak laid down his life, like his great grand-father, the fifth Guru. Again like his own grand father, 6th Nanak, the tenth Guru took to sword for the same reason, that surrendering life as *Ahuti* and tactic, when not successful, should not mean surrendering values helplessly. So long as life breathes, effort and struggle must continue, and when other means have failed it is ethically and morally justified to resort to force.

13. Sikhism is a direct and independent approach, nirmal means pure, unadulterated, clean, those who try to depict Sikhism as a satellite of Hinduism should well ponder over the 10th Nanak's significant words which we recite every evening:-

ਪਾਇ ਗਰ ਜਬ ਤੇ ਤੁਮਰੇ ਤਬ ਤੇ ਕੋਊ ਆਖ ਤਰੇ ਨਹੀ ਆਨਯੋ ॥

ਰਾਮ ਰਹੀਮ ਪੁਰਾਨ ਕੁਰਾਨ ਅਨੇਕ ਕਹੈ ਮਤ ਏਕ ਨ ਮਾਨਯੋ ॥

ਸਿਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਸਾਸਤ੍ਰ ਬੇਦ ਸਭੈ ਬਹੁ ਭੇਦ ਕਹੈ ਹਕ ਏਕ ਨਾ ਜਾਨਯੋ ।

(ਰਾਮਵਤਾਰ, ਸਵੱਯਾ ਪਾ: ੧੦)

Cunningham said, "It was reserved for Nanak to perceive the true principles of reform, and to lay those foundation a which enabled his successor Gobind to fire the minds with a new nationality, and to give practical effect to the doctrine that the lowest is equal with the highest, in race as in creed in political rights as in religious hope."

G.C. Narang also says, "Gobind himself, in fact, as well as his work, was the natural product of the process of evolution that had been going on ever since the foundation of Sikhism. The harvest which ripened in the time of Gobind Singh had been sown by Nanak and watered by his successors. The sword which carved the Khalsa's way of glory was, undoubtedly, forged by Gobind, but the steel had been provided by Nanak."

Failure to read the 10th Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh, in the context in which he came to live and function, could result in not only a lop-sided understanding of his mission, but could lead to totally misconstrued and unintelligent views. One such blunder was committed even by a man of the academics Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore when in his "Itihas" he tried to compare and equalize Guru Gobind Singh with Shivaji Maratha and pronounced that Gobind Singh fell from the high spiritual ideals of Guru Nanak and the Sikh Society decayed because they took to the profession of arms. He particularly lamented that the Sikhs did not conform to his notions of high ideals and did not produce any painters, or dancers, or even poets, not knowing that all the Sikh Scriptures and Religious books even some of the Historical books are all written in poetry the like of which has not been written so far and set to music and rythm. Sir Gokal Chand Narang, an ardent Arya Smajist, in his "Transformation of Sikhism" writes about Guru Gobind Singh that 'hereditary as the gift of poetry which has remained unsurpassed since his times". Again

he says, "he developed a class of warlike poetry, unknown in the Punjab before, which he turned to such a great account in rousing the dormant energies of the people". And again "verses of Gobind Singh forming an invocation to the sword are among the finest of their kind to be met with in any literature of the World."

Any student of Sikh History who reads about the life and works of the Satguru would straight away note that the first brick which the Ist Nanak laid of his teachings and dissemination of knowledge was in poetry and music. Both of these reached a stage of perfection during the time of his nine successors, untouched and unparalleled so far. Moreover, in Sikhism Satguru has laid down music (*Kirtan*), as the only and sole form of Worship. To this day at Amritsar in Hari Mandir constant and continuous music (*Kirtan*), divine and sublime is carried on day and night. The 10th Satguru's own contribution to music is also exceptional as is evident from his compositions in the Dasam Granth. There are nine different styles of poetry (*Chhands*) totalling seventy three compositions, in the Dasam Granth that deal directly with music and are called *Sangeet Chhands*.

GURU GRANTH SAHIB
UNIQUE AND UNIVERSAL SCRIPTURE

HARNAM SINGH SHAN*

Guru Granth Sahib transcends not only such religious barriers, mutual hostility and strong prejudices; but also all types of religious exclusiveness, dogmatism, formalism, chauvinism and egocentric individualism. It preaches that God, the Creator of all, being One and all people being His Own Creation, there is therefore only one basic religion for the whole humanity; and that religion is Truth which can be adopted and practised by anybody, any time, anywhere.

Expressing this conviction in very clear terms, it states:

ਏਕੋ ਧਰਮੁ ਦ੍ਰਿੜੈ ਸਚੁ ਕੋਈ ॥

ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਪੂਰਾ ਜੁਗਿ ਜੁਗਿ ਸੋਈ ॥¹

He, who grasps the truth, realises that

As the creator is One and is ever the same age after age.

There is, therefore, One religion of all mankind.

Enunciating its own concept of that One religion of all mankind and the definition of its true adherent, it also observes:

ਗਲੀ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਹੋਈ ॥ ਏਕ ਦ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਕਰਿ ਸਮਸਰਿ ਜਾਣੈ ਜੋਗੀ ਕਹੀਐ ਸੋਈ ॥²

*Religion consists not in mere talk. He who looks on all alike
and considers all as equals,*

May be acclaimed as truly religious.

Indicating also the way to such an ideal and equalitarian religion, it maintains:

ਅੰਜਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਨਿਰੰਜਨਿ ਰਹੀਐ ਜੋਗ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਇਵ ਪਾਈਐ ॥³

The way to true religion is found by dwelling in God.

And remaining detached

in the midst of worldly attachments. (like a lotus in water).

Guru Nanak, its first and foremost author, holds therefore that as a tree is known by the fruit it bears, so a man's religion is known by the deeds he performs. Denominational robes, symbols, rites, rituals, ceremonies, sacraments, precepts, dogmas, doctrines, theories, miracles,

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outward garbs and visible marks which do not lead to righteous deeds, will not take anyone far on the path of religious and spiritual progress. Hence, Guru Arjan Dev, its prolific author as well as compiler-cum-editor defines the true religion and righteous living, as under, in his masterpiece, Sukhmani Sahib:

ਸਰਬ ਧਰਮ ਮਹਿ ਸ਼੍ਰੇਸਟ ਧਰਮੁ ॥ ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਿ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਕਰਮੁ ॥

ਸਗਲ ਕ੍ਰਿਆ ਮਹਿ ਉਤਮ ਕਿਰਿਆ ॥ ਸਾਧਸੰਗਿ ਦੁਰਮਤਿ ਮਲੁ ਹਿਰਿਆ ॥⁴

The most exalted of all religions consists of love and God's Name and purity of conduct.

The highest of all actions lies in the effacement of impure thinking in the company of the holy.

Guru Granth Sahib has given optimistic hope to every person - belonging to any caste or creed, sex or stratum - for his or her liberation even when he or she is alive in this very world, as stated below by its major contributor:

ਖੜੀ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਸੂਦ ਵੈਸ ਸਭ ਏਕੈ ਨਾਮਿ ਤਰਾਨਥ ॥⁵

Khatris, Brahmans, Vaishyas and Sudras

all can swim across the Ocean of Existence,

through loving devotion to the Name of One Lord.

and the foremost author:

... ਜੀਵਨ ਮੁਕਤੁ ਮਨਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਵਸਾਏ ॥⁶

He who enshrines the Name of God in his heart

is emancipated even when alive.

They have likened the human soul to a bride and God to a bridegroom; and have assured everybody, man and woman, that -

ਭਉ ਭਗਤਿ ਕਰਿ ਨੀਚੁ ਸਦਾਏ ॥

ਤਉ ਨਾਨਕ ਮੋਖੰਤਰੁ ਪਾਏ ॥⁷

Liberation can be attained

by cherishing loving devotion to God,

accepting His will and dwelling in humility.

It can be surely attained while leading a normal householder's. Life of virtuous conduct, remembering God, adoring His Nature, doing honest work, performing social and familial duties, earning livelihood and sharing earnings with the needy, as opposed to pursuing, celibacy or barren asceticism and mortification of the body it. According to Guru Nanak Dev:

ਖਾਇਆ ਮਹਲੁ ਮੰਦਰੁ ਘਰੁ ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਤਿਸੁ ਮਹਿ ਰਾਖੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਅਪਾਰ ॥⁸

The body is the palace, the Temple and the House of God,

In which He has placed His infinite Light.

By following the aforesaid way of living, under the guidance of the True Master, it reassures everyone in these very words:

ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਐਸੀ ਵਡਿਆਈ ॥ ਪੁਤ੍ਰ ਕਲਤ੍ਰ ਵਿਚੇ ਗਤਿ ਪਾਈ ॥⁹

*Such is the distinctive greatness of the True Guru
that through his grace and guidance*

One can attain salvation even while living a normal domestic life.

ਨਾਨਕ ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਭੋਟਿਐ ਪੂਰੀ ਹੋਵੈ ਜੁਗਤਿ ॥

ਹਸੰਦਿਆ ਖੇਲੰਦਿਆ ਪੈਨੰਦਿਆ ਖਾਵੰਦਿਆ ਵਿਚੇ ਹੋਵੈ ਮੁਕਤਿ ॥੨॥¹⁰

By meeting with the True Guru

One comes to know the right way of living,

Which leads one to the union with God.

Under his kind guidance and by the grace of God

One attains liberation,

Even while leading a full life

Of smiling playfulness and

Cheerful enjoyment of wear and food.

Guru Granth Sahib has addressed itself, thus, to the common man of the world and not to an ascetic or a recluse. It has brought religion out of the cloister and related it to the living beings and to the realities of life, adding a noble ideal, practical approach and social meaning to its fold. It advises and tells them, for instance —

ਏਕੋ ਜਪਿ ਏਕੋ ਸਾਲਾਹਿ ॥ ਏਕੁ ਸਿਮਰਿ ਏਕੋ ਮਨ ਆਹਿ ॥¹¹

Contemplate and praise One alone.

Meditate only on that One God;

Seek and cherish Him alone.

ਜਬ ਲਗੁ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਰਹੀਐ ਨਾਨਕ ਕਿਛੁ ਸੁਣੀਐ ਕਿਛੁ ਕਹੀਐ ॥¹²

We should keep on communicating with the fellow-beings,

So long as we live in the world.

ਮਿਥਿਆ ਤਨ ਨਹੀ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰਾ ॥¹³

the human body that does not do good to others is worthless.

ਮਿਠਤੁ ਨੀਵੀ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਗੁਣ ਚੰਗਿਆਈਆ ਤਤੁ ॥¹⁴

Sweetness and humility are

the essence of all virtues and good qualities.

ਸਚੁ ਓਰੈ ਸਭੁ ਕੇ ਉਪਰਿ ਸਚੁ ਆਚਾਰੁ ॥¹⁵

Truth is higher than everything else;

But higher by far is the truthful living.

ਕਬੀਰਾ ਜਹਾ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਤਹ ਧਰਮੁ ਹੈ ਜਹਾ ਝੂਠੁ ਤਹ ਪਾਪੁ ॥

ਜਹਾ ਲੋਭੁ ਤਹ ਕਾਲੁ ਹੈ ਜਹਾ ਖਿਮਾ ਤਹ ਆਪਿ ॥¹⁶

Where there is enlightenment, there is righteousness.

Where there is falsehood, there is sin.

Where there is covetousness, there is death.
Where there is forgiveness, there is God Himself.
ਮੰਦਾ ਚੰਗਾ ਆਪਣਾ ਆਪੇ ਹੀ ਕੀਤਾ ਪਾਵਣਾ ॥¹⁷

Everyone has himself to bear the consequence of
his good and bad action

ਸਭਨਾ ਕਾ ਦਰਿ ਲੇਖਾ ਹੋਇ ॥ ਕਰਣੀ ਬਾਝਹੁ ਤਰੈ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥¹⁸

Everyone is answerable to God.

No one is saved but for his good deeds.

ਹਕੁ ਪਰਾਇਆ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਉਸੁ ਸੁਅਰ ਉਸੁ ਗਾਇ ॥¹⁹

Depriving others of their dues

is like eating perk to a Muslim or beef to a Hindu.

ਜੋ ਤਿਸੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਸਾਈ ਗਲ ਚੰਗੀ ॥²⁰

Whatever pleases God is the best of all things and actions.

ਕਹੁ ਕਬੀਰ ਜਨ ਭਏ ਖਾਲਸੇ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਭਗਤਿ ਜਿਹ ਜਾਨੀ ॥²¹

Such of God's servants have become God's own

Who know the way of loving devotion to Him.

ਜੋ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੰਡੇ ਸੋਈ ਪਿੰਡੇ ਜੋ ਖੋਜੈ ਸੋ ਪਾਵੈ ॥²²

He that pervades the universe also dwell in the human body.

He who searches Him shall find Him there.

ਆਪਿ ਨਾਥੁ ਨਾਥੀ ਸਭ ਜਾ ਕੀ ਰਿਧਿ ਸਿਧਿ ਅਵਰਾ ਸਾਦ ॥²³

The craving for supernatural and miraculous powers,

is an irrelevant taste.

ਜਪੁ ਤਪੁ ਸਭੁ ਇਹੁ ਸਬਦੁ ਹੈ ਸਾਰੁ ॥²⁴

The holy Word is the Essence of all meditations and austerities.

ਹਉ ਵਿਚਿ ਜਾਤੀ ਜਿਨਸੀ ਖੋਵੈ ॥²⁵

Man degrades himself in the human order Because of his egoism.

ਹਉਮੈ ਏਹਾ ਜਾਤਿ ਹੈ ਹਉਮੈ ਕਰਮ ਕਮਾਹਿ ॥²⁶

Self-assertion gives man his individuality And leads him to action.

ਬਾਬਾ ਹੋਰੁ ਖਾਣਾ ਖੁਸੀ ਖੁਆਰੁ ॥

ਜਿਤੁ ਖਾਧੈ ਤਨੁ ਪੀੜੀਐ ਮਨ ਮਹਿ ਚਲਹਿ ਵਿਕਾਰ ॥

ਬਾਬਾ ਹੋਰੁ ਪੈਨਣੁ ਖੁਸੀ ਖੁਆਰੁ ॥

ਜਿਤੁ ਪੈਠੈ ਤਨੁ ਪੀੜੀਐ ਮਨ ਮਹਿ ਚਲਹਿ ਵਿਕਾਰ ॥²⁷

Wearing that kind of dress

which causes torment to the body

and breeds evil thoughts in the mind is distressful, O Friend.

ਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਮੰਦਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਜਿਤੁ ਜੰਮਹਿ ਰਾਜਾਨ ॥²⁸

Why revile woman,

from whom even kings and greatmen are born?

The aim and object of such instructions and exhortations has obviously been the all-round uplift and welfare of human-kind through love, devotion,

service and righteous deeds, contributing to universal peace, pleasure and prosperity. They embody the message of unity, equality, compassion, tolerance and non-violence; and evince socialistic and altruistic approach which is one of optimism, faith and joy in natural phenomena. They also aim at promoting such lofty ideals, as are projected in this Holy Scripture, equating the Supreme Lord with Truth, and Love of Him with service of humanity. They also enjoin upon its followers truthful living and social responsibility, invoking both social service and beneficent action, as advised in the following verse by the Founder of Sikh religion:

ਘਾਲਿ ਖਾਇ ਕਿਛੁ ਹਬਹੁ ਦੇਇ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਰਾਹੁ ਪਛਾਣਹਿ ਸੋਇ ॥²⁹

*They alone have known the right way
who eat the fruit of their own toil
and share it with those in need.*

He believed and stated that such active social service and devoted beneficent action, called Seva, is very essential not only for the fulfilment of our objectives here but also in the hereafter:

ਜੇਤੇ ਜੀਅ ਤੇਤੇ ਸਭਿ ਤੇਰੇ ਵਿਣੁ ਸੇਵਾ ਫਲੁ ਕਿਸੈ ਨਾਹੀ ॥³⁰

*All living beings are your Own creatures;
But no one can obtain reward
without rendering devoted service.*

ਵਿਚਿ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਸੇਵ ਕਮਾਈਐ ॥ ਤਾ ਦਰਗਹ ਬੈਸਣੁ ਪਾਈਐ ॥³¹

*If we want to get a seat at the Divine Portal;
We should dedicate ourselves
to the active service of the people in this world.*

The man is further advised to uphold his firm faith in God's Will, Grace, and Law; and remain grateful to Him and be content with whatever He bestows upon him in His Wisdom and His Will. Recording the Guru's message of hope and cheer for all humankind, this Holy Book encourages and assures even the down-trodden and the wavering ones in such inspiring and enthusing words as the following:

ਤੂ ਕਾਹੇ ਡੋਲਹਿ ਪ੍ਰਾਣੀਆ ਤੁਧੁ ਰਾਖੈਗਾ ਸਿਰਜਣਹਾਰੁ ॥

ਜਿਨਿ ਪੈਦਾਇਸਿ ਤੂ ਕੀਆ ਸੋਈ ਦੇਇ ਆਧਾਰੁ ॥³²

*Why do you waver and fall into suspense?
He, Your Creator, shall surely sustain you.
He, who has created this world
Also takes care of it.*

These and all other counsels, teachings and exhortations of Guru Granth Sahib are meant not only for its adherents but also for the whole humanity, as is stated in the Volume itself in the following verse by Guru Amar Das (1479-1574), the Third prophet-preceptor of Sikhism:

ਪਰਬਾਇ ਸਾਖੀ ਮਹਾ ਪੁਰਖ ਬੋਲਦੇ ਸਾਝੀ ਸਗਲ ਜਹਾਨੈ ॥³³

Great men speak in the terms of the particular³⁴

But their wisdom is applicable to the whole world.

As far as the caste-ridden India, in particular, is concerned, these are common and applicable to all its castes and creeds, so tells Guru Arjan Dev, its holy compiler-cum-editor:

ਖੜੀ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਸੂਦ ਵੈਸ ਉਪਦੇਸੁ ਚਹੁ ਵਰਨਾ ਕਉ ਸਾਝਾ ॥³⁵

This common spiritual message

Is meant for the people of all the four castes:

Kashatriya, Brahmin, Sudra and Vaishya.

ਗੁਰੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਉਪਦੇਸੁ ਕਹਤੁ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਸੁਨੈ ਸੋ ਪਾਰਿ ਪਰਾਨਥ ॥³⁶

Such is the teaching and message of Guru Nanak,

whoever listens to it is ferried across³⁷ the Ocean of Existence.

Apart from all that, those are also specifically addressed to various persons belonging to some particular categories, creeds and callings, etc., such as -

1. To Yogis :

ਗਲੀ ਜੋਗੁ ਨ ਹੋਈ ॥ ਏਕ ਦ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਕਰਿ ਸਮਸਰਿ ਜਾਣੈ ਜੋਗੀ ਕਹੀਐ ਸੋਈ ॥³⁸

Yoga consists not in mere talk or chatter.

*He, who looks on all alike and regards all as equals,
may be acclaimed as a true Yogi.*

To Hindus:

ਹਿੰਦੂ ਮੂਲੇ ਭੂਲੇ ਅਖੁਟੀ ਜਾਂਗੀ ॥ ਨਾਰਦਿ ਕਹਿਆ ਸਿ ਪੂਜ ਕਰਾਂਗੀ ॥

ਅੰਧੇ ਗੁੰਗੇ ਅੰਧ ਅੰਧਾਰੁ ॥ ਪਾਥਰੁ ਲੇ ਪੂਜਹਿ ਮੁਗਧ ਗਵਾਰ ॥

ਓਹਿ ਜਾ ਆਪਿ ਡੁਬੇ ਤੁਮ ਕਹਾ ਤਰਣਹਾਰੁ ॥³⁹

*The Hindus having strayed from the Primal Lord,
are going the wrong way.*

They worship idols, as instructed by Narad...'

*They, the ignorant ones, worship stones, not realising that stones,
which themselves sink, cannot ferry others across.*

2. To Muslims:

ਮਿਹਰ ਮਸੀਤਿ ਸਿਦਕੁ ਮੁਸਲਾ ਹਕੁ ਹਲਾਲੁ ਕੁਰਾਣੁ ॥

ਸਰਮ ਸੁੰਨਤਿ ਸੀਲੁ ਰੋਜਾ ਹੋਹੁ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਣੁ ॥⁴⁰

*Let compassion be your mosque, faith your prayer-mat,
and righteousness your Qoran*

Let modesty be your circumcision, and uprightness your fasting.

Thus you will become a true Muslim.

ਦਇਆ ਦਿਗੰਬਰੁ⁴² ਦੇਹ ਬੀਚਾਰੀ ॥ ਆਪਿ ਮਰੈ ਅਵਰਾ ਨਹ ਮਾਰੀ ॥⁴¹

The true Digambar⁴² Jain is he

who cherishes compassion and probes his

*As he kills (i.e. subdues his own self),
he does not kill (i.e. hurt) others.*
ਮਨੁ ਹਾਲੀ ਕਿਰਸਾਣੀ ਕਰਣੀ ਸਰਮੁ ਪਾਣੀ ਤਨੁ ਖੇਤੁ ॥
ਨਾਮੁ ਬੀਜੁ ਸੰਤੋਖੁ ਸੁਹਾਗਾ ਰਖੁ ਗਰੀਬੀ ਵੇਸੁ ॥
ਭਾਉ ਕਰਮ ਕਰਿ ਜੰਮਸੀ ਸੇ ਘਰ ਭਾਗਠ ਦੇਖੁ ॥⁴³
*Let the mind be the ploughman,
Good deeds the ploughing
Honest strivings the water
And your body the field.
Let God's Name be the seeds, content the leveller,
and humility the garb.
Let your actions be those of love and amity.
The seed will then sprout, the crop will grow.
And you will see your home blessed with prosperity.*

To Traders :

ਵਣਜੁ ਕਰਹੁ ਮਖਸੂਦੁ ਲੈਹੁ ਮਤ ਪਛੋਤਾਵਹੁ ॥⁴⁴
*Carry on your trade For gaining your objective (i.e. profit).
Lest you should repent afterwards.*

All beings are advised, thus, to be true and firm believers in their respective faiths; and alert and active workers in their respective callings. Such sincere advice and impressive guidance to the followers of other religions and professions, etc. in the sacred scripture of one's own faith does not seem to have been given this way in the Holy Book of any other religion.

The fervent appeals, prayers and pleadings included therein are also applicable to the entire humankind. These have been made by the Sikh Gurus to the Creator of all and sundry, for and on behalf of the whole humanity, for the maximum good of every creature, for the well-being of the whole world. They find their highest and noblest expression in the following verses, for example:

1. Guru Nanak Dev, the First Guru, pleads with God:

ਤੇਰੇ ਜੀਅ ਜੀਆ ਕਾ ਤੋਹਿ ॥ ਕਿਤ ਕਉ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਆਵਹਿ ਰੋਹਿ ॥
ਜੇ ਤੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਆਵਹਿ ਰੋਹਿ ॥ ਤੂ ਓਨਾ ਕਾ ਤੇਰੇ ਓਹਿ ॥⁴⁵
*All creation is yours, O Lord !
And you are the only Master of all.
Why are they visited, then, with Your wrath ?
In spite of Your having wrath on them,
They are still Yours and you are theirs, O Lord !*

2. Guru Amar Das, the Third Guru, appeals to God:

ਜਗਤੁ ਜਲੰਦਾ ਰਖਿ ਲੈ ਆਪਣੀ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਧਾਰਿ ॥

ਜਿਤੁ ਦੁਆਰੈ ਉਬਰੈ ਤਿਤੈ ਲੈਹੁ ਉਬਾਰਿ ॥⁴⁶

The world is in flames !

Save it, O God, out of your mercy;

It can be saved, O Lord

3. Guru Ram Das, the Fourth Guru, prays to God

ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਿ ਕੈ ਸੁਨਹੁ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਸਭ ਜਗ ਮਹਿ ਵਰਸੈ ਮੇਹੁ ॥⁴⁷

Listen to our prayer, O God; And let Your Grace rain

Over the whole world.

4. Guru Arjan Dev, the Fifth Guru, supplicates to God:

ਸਭੇ ਜੀਅ ਸਮਾਲਿ ਅਪਣੀ ਮਿਹਰ ਕਰੁ ॥

ਅੰਨੁ ਪਾਣੀ ਮੁਚੁ ਉਪਾਇ ਦੁਖ ਦਾਲਦੁ ਭੰਨਿ ਤਰੁ ॥⁴⁸

Be merciful, O God; and keep all beings in Your care.

*Let grain and water be in plenty, shatter their suffering and penury
and ferry them across the Ocean of Existence.*

ਬੇਗਮ ਪੁਰਾ ਸਹਰ ਕੇ ਨਾਉ ॥ ਦੁਖੁ ਅੰਦੋਹੁ ਨਹੀ ਤਿਹਿ ਠਾਉ ॥

ਨਾਂ ਤਸਵੀਸ ਖਿਰਾਜੁ ਨ ਮਾਲੁ ॥ ਖਉਫੁ ਨ ਖਤਾ ਨ ਤਰਸੁ ਜਵਾਲੁ ॥੧॥

ਅਬ ਮੋਹਿ ਖੂਬ ਵਤਨ ਗਹ ਪਾਈ ॥ ਉਹਾਂ ਬੈਰਿ ਸਦਾ ਮੇਰੇ ਭਾਈ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

ਕਾਇਮੁ ਦਾਇਮੁ ਸਦਾ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਰੀ ॥ ਦੋਮ ਨ ਸੇਮ ਏਕ ਸੇ ਆਹੀ ॥

ਆਬਾਦਾਨੁ ਸਦਾ ਮਸਹੂਰ ॥ ਉਹਾਂ ਗਨੀ ਬਸਹਿ ਮਾਮੂਰ ॥੨॥

ਤਿਉ ਤਿਉ ਸੈਲ ਕਰਹਿ ਜਿਉ ਭਾਵੈ ॥ ਮਹਰਮ ਮਹਲ ਨ ਕੋ ਅਟਕਾਵੈ ॥

ਕਹਿ ਰਵਿਦਾਸ ਖਲਾਸ ਚਮਾਰਾ ॥ ਜੋ ਹਮ ਸਹਰੀ ਸੁ ਮੀਤੁ ਹਮਾਰਾ ॥⁴⁹

The name of my city is Griefless.

Suffering and sorrow do not abide in it.

*There is neither any worry of paying taxes or trade, nor any fear of
a default in the other.*

*I have now found a wonderful place in my homeland where there is
always peace, my brother!*

Its sovereignty is firm and inviolate for ever.

*There is no second or third class, as all are alike, being in the first
class.*

It is ever populous, and enjoys ever-enduring reputation.

Its residents are prosperous and contented.

They go about as they please.

*As they are intimates of the Mansion and its Lord, no one prevents
their entry into it.*

*So says Ravidas, the liberated cobbler, to whom all fellow-citizens
are loving friends.*

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12. Guru Arjan Dev, Ibid., *Rag Gauri*, p.269.
13. Guru Nanak Dev, Ibid., *Rag Asa*, p.470.
14. Ibid., *Rag Sisi*, p.62.
15. Alternative rendering: "*The living of truth*".
16. Bhagat Kabir, Ibid, *Slok* no. 155, p.1372.
17. Guru Nanak Dev, ibid., *Rag Asa*, p.471.
18. Ibid., *Rag Ramkali*, p.952.
19. Ibid., *Rag Majh*, p.141.
20. Guru Ram Das, ibid., *Rag Tilang*, p.726.
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24. Ibid., *Rag Dhanasari*, p. 661.
25. Ibid., *Rag Asa*, p. 466.
26. Ibid., *Rag Asa*, p. 466.
27. Ibid., *Rag Siri*, p. 16.
28. Ibid., *Rag Asa*, p. 473.
29. Guru Nanak Dev, Ibid., *Rag Sarang*, p. 1245.
30. Ibid., *Rag Asa*, p. 354.
31. Ibid., *Rag Siri*, p. 26.
32. Guru Arjan Dev, Ibid., *Rag Tilang*, p. 724.
33. Guru Amar Das, Ibid., *Rag Sorath*, p. 647.
34. That is, their teachings and utterances are adressed to particular persons and occasions.
35. Guru Arjan Dev, Ibid., *Rag Suhi*, p. 727.
36. Ibid., *Rag Maru*, p. 1001.
37. That is, attains salvation or liberation.

38. Guru Nanak Dev, *Guru Granth Sahib, Rag Suhi*, p. 730.
39. Ibid., *Rag Bihagra*, p. 556
40. Ibid., *Rag Majh*, p. 140.
41. Ibid., op. cit., *Rag Asa*, p. 346.
42. *Digambar* : That is, the 'sky-clothed', a named ascetic; a member of an order of the ascetics of the Jain religion who goes naked; a Jain mendicant.
43. Ibid., *Rag Sorath*, p. 595.
44. Ibid., *Rag Asa*, p. 418.
45. Guru Nanak Dev, Ibid., *Rag Siri*, p. 25
46. Guru Amar Das, Ibid., *Rag Bilawal*, p. 853.
47. Guru Ram Das, Ibid., *Rag Sorath*, p. p. 652.
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GURBANI'S CORRECT INTERPRETATION

JOGINDER SINGH*

There is no count of snipers targeting Sikhism from without. Weren't our mod-parents, politicians and clergy enough from within? A new crop of 'removers of distortions have now arisen to confuse Sikh religion further. Their doings are fraught with the worst of consequences.

This humble write up has been necessitated by the articles of two such removers of distortions contained in the July 2002 Issue of *Spokesman Magazine*. Like several other issues of the magazine containing such articles before; the present issue was also brought to me by a well-meaning friend to express my views. The articles have been written by Sardar Baldev Singh USA and Sardar Gurakakhsh Singh Kala Afghana. This time, after much deliberation and, of course, after praying for God and Gurus guidance I am endeavouring to share my humble views with wider readership.

On the title page, the following zeal provoking words:

"Who introduced spurious wording in the Sikh prayer?" are printed in bold relief and refer to Sardar Baldev Singh's article.

There certainly are pearls of wisdom also in this write up analysis and advice with which one could not agree more, i.e. page 35, para 2.

"The preaching of Sikhism from Janam Sakhis and other spurious literature, has converted it (Sikhism) into a religion of myths, rituals and superstitions far removed from the teachings of Guru Nanak."

Page 35 para one:

"Guru Nanak tackled such people (malicious distortionists) by using humility as his shield and knowledge as his sword."

May Satguru Nanak bless me with these gifts also ! Unfortunately these pearls don't lead us unto Kindly Light. Now, the issue of spurious wording. This has been highlighted by the Editor in a coloured box in p-35 with the following words of the author:

"According to the fourth line (of the Sikh Ardas) the Sikhs first worship Bhagauti before paying their homage to the Guru and the rest. The

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second the third and the beginning of the fourth line repudiate the philosophy of Adi Guru Granth Sahib (AGGS). Now let us look to the meaning of Bhagauti. The word has been used a few times in AGGS and means bhagat (devotee). (Sardar Baldev Singh has given no references relating to this meaning). According to Mahnkosh of Bhai Kahn Singh, Bhagauti or Bhagwati means goddess Durga Devi. According to Punjabi dictionary Bhagavti means sword or Durga Devi. Therefore, Bhagauti means sword, Durga Devi or bhagat but not God. Therefore, the Sikhs start their prayer by invoking the blessings of Durga Devi (line second) and not God.”

The witting or un-witting travesty of truth contained in this statement, I shall discuss later. I wish to discuss in FIRST - some other vague and confusing observations in this article to build my view-point properly.

In the last fourth line on p-37, the author translates “*Var Sri Bhagauti ji, Patshahi 10*” as an “*ode to Sri Bhagauti ji, Patshahi 10*.”

So far as I know, there are no Odes in Gurbani. I quote from World Book Dictionary published by World Book Inc, Chicago, London, Sydney, Toronto, because the dictionary has the acceptance of all in main English speaking countries. It says, “Ode is often addressed to persons or things (and not matters spiritual, if I may add). Pindar of ancient Greece used to address Odes in praise of athletic heroes.”

All words used in the headlines of Gursabd (hymns) allude either to the author, the musical measure or prosody (metre and versification) i.e. sloke, ashtpadi, dupade , chopai etc etc and Mohalla and Rag and Gharana etc. When you come across the following heading in Gurbani speaking of prosody only like sloke, varan ton wadhik; what meaning would you come to if you substitute the word ‘Odes’ in place of varan?

In para one of page 37, the author says, “Some think that Guru Nanak Dev ji composed it (The Sikh Ardas). This statement, also, does not If he (the author) had understood the headline , Var Sri Bhagauti Ji ki, Patshahi 10, he would have found out the patent fact that the beginning of the Sikh Ardas was conceived as an invocation of God and the nine Gurus preceding Patshahi 10 (who is the real author of it) and was used as a prologue to the now much distorted Dasam Granth.

If I had not been stung by what I am going to discuss now, I would not have lifted my pen. The author has given the meaning of the word Bhagauti from Punjabi dictionary Bhai Khan Singh’s Mahan Kosh. The references from AGGS, he gives, are not concrete. The Editor has highlighted all this *in the face of— and in utter contradiction of the meaning given to the word Bhagauti by no less than the 5th prophet of sikhism, satguru Arjan Dev Ji.*

It can be possible that neither the author nor the editor have ever heard or read through Guru Ji's towering divine composition, Sukhmani Sahib ? Are they really not conversant with, "Bhagauti Bhagwant bhagat ki rang".

Do these words of the guru leave any doubt, whatsoever, in any one's mind that Bhagauti, does not, under any circumstances, mean Durga Devi, or sword or Bhagat in Sikh scripture ? I leave it to the judgement of the readers to divine what will happen to our religion when our scholars and magazines will begin to commit the blasphemy of ignoring the gurus word and highlighting vague definitions in order to trifle with our basic heritage?

Translation, says a Chinese proverb is treason. When it comes to interpreting Gurbani, the eternal word of God the problem becomes several times more daunting. Taking heart from the XIX Pauri of Japji Sahib : "*akhri naam.....*" and after humble prayer for guidance I proceed in a spirit of learning from and sharing my thoughts with the readers.

Bhagauti is the end result of God's worship acquirement of the Divine Color radiance of God's glory. The quotation we are discussing is from IXth Ashtpadi of Sukhmani Sahib. In the following line Guru ji makes himself still more clear:

"Sagal tayagey dusht ka sang" i.e. leave all evil alone. By doing so you will search the same end result. The explanation is in *Ashtpadi One: Prabh ke simran mun ki mal jai amrit naam ridh mahe samai.*"

By remembering / worshipping God the soil / evil of the mind is washed away and conscious realisation of God takes its place.

When I begin to comment (after translation) on Gurbani I am seized with more diffidence and yet I presume. I have to do bit by bit.

In my estimation the Sikh Ardas begins with IK Onkar invocation to one and only God (omniscient immanent in this creation), *Waheguru ji ki Fateh*, who is Omnipotent. *Var Sri Bhagauti ji ki* in the title refers to the versification in which the *Ardas* is written. *Patshahi 10* refers to authorship. "*prathm Bhagauti simr ke etc.*" beacons us to focus our mind on the Divine glory of God first ; then, the Xth Lord reveals to us the mystery of the gifts that Sikhs service by worshipping nine preceding Gurus. Pace Bhai Gurdas ji, "*Gur Murat Gur Sabd hai Bhai.*" Seven Guru's lived by sabad and recorded it, three gurus parctised and lived it for our onging guidance.

Sikhism, from Indian point of view, is not - like Islam and Christianity and alien religions. It was born in Punjab, the mother of the civilization and religions which form an integral part of its lustrous heritage. It was, thus, natural for Sikh religion to imbibe words from ancient lore of Punjab. My humble appeal is that without adequate knowledge of our heritage let us not fall into the trap of creating new fissures and schisms in our much

wronged religion. Instead of wasting our energies on the trivia let us concentrate our efforts to solve the solid problems which face us today.

Talking of trivias S. Baldev Singh tells us on page 36 that it is LIE, I repeat that he says that it is LIE to call Sri Guru Gobind Singh ji *aapae gur chela*. His argument- If one may call it so:-

Guru Gobind Singh did not transfer guruship to the five beloved ones. He asked them to administer '*Khande de pahul* to him'. After his baptism the guru became only number of the Khalsa fraternity.

Explaining his argument further, the author says:

It was Guru Nanak who (Angad). All his successors followed his example."

The Editor has printed these words in bold. Is Guru Gobind Singh a successor of Guru Nanak? If he is then the whole argument of was '*Ape Gur Chela*' when he transferred the authority of the guru to Bhai Lehna and called him his own limb the author is demolished by Himself only. If he is not, then, the author is and the Editor guilty of blasphemy.

Now we, the Sikhs have to find out whether by transferring the gurudom to his followers and leaving the world the guru acquires a more patent temporal title of ape guruchela, or is it that by transferring his authority to gurusabd and joining the fraternity of the followers while still living, can he more appropriately, be called *gurchela*. I do not want to make this write-up long winded, trying readers patience. With the institution of Gurmata the 10th lord created, and in the way he submitted to the combined will of the Khalsa fraternity gaining the title '*Sarbansdani*', has he left any doubt behind, from the point of view of both '*Miri and Piri*', that he was a unique Gruchela? This is not a LIE but gospel truth.

Now I am constrained to express my feeling of the deep hurt caused by these rigmaroles. Our so called path finders choose a fallacious subject and then, to confuse the Sikhs, weave an endless rope of sand around it.

'*Sabd Guru, Surt-dhun chela*'. Not the *murat*-the body; but the message received by the Guru directly from God repeat-only this message, The Word. The Sabd-received by the Gurus was always the Guru of the Sikhs. I remember the revelation of the Third Lord. Which so beautifully and in such simple words highlight this basic message of Sikhism.

Satgur ne sabko dekhda, Jeta jagat sansar dithe mukt na howai ee jichar sabd na kare vichar. And the Guru was alive when he said so. Instead of blasting the silly myth i.e. that at the time of his departure from earth Guru Gobind Singh ji bequeathed Gurudom to AGGS, let us highlight the truth that sabd and this Sri Guru Granth Sahib the repository of *sabd* has always been the Guru of the living Gurus and the Sikhs. The Guru tells us

that he is uttering the sabd as he is been guided by God: *bolaya boliin tera*. He goes to the extent of telling us, “*Har karta aap mukon Ghadhwa*”. The Lord God himself forces it out. I repeat forces it out from His mouth. Clarifying that the Guru could not receive God’s word at The Gurus bidding. Thou sabd is God and Guru (Even) of our Gurus of course the followers Guru is also the Guru’s Guru.

It was the will of God that he favoured the Sikhs with the boon of ten prophets who delineated God’s sabd by actually living it out through over two centuries and when God willed He ended their line. This to my mind is the truth. All other reports and arguments are incorrect.

I wonder why the editor’s pen, when he had accepted the write up did not remove the obvious sub-statement in observations like the following on p - 35.

“Guru Nanak did not talk about the past life or reward in the next life (heaven), what he emphasised was the present life. He urges us to realise God in this life and become Jiwan Mukta”.

The whole Gurbani is full of references to the past and future life. Random thoughts as they strike my mind, in the last but one hymns of Kirtan sohila, for instance Guru Nanak says: “*purab likhe gur paya —*”, and in Asa Di Var, “*agey karni kirat wachiye.....*” and hundreds of such references could be quoted. The Guru explains to us in *Jap ji Sahib* that there are two realms: one of *Achari*, the other of Grace. (*Karni avey kapra nadri mokh dwar*) He (our Guru) shows us the clear path of *sewa* and *simran* which we may a... the realm of action and enter the realm of grace and thus live as *jiwan muktas*.

Being the humblest of humble, Sikh who is unable to measure upto Guru’s wishes (though he has not given up), I appeal to our writer and editors not to make a mockery of our sesiphire — We used the word mockery with a heavy heart knowing that progressiveness being the basic attribute of a Sikh, Guru and God. I will be redeemed if I add love of sabd because in the next article, which I am going to write about mockery made of “Dasam Dwar”.

THE KHALSA DURING 18TH CENTURY

KIRPAL SINGH*

The 18th century history of the Sikhs is so significant, glorious, inspiring that it is repeated in every Gurdwara in the daily *Ardas* in the morning and evening.

“Hail those Sikhs who meditated the name of God; Shared their food with others; continued to run the common kitchen and fought against injustice and terrorism; sacrificed their lives by being cut joint by joint, suffering every torture for the sake of their faith and religion.”

The Sikhs during 18th century had shown an exemplary character of service and sacrifice by suffering the maximum. It is, therefore, very important to study various phases of 18th century history of Sikhs. It is, however, very uphill task to discuss the Sikh relations with Marathas, Ruhelas, Afghans, Jats of Bharatpur, the British etc. during 18th century in a single paper or chapter. We shall try to highlight only important phases of Sikh history during this period.

The Mughal Policy of repression and suppression

The 18th century opened with the policy of suppression of the Sikhs by the Mughal Government. In the first decade, Anandpur Sahib was besieged by the huge Mughal army and that of Hill chiefs. They wanted to dislodge Guru Gobind Singh from Anandpur Sahib. These aggressive campaigns of the Mughals resulted in the martyrdom of the four sons of Guru Gobind Singh alongwith the Guru's mother. Guru Gobind Singh had to go to Damdama Sahib (Bathinda). Ultimately he went to the south where he was martyred in 1708.¹

Senapat in Gursobha and Akhbarat-I-Darbar-I-Maola give in detail the circumstances in which Guru Gobind Singh was martyred. Most probably he was attacked by a hired Pathan.²

Sometime a single event changes the course of history. The martyrdom

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of the young sons of Guru Gobind Singh proved to be the most significant event in the annals of Khalsa. Khalsa made up its mind to destroy Sirhind roots and branch where the young sons of the Guru had been killed. Sirhind was the capital of the area. Destruction of Sirhind as has been significantly remarked by Griffin, led to the establishment of Khalsa Raj. Whenever the Sikhs got strength during the early 18th century, they attacked Sirhind, which they called *Guru Mari Sirhind*. Sirhind was first destroyed by Banda Singh Bahadur in 1710. He had been deputed by Guru Gobind Singh to punish the tyrants. After conquering Kaithal, Samana and then Shahbad, Banda Singh Bahadur took circuitous route and moved towards hills north of Ambala and established himself at Mukhlisipur. The topographical study of Mukhlisipur will reveal the military strategy of Banda Singh Bahadur. He built Lohgarh over hillock surrounded by a ditch and linked with thick forest from where he could escape towards the hills. During Banda's period, Bahadur Shah issued edict that no Sikh should be allowed to move about in the town and villages. Despite all this Banda Singh Bahadur was able to establish a Sikh state and issued coins in the name of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh.³ He gave the shattering blow to the *Mansabdari* system of land holding which was prevalent in those days. Banda Bahadur forbade peasants to give land revenue to their overlords. In this way he won the sympathy of tenants and peasants who joined his movement in a large number.⁴ Banda Singh Bahadur adopted the policy of elevating the lowly. Irvine writes, "In all the parganas occupied by the Sikhs, the reversal of the previous customs was striking and complete. A low scavenger or leather dresser, the lowest of the low in Indian estimation had only to leave home and join the Guru (meaning Banda) when in a short time he would return to his birth place as its ruler with his order of appointment in his hand."⁵ Farrukh Syar, the Mughal Emperor issued strict orders in 1715 to capture Banda Singh Bahadur. He was besieged in the Haveli of Gurdas Nangal. Banda Singh Bahadur valiantly stood the siege and ultimately had to submit. In order to terrorise the Sikhs, a long procession of about 700 Sikhs was taken out from Lahore to Delhi. Sikhs were killed in Delhi. Khafi Khan, a contemporary writer, has given a graphic detail of the heroic deeds of those Sikhs whom he called accursed. He has no soft words for the Sikh Gurus or Khalsa, he has narrated the account of a young Sikh which will ever remain a source of inspiration. He writes that "he was giving an eye witness account" of an old lady coming to the Emperor requesting that his son was not a Sikh and he had been arrested as Sikh and was going to be killed. The Mughal Emperor took pity on the lady and ordered that her son should be released. The women came to the executioner, wanted her son to be released

forthwith but Khafi Khan writes that her son refused to be released and he declared that he was a staunch follower of Guru Gobind Singh and his mother was telling a lie that he was not a Sikh. So, he was killed alongwith his companions.⁶

Mirza Mohammad Harisi the author of Ibrat Namah who was present at Delhi describes it as *Tamasha* "Such a crowd in the bazar and lanes had rarely been seen. The Mussalmans could hardly contain themselves with joy. But the unfortunate Sikhs who had been reduced to this condition were quite happy and contented with their lot. Not the slightest sign of dejection or humiliation was visible on their faces, in fact most of them as they passed along on their camels seemed to be happy and cheerful, merrily singing their sacred hymns."⁷

After Banda Singh Bahadur there was a problem to unite the Sikhs who had been scattered to various places. Some had gone to jungles, some to the deserts of Bikaner and some were hiding at different places because of Mughal policy of extermination of Sikhs. Mata Sundari, revered spouse of Guru Gobind Singh, sent Bhai Mani Singh to Amritsar to organise the Sikhs. He revived the old fairs of Baisakhi and Diwali. He wanted that Sikhs should assemble at Amritsar to chalk out their plan of action and take all the measures for their safety. But Bhai Mani Singh was martyred in the attempt. He was successful to show the way to Khalsa that Akal Takht and Darbar Sahib Amritsar were the rallying points at that hour of crisis. The Mughal government also knew that Sikhs would be assembling at Amritsar, strong measures were taken to prevent the Sikhs from coming to Amritsar.

It will not be out of place to give here in brief the circumstances leading to the martyrdom of Bhai Mani Singh, the most revered learned Sikh of his times. The rule of Abdul Samad Khan (1716-1726 A.D) and rule of his son Zakaria Khan (1726-1745 AD) are considered to be the period of persecution of the Sikhs. Several Sikhs were killed during this period.⁸ But the most memorable is Bhai Mani Singh who is considered as Saint Paul of Sikhs as he did a lot of work to preserve the divine verses and tradition of the Gurus. He had taken baptism from Guru Gobind Singh. As priest of Golden Temple, Amritsar he applied for the permission to hold Diwali fair. Permission was granted on the condition that he would pay to the government a stipulated amount. On the day of festival army was sent there. Fair could not be held. The Sikhs could not visit Darbar Sahib. Bhai Mani Singh was arrested. He was given the usual choice. Either to accept Islam or be killed. Bhai Mani Singh was tortured to death by the order of the government.⁹ In this way the great exponent of Sikhism was martyred

in his attempt to give freedom to Sikhs to visit Darbar Sahib.

In the first half of 18th century, the rule of Mir Mannu (1748-1753 A.D.) is known to be the worst rule for the Sikhs. Tamas Khan who was the page of Mir Mannu has described how the Sikhs were arrested and how they were killed for none of their fault except that they were Sikhs. Sikhs still remember the tyranny of Mir Mannu and they used to say *Mannu Saadi Datri, Asin Mannu De Soye, Jiun Jiun Mannu Wadhda Asin Doone Chaune Hoye*. How the Sikhs were chased and killed has been described by Tahman Khan, servant of Mir Mannu in his diary entitled *Tahmas Namah*:

“After some time, Mirnulumk himself marched out of Lahore to a distance of seven kos and encamped near village Tikapur situated on the bank of the Ravi. He halted there for a long time and sent out Mughalia troops under Khwajah Mira in every direction to suppress the Sikhs, whenever he heard of their risings. Khwajah Mira at the head of his troops rode out twenty or some times thirty kos. Wherever he got a clue of the whereabouts of the Sikhs, he suddenly fell upon them and slew them.

The person who brought Sikhs alive or their heads or their horse, received prizes. Every Mughal who lost his own horse in the battle was provided with another of a better quality at the expense of the government. The Sikhs who were captured alive were beaten with wooden mallets and killed. At times Adina Beg Khan sent forty to fifty captured Sikhs from the Doab District (Jalandhar). They were as a rule killed with the strokes of wooden hammers.”¹⁰

At another place Tahmas Khan writes:

Muino Mulk was at Batala, news was received that the Sikhs were creating trouble. Muinumulk sent Syed Jamiluddin Khan and Bakhshi Gazibeg Khan against them. They were dispersed. Nine hundred of them, however, had gathered in the fort of Ram Rauni (Amritsar) close to Chak Guru (close of 1752). They were besieged in the fort. Ultimately in desperation, the Sikhs issued out of the fort and fell upon the besiegers, sword in hand. A hand to hand fight took place. Syed Jamiluddin Khan and his cavalry got down from their horses and fought on foot. After a desperate fight the Sikhs were killed.¹¹

During persecution of the Sikhs, the Mughal government under Mir Mannu or his Begum Mughlai Begum, Sikh women and children were not spared. An eye witness account has been so vividly described:

Next day Qasim Khan left the road to Patti and moving towards a village twelve kos away, camped there. On the plea that people had sided with the Sikhs, he imprisoned them. He camped there for a

month. He did not release women and children who were taken captive. The Sikhs used to fight with him every day and depart.¹²

Sikh Afghan Struggle

In 1739 AD Ahmed Shah Abdali who had visited India in the train of Nadir Shah became the ruler of Afghanistan. Keeping in view the weakness of the Mughal government, he cherished the dream to conquer the entire Punjab and annex it to the Kabul Kingdom. For this purpose he made repeated invasions from 1747 - 1767 AD. Sensing the spirit of times, Nawab Kapur Singh in 1748 organised Dal Khalsa by uniting various Dals of the Sikhs. The organisation of Dal Khalsa proved to be a great force to be reckoned with.¹³ In the middle of 18th century, Punjab witnessed the quadruple struggle between Mughals, Marathas, Afghans and the Sikhs for the rule of Punjab. Mughals were defeated by Ahmed Shah Abdali who ransacked Delhi and collected huge wealth in 1756. Marathas occupied Punjab in 1757. Abdali was not to tolerate this, he brought a huge army and defeated the Marathas in the combat which is known as 3rd Battle of Panipat in 1761. Marathas had superiority of number and superiority of ammunition but they could not defeat Abdali who was determined to win the war over the Marathas.¹⁴ Now the Sikhs had to face the wrath of Ahmad Shah Abdali who wanted to vanquish the Sikhs.

Ghallughara

The Sikhs had gone towards Sirhind and made an encampment at village Kup when Abdali reached Lahore. With rapid marches of light cavalry he covered the whole distance from Lahore to Kup within two days and reached Kup on February 5, 1762 where about Sikhs, men, women and children were encamped. The Sikhs were taken by surprise. The strategy was to overwhelm the Sikhs and to wipe them out. But the Sikhs stubbornly frustrated his designs. They stood for a while, engaged the enemy and then fled ahead. The enemy was in hot pursuit. The pursuer and pursued fought on for twelve kos and they were anxious to quench their thirst. After half a day's severe fighting they saw a big pond of water at village Qutab Bahmini. The clash and clang of swords stopped for a while and they had their fill of water. Abdali pursued the Sikhs upto Barnala where he called halt because his army was enervated and exhausted. The popular estimate of the loss of men on the side of Sikhs is 12000 to 15000 men and this battle is known as ghallugharaa in the History of the Sikhs.¹⁵ On his way back he destroyed Darbar Sahib, Amritsar and filled the tank with cows blood so that Sikhs might not be able to claim this place as sacred. But he was mistaken.

Hardly he had reached Kabul, Khalsa again gathered at Amritsar on Vaisakhi day and rebuilt the Temple.

Martyrdom of Baba Gurbaksh Singh

Qazi Noor Muhammad who accompanied Ahmed Shah Abdali during his 7th invasion and calls the Sikhs 'dogs' has given a vivid account of martyrdom of Baba Gurbaksh Singh whose memorial is still revered behind Akal Takht. The author of Jang Namah writes about the seventh invasion of Ahmad Shah Abdali :

When the Shah arrived at the Chak there was not a single Kafir to be seen there. But a few of them had remained in an enclosure so that they might spill their own blood. And they sacrificed their lives for the Guru. When they saw the renowned king and the army of Islam, they came out of the enclosure. They were only thirty in number. But they had not a grain of fear about them. They had neither the fear of slaughter nor the dread of death. Thus they grappled with the Ghazis and in this grappling they spilt their own blood. All the accursed Sikhs were killed and went to hell. The Muslims ran to the right and the left in search of them but they did not find even one of the impertinent dogs. The Shah had, therefore, to return to Lahore helplessly."¹⁶

Ahmed Shah Abdali made several invasions to occupy Punjab and annex it to Kabul Kingdom. On every invasion he was harassed by the Sikh bands. The Sikhs warrior bands which were called Mislā - began to occupy territory at various places. They conquered Lahore for the first time in 1765 and struck coins in the name of Gurus. Most of the Punjab was occupied by the Sikh Misdars. Abdali, the best horseman of Asia of his time conquerer of Delhi, victor of the battle of Panipat felt exhausted before the valiant Khalsa. He left Punjab and died in 1769.

Establishment of Sikh Misls.

In 1738-39 Nadir Shah's invasion and subsequently Ahmad Shah Abdali's repeated invasions from 1747-1767 AD created confusion and chaos in the whole northwestern India. The Punjab suffered the most. There was no sense of security. The people in Punjab were always in fixas to whom to pay land revenue. The Mughal government had been destroyed by the Afghan and Marathas. The Marathas were subsequently defeated by Afghans.¹⁷ Almost every alternate year Ahmad Shah Abdali came and devastated the land and looted the population irrespective of their religion. The only redeeming features were the Sikh moving bands who resisted the invader and helped the peasantry. Gradually different villages began to

seek protection from various Sikh chiefs and they paid protection money to the Sikh chiefs. This led to the development of Rakhy system. Owing to the continuous political insecurity and chaos the prominent Sikh chiefs began to possess big patches of land and there developed *Misaldari* system. There had been evolution of twelve misals. The famous misls were Bhangis, Kanyias, Ahluwalias, Ramgarhias, Sukarchakia, Phulkian and Karoresinghia etc. etc. All these misls were independent in their internal administration. But they were religiously bound to obey Gurmatta passed by *Sarbat Khalsa* on the occasion of Diwali or Baisakhi.

*The Central Government of the Sikhs*¹⁸

Sikhs introduced the *Gurmatta* system. On every Baisakhi and Diwali they used to meet at Amritsar and pass resolutions regarding their religious and political matters. This *Gurmatta* system had been rightly called as Central Government of the Sikhs, because *Misldars* used to rule at distant places and they were only under the rule of Akal Takht where *Gurmatta* was passed. George Forester has beautifully described the *Gurmatta* system in his travels when he visited Punjab in 1783 in the following words:

“The grand convention called in their language *Goorimatta* was that in which the army met to transact the more important affairs of the nation, as the declaration of wars or peace forming alliance and detaching of parties on the service of the year. The amount of the contribution levied on the public account was reported to the assembly, and divided among the chiefs proportionately to the number of their troops. They were at the same time obliged to their soldiers who on any cause of dissatisfaction, made no hesitation in quitting their service and following the more popular leader”¹⁹

Sikh domination in Delhi march 1783

The Sikh under Jassa Singh Ahluwalia entered Delhi unopposed. They entered Red Fort and occupied Diwan-I-Aam. The Emperor and their courtiers hid themselves in the private apartments. Jassa Singh Ramgarhia also joined coming from Hissar. They siezed whatever they could. Small cannons were taken possession of by many of the Sikh. Jassa Singh Ramgarhia captured four cannon guns and a large variegated slab of stone which is still preserved in Bunga Ramgarhia Darbar Sahib, Amritsar. Gradually all Sikhs retired.²⁰

On account of Sikh's conquest of Delhi, Shah Alam II, the Mughal Emperor called Begum Samru²¹ to assist him. She entered into negotiations with S. Baghel Singh, the leader of Karorsinghia Misl. Following terms

were settled and approved by the Emperor:

1. The major portion of Sikh army would immediately retire to their homes in the Punjab.
2. Baghel Singh would remain in capital with 4000 troops.
3. He was allowed to build seven Gurdwaras at places sacred to Sikhs religion in the city of Delhi.
4. His headquarter would be established at Sabzi Mandi.
5. To meet the expenses of his troops and construction of Gurdwara he was permitted to charge six annas in the rupee of all the income from octroi duties in the capital.
6. The Sikhs would not misbehave in any way during their stay in the capital.
7. The construction of the Gurdwaras must be finished as early as possible, but not beyond current year in any case.

The most remarkable thing during the political turmoil of 18th century is that the Sikhs showed an ideal character. Even Qazi Nur Mohammad who had accompanied Ahmed Shah Abdali in his Jihad against the Sikhs had paid a glowing tribute to the Sikhs. Even in war against Afghans, Sikhs did not touch any woman. This is testified by Qazi Nur Muhammad. Sikh character shines like a beacon light compared to their contemporary chiefs who had a number of women in their harems and used to carry away Hindu women. It is significant to note that Qazi Nur Muhammad who accompanied Ahmad Shah Abdali during his seventh invasion had intense hatred for the Sikhs. he called Sikhs '*sag*' which in persian means 'dog'. But he has paid glowing tribute to their character and bravery and had vividly depicted their fighting tactics in his Jangnamah. We reproduce here a few extracts which give a vivid account of the 18th century Sikhs:

“Do not call the dogs (the Sikhs) ‘dogs’ because they are lions and are courageous like lions in the field of battle. How can a hero, who roars like a lion in the field of battle, be called a dog. If you wish to learn the art of war, come face to face with them in the field. They will demonstrate it to you in such a way that one and all will praise them for it. If you wish to learn the science of war, O swordman, learn from them how to face an enemy like a hero and to get safely out of an action. Singh is a title ‘ a form of address for them’. It is not justice to call them dogs. If you do not know the Hindustani language (I tell you that) the word Singh means a Lion. Truly they are like lions in battle and at the time of peace they surpass Hatim”.²²

“When they take the Indian sword in their hands, they overrun the country from Hind (-ostan, meaning Northern India) to Sind. Nobody then

stands in opposition to them, however much strong he may be. When they manipulate the spear they shatter the ranks of the enemy, and when they raise the heads of their spears in the sky, they would pierce even through the caucus. When they adjust the strings of their Chachi bows and place in them the enemy-killing arrows and pull the strings to their ears, the body of the enemy begins to shiver with fear. When their battle axe falls upon the armour of their opponents, that armour becomes their coffin”.²³

“The body of every one of them is like the piece of a rock and in physical grandeur, every one of them is more than fifty persons. It is said that Bahram Gore killed wild asses and set the lions shrieking. But if Bahram were to come face to face with them, even he would bow before them.”

“During a battle when they take their guns in their hands, they come jumping into the field of action, roaring like lions. They tear the chests of many and shed the blood of several (of their enemy) in the dust. It is said that the musket is a weapon of ancient days. It, however appears to be the creation of these dogs rather than of the great Socrates. Although there are so many of the *tufangchis* (musketeers), but nobody can excel them in its use. To the right and to the left, and in front and towards the back, they go on firing regularly. If you do not believe in what I say, you may enquire of the brave swordmen who would tell you more than myself and would praise them for their fighting. The fact that they grappled with thirty thousand heroes bears witness to my statement.”²⁴

“If their armies take to flight, do not take it as an actual flight. It is a war tactic of theirs. Beware, beware of them for second time. The object of this trick is that when the furious enemy runs after them, he is separated from his main army and from his reinforcements. Then they turn back to face their pursuers and set fire even to water. Did you not see how, during the fight, they took to a deceptive flight from before the Khan, and how, then they turned back on him and surrounded him on all sides. The Khan then came down from his horse and flung arrows and bullets at them and with bravery extricated himself from their midst.”²⁵

You may yourself judge, O brave man, how a single battalion of theirs rushed upon Multan, entered the city and devastated it and carried away an immense booty. I am not sufficiently strong in mind to be able to express what the dogs did there. Since the creation of the world nobody remembers to have seen Multan devastated in this way at the hands of anybody. But because God so willed it, everyone of us has to submit to His will.

“Leaving aside their mode of fighting, hear you another point in which they excel all other fighting people. In no case would they slay a coward,

nor would they put an obstacle in the way of a fugitive. They do not plunder the wealth and ornaments of women, be she a well-to-do lady or a maid-servant. There is no adultery amongst these dogs nor are these mischievous people given to thieving. Whether a woman is young or old they call her a Budhiya and ask her to get out of the way. The word Budhiya in Indian language means 'an old lady'. There is no thief at all amongst these dogs, nor is there any house-breaker born amongst these dogs, nor is there any house-breaker born amongst these miscreants. They do not make friends with adulterous and house breakers, though their behaviour on the whole is not commendable."²⁶

"if you are not conversant with their religion, I tell you that the Sikhs are the disciples of the Guru. The ways and manners of these people received their impetus from Nanak who showed these Sikhs a separate path (taught them a distinct religion). He was succeeded by Govind Singh. From him they received the title of Singh. They were not from amongst the Hindus. These miscreants have a separate religion of their own".²⁷

FOOTNOTES

1. For details see the chapter 'Guru Gobind Singh's Relations with Bahadur Shah in my book *Perspective on Sikh Gurus*, Delhi, 2000.
2. Ibid.
3. *A Short History of Sikhs* Teja Singh Ganda Singh, Orient Longman 1950, p. 82-86
4. *Ibid.* p. 107
5. Later Mughals, Irvine, Delhi 1995m p. 98
6. Khafi Khan, Muntkhib Lubab, Vol. VII, p. 766
7. Quoted in the *Short History of the Sikhs*, Teja Singh Ganda Singh, Orient Longman,. 1950, p. 124
8. Tahman Namah, Tahmas Khan, translated: P. Setu Madhava Rao, Bombay, 1967, p. 19.
9. *A Short History of Sikhs*, Teja Singh Ganda Singh, Orient Longman, 1950, p.124.
10. *Tahman Namah Tahmas Khan*, translated: P.Setu Madhava Rao, Bombay, 1967, p.19.
11. *Ibid.* P.18.
12. *Ibid.* P.23.
13. For details see *History of Sikhs*, Hari Ram Gupta, vol. II P.73-97 (and edition 1978)
14. See *Maratha-Sikh Relations* by Kirpal Singh in the Third Battle of

- Panipat, edited by Dr Hari Ram Gupta.
15. *Life of Maharaja Ala Singh of Patiala and His Time*, Kirpal Singh, Amritsar, 1954, P.103-108.
 16. *Jang-Namah*, Qazi Nur Muhammad edited Ganda Singh, Amritsar, 1939, P.35.
 17. *A Short History of Sikhs*, Teja Singh, Ganda Singh, op. Cit., p. 159.
 18. This term was first used by Dr G L Chopra in his book *Punjab As Sovereign State*.
 19. *A Journey from the Bengal to England*, Vol. 1, Patiala, 1970, p. 330.
 20. For details see *History of Sikhs*, Hari Ram Gupta Vol. III, Delhi 1981, p. 164-170.
 21. Her real name was Zehrul Nissa daughter of Asad Khan. Married to a German adventurer known as Samru. She got converted to Roman Catholicism and after the death of her husband managed the Jagir at Sardana; She was favourite of Shah Alam II, Mughal Emperor.
 22. *Jang Namah*, Qazi Nur Mohammad, ed. Ganda Singh, cit. Op., p. 55.
 23. Ibid., p. 56
 24. Ibid., p. 57
 25. Ibid., p. 57
 26. Ibid., p. 57-58
 27. Ibid., p. 58-59

SIKH YOUTH TODAY AND MEDIA

JASWANT SINGH*

Youth all over the world are surging ahead in all fields of life, education, physical development mental horizons, entertainment, competitive employment, and settling in life, technical education, evolving new norms of inter personal relations between parents and youth, boys and girls, charting their mental image, social conduct, dress-codes. They are exploring newer modes of entertainment forming their own outlook and strategies towards religion. It is also a fact of life that all elders are finding their youth drifting away socially and religiously from their own perceived and practised norms.

Parents role

Parents have all along played a sterling role in moulding their children along their own social and religious beliefs. It is by their day to day conduct that children and later the youth make their own deductions, not by their spoken words / sermons. Of the parents, mothers have a vital role both for boys and girls more so the latter. Socially upright and religiously devout parents usually have their children on the right path, but unfortunately if both are working, socially hyperactive, child is left with no option but to plough his own furrow. Parents, who take their children to a Gurdwara regularly and have a religious bent of mind, have the pleasure to see their offsprings grow into religious and upright youth. But if they are left without direction or guidance in their earlier tender years with the hope of moulding them later on, it may be too late then. It appears a majority of Sikh youth, boys and girls are slowly drifting into “too late” category. Now onwards I will confine to my theme of Sikh youth.

Role of Media

We have two very important media today affecting all including youth

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- a) Print media, magazine periodicals and newspapers.
- b) Electronic media, radio, movies, television, internet

These media play two important roles - educational and entertainment.

In fact present print media is quite lukewarm and equivocal about Sikh image. There is hardly a national magazine except 'NISHAN' which projects, Sikhs image correctly, Saga of Bravery of Sikhs, Battle of Saragarhi has been one of *Nishan's* pioneer articles with beautiful pictures. Since the prevailing trend is not very conducive to Sikh image, it will be worthwhile to promote this medium on war footing to stem the downward slide in Sikh elan and *charhdi kala* in the minds of youth. Articles about the Sikhs entrepreneurs, industrialists - scientists, doctors, engineers, diplomats, bureaucrats, also highlighting the Sikh martyrs from Gurus era to the present age must form the center stage. This is out of proportion to their census figures in the country. This requires lot of finances which can be arranged either through SGPC, an organisation with enough resources or through an NGO of philanthropic Sikhs in India / abroad. Very dedicated knowledgeable Sikh scholars like Patwant Singh, Dr Sangat Singh, Khushwant Singh, Darshan Singh Maini, Dr Kharak Singh, Dr Kirpal Singh and alike can pool their brains. Institution like Institute of Sikh Studies can be involved. I am aware reading habits are dwindling among the youth. It will be very pertinent to include the enlightened, committed youth, boys and girls, in this youth building programmes.

Role of Electronic media

Television is the rage of the youth, their entertainment and partly educational lifeline. It has been seen mostly that fully shaven / partly shaven Sikhs boys and bobbed girls are depicted gyrating to the fast tunes of Punjabi folk songs. It is very thrilling to know that Punjabi pop songs have caught the fancy of whole of India nay the world. It is tantalising to see the youth enjoying the otherworldly bliss dancing and singing. Punjab has rich treasure of its own folk songs and it goes to the glory of present programme directors to fully depict and exploit it. I strongly feel an exclusive channel be hired by the Sikh organisations preferably by the SGPC or any other Sikh NGO which should depict Sikh actors / actresses in their genuine forms. Programmes like rich Sikh history, Sikh heroes Banda Bahadur, Maharaja Ranjit Singh, General Hari Singh Nalwa and modern Sikh Army, Navy, Air Force gallantry awardees can be projected, so that Sikh youth have a genuine pride in their heritage. Since Sikhs do not want their Gurus to be depicted on small or large screen, it will be a good plan to highlight Sikh heroes. Daily programme from Darbar Sahib is a wonderful

arrangement, it may be enlarged to a longer duration. It is pure unmixed Bani as per Gurus Maryada. If there is Jain channel, Astha channel, how about having a Sikh channel. Its finances and viability can be planned out. Dharam Parchar Committee of SGPC has the resources, let us convince / motivate them. It will be interesting to know that **Doordarshan** covers 91% area and 97% population of India. **Mobile video vans** are being sent to the countryside to educate the rural population. Sikh organisations can also adopt this mode with gratifying results.

While discussing this problem with the youth, it was suggested that at an earlier age the cartoons in TV could be Sikh orientated, so that children have their early initiation into the Sikh culture in a positive glorifying manner. In well attended Gurdwaras of cities like Chandigarh, Ludhiana, Delhi programmes are being beamed on TV. It is suggested that besides *kirtan darbars*, *katha* sessions, *dhadi* and *kavi darbars* to which youth are not particularly attracted, let us introduce Sikh programmes, question answer sessions, where youth ask questions from elders clear their religious doubts, dispel the age-old myths. Their answers should be provided in a tranquil atmosphere.

Another modern medium of communication is internet, where a fund of religious information, life histories and contribution by the Sikh Gurus their preaching basic tenets of Sikhism can be included, Christians and Muslims are already doing it. A burning topic for youth today is to maintain or discard *keshas*. Gurus dictate is unambiguous - *keshas* must be maintained as gifted by Almighty. Certain so-called modern liberal enlightened Sikh intelligentsia are adopting and propagating a liberal outlook about the dispensability of hair. Youth who have discarded the Sikh form and have merged with the majority community appearance-wise vehemently proclaim about their inner unshakable belief in Sikhism. Well, even as a surgeon while operating I did not see the 'belief organ' inside the body. Once Sikh children and Sikh youth feel proud of their Sikh form and image, they will not discard *keshas* - the battle is won. Young girls have to be equally motivated, indoctrinated not to discard full fledged Sikh boys and accept shaven Sikhs / non Sikhs in marriage. I am aware, the prevailing winds are blowing in different direction and it will be a Herculean task to stem the tide. Let us do it with gusto.

I agree, we need not discard the youth as *patit* or fallen but a genuine effort be made to bring them back to the fold. These efforts if started in childhood by parents, then at school will bloom the youth into Sikhs as desired by the Guru Gobind Singh. Time is running out, let us act and act now.

AUTHOR: BULLEH SHAH
LEADING LIGHT OF PUNJAB

SAFIR RAMMAH

Bulleh Shah is the most popular Punjabi Sufi poet. His verses were included in the Punjabi text book for matriculation examination. He is famous for using homely similes like the following

ਬੁਲਿਆ ਰੱਬ ਦਾ ਕੀ ਪਾਉਣਾ ਇਧਰੋ ਪੁਟਣਾ ਏਧਰ ਲਾਉਣਾ ॥

Most of what we know about Bulleh Shah's life has come to us through unreliable anecdotes and folklore. The limited authentic historical record, based on sporadic references to events of his life in his poetry and in the writings of his contemporaries, is barely enough for a brief sketch of his life.

He belonged to a Syed family and was born in 1680, in a small village, Uch Gilania, in Bahawalpur. His father's name was Sain Mohammad Darvesh and his own real name was Abdullah. When he was six years old, his family moved to Kasur where he got his formal education from Maulvi Ghulam Murtaza, who was the Imam of the main mosque in Kasur.

For a while after completing his education, Bulleh Shah taught at the same mosque. He then became a murid of Inayat Shah Qadri, a famous saint of Qadiryah school of sufis in Lahore, who belonged to the Arain caste. Bulleh Shah had to face the resentment and taunts of his family and other Syed friends for accepting the spiritual guidance of a non-Syed. The poetic response from Bulleh Shah rejected his critics' false concept of inherent superiority and nobility of any caste and set the pattern of his lifelong challenge to accepted norms:

*Those who call me Syed
Are destined to hell made for them.
Those who call me Arain
Have the swings of heaven laid for them.
The low-caste and the high-caste,
Are created by God who is all-powerful;
He casts away the fair ones,
And clasps to His heart the meritless ones.*

In 1729 when Shah Inayat died, Bulleh Shah succeeded him as the head

of his monastery at Lahore. Bulleh Shah died in 1758. He never married.

Even with the recent upsurge in Bulleh Shah scholarship, credible critical works highlighting some of the most important aspects of his poetry are lacking. The initial scholarship was focused on collecting, editing and authentication of the earlier written records and folk memory of his poetry. Critical appreciation of his poetry has not yet gone beyond expositions of its religious aspects.

Bulleh Shah's poetry can be divided into three broadly distinct periods reflecting the progression of his thoughts throughout his life.

In the first period, the love and devotion of his murshid is the main theme. A minor turbulence in this relationship would cause a great anguish for him and the poetry of this early period reflects the whole vista of emotions from unbearable pain and dejection to the extremes of delight and exuberance:

*Your love has made me dance to a fast beat!
Your love has taken abode within my heart!
This cup of poison I drank all by myself.
Come, come, O physician, or else I breathe my last!
Your love has made me dance to a fast beat!*

In the second phase, poetic expressions of Bulleh Shah's mystic experience are prominent:

*You alone exist; I do not, O Beloved!
You alone exist, I do not! Like the shadow of a house in ruins,
I revolve in my own mind. If I speak, you speak with me:
If I am silent, you are in my mind.
If I sleep, you sleep with me:
If I walk, you are along my path.
Oh Bulleh, the spouse has come to my house:
My life is a sacrifice unto Him.
You alone exist; I do not, O Beloved!*

Most of Bulleh Shah's critics tend to focus on the first two phases of his poetry. Generally, the writings on Bulleh Shah are little more than explanations of the mystic content of his poetry in the context of different sufi schools of thought. Some of his more enlightened, progressive and humanist compositions are said to be written under the influence of Bhagti ideas. His poetry is considered to be mainly concerned with the eternal life. This ignores the fact that the most significant part of Bulleh Shah's poetry is his fierce denunciation of all forms of oppression, especially the oppression of freedom of thought and other obstacles towards peaceful human coexistence.

It is this third phase of Bulleh Shah's poetry, apparently written after reaching the heights of his spiritual quest and gaining a unique wisdom and insight into human affairs, that has made him one of the most popular Punjabi poets.

He advocated the pre-eminence of truth, love, and compassion over religious scholarship, external formalities and blind faith. His outright rejection of any formal authority of religious institutions in regulating the affairs of society, in particular the role of the mullahs and religious scholars, became the subject of many of his famous poems. He sharply criticized the rigid beliefs and intolerance of mullahs and preachers that in his opinion were the main source of communal hatred.

*The mullah and the torch-bearer, Hail from the same stock;
They give light to others, And themselves are in the dark.*

He believed that human beings equally deserve the right to live a life of peace and dignity regardless of their colour, creed or status:

*There is only one thread of all cotton.
The warp, the woof, the quill of the weaver's shuttle,
The shuttle, the texture of cloths, the cotton shoes and hanks of yarn,
All are known by their respective names, And they all belong to
their respective places
But there is only one thread of yarn.*

Bulleh Shah never cared to mince words in his bold and courageous challenge to the forces of darkness of his time. He was a liberal and progressive thinker in the most modern sense. His outspoken and blunt style struck a chord with all segments of Punjabis who have kept his memory alive without the help of state institutions.

He was the leading light of a rich sufi tradition of Punjabi poetry that for many centuries had spread the message of religious tolerance, communal harmony, liberalism, humanism and love. Set to the tunes of folk and classical music, compositions of Bulleh Shah and other Punjabi sufi poets are remarkable pieces of literary art that synthesize highly complex ideas, emotions and experiences in the homely and deceptively simple idioms and metaphors of rural Punjab. The intention is not just to charm but also engage and enlighten the hearts and minds of the audience. By all critical accounts, the classical Punjabi sufi poetry reached its pinnacle in Bulleh Shah.

Loved by Punjabis of all faiths and creeds, Bulleh Shah could have easily claimed the title of a national poet of all Punjabis if such a title was ever considered to be politically correct.

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## ARE SIKHS HINDUS?

BALDEV SINGH\*

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For the sake of historical truth and communal harmony, please allow me to respond to Mr. Niranjan Shah's column that was published in India The Tribune of September 28, 2002. Let us not poison the minds of our young children with ignorance, communal hatred and historical myths. Let them grow to be honest, upright and truthful human beings, which the world needs the most, especially in a country like India.

I am glad that he admitted at the outset that the word 'Hindu' is not found in any Hindu Scriptures and this label was given to the Indian people by outsiders. However, for some reason he failed to inform the readers about the meaning of 'Hindu' and gave an absurd explanation that 'Hindu' is the Persian equivalent of the Vedic term 'Sindhu' used for a river. It is difficult to imagine that a knowledgeable person like Mr. Shah does not know the meaning of 'Hindu'. Let me explain what the word 'Hindu' means.

Indian subcontinent was inhabited by dark complexioned people before the migration of Caucasian people from central Asia. The fair skinned people who lived on the West of Hindu Kush mountain range called the Indian subcontinent the land of the black people. I would like Mr. Shah to explain the meaning of 'Hindu Kush'. In Persian and Arabic 'Hindu' means black, slave and thief. Muslim conquerors used these words for the subjugated Indians. It is ironic and shameful that Mr. Shah now wants to assign that derogatory label 'Hindu' to Sikhs, Jains and Budhists. Did Mr. Shah ask any Sikh or Jain or Budhist about how do they feel when someone calls them Hindu? As a Sikh I would feel highly insulted if some body called me a Hindu. Mr. Shah won't understand what I am saying because he is totally ignorant about Sikhism as is evident from his column.

Mr. Shah, our Hindu ancestors accepted whatever was dished out to them by outside invaders because the clever and devious Brahmin kept them ignorant like dumb driven cattle. The Brahmin took away all their human dignity and self-respect by using the most cruel and tyrannical 'caste

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system' ever devised by man for the exploitation of man.

Mr. Shah says that Sikhs are Hindus because the Indian constitution says so, Khushwant Singh says so and for all the things Maha Raja Ranjit Singh did for the Brahmins and Hindus. His statements about Guru Teg Bahadur's martyrdom or that Guru Gobind Singh sent his five disciples to Benaras to study Sanskrit or that Ranjit Singh was establishing a Hindu Empire in the Northeast are patently false. Let me deal with these arguments one by one.

First, during the debate on the Indian constitution when the clause claiming Sikhs, Budhists and Jains as 'Hindus' came for discussion, the two Sikh representatives, Sardar Hukam Singh and Sardar Bhupinder Singh Mann opposed it vehemently. Their objections were over ruled and the Constitution was adopted. The Sikhs have been protesting this unspeakable crime ever since. The world community has been hoodwinked into believing that India is world's biggest democracy whereas in reality it the biggest tyranny of majority over minorities. Where else in the world much less a democratic country, the majority community decides the 'religious identity, of minorities. Hindus keep talking day in and day out about the atrocities and forced conversions of Hindus carried out by the Muslim rulers. I agree with this claim without any hesitation. But let us discuss this issue dispassionately. The Muslims ruled over a major portion of the Indian subcontinent for almost seven centuries. In 1947, when the British relinquished their rule, majority of the Indian population, 65-70% was Hindu. Contrast this with what the so-called secular and liberal Hindu rulers led by Jawahar Lal Nehru did to the minorities shortly after independence. These Hindu leaders converted all Sikhs, Budhists and Jains to Hindus with the stroke of a pen. No Hindu leader worth the name has ever protested against this abominable injustice to the minorities. Let me ask a question to the Hindus living in the United States. How would they react if the US Congress were to pass a law declaring all minorities to be Christians?

The final authority on Sikhs and Sikhism is Aad Guru Granth Sahib, Holy Scripture of the Sikhs. This Scripture is unique because unlike other world Scriptures, Sikh Gurus wrote it themselves. Aad Guru Granth Sahib, Sikh Gurus and others who have made in depth studies of Sikihsim have confirmed unequivocally that Sikhs are not Hindus.

"We are neither Hindus nor Muslims. Our bodies and breaths belong to the Almighty God, Whom people call Allah or Ram."

*Aad Guru Granth Sahib, P 1136.*

When Shaikh Braham asked Guru Nanank, "Are you a Hindu or a

*Muslim?" "I will be telling a lie if I say that I am a Hindu but I am also not a Muslim," averred Guru Nanak.*

*Sangat Singh. Sikhs in History, p. 14.*

*The Sikh Gurus rejected all the essentials of Hinduism and the moral authority of Hindu Scriptures.*

*Sangat Singh. The Sikhs in History, p. 15.*

*Jagtar Singh Grewal. The Sikhs of the Punjab, p. 31.*

*Jagjit Singh. The Sikh Revolution, p 105.*

Guru Nanak rejected the sacred thread, befriended a low caste Muslim *Mirasi* named Mardana and called him Bhai (brother) Mardana. Bhai Mardana accompanied Guru Nanak during his odysseys and remained his devoted friend and follower till his death. Guru Nanak stayed in the homes of Shudars partaking their food and traveled to Muslim countries to preach his message of universal love and equality under One and Only God. He proclaimed his solidarity loudly with the downtrodden.

*"I will stand by the lowest of the lowest caste rather than with the arrogant and rich of the high caste. Societies which take care of their downtrodden enjoy the blessing of Merciful God."*

*Aad Guru Granth Sahib, p 15 .*

*As the Sikh movement grew stronger, the High caste Hindus started harassing the Sikhs. Therefore, they complained to Emperor Akabar that Guru Amar Das was defiling the traditions and religion of our forefathers by abolishing the caste distinctions among his followers. Guru Amardas sent his trusted and devoted Sikh, Bhai Jetha to answer these allegations. Bhai Jetha explained to the Emperor, "We have abandoned the traditions and religion of our forefathers not to offend any body, but to practise a new faith of universal love and equality founded by Guru Nanak."*

*Emperor Akbar's relations with the Sikh Guru were very cordial, However, Guru Arjan's growing influence and popularity was irksome not only to high caste Hindus but also to conservative Muslim clergy. People like Shaikh Ahmed Sirhindi complained to prince Salim about the growing influence of Sikh faith, which was becoming an obstacle in the Islamisation of India. On the other hand high caste Hindus saw Sikhism as challenge to their way of life, the caste system. They conspired with Hindu government officials like Chandu, Birbal, Raja Mann Singh (maternal uncle of Salim) and Salim's Rajput mother against Guru Arjan Dev. When Salim (Jahangir) became the Emperor*

*after Akbar's death, he ordered Chandu to torture Guru Arjan Dev to death. Shortly after that, government officials of Lahore and the Khattris started hostile activities against Guru Hargobind Sahib, the successor of Guru Arjan Dev. In the ensuing skirmishes Guru Hargobind Sahib scored decisive victories. Guru Hargobind Sahib's army also had a contingent of Muslims. Bhagwan Das Gherar, his son Rattan Chand and Chandu's son, Karam Chand were killed in action. The Guru built a mosque for the Muslims in the village of Hargobindpur. This mosque is preserved as a historical site and it is called Guru Ki Masit.*

*Later on when Guru Gobind Singh created the Khalsa Order and gave a clarion call to the downtrodden of India to come under his banner to fight the oppression of Mughals and the tyranny of caste system, the Rajput kings of hills adjoining Punjab declared war against him. In the battle of Bhangani a Muslim divine, Pir Budhu Shah helped Guru Gobind Singh. The Pir lost two sons and many followers in the battle. After a bitter defeat the Rajput kings appealed to Emperor Aurangzeb to come to their aide. Guru's forces were no match against the combined forces of Rajputs and the Imperial army. When most of the Sikhs including Guru Gobind Singh's two elder sons and three Piaras (Beloved) courted martyrdom, the Sikhs asked Guru Gobind Singh to leave the battle field and move to the safety of Malwa region. Muslim friends and followers like the Khan brothers, Rai Kalah and others helped Guru Gobind Singh at this critical juncture. On the other hand Guru Gobind Singh's one time household employee, Gangu Brahmin (Ganga Dhar Kaul) betrayed Guru's mother and his six and eight years old sons. He handed them over to the government officials for a monetary reward. When Wazir Khan, the Subedar of Sirhind was unable to convince the young ones to convert to Islam, he ordered their execution. Nawab Sher Mohamad of Malerkotla reminded Wazir Khan that Quran forbids the killing of young children whereas Diwan Sucha Nand Bhandari urged Wazir Khan to execute the young ones by saying, "The offspring of a poisonous snake are also poisonous snakes." The young ones were tortured before being bricked alive.*

Sangat Singh. *The Sikhs in History*, p 54-65.

*During the early part of eighteenth century the Muslim rulers and their Hindu collaborators carried out systematic extermination of the Sikh population. There were two major massacres of the Sikhs known as big and small Ghalooghara (holocaust). Ahmed Shah Abdali carried out one of the massacres while Diwan Lakhpat Rai was responsible*

*for the other. The latter took a vow “Nanak, a Khatri started this hoax of Sikhism and I a Khatri will destroy it.”*

Sangat Singh. *The Sikhs in History*, p 77-82.

From my interaction with Hindu students and faculty members during my studies at Banaras Hindu University (1960-1962), I was convinced that Hindu morality is different from that of others. For example, the British colonists, returned the bodies of the victims to their relatives, paid some financial compensation to the victim's families and apologized for the massacre of Jallianwala Bagh. On the contrary, the bodies of the Sikh victims of 1984 massacre were not returned to their relatives because the Indian government disposed of the bodies by burning or throwing them in rivers and deep canals. No Hindu government official up-to-date has expressed any remorse for the killing of thousands of innocent Sikh men, women and children by their own government.

Hinduism is altogether different from Sikhism theologically. Let me illustrate this point by citing two passages from Aad Guru Granth Sahib one by Guru Nanak Dev and the other by Bhagat Nam Dev addressed to a Brahmin priest.

*“The gods and goddesses whom you worship and to whom you pray, what can they give? You wash them yourselves; left to themselves, they will sink in the water. There is no merit in the worship of statues.”*

Aad Guru Granth sahib, p 637.

Bhagat Nam Dev was tormented and not allowed entry into the temple due to his low caste. He expressed his anguish in a hymn addressed to a Brahmin priest.

*“Listen o Pandey, I meditate on the Almighty God and I have found Him. O ignorant one, what have you gained from your holy mantras and gods? I have heard that your gyatri was a cow in previous life. When she strayed into the crop of a farmer, named Loda, he broke her leg with a club and she became lame. I have heard about your god Shiv Ji, the rider of white bull. He went to the house of generous person for a feast. He didn't like the food, so he killed that man's son with a curse. I have also heard about your god Ram Chandar Ji. He fought with Ravan, who took away his wife. Hindu is blind to God due to his worship of idols of gods and goddesses and practice of caste system whereas a Muslim who worships God is partially blind to God due to his bigotry. Wiser than both is he who sees God in all. Temples are sacred to the Hindus whereas mosques are sacred to the Muslims. However, Nam Dev focuses his mind on the One and Only, Who is not*

*restricted either to the temple or the mosque.”*

*Aad Guru Granth Sahib, p 875.*

Most of the Sikhs are ethnically and culturally related to Punjabi Hindus and Muslims, as the ancestors of Sikhs were either Hindus or Muslims. The overwhelming majority of ancestors of Indian Muslims were also Hindus as pointed out by Mr. Shah. However, after 1947 the high caste Punjabi Hindus disowned the Punjabi language and culture of their ancestors thus severing their cultural ties with Sikhs.

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**Editor**

## INADEQUACY OF SIKH LEADERSHIP

GURDIP SINGH

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“Power”, said Henry Adams, “is poison”. Reinhold Niebuhr, the author of “Moral Man and Immoral Society” adds “it is a poison which blinds the eyes of moral insight and lames the will of moral purpose”.

The conduct of the Akali leaders in the recently concluded elections of the President of the SGPC is, sadly, a literal attestation of the above quotes. The denigration of the moral prestige and historic dignity of the SGPC during this election process, by the political games of the petty minded Akalis is an unedifying journey past reason and lashing emotions. The drama of the elections was a demeaning affair. It is not who has won or who has lost but how the image of the SGPC has been destroyed. The denigration of the SGPC, regrettably, did not bother the guardians of the religious body.

SGPC had already been serving as a hand-maiden of the SAD, the latest episode of abashless “stabbing” and captive voters strikes another nail in the coffin of autonomous and virtuous existence of the SGPC. Simultaneously, if the Congress Government employed dictatorial and blatantly coercive tactics to influence the outcome of the SGPC President’s election, the responsibility for it squarely rests with a faction of the SAD in the present context as well as the SAD’s intrusions in SGPC affairs when in power. The call addressed to the SGPC members for “conscience vote”, in itself of dubious intent, was unheeded disdainfully. It seems that the faint and flickering conscience of the members, more amenable to influences of other kind than the sense of duty, was easily prevailed upon. With rare exceptions the members coming for election may as well have displayed the tag marked “SOLD”.

The nomination of a Sant by one of the factions for the post of the President of the SGPC exposes the naivete of the Sant (alas, he is also a member of the Dharam Parchar Committee). The Sant, as reported in the

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press, could be cajoled as a prospective candidate and having acquiesced, later blamed his acceptance on the perfidy of his sponsors. This exposes the opportunistic political motivations of many of the tribe of Sants. Their domain and claim portend very serious consequences for the Sikhs. Their political adventures and patronage divest them of the dignity of their assignation.

For the last four years there has been spiralling escalation in the campaign of hate and rage and the public match of revilement between the two main factions of the SAD. This has bordered on political neurosis resulting from frustration and fear of oblivion. In the present SGPC President's election the two factions, in their effort to gain upper hand stooped to seek extraneous intrusion in the SGPC affairs. One faction prostrated before the Congress which is responsible for the unforgettable lethal damage to the Sikh cause during their governance in 1984; the other faction rode piggy-back on the BJP which is a patron of anti-minority biased RSS and its corollary, the anti-Sikhism, Rashtriya Sikh Sangat. In this bargain the identity of Akalis in general and SGPC in particular was subsumed and suffered grievous body blow.

The personality based political fight and rivalry has caused damage to both the Akali Dal and the SGPC. These two prime panthic entities are conjugated institutions and have symbiotic relationship though their orbits are, and must be, different. Necessarily, politics and ethics interpenetrate but if the political exigencies of the moment organically decapitates the SGPC and impose hegemony of the politicians then it undermines the very rationale of the SGPC's total impulse for ethical objectives.

It also needs to be analysed why there is lack of even minimal protest from within the ranks of the Akali Dal. It is indeed baffling and surely points to the collective immorality and a kind of social insanity. In a healthy organisation a withered and/or soiled leadership material gets discarded as dross. This has not happened in the SAD for a long time. There are quite a few elderly leaders in the SAD who have experienced both evil and good. Their value as advisors rather than active manipulators would be more beneficial to the panth.

It seems the Akali factions have not learnt a lesson from their defeat in the Assembly elections. The Chandigarh Chapter of the Sikh Core Group, after the Assembly elections, had given a call to the Akali leadership to "UNITE OR PERISH". The appeal highlighted the negative voting which brought a party like Congress into power in Punjab. It was also proposed that the Akalis should unite, not based on personal equations but on a purposeful agenda. Although it was realised that the leaders may not be

readily willing to shed power through persuasion, howsoever elegantly proposed, yet the effort was made, hoping to appeal to the higher instincts for panthic good. It seems the Akalis continue to follow the path towards “PERISH”.

In the current turmoil in the Akali politics the most serious allegation has been the denigration of the maryada of the Akal Takht Sahib. There have been claims and counterclaims regarding inferior versus superior adherents. The persona of the Jathedar is depicted as an infallible ecclesial authority and clerical inviolability. It seems that the protege of the disinherited faction becomes more virtuous. The distinction between individualized status and institutional sanctity is wilfully obscured. That it is perverse to equate and sacrilize the role of any Jathedar with the sanctity of the Akal Takht Sahib is not the concern of the contesting factions.

Examine the internecine dealings of the Takht Jathedars which add an element of blemish in the Sikh image. Sample the following : there have been allegations by Jathedar Akal Takht Sahib against another Takht Jathedar of embezzlement of funds; Jathedar Akal Takht Sahib has debarred other Takht Jathedars from the meeting of the Singh Sahibans; Hukumnamas have been issued violating all norms and even countermanding the Hukumnamas issued by an earlier incumbent; Jathedar Akal Takht Sahib and the President of the SGPC have exchanged acrimonious charges; the displaced Jathedar Akal Takht Sahib has been appointed as the Head Granthi of the Golden Temple, who then refuses to sit amongst the five Singh Sahibans, some of whom he had excommunicated during his tenure. This is a sordid tale wherein every new episode adds further complexities and, by implication, reflects on the reverence in which the institution of the Akal Takht Sahib is held by the Sikhs. And these hierarchical impositions are deleterious as Sikhism postulates absence of priesthood.

The course the Sikh polity is still hurtling downhill without locating an angle of repose not to mention of regaining lost ground. A brief introspection of the fateful past, accruing monumental deprivations because of inadequacies of leaders' statesmanship, would be in order at this juncture :

- a) The contribution by the Akalis during the independence struggle is a saga of unmatched sacrifices, far exceeding in proportion to their numerical strength. Yet after the independence they alone were denied the demand for a linguistic province. The Punjabi Suba had to be claimed after a further struggle. Grudgingly, a skeleton of a state was then carved out as Punjabi Suba — minus vast areas with Punjabi speaking population; minus the state capital; deprived of the legitimate

right on their River Waters and deprived of the control of River Headworks.

- b) The Sikh soldiers fought extremely bravely in post partition wars in defence of the country. They were “rewarded” with a reduction of their representation in the defence services being brought down from approximately 20% at the time of partition to nearly 4% at present which is further to be scaled down to 2.5%.
- c) Punjab became the granary of India through the efforts of the Sikh farmers who ushered in Green Revolution and staved off the food shortages in the rest of India by contributing upto 60% of the Central Pool of the food grains. However, in “appreciation” of this contribution the River Waters of Sutlej, Beas and Ravi which should have been the exclusive right of Punjab were taken over by the Centre through the Act of Reorganisation of Punjab and their waters “looted”.
- d) The energy and vitality of the Sikhs draws inspiration from their religious heritage. Their most sacred shrine was the target of attack in 1984 and was followed by a holocaust of unimaginable proportions.

The above catastrophies abundantly depict a yawning hiatus between the dynamism amongst the Sikh masses and the incapacity of the leadership to translate these attributes into advantage and gain for the community.

It is not the purpose to conclude that the picture of Sikh polity is totally desolate but since the focus is on the disasters perpetrated due to deficient leadership, the focus is inescapable on strategic deprivations narrated above. Generally, the glory of Sikhism, and deservedly so, is the subject of most Sikh publications. However, the current dismal scenario compels intense focus on the degeneration of the Sikh polity. It is critically urgent to dissect and cauterize the cancer of pretensions, hypocrisy and betrayal. Otherwise, this malignancy would lead to aggregate nemesis of ignominy of the Sikh ethos.

The fact is that the SGPC exists as the “Sikh Voice” irrespective of its pitiable performance or the “rejectionists” arguments to depreciate its significance. It would be relevant to add that an Akali leader devoid of religious potential is nothing less than a saboteur of the panth. Since the ultimate performance of the SGPC is to be found in the character profile of the members, the reforms at the grassroots levels are the only viable alternative to revive the inner vitality of the SGPC and tilt the fulcrum from decadence to effulgence. A vigorous and pietistic thrust directed towards purgation of subsystems of selfish interests is called for. Only drastic and revolutionary measures would generate the resolute force necessary for asserting righteous conduct.

When the SGPC elections were due as per schedule in September, 2001, the Sikh Core Group had initiated a dialogue for evolving a consensus in nomination of candidates as proximate to idealistic parameters as possible. The Chandigarh Chapter of the Sikh Core Group had convened a meeting on June 14, 2001 which was attended by President Chief Khalsa Diwan; President Sant Samaj; Chief Organiser Guru Gobind Singh Study Circle; Patron Sikh Core Group; members of the Institute of Sikh Studies and World Sikh Council. The recommendations of the meeting were as follows :

- “a) It is important, that essential screening of the candidates (for election as SGPC members) is made obligatory by representatives of panthic bodies which do not themselves enter the electoral fray. Voters should also be educated so that they vote for only such candidates as have a total commitment to the panth and the cause of gurdwaras, unfettered by loyalty to a political party.
- b) There was complete unanimity amongst the representatives of these leading panthic bodies (represented in the meeting) that it should be acceptable to the SGPC to constitute a group of devoted Sikhs who may be deputed to filter a list of such sewaks who are appropriately qualified to be members of the SGPC and that political parties, according due deferance to panthic primacy, should provide cooperation in supporting such nominated candidates.”

In the present international polity, religion has emerged as a significant factor influencing international relations. Sikhism, by virtue of being “a treasure of mankind” has a prominent role to play in the evolving new global social order based on politico-ethical rationale. SGPC is an institution of religious resource for Sikhism. The religious potential of Sikhism cannot be permitted to be obscured by the hubris of petty minded leaders. Groups of sentient Sikhs everywhere must add their will, in whatever manner possible, to revolt against the present Sikh institutional failures.

## THE SPIRITUAL WORLD

HARDIT SINGH\*

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God has created two distinct spheres: our observed material world and the unseen spiritual world. Practically all the world's religions believe in the existence of an unseen, other spiritual dimension.

The spiritual world is both within and without us; whoever probes into it realises the reality -"*Jo brahmande soi pinde, jo khoje so pave.*" Because of our preoccupation with worldly affairs and our false notion that we are merely physical bodies, we remain ignorant of our real status: we are embodiments of the Divine Light and are as such essentially spiritual.

Entry into the spiritual domain is not easy. It is largely a matter of Divine mercy and grace but some human effort is also needed. If it were not so, no prophets and gurus would have visited us and no scriptures would have been written to guide humanity. In his first six hymns of Japji, Guru Nanak called upon his followers to submit to the will and pleasure of God; to meditate on the glories of the True One at the ambrosial hours of the dawn; to remember the One Lord to imbibe godly qualities. In the hymn XIII it is said that by meditation, the soul becomes harmonized with the Divine Self. Also intuitive and intellectual attainment of inner consciousness is moulded.

When the mind awakens with the celestial combination of consciousness (*surta*), music (*dhun*) and *shabad* (*Naam*), space and time barriers are broken, vision and perception are broadened, and the soul, like radio waves, can, travel or penetrate anywhere without restrictions. Liberated souls can draw upon spiritual archives, like the records of the legendary-*Chitar-Gupt*, the hidden scribes, which contain all the information about the past, present and future events. Generally prophets and Gurus possess such supernatural powers and they can reveal heavenly visions to any person of their choice.

Bhagat Ravidas paints a picture of the spiritual world in one of his compositions, *Begumpura shahr ko nao* as under:

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*The City Joyful is the name of that city;  
Suffering and sorrow abide not there.  
Neither is there worry of paying taxes,  
nor does any hold property;  
Nether fear of punishment for error nor of decline.  
This place of habitation have I found;  
Brother! There weal perpetually reigns. (Pause)  
Eternally fixed is the kingship there in  
No second or third are there: all are alike*

*There people deport themselves as they please;  
All are inmates of that mansion; none bars any.*

Japji in its hymns 36 and 37 also contains verses describing the beauty and serene atmosphere of the spiritual world:

*There is in it sweet music, joy and  
happiness unlimited. Mystic vision and songs elevate  
Inhabitants there to a most wondrous state.  
There are fashioned beautiful things  
Whose excellence cannot be described.  
There are heroes imbued with God's pure burning flame;  
They bathe in His light and they dwell in His name.  
They die not, nor are they led astray.  
In whose heart dwells the Lord.*

Like many, I too have had number of experiences with the spiritual world. They may not have a scientific explanation but they were vivid occurrences and to this day have deepened my appreciation of the mysteries of our being. During my military service at Jalandhar from 1955 to 1957, I was lucky to meet two great spiritual personalities: Sant Baba Jwala Singh of Harkhowal (1890-1957), great *brahmgyani* of the twentieth century, and Bhai Vir Singh (1872-1957), a renowned Punjabi poet, writer, novelist, and mystic who shunned recognition and publicity.

Sant Babaji shed his mortal frame on the 13th of November 1957 and his body was disposed of in a river on the 14th. I was 1500 miles away in South India. In two separate visions on the 13th and 14th mornings I saw all that was happening at the time of his death in a Gurdwara room; the devotees around him covering his body in a white sheet. In the second vision I saw the caravan of vehicles, three small boats which carried the coffin to the centre of the river. In both these visions I saw myself amongst his nearest devotees and listened to Babaji's last words addressed to me.

Within few days a letter was received intimating death of Babaji along

with a note that he had remembered me before he shed his mortal frame. I went on leave and to my great astonishment the description of the Gurdwara, the location of the room and the sequence of events tallied exactly with my visions. He had shed his mortal *coil* at Domeli, a village not seen by me before and his body was submerged in the Sutlej river. The wonder was that whereas the death and water-burial had happened at about noon time, the visions were flashed six hours in advance during my morning prayers. In another incident in 1965, I was asked to move to another appointment due to some differences with my superior officer. Whilst I was thinking to make a representation against the unjustified transfer, Babaji appeared in a vision and told me "to get out to avoid imminent death. "I obeyed. Sure enough, the brigadier who had replaced me was killed in Pakistan shelling six months later. Obviously, the all knowing Babaji is one of the eternal masters of the spiritual world.

Bhai Vir Singh, in addition to being a writer and a mystic, was also a keen gardener and lover of flowers. He died in 1957. While serving in North-East India in the 1960s, I collected some rare varieties of orchids from the remote areas for presentation to his home in Dehra Dun, where his younger brother, Dr Balbir Singh was living. While travelling by train to Dehra Dun in a first class compartment all by myself, I envisioned Bhai Sahib standing before me, receiving the orchids and holding them gently in his hands. He was smiling and thanking me for the beautiful collection. It was a clear vision and not an illusion or delusion. Some of these orchids are still flourishing in that house.

In another incident, I visioned Bhai Sahib rowing a canoe in a vast blue sparkling lake surrounded by beautiful hills, gardens, and meadows. The whole scene was illuminated beyond description. Bhai Sahib was alone and so was I, waiting for him on the shore. As he approached me, with a broad smile, he beckoned me to step in to enjoy the celestial atmosphere. The scene was so brilliant and serene that it appeared to be of some other world.

Many a time one of my relatives while listening to shabad-keertan on the radio broadcast from the Golden Temple, Amritsar, goes into a trance. She enjoys the keertan in the Temple itself without actually being present there. The body back home becomes stiff and remains unaware of its surroundings until the samadhi experience is over.

The object of this article is to remind us that we are not on this earth to merely eat, drink and be merry. We have to fulfil our spiritual aim in this life itself and that is to gain entry into the domain of Truth or Reality (Such-Khand) by prayer love and noble deeds. The five examples cited in brief

provide glimpses of the spiritual world and fortify our belief in its existence. Its perception begins from within us and culminates in visualizing God in His entire creation.

We should remember that when we are fortunate to have a vision or illuminating experience, we are reminded that our being is much larger than the physical realm we daily perceive. Perhaps these experiences are meant to help us realize the limitations of the material world with all its desires and give us a deeper perspective into what really is important.

The spiritual or the other world is also associated with that of True Justice where we have to render accounts of our deeds after death. It is a separate subject.



SETTLING TERRITORIAL AND WATER DISPUTES  
— A REJOINDER —

KHARAK SINGH\*

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It is gratifying that a senior statesman like Shri Satya Pal Dang has joined the debate on Punjab River Waters with his article under the above title that appeared in The Tribune dated 2nd December, 2002. It seems his position on the issue has undergone no significant changes since 1995 when he published his earlier article A Way Out of the Water Dispute in The Tribune dated 19th July 1995. His conclusions are :

- “1. Share of the river waters between Punjab and Haryana must be mutually decided. If that proves impossible, let it be decided by a Bench of the Supreme Court in which no judge is either Punjabi or Haryanvi.
- “2. The question of the SYL Canal has already been decided by the Supreme Court. Also, Punjab has no moral or legal right to go back on its commitment made more than once by its leaders. Even then, this matter too may be gone into by the Supreme Court bench which may be constituted to decide the shares of waters.
- “3. The late Beant Singh, Chief Minister of Punjab, contended that Punjab should have a share in the waters of the Yamuna if Haryana is to have shares of the surplus waters of Beas and Satluj. The Supreme Court bench can decide this question also.”

Shri Dang is known for his objective approach. He is certainly above provincial chauvinism, and is apparently in no mood to plead the case of the Punjab. He is, however, expected to lend his support to justice. He should pay at least as much consideration to the rights of Punjab as to the interests of Haryana.

Before dealing with Shri Dang’s conclusion let us briefly refer to the points / arguments given by him, or the facts relevant to the use of river waters :

*1. Who owns River Waters*

- i) According to the Riparian Law doctrine for exercising control of

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river waters, a river is a part and parcel of the territory of Riparian States which have exclusive control over it. This principle is universally accepted and is incorporated unambiguously in the Indian Constitution as well, vide Entry 17 of List II of the Seventh Schedule which covers:

“Waters, that is to say, water supplies, irrigation and canals drainage and embankments, water storage and water power subject to the provisions of Entry 56 of List-I”

Entry 56 of List I of Indian Constitution limits the Union’s authority to ioregulate and develop ,inter-State rivers<sup>TM</sup> and river valleys to the extent to which such regulation and development under the control of the Union is declared by Parliament to be expedient in the Public interestll.

In addition, Article 262 of the Indian Constitution states that:

“a) Parliament may by law provide for adjudication of any dispute or complaint with respect to use, distribution or control of waters of, or in any inter-State river or river valley.

“b) Notwithstanding anything in the Constitution, Parliament may by law provide that neither the Supreme Court nor any other court shall exercise jurisdiction in respect of any such dispute or complaint as is referred to in Clause (I).

“Further, it may be added that regarding a river, the unit State has full and exclusive legislative and executive powers under Article 246(3) and 162 of the Indian Constitution. It is pertinent to mention that Entry 56 (ibid.) and Article 262 mentioned above confers authority to Parliament to legislate only in regard to iointer-State riverslo and not in regard to waters of a State, over which the concerned State alone has exclusive and final authority.”

ii) It is abundantly clear that authority of the Union Government on rivers and river valleys is limited to inter-State rivers - only. This has been confirmed by the Supreme Court in its judgement, vide para 14 in the matter of Cauvery Water Dispute (AIR 1992, S.C., page 522)

iii) No claim has ever been accepted from a non-riparian State for use of a river water. It is well known that claim of Rajasthan to Narmada river waters was rejected on the same ground. More recently, Yamuna waters were allocated only among riparian States, and Punjab was not given any share, although it was as much a successor State as Haryana.

iv) In view of the situation explained above, it is incorrect to use the term ,sharing of river waters<sup>TM</sup> while dealing with claim from Haryana or Rajasthan. For, in fact, no such claim lies.

Riparian Law has to apply irrespective of the needs of any State. In this regard, the views of the Joint Parliamentary Committee during the

drafting of the Constitution may be cited:

“The effect of this is to give each Province complete powers over water supplies within the Province without any regard whatever to the interests of neighbouring Provinces.”

2. Division of Assets between Punjab & Haryana : Under the Punjab Reorganisation Act 1966, assets are to be divided between Punjab and Haryana in the ratio of 60:40. As Shri Dang has himself admitted, this does not apply to river waters.

3. Haryana is not riparian to rivers Satluj, Beas and Ravi. One simply has to look at the map to find out that while Punjab is a part of the Indus Basin, Haryana belongs to the Yamuna-Gangetic Basin. The two basins are clearly divided by the Ghaggar river, which constitutes the dividing watershed.

4. Rajasthan, too, is not riparian to the Punjab Rivers. If at all any proof is needed, the following should suffice :

a) The Gang Canal which serves erstwhile Bikaner State of Rajasthan was supplied waters only on payment of royalty or seigniorage to the Punjab Government. This would have been unnecessary, if Bikaner / Rajasthan were riparian.

b) Rajasthan Government admitted that it was not riparian to Punjab Rivers when it claimed a share of Narmada Waters, on the plea that it was getting water from the Punjab even though it was non-riparian.

c) In the Indus Waters Treaty 1960, only Satluj, Beas and Ravi are mentioned. There is no mention of the river Ghaggar. It clearly shows that it is not a part of the Indus river system. Thus, Haryana, which is beyond Ghaggar, cannot by any stretch of imagination be regarded as a part of the Indus Basin.

5. Application of Riparian Principle : In Shri Dang’s opinion “the riparian principle applies to sovereign countries and not to states within one country. Apart from the fact of its universal application, the Indian Constitution, as quoted earlier, leaves no doubt about its application to states. In fact, according to some international judgements, it could apply even within a state of a sovereign country. We hope, Shri Dang will agree that it is not a matter of ‘opinion’.

6. Right of Himachal Pradesh : There is no controversy over this issue. Himachal Pradesh is very much riparian to the three Punjab rivers. At present there is no dispute with it. If and when there is any, it can be easily settled under the procedure laid down in the Indian Constitution. for riparian States.

7. River Basin Principle : Shri Dang favours application of the ‘basin principle’ for settlement of the issue. As explained earlier no part of Haryana

and Rajasthan falls in the Indus basin. Haryana is in the Yamuna basin, which is a tributary of the Gangetic river system. Ghaggar is not a tributary of the Indus. It is an independent river dividing the Indus and Gangetic basin.

8. Comparison with Cauvery River : Karnataka and Tamil Nadu are both riparian to the Cauvery, so that their claims are valid and can be settled through Government of India appointed tribunal. Their case is not comparable with that of Punjab Rivers where neither Haryana nor Rajasthan is riparian, so that no claim legitimately lies in their behalf. Government of India has no authority to appoint any commission / tribunal to entertain claims of a non-riparian state. Even the Supreme Court has no such jurisdiction.

9. The Real Problem: Legitimate rights of the Punjab State over its river waters, guaranteed by the Constitution, have been violated through unconstitutional legislation. Sections 78, 79 and 80 of the Punjab Reorganisation Act 1966 are the cases in point. These were apparently added with malafide intention to deprive the Punjab State and its farmers of their constitutional rights. It is imperative, therefore, to challenge these Sections in the Supreme Court to get the wrong rectified before a Constitutional Bench.

Apart from unconstitutional diversion of Punjab river waters to non-riparian States, the control of its rivers was passed to the Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB). This again is unconstitutional and the Supreme Court should be moved to restore the control to the Punjab State.

The real problem that needs to be addressed is the legitimate rights of the Punjab State have been violated through unconstitutional legislation, notably Section 78, 79 and 80 of the Punjab Reorganisation Act 1966. It is painful to point out that the Centre has played a partisan role throughout. Its unconstitutional 'awards', forced 'agreements' and commissions have only aggravated the situation. When Punjab moved the Supreme Court seeking a verdict on the constitutionality of such laws, it was forced almost at gun point<sup>TM</sup> to withdraw its petition.

Political parties following short-sighted vote oriented politics are misleading the public and inciting passions on both sides of the State borders and doing incalculable harm to good neighbourly relations. The situation demands statesmanship. It must not be forgotten that any sustainable solution has to be based on justice and made within the framework of the Indian Constitution.

In the light of the position explained above one might look at the conclusions drawn by Shri Dang again. Possibility of a mutual decision

between Haryana and Punjab on river waters is extremely remote in view of the diametrically opposed positions taken by the two governments. On the construction of the SYL canal, the Supreme Court judgement relates only to the construction. It has carefully refrained from making any reference to the alleged share of Haryana in Punjab River Waters. Obviously, the Court is aware of its lack of jurisdiction in this regard. On Yamuna Waters, Punjab<sup>TM</sup>s claim is as strong or as weak as that of Haryana on Satluj, Beas and Ravi. So Shri Dang has rightly advised a reference to the Supreme Court. This course is indeed laudable. No amount of rhetoric on the part of politicians or threatening positions taken by the parties involved is going to help. The need of the hour is unity, sanity and commitment to justice. Let us take advantage of the Supreme Court. Let us make the right reference to the Apex Court, i.e., the ones that it is competent to adjudicate. Wrong questions will beget wrong answers. While the court cannot determine share of water of any particular state in any particular river, it can certainly interpret the relevant sections of the Indian Constitution on title to rivers. Similarly the Supreme Court should be requested to give its verdict on the constitutionality or otherwise of certain piece of legislation which has been objected to by the Punjab Government and which forms the basis of the dispute.

Nobody should reasonably object to such a reference being made to the Supreme Court. Punjab had earlier attempted this course. Let it be done again in the hope that this time, it will not be forced to withdraw it.

## SIKH RELIGION AND YOUTH

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The Youth section has been introduced in response to a deeply felt need of the young to know about Sikhism. They have been given modern westernized education which instills in them the skill of reasoning and curiosity to know more about Sikhs. A panel of Sikh scholars would give answers to their queries in the issues of *the Abstracts of Sikh Studies*. Kindly send your letters to the Editor.

### *Sikh Religion*

- Q. What do you understand by religion ?
- A. Religion means a force of Love, constituting an intimate relationship with the Ultimate Reality. It is based on the Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man, irrespective of caste, colour or sex. For a Sikh, religion covers all aspects of life, temporal as well as spiritual.
- Q. What part does your religion play in the political and economic life of the nation ?
- A. The homeland of the Sikhs, the Punjab, is a part of the Indian Federation. Prominent features of the Constitution of India derive heavily on Sikh ideals of polity. In the political affairs of the country, they have played a role far out of proportion to their numbers. Sikhs excel as farmers, soldiers, as well as industrialists. Punjab state, with only 2% of the irrigated area of the country, contributes over 60% towards food grain reserves of the country.

### *Origin of Religion*

- Q1. Where and when was your religion founded ? Give at least three reasons why it was founded in the place it was founded ?
- Q2. Who founded the religion ? Please give the historical, social, political and economic background of the person who founded it and the place where it was founded ?
- Q3. How does your religion spread and how do people become members ?

Q4. Are there sects or breakaway groups ? Please name them and state the reasons why they broke away.

A1. &

A2. It was founded in west Punjab (now in Pakistan) at Nanakana Sahib by Guru Nanak Dev, who was born at this place in 1469 AD. It originated in the Punjab, because the founder was born here. Guru Nanak was succeeded by nine other Gurus, who further explained his philosophy, and propagated his teachings through hymns and practical life. It is a prophetic, revelatory religion. Punjab lies at the confluence of two great ancient civilizations, both violently pitted against each other, in need of a message of tolerance and mutual understanding. This situation appears to have promoted its growth.

A3. In India, it has spread mostly by conversion from other faiths. Growth rate of Sikhs has been the highest as compared with other religions according to census figures. Outside India, Sikh Religion has spread by migration from India and also by conversion. The Sikh faith is open to all. Five practising Sikhs, in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib, are authorized to initiate a neophyte into Sikh Religion. Their role is largely to explain the basic principles of the religion and the code of conduct. The ceremony is called 'Amrit ceremony,' meaning administration of 'nectar.'

A4. The principles of Sikh Religion are enshrined in Guru Granth Sahib, the Scripture of the Sikhs, which was written by their prophets themselves. The original manuscript, duly authenticated by the Prophet in 1604 AD, exists. Thus, there is little scope for growth of breakaway groups.

However, there is a very small minority of Sikhs who deviate from the mainstream on one point. While the mainstream believes that line of succession to personal Guruship ended with Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Guru, and that the reigning Guru now is the 'Word' or Guru Granth Sahib, the *Namdharis* believe in personal Guruship.

*What is Waheguru?*

This profound question in the mind of man will remain ever unanswered because we can only realize Waheguru but we cannot tell what He is. In *Gurbani*, there is a simple example to explain why no one can answer this question. A mute person, after tasting sugar, knows the taste, enjoys it and expresses it through a smile. But being unable to speak, he cannot tell a word about what sugar is like. Waheguru is love, hence

immensely sweet, many times sweeter than anything in this world. Holy persons love Waheguru, they enjoy the sweetness but cannot say anything by which we can know and understand Waheguru. There is no language and nothing available in this world which can be quoted to describe Waheguru. Therefore, only similes, however incomplete or unrepresentative they may be, have been offered by holy persons. That is the best they can do to explain their mystic experiences of the spiritual world (Waheguru) to those living in this mundane world.

### *Waheguru as Father - Mother*

(i) Waheguru is mentioned as Father, Mother, Protector, etc. These words are used to remind us about some of His virtues. Waheguru is the cause of our birth (creation). He nurses us, protects us, and does everything else to make our lives happy, the way parents do for their children. Before creating humans and other living beings, Waheguru created the sun, moon, water, air, plants, etc. He also created whatever was required by the people to live comfortably. All things are a gift from Waheguru to us as children are given all things free with love by their parents. There are many other things that we have not yet discovered which have been created by Waheguru. The earth, sun, rain, air, darkness, etc. have been so adjusted that they produce innumerable kinds of foods for our consumption. No scientist with all the latest technology has ever been able to create a single grain or fruit in his laboratory. This is done by Waheguru alone under His own laws. These natural phenomena are so set that the earth produces different kinds of foods in different regions. Man is required only to put the Waheguru-given seeds in the soil and harvest the fruit.

Waheguru does many more things than those mentioned above to keep us comfortable and happy in the same way that parents do for their children. Hence, the most popular character of Waheguru is revealed to our heart when with love we say, "You are my Father, my Mother, my Brother, and all my other kin.... You protect me from everything at all places." Gurbani expresses it in these words:

ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਪਿਤਾ ਤੂੰ ਹੈ ਮੇਰਾ ਮਾਤਾ ॥ ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਬੰਧਪੁ ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਭ੍ਰਾਤਾ ॥  
ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਰਾਖਾ ਸਭਨੀ ਥਾਈ ਤਾ ਭਉ ਕੇਹਾ ਕਾੜਾ ਜੀਉ ॥

(ਆਦਿ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ, ਪੰਨਾ 103)

Gurbani explains why we fail to 'find' Waheguru, Who is living in every person, by giving an example of a musk deer. The deer smells musk and runs in different directions to find it but remains unsuccessful. He searches for it outside whereas the musk is inside his own body, hence he fails. It is only when the hunters get him and take the musk from the pouch

near his navel that he comes to know of it. In the same way we run out to find Waheguru but remain unsuccessful. It is only when the soul leaves us that we know that the reflection of Waheguru was inside us and sustaining us.

ਘਰ ਹੀ ਮਹਿ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਭਰਪੂਰੁ ਹੈ ਮਨਮੁਖਾ ਸਾਦੁ ਨ ਪਾਇਆ ॥  
ਜਿਉ ਕਸਤੂਰੀ ਮਿਰਗੁ ਨ ਜਾਣੈ ਭ੍ਰਮਦਾ ਭਰਮਿ ਭੁਲਾਇਆ ॥

(ਆਦਿ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ, ਪੰਨਾ 644)

In conclusion, we may say that we know the Great Soul, Waheguru, is True, not an illusion. He is the Creator of the Universe and is existing in it like 'I' in 'MY' body. He is sans-fear and sans-enmity because there is none else except Him; He does not grow old or die, i.e., He is beyond time; He does not undergo the cycle of birth and death: being self-created.

JATHEDAR BHAI KARTAR SINGH JHABBAR\*\*  
- THE LIFE AND TIMES –

BHUPINDER SINGH\*

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This is a story of a heroic Akali leader, the story of Jathedar Kartar Singh Jhabbar, gleaned, to begin with, from his personal journals by Bhai Narayan Singh whose narrative in Punjabi has now at long last been translated in English by Sardar Karnail Singh for a much wider audience. It is a story of a simple man of a rustic background with no formal education, no organizational base or constituency who with his matchless daring, piety and astuteness did single handedly bring about gurudwara reforms. Historians appear to have ignored his role notwithstanding his validation by Dr. Ganda Singh, the doyen of Sikhs historians. SGPC deserves praise for throwing light on Jhabbar and for recognizing his invaluable service to the Sikh *panth*.

Sardar Kartar Singh Jhabbar was a preacher who lived his life by what he preached. He devoted all his time and energy in the *panthic* service. He was a natural born leader with an uncanny sixth sense to read the winds of religio-political changes. He was the first to perceive the threat posed by Gandhi's politically driven non-cooperation movement to Sikh religious reforms. He will be long remembered for singularly spearheading the campaign to gain control of Sikh Shrines from the amoral *mahants*. During the long-drawn campaign he was jailed thrice for life (one of the life penalty was commutation of a death sentence). He was a real renaissance man.

Kartar Singh Jhabbar was born in 1874 in the village of Jhabbar (now part of Sheikhpura district, Pakistan), a stronghold of the fiercely independent-minded *Virks*. His personal diaries say little about his early years, which in all likelihood were spent working the family farm. That is not to say that his rural rearing isolated him from the winds of religious and political changes that were sweeping the Punjab landscape.

Punjab that Jhabbar had inherited was a shattered homeland. In 1849

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\*\* Review Article of Bhai Narayan Singh's book *Jathedar Bhai Kartar Singh Jhabbar - The Life and Times* –, Translated by Karnail Singh, Published by SGPC, Amritsar, Pages 121 (hard cover).

the kingdom of the Sikhs came to an unhappy end. For the Sikhs, who cherished their freedom from the times of the sixth Guru, who were imbued with a sense of fighting for justice equality by the tenth Guru, who ruled Punjab for nearly a hundred and fifty years (1699-1849), first under the misls and later under the Sikh kingdom of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, to find themselves an endangered species was utterly shocking.

Gurudwaras, the principal places of Sikh gathering, were no longer under Sikh management, control over which had long since passed into the hands of the Udasis "with Hindu inclinations". Sikhs sought to regain control over their Gurudwaras, the British preferred the status quo. Jhabbar was to spend the rest of his days trying to wrest control of the Gurudwaras from the corrupt *mahants*.

Another threat was posed by the steadfast proselytizing zeal of the Christian church and the resurgent Hinduism in the form of the Arya Samaj. Numbers of Sikhs declined sharply leaving the Sikh body politic in disarray. It was, thus, that in 1904, at age 30, Kartar Singh Jhabbar came under the influence of Bhai Mool Singh Gurmula who administered the *amrit* to him. Two years later Jhabbar entered the Gharjakh Vidyalaya seminary a well known institution in Gujranwala (now in Pakistan) where he spent three years to "acquire Gurmat knowledge". Jhabbar moved his residence to Lahore on the urging of Sardar Lall Singh.

On Baisakhi day, 1919 the British soldiers mowed down hundreds of innocent people at Jallianwala Bagh. News reached Jhabbar while he was addressing a congregation at the Gurudwara Sacha Sauda at Chuhar Kana. Young men formed squads and blew up government assets such as canal bridges, electric wires and railway stations. Jhabbar was among the rounded up ringleaders. He was tried, convicted and sentenced to death. A month later his sentence was commuted to life in Andaman Islands and soon thereafter he was freed. At Andaman he got a good grounding in political theories.

1920 was a watershed year. In October some of the important Sikh shrines passed into the hands of the *panth* without much ado. First of fall was the Gurudwara of Babe Di Ber and was followed successively by Harminder Sahib and Sri Akal Takht Sahib. The *pujaris* of Sri Akal Takht Sahib bribed a Nihang Jatha to neutralize the *panthic* control but of no avail. At the request of Jhabbar, Bhai Teja Singh Bhuchar was appointed Jathedar of Sri Akal Takht Sahib.

Jhabbar set his sights on the recovery of the Gurudwara Janam Asthan at Nankana Sahib. Different people were to react differently to the *panthic* mission to wrest control from the *mahants*. Soon, Jhabbar was under attack

in several quarters.

Obvious opposition came from the *mahants* who had the most to lose. The *mahants* were to gird themselves to frustrate all *panthic* efforts to gain control of their shrines. At the same time the *mahants* appealed to the police, the law courts and the British government to stop what they called illegal seizures. The police were concerned mainly with peace and order and not possession. The magistrates tried to wrestle with material implications of possession and ownership of property. With the increasing number of Sikhs taking the *amrit* to enlist into *Jathas* the British were to assess the threat that posed to their interests.

*Mahant* Narain Das of Gurudwara Janam Asthan at Nankana Sahib was to use ruse after ruse to catch Jhabbar and other *Jatha* leaders off guard and when one scheme failed he would employ a different stratagem to thwart them. But the unkindest act of all was the opposition from within. Often Jhabbar found himself at odds with the *panthic* leaders. For example, Sardar Teja Singh Samundari, Master Tara Singh and others issued a verbal “hukam” to Jhabbar to cease all efforts at seizing Gurudwara Janam Asthan.<sup>1</sup>

Bhai Lachman Singh and his *Jatha* who had performed *ardas* to take possession of the Gurudwara and who felt that it was “not in keeping with the Sikh tradition to go back on it” nonetheless went ahead, entered the shrine and “bolted it from inside”. *Mahant* Narain Das was to let loose his own goon militia on the peaceful ‘squatters’ with dire consequences: Bhai Lachman Singh was burnt alive, Bhai Dalip Singh was shot dead and Bhai Waryam Singh was butchered.

On hearing of the massacre Jhabbar “chalked out” an action plan. Devout Sikhs were mobilized. On February 20, 1921 hundreds gathered at Chandar Kot Bridge discovering that the Government had taken control of the shrine and placed it under guard of British army. Notwithstanding an order from Mr. King, Deputy Commissioner of Lahore Division, not to proceed, and despite a warning that the army was armed to the teeth, Jhabbar led eleven *Jathas*, consisting of two hundred volunteers each, to march forward. Sensing the determination of the *Jatha*, Deputy Commissioner Currie approached Jhabbar to know what was it that they wanted. Jhabbar replied, “keys to the Gurudwara”. After some discussion Commissioner King handed the keys to Jhabbar with the proviso that they form a committee who would be given possession of the shrine.

The senseless killing of Bhai Lachman Singh and his comrades was to turn Nankana Sahib into *cause celebre*. The Governor of Punjab,

<sup>1</sup> In this context vide Bawa Harkishan Singh’s statement in *Abstracts of Sikh Studies* in Oral History, April-June 2001, page 106-107.

prominent Sikh leaders and even Mahatama Gandhi came to see the aftermath of the bloody struggle for its take-over.

In March 1921 Punjab government convened a meeting at which it was decided that Sikhs would not take “forcible possession of Gurudwaras”, including that of Nankana Sahib, and that the government would enforce this policy vigorously. Consequently, Jhabbar together with a few members of his *Jatha* were arrested immediately and lodged in Lahore Borstal jail. During their prison visit the Sikh leaders were told by Jhabbar that the campaign for the take-over of the Gurudwaras was a religious and not a political movement. Jhabbar was sentenced to eighteen years of rigorous imprisonment. Once again, Sikh leaders pleaded with the government and secured the release of the prisoners on the understanding that the campaign for forcible take-over would be ended pending legislation to deed all Gurudwaras to the Sikh *panth*.

Whilst in prison Jhabbar had learned that Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar had issued an edict against wearing of black turbans. On his release Jhabbar was instrumental in the passing of *Gurmatta* that all Sikhs should wear black turbans. At the same time Gurudwara committee also passed a resolution to take back the keys of *Tosha Khana*. To thwart the Akalis, *Sarbrah* of Harminder Sahib, an appointee of the government, handed the keys to the magisterate. Word quickly spread that the government had taken possession of this holy shrine. Hundreds of Sikh took the *amrit* and the situation approached crisis point. In the end the government gave up and gave the keys to the *panth*.

The next crisis erupted over *kar sewa* at Harminder Sahib and *Jaito morcha* organized for the restoration of Maharaja of Nabha. Sikhs took *amrit* and volunteered for the *morcha*.. Many Akalis were arrested and in February 1924 a *shahidi Jatha* was sent to Jaito. Over 50,000 sympathisers marched alongside the *morcha*. The crowd was fired upon killing almost a hundred protestors. Another *Shahidi Jatha* headed for Jaito and in the face of mounting agitation the authorities finally capitulated. But, the new Governor of Punjab, Sir Malcolm Hailey, threw a damper by proclaiming that unlike his predecessor he will “strictly enforce law and order”.

In his many addresses to various congregations Jhabbar explained the Gurudwara Reform movement and insisted that Sikhs pay no notice to the Governor but to go ahead with the *Jaito morcha*. Jhabbar was arrested and “sent to Campbellpur jail for 18 years”. Assistant Jail Warden translated his hostility towards Jhabbar by planting evidence. Jhabbar’s health was on a steady decline. He was later transferred to Multan jail where he, again, suffered at the hands of his jailors. While he was incarcerated the “long-

drawn struggle for exercise of religious rights” came to an end with passage of the Gurudwara Act, 1925.

With the passage of the Gurudwara Act, 1925 many Akali prisoners were released. Akalis held at various prison camps were then transferred to Rawalpindi jail. Harsh treatment in jails had taken its toll on Jhabbar and his health deteriorated. He was released after serving four and half year sentence. He was elected to Nanakana Sahib Gurudwara committee where he “worked for several years”. He devoted all his time in obtaining other concessions such as return of income producing lands set aside for upkeep of Gurudwaras, allowing sale of *Jhatka* meat and so on.

But mostly Jhabbar spent his time preaching *Gurmat* and Sikh *Rehat Maryada*. Jhabbar is the quintessence Sikh votary whose contributions to the development of Sikh institutions remain unparalleled.

## AN INTRODUCTION TO SRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB

A REVIEW BY JASWANT SINGH\*

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*Author : Dr Sarup Singh Alag, MA (English) Ph.D.*

*Publisher : Sarup Singh Alag, Alag-Shabad-Yug, 5/93 Urban Estate 2, Focal Point,  
Ludhiana - 141 010 (Pb.) India*

*Sponsor : Bhani Kaur Gujral, Grost Road, London (UK)*

*Pages : 304; Price : Free Distribution*

Dr Sarup Singh Alag MA in History, Urdu, Punjabi, Economics and English is author of 40 books in English, Punjabi, Hindi, and Bengali. All these books are on Sikhism and spectacularly are for 'Free Distribution'. His flowing enjoyable easily digestible English with *Bani* as cornerstone forms the bed-rock of his writings. An introduction to Sri Guru Granth Sahib and its Punjabi and Hindi versions are a very kind gift by the author.

The book has 56 chapters, contributors comprise 6 Gurus, 15 *Bhagats*, 4 devout Sikhs and 11 Bhats. The Granth is written in 31 Musical measures - *Ragas* and the author gives opinion of some scholars and readers about the book. I will like to highlight its salient features. Out of a total of 5872 hymns, Gurus composed 4956, *Bhagats* 778, devout Sikhs 17, Bhats 121 swaiyas. The author has written biographies of all the contributors which form a very informative and refreshing fund of knowledge. On request he supplied me the detailed information of the remaining four Gurus. All information is quite sufficient for devout Sikhs and Sikh scholars though for a researcher sky is the limit or the depth of sea to explore. I have tremendously benefited from this knowledge while writing or speaking about the Gurus and about Guru Granth Sahib. He has profusely quoted hymns under different contributors with their English translation. A separate chapter has been exclusively devoted to *Ragas*, musical measures in which hymns have been written. Interestingly Guru Granth Sahib has been written and arranged according to *Ragas* and not based on contributors. Guru Nanak sang his hymns to the accompaniment of rabab played by his

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\* Maj Gen (Dr), AVSM (retd.), 1801, Sector 33, Chandigarh

companion Bhai Mardana. All the contributors wrote their *Bani* in *Ragas*. A few interesting chapters like Gurbani from Gurus vision, Gurbani's - Brahm Gyani, Jiwan Mukta have been written. He has added a chapter on non-Sikhs opinion about Sri Guru Granth Sahib.

I will quote Pearl S Buck, Nobel Laureate, the author of *Good Earth*, she writes, "*I have studied the scriptures of other great religions but I do not find elsewhere the same power of appeal of the heart and mind as I find in the Gurbani.*"

Mr. Duncan Greenlees — an eminent historian writes, "*Guru Granth Sahib is Guru's own book through which he has been talking to his devotees for ages. That is why this Scripture is called Gurbani which means Guru's voice.*"

Mr Toynbee, the historian writes, "*Of all known scriptures, this book is the most highly venerated. It means more to Sikhs than even the Quran means to Muslims, the Bible to Christians and the Torah to Jews. The Adi Granth is the Sikh's perpetual Guru, spiritual guide.*"

The book by a gifted scholar, tireless crusader for conveying the Gurus message, a prolific writer is a gift to devout Sikh/non-Sikh humanity. It is beautifully printed with attractive binding and on top of it "he charges not a shilling".

## TEGZAN GURU HARGOBIND SAHIB (PUNJABI)

A REVIEW BY HARDIT SINGH\*

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*Author : Jasbir Singh Sarna (Ph.D.)*

*Published by Santa Singh Publishers, Baramulla (J&K)*

*Pages : 120; Price: 190;*

Guru Hargobind Sahib's life is widely covered both by Punjabi and English writers notably Bhai Gian Singh, Bhai Santokh Singh, Bhai Vir Singh and S. Satbir Singh. The English historians are J D Cunningham, M A Macauliffe, Dr Trilochan Singh, Sr Khushwant Singh, Hari Ram Gupta and Dr H L Agnihotri. In spite of all these works, the Guru's period of detention in the Gwalior fort remains undetermined. It varies from 40 days by Bhai Gian Singh to 12 years by Moshin Fani. The author, mainly based on Bhat Vahis, puts it at 6 years. The famous historian Dr Kirpal Singh has also calculated it at 6 years but there is yet no finality. Eperor Jahangir, according to Hari Ram Gupta, wanted to "confine him for a few days in a disciplinary jail so that his brain and temper may be somewhat rectified". The Emperor was discomfited with the establishment of the Akal Takht, militarisation of the Sikhs and the regality attached to the *gur-gaddi*.

Bhai Gurdas' Var 26 (Page 26 of the Book under review) has been grossly misinterpreted and misunderstood by many scholars. Hunting and the other royal pursuits by the Guru have been taken by them as a departure from Guru Nanak's mission as also advocacy of meat eating amongst the Sikhs. The author by giving the names of important Sikhs and their deeds (Pages 57 to 73) and the Guru's travels to spread Guru Nanak's mission (Pages 74 to 118) has proved that after Guru Nanak, Guru Hargobind Sahib was the second Guru to spread Sikhism extensively in North India. In his two *Hukamnamas* (edicts) given on Pages 53-56, the Guru had asked the Sikhs "not to go anywhere near meat and fish.....". "*Maas Machchi de nere nahin awna*" has also demolished this meat eating insinuation. It is a

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\* 1278, Sector 42-B, Chandigarh

matter of interest that Guru Hargobind Sahib had used the term 'Khalsa', for the first time in the Sikh history, in the edict sent to the Sikhs in the East- "*Purav di sangat Guru da Khalsa hai*".

The book is divided into twelve chapters bringing out different aspects of the Guru's life, establishment of the Akal Takht, militarisation of the Sikhs, detention in the Gwalior Fort, his battles against the Mughals which he won inspite of being outnumbered both in strength and weapons and important events such as exploits of Bhai Bidhi Chand and the episode of Mata Kaulan.

Mr Jasbir Singh Sarna is the author of ten Punjabi and five English books. His two Punjabi books have received Punjab Government and Jammu & Kashmir Academy first awards. He is a prolific writer who has made a valuable contribution to the history of the Guru's period. The book is well presented and printed. Mr Sarna has justified the 'Tegzan' character of the Guru who indeed was an expert wielder of sword, destroyer of evil forces and a gallant warrior.

## JIWEEN BRITANT BABA ALA SINGH

A REVIEW BY SADHU SINGH\*

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*Jiveen Britant Baba Ala Singh*

*Author : Dr Kirpal Singh*

*Published by Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar*

*Pages : 116; Price: 100;*

Dr Kirpal Singh is a doyen of Punjab History and a historian of great eminence. He has held very prestigious positions as a scholar of Sikh history and has been a member of world famous institutions like the Royal Asiatic Society, London. Many institutions and societies have honoured him for his outstanding contribution to Sikh History and culture. He visited the United Kingdom in search of historical material and to attend seminars. He has to his credit the publication of 30 books and more than 100 research papers. The book under review is a great contribution to Sikh History especially the history of cis-Satluj Sikhs.

Maharaja Ala Singh occupies a unique place in the History of the Sikhs. His ancestor Phul was blessed by Guru Hargobind Sahib: “the Phul (flower) will blossom. What to talk of his hunger, his descendants would satisfy the hunger of millions. Their horses would drink water from Satluj and Jamuna.” Tiloka and Rama, sons of Phul, both served Guru Gobind Singh and Guru ji sent one Hukamnama to them mentioning. “Your house is mine...” Ala Singh was born in 1691 AD and at the age of 16 got married to Fateh Kaur who was miraculously saved by Bhai Dayal Das. She was a lady of sterling ability and Ala Singh benefitted substantially as Napoleon had benefitted by his marriage with Josephine. She brought him closer to the family of Bhai Dyal Das and Bhai Gurbakhsh Singh helped a lot in founding the Patiala State. Bhai Charan Das, at Sunam, prophesied that Ala Singh would become a Raja.

The book is a well-knit description of historical events duly supported by facts. The third chapter which described the condition of the cis-Satluj

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\* 1278, Sector 42-B, Chandigarh

territory in those days, paints a picture of chaos and anarchy then prevailing. This fact establishes Maharaja Ala Singh's pre-eminence as he was able to uproot the anarchy and give rise to a state which led a peaceful and prosperous existence for a long time.

Another chapter worthy of note is entitled 'Maharaja Ala Singh's relation with the Marathas'. This chapter presents Maharaja Ala Singh's personality as a Sikh as well a statesman. As a true Sikh he helped the Marathas in the hour of their dire need. His friendly relations with powers which could be helpful in driving out the foreigners, throws light on him as a statesman of high calibre.

Prior to the rise of Ala Singh the cis-Satluj territory was dominated by the most powerful man of the period, Isa Khan. The death of the Isa Khan in 1718 AD is the most important event in the evolution of Phulkian States and a great land mark in the life of Ala Singh. His exceptional powers, robust strength and inborn courage made him very popular at Barnala, where he had shifted from Bhaduar. Here, with the help of Dal Khalsa, Ala Singh defeated Rai Kalahn and Asad Ali Khan, faujdar of Jullundhur Doab. The victory exalted Ala Singh as a great leader of cis-Satluj territory. Nawab Kapur Singh administered him Pahul at village Thikriwala. The grand victory of Rampur brought Ala Singh immense glory, prestige, power and numerous territorial acquisitions.

After the battle of Panipat (1761) Ala Singh entered a very critical and stormy career of his life. He was arrested twice by Ahmad Shah Abdali. Once the latter ordered his long hair to be cut off. Ala Singh was saved by the sagacity of Mai Fetah Kaur (from this sacrilege). Another time Ala Singh was dubbed as a traitor to the Khalsa but the timely help of Jassa Singh Ahluwalia saved him from the wrath of the Khalsa. Thus, the tides of his misfortune were stemmed and he was able to establish Patiala Raj. Ahmed Shah Abdali honoured Ala Singh with a robe of honour and confirmed 726 villages as his possession. Soon after the return of Ahmad Shah Abdali and his rapprochement with the Sikhs, Maharaja Ala Singh died of fever on 22<sup>nd</sup> August, 1765 AD.

Maharaja Ala Singh was a great statesman and a ruler of exceptional ability. He was par-excellence in administrative ability which has been so rare in the rulers of the world. He was the greatest Sikh statesman of his time. He made such a balance of alliances with the Marathas, Najib Khan and Abdali in such way that it enhanced his power and prestige and raised him to be one of the most important Chiefs of the territory North-west of Delli. To the Sikhs he was a friend and ally. He used to serve them with devotion Maharaja Ala Singh's administration was very simple and served

the needs of the time. His untutored genius had evolved the way of Govt., which included the fundamentals of any modern state. He was truly a secular ruler. He, like Akbar the great made no distinction of caste and creed in making appointments in his state. He was the first Sikh ruler to initiate a non-religious outlook in administration, which culminated during the rule of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh. Maharaja Ala Singh rose to the highest position from the ordinary status of a peasant. He knew the difficulties of the peasants. He combined military action and agriculture advancement in such a way that extensive cultivation was always made a stepping stone to military conquests.

Like the great Mughal, Akbar, Maharaja Ala Singh possessed great political sagacity, a steady intellect and a clear vision. He had the best qualities of a Sikh Jat, energy, courage, shrewdness and an indomitable spirit, that would never accept a defeat. He understood the tenets of Sikhism and practised in life. He acted upon the words of Guru Gobind Singh, “May the kettle (Degh) and the sword (tegh) hand in hand in the Sikh world. Qazi Noor Mohammad, a contemporary of Maharaja Ala Singh, and Lapel H Griffon, a modern historian, have paid glowing tributes to the prudence and gallantry of Maharaja Ala Singh.

The Punjabi translation of the book *Life of Maharaja Ala Singh of Patiala and His Times* by Dr Harinder Kaur Sethi is a commendable work. The Punjabi version of the book is understood well and appreciated by readers of all hues. The book opens a vista of the by gone era full of chaos and anarchy. The rhythmic prose and narrative style of Historical events makes the reader believe as if he were also a part of that epoch making event of history.

“Ladies of Note closely connected with Maharaja Ala Singh” is a very thought provoking chapter. The lives and deeds of the three remarkable woman of the house of Patiala — Fateh Kaur, Pardhan and Rajindran with their sagacity and grand vision, greatly helped in founding and defending the Patiala Raj. They have been a role model for Sikh ladies for all times.

The book under review is an excellent exposition of Sikh history and culture. I wish the translator could have given the maps, the footnotes and the appendices (which have been given in the original) in order to make the book more authentic.

## Oral History

### ਬਿਆਨ ਡਾਕਟਰ ਗੋਪਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਰਦੀ

ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ ਕਰਤਾ : ਡਾਕਟਰ ਕਿਰਪਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ

(ਲੜੀ ਜੋੜਨ ਲਈ ਪਿਛਲਾ ਅੰਕ ਦੇਖੋ)

ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ : ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਗਲਬਾਤ ਤੋਂ ਪਤਾ ਲਗਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਬਲਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ ਓਵਰ ਐਂਡ ਅਲੋਨ (over and alone) ਮਾਸਟਰ ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਸੀ।

ਉਤਰ : ਮੇਰੇ ਮਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਇਮਪਰੈਸ਼ਨ ਇਹੀ ਹੈ। ਉਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਲੀਡਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਮਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਇਹ ਹੀ ਇਮਪਰੈਸ਼ਨ ਸੀ। ਅਗਰ ਇਕ ਗੱਲ ਦਾ ਬਰਿਟਸ਼ ਗੌਰਮਿੰਟ, ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਤੇ ਮੁਸਲਿਮ ਲੀਗ ਉਤੇ ਸਭ ਤੋ ਪ੍ਰਭਾਵ ਇਹੀ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਜੇ ਫੈਸਲਾ ਸਰਦਾਰ ਬਲਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ ਕਰ ਆਏਗਾ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਸਟਰ ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਜਾਂ ਅਕਾਲੀ ਦਲ ਨਾਂਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰੇਗਾ। ਅਲਬਤਾ ਇਹ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਫੈਸਲਾ ਮਾਸਟਰ ਜੀ ਕਰ ਆਉਣ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਸਰਦਾਰ ਬਲਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ ਕਹਿ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਮੰਨਦਾ ਅਤੇ ਇਹ ਹੋਇਆ ਵੀ। ਜਿਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਕੈਬਨਿਟ ਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਸਟੇਟਮੈਂਟ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਔਰ ਮਾਸਟਰ ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਮਨਜ਼ੂਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦਾ। ਸਰਦਾਰ ਬਲਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਅਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਅਕਸੈਪਟ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਾਂ। ਇਹ ਉਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਹੋਇਆ ਜਦੋਂ ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਦਾ 1947 ਵਿੱਚ ਐਨਾਲ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਉਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਮਾਸਟਰ ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਅਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਦੇ ਬਰਖਿਲਾਫ਼ ਲੜਾਂਗੇ ਅਤੇ ਰੇਡੀਉ ਦੇ ਉਤੇ ਸਰਦਾਰ ਬਲਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਕਹਿ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਕਿ ਇਟ ਇਜ਼ ਏ ਸੈਟਲਮੈਂਟ, ਵੀ ਅਕਸੈਪਟ ਇਟ (It is a settlement, we accept it)। ਜਿਹੜੀ ਤਿੰਨ ਜੂਨ ਦੀ ਪਲੈਨ ਸੀ। ਮਾਸਟਰ ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਜਿਸਨੂੰ ਕਿਹਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਅਸੀਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਮੰਨਾਂਗੇ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਅਕਾਲ ਤਖ਼ਤ ਤੇ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਸੋਹਾਂ ਸੁਗੰਧਾਂ ਚੁਕ ਕੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਅਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਬਿਲਕੁਲ ਅਕਸੈਪਟ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਾਂਗੇ ਲੇਕਿੰਨ ਸਰਦਾਰ ਬਲਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਰੇਡੀਉ ਉਤੇ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਰਾਤ ਕਹਿ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਇਟ ਇਜ਼ ਏ ਸੈਟਲਮੈਂਟ ਐਂਡ ਵੀ ਵਿਲ ਐਕਸੈਪਟ ਇਟ। ਹੋਰ ਕੋਈ ਚਾਰਾ ਨਹੀਂ।

ਮਗਰ ਮੈਂ ਇਹ ਸਮਝਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਕਿਊਜ਼ (Accuse) ਕਿਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ। ਸਾਡੀ ਪੌਜ਼ੀਸ਼ਨ ਉਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਐਸੀ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਵੱਧ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਧ ਅਸੀਂ ਮਾਰ ਮਾਰ ਕੇ ਇਹ ਗੱਲ ਕਰ ਸਕੇ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਜਿਸ ਨੂੰ ਜਿਨਾਹ ਕਹਿੰਦਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਲੰਗੜਾ ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਹੈ, ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਮੈਂ ਮਨਜ਼ੂਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦਾ। ਉਸ ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਦੇ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਜਿੰਨਾ ਇਲਾਕਾ ਅਸੀਂ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਬਚਾ ਸਕਦੇ ਸਾ ਉਹ ਬਚਾ ਲਿਆ। ਅਲਟੀਮੇਟਲੀ ਉਸ ਇਲਾਕੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਸਾਡੀ ਆਬਾਦੀ ਵਸੀ। ਉਹੀ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸੂਬਾ ਬਣਿਆ। ਉਹੀ ਡੋਮੀਨੇਟਡ (dominated) ਸਿੱਖ ਏਰੀਆ ਹੈ। ਅਗਰ ਉਹ ਨਾ ਬਣਦਾ ਤਾਂ ਸਾਡੇ ਕੋਲ ਜੋ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ ਉਹ ਵੀ ਨਾ ਮਿਲਦਾ। ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਮੈਂ ਸਮਝਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਵੱਧ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਧ ਇਹੀ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਕਿਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੀ ਵੰਡ ਕਰਾਈ ਜਾਵੇ। ਉਹ ਇਹ ਕਰਵਾ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਗਈ ਅਤੇ ਇਹ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਨੂੰ ਮਨਾ ਕੇ ਤੇ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਮਰਜ਼ੀ ਨਾਲ ਕਰਵਾਈ ਗਈ। ਅਗਰ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਨਾ ਮੰਨਦੀ ਅਤੇ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਹਿੰਦੂਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਕਹਿ ਦਿੰਦੀ ਕਿ ਅਸੀਂ ਓਵਰ ਆਲ ਸੈਟਲਮੈਂਟ (Overall Settlement) ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਦੀ ਕਰਨਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਾਂ। ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਨਾ ਰਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਬਿਲਕੁਲ

ਡੂਮ (doom) ਹੋ ਗਏ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਚਲੇ ਸੀ। ਕੋਈ ਚੀਜ਼ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਬਚਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਕਦੀ ਸੀ।

ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ : ਜਿਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਸਰਦਾਰ ਬਲਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ ਮਾਸਟਰ ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਹੋਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਇਨਡੀਪੈਂਡੈਂਟ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਕੋਈ ਐਕਸ਼ਨ ਕਰਦਾ ਸੀ ਤਾਂ ਕੀ was he under the influence of Congress or was he under the influence of British Government ?

ਉਤਰ : He was under no influence of both and particularly he wanted to protect his own interest also.

ਭਾਵ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਵੀ ਕੋਈ ਇਨਟੈਰਿਮ ਗੌਰਮਿੰਟ ਵਿੱਚ ਆਵੇ ਉਹ ਸਿੱਖ ਆਵੇ ਅਤੇ ਉਹ ਸਿਰਫ ਬਲਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ ਆਵੇ। ਇਹ ਉਸਦਾ ਵੱਡਾ ਮੇਜਰ ਇਨਟਰੈਸਟ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਇਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਬਰਿਟਿਸ਼ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਪਤਾ, ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਪਤਾ ਅਤੇ ਮੁਸਲਿਮ ਲੀਗ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਪਤਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਅਗਰ ਬਲਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਲੈ ਲਿਆ ਜਾਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਮਾਸਟਰ ਜੀ ਵਿਰੋਧਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਨਗੇ।

ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ : ਜਿਹੜੀ ਕੈਬਨਿਟ ਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਪਲੈਨ ਸਨ ਉਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਮਾਸਟਰ ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਸੀ। As the nominee of Interim Govt. or his nominee.

ਉਤਰ : ਮਗਰ ਮਾਸਟਰ ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਜਿਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਆਪਣਾ ਨਾਮ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਉਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਅਕਸੈਪਟ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ। ਸਰਦਾਰ ਬਲਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਮਰਜ਼ੀ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਅਤੇ ਫਿਰ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਅਕਸੈਪਟ ਕਰਨਾ ਪਿਆ। ਉਥੇ ਹੋਰ ਕੋਈ ਚਾਰਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ। ਮਾਸਟਰ ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਹੈਲਪਲੈਸ (helpless) ਸੀ।

ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ : ਮਾਸਟਰ ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਹੈਲਪਲੈਸ ਕਿਉਂ ਸੀ ?

ਉਤਰ : ਸੁਆਲ ਇਹ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਮਾਸਟਰ ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਪਿਛੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਐਮ ਐਲ ਏ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਰਹੇ। ਆਰਗੇਨਾਈਜ਼ੇਸ਼ਨ ਸੀ ਪਰ ਐਮ ਐਲ ਏਜ਼ ਕਿਸੇ ਨਾ ਕਿਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਬਲਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਨਾਲ ਮਿਲਾ ਲਏ ਸਨ। ਇਹ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਮਿਲਾ ਲਏ ਸਨ। ਅਤੇ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਆਪਣੀਆਂ ਗੋਲੀਆਂ ਖੇਡ ਰਿਹਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਇਕ ਵਾਰੀ ਜੇ ਬਲਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੈਂਟਰ ਦੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਆ ਜਾਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿੱਚ ਵਜ਼ੀਰ ਹੋ ਜਾਵਾਂ। ਉਹ ਆਪਣੇ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਸੀਟ ਬਣਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਸੀ। ਇਸ ਲਈ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੋਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਮਿਲਕੇ ਆਪਣਾ ਇਕੱਠਾ ਜੁਟ ਬਣਾ ਲਿਆ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਸਰਦਾਰ ਬਲਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੈਂਟਰ ਦੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਆ ਜਾਣ ਤੇ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿੱਚ ਆ ਜਾਣ ਅਤੇ ਅਖ਼ੀਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਇਹੀ ਹੀ ਹੋਇਆ ਅਤੇ ਮਜ਼ਬੂਰ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਗੌਰਮਿੰਟ ਵਿੱਚ ਲੈਣਾ ਪਿਆ।

ਇਕ ਗੱਲ ਜਿਹੜੀ ਕਿ ਅਜੇ ਤੱਕ ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਲੱਗਿਆ ਉਹ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਤੇ ਮੈਂ ਮਹਾਤਮਾਂ ਗਾਂਧੀ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲਣ ਗਏ। ਇਹ ਜੁਲਾਈ 1947 ਦਾ ਸਮਾਂ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਸਥਿਤੀ ਗੰਭੀਰ ਸੀ। ਅਜੇ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਇਧਰੋਂ ਗਏ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਨ ਅਤੇ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਡੀ ਮੈਂ ਸਮਝਦਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਜੇ ਗਲਤੀ ਅਸਾਂ ਕੀਤੀ ਕਿ ਜਿਹੜੀ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਬਾਹਰ ਕਢਕੇ ਈਸਟ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿੱਚ ਧਕ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਅਗਰ ਉਹ ਰਹਿ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਤਾਂ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਤੇ ਅਸੀਂ ਜੋ ਵੀ ਡਿਕਟੇਸ਼ਨ ਅਸੀਂ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਉਹ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਨੂੰ ਮਨਜ਼ੂਰ ਕਰਨੀ ਪੈਣੀ ਸੀ।

ਪਿਛੋਂ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਓਵਰ ਆਲ ਸਾਰੇ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਮਿਲਕੇ ਐਕਸ਼ਨ ਲੈਣਾ ਪੈਂਦਾ ਸੀ। ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਚਲੇ ਗਏ ਸਨ ਅਤੇ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਉਹੀ ਬੋਲੀ ਬੋਲਦੇ ਸਨ ਜੋ ਬਾਕੀ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਬੋਲਦਾ ਸੀ। ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਦੀ ਪੁਛ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਰਹੀ ਸਾਡੀ ਪੁਛ ਵੀ ਘਟ ਗਈ ਸੀ। ਮਗਰ ਅਜੇ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਗਏ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਨ। ਅਸੀਂ ਮਹਾਤਮਾ ਗਾਂਧੀ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲਣ ਗਏ ਅਤੇ ਅਸੀਂ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਜਿਸ ਇਲਾਕੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਕਿਸੇ

ਦੀ ਬਹੁ-ਗਿਣਤੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁਣ ਉਹੀ ਗੱਲ ਜੋ ਕੈਬਨਿਟ ਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਨੂੰ ਅਸੀਂ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੀਤੀ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਸਰਦਾਰ ਬਲਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਾਂਹ ਕਰ ਆਏ ਸੀ, ਉਹੀ ਹੀ ਗਲ ਅਸੀਂ ਹੁਣ ਮਹਾਤਮਾ ਗਾਂਧੀ ਕੋਲੋਂ ਮੰਨਵਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਗਏ ਅਤੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਹੁਣ ਸਾਡੀ ਮੱਦਦ ਕਰੋ। ਮਹਾਤਮਾ ਗਾਂਧੀ ਬੜੇ ਫਰਸਟਰੇਟਡ ਮੂਡ (Frustrated mood) ਵਿੱਚ ਸਨ। ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਮੇਰੀ ਕੋਈ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਮੈਂ ਸੁਨਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ। ਆਪ ਸਰਦਾਰ ਪਟੇਲ ਸੇ ਬੋਲੋ। ਆਪ ਪੰਡਤ ਜੀ ਸੇ ਬੋਲੋ। ਮੇਰੀ ਤੇ ਕੋਈ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਮੈਂ ਸੁਨਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ। ਆਪ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਟੇਟ ਚਾਹਤੇ ਹੋ ਆਪ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਟੇਟ ਚਾਹਤੇ ਹੈਂ। ਜਿਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਮੈਂ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਅਸੀਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਟੇਟ ਨਹੀਂ ਚਾਹਤੇ ਅਸੀਂ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸਪੀਕਿੰਗ ਸਟੇਟ (Punjabi Speaking State) ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਾਂ। ਅਸੀਂ ਉਹ ਸਟੇਟ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਾਂ ਜਿਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਕਿਸੇ ਕੌਮ ਦੀ ਬਹੁ-ਗਿਣਤੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਹਿੰਦੂ, ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ, ਸਿੱਖ ਬਰਾਬਰ ਬਰਾਬਰ ਹਨ। ਤਾਂ ਮਹਾਤਮਾ ਗਾਂਧੀ ਨੇ ਫੌਰਨ ਆਪਣਾ ਪੈਤੜਾ ਬਦਲ ਲਿਆ ਤੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਅਗਰ ਐਸੀ ਬਾਤ ਹੈ ਤੋਂ ਇਸਕਾ ਬਲਿਉ ਪਰਿੰਟ ਛਾਪੋ। ਕਿਸੀ ਕੋ ਬੋਲੋ। ਉਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਕਿਸੀ ਨੇ ਬਲਿਉ ਪਰਿੰਟ ਛਾਪਣ ਦੀ ਹਿੰਮਤ ਨਾ ਕੀਤੀ। ਸਾਰੇ ਡਰਦੇ ਸਨ ਕਿ ਅਗਰ ਰਾਵੀ ਦੇ ਉਤੇ ਹੱਦ ਬੰਨਾ ਪਾ ਲਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਖ ਕੌਮ ਖਾ ਜਾਏਗੀ। ਕਿਉਂ ਕਿ ਅਸੀਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਘਟੋ ਘਟ ਚਨਾਬ ਉਤੇ ਹੱਦ ਬੰਨਾ ਅਸੀਂ ਬਣਾਉਣਾ ਹੈ।

ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ : ਜਿਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਸਰ ਸਟੂਆਰਡ ਕਰਿਪਸ 1942 ਵਿੱਚ ਇਥੇ ਆਇਆ ਉਦੋਂ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੇ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਮੈਮੋਰੈਂਡਮ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਹੱਦ ਬੰਨੀ ਲਿਖਤੀ ਰਾਵੀ ਮੰਨੀ। ਉਦੋਂ ਰੌਲਾ ਕਿਉਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਪਿਆ। ਹੁਣ ਫਿਰ ਕੀ ਗੱਲ ਸੀ, ਇਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਦੱਸੋ ?

ਉਤਰ : ਗੱਲ ਇਹ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਫੌਰਨ ਬਾਅਦ ਆਜ਼ਾਦ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੀ ਸਕੀਮ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਬਹੁਤੀ ਚਲਾਈ। ਬਾਅਦ ਵਿੱਚ ਹੀ ਜ਼ੋਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਥੋੜੀ ਜਿਹੀ ਵਿਰੋਧਤਾ ਰਾਵਲਪਿੰਡੀ ਜਿਲੇ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਹੋਣੀ ਸੀ ਉਹ ਅਕਸੈਪਟ (accept) ਕਰ ਲੈਣੀ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਕੁਝ ਇਹ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਹਿੰਦੂਆਂ ਨੇ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਦਾ ਜੋ ਅਸੂਲ ਹੈ ਉਹ ਮੰਨਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਅਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਜੇ ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਬਣਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਚਨਾਬ ਦੇ ਉਤੇ ਅਸੀਂ ਹੱਦ ਬੰਨੀ ਪਾ ਲੈਂਦੇ ਹਾਂ। ਹਿੰਦੂਆਂ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਅਸੀਂ ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਮੰਨ ਲੈਣਾ ਹੈ। ਮਗਰ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਮਖਾਲਫਤ ਕਰਨੀ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤੀ। ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਮਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਇਹ ਗੱਲ ਤਾਂ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਘੱਟੋ ਘੱਟ ਆਜ਼ਾਦ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਤਾਂ ਬਣ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਹੁਣ ਜਦੋਂ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੱਦ ਨੂੰ ਤਿੰਨ ਚਾਰ ਸਾਲ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਰਹੋ ਤੇ ਫਿਰ ਕਹੋ ਕਿ ਰਾਵੀ ਵੀ ਬਣ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਜ਼ਮੀਨਾਂ ਮਿੰਟਗੁਮਰੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਲਾਇਲਪੁਰ ਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਇਲਾਕਿਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਜਿਹੜੇ ਅਮੀਰ ਆਦਮੀ ਸਨ। ਜਿਹੜੇ ਅਕਾਲੀ ਦਲ ਦੇ ਸਪੋਰਟਰ (supporter) ਸਨ, ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਹੀ ਦੇਈ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹੋ। ਤੁਸੀਂ ਮੰਗੋ ਉਹ ਅੱਗੋਂ ਨਾ ਦੇਣ ਤਾਂ ਵੱਖਰੀ ਗੱਲ ਹੈ। ਸੋ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਰੌਲਾ ਪਾ ਪਾ ਕੇ ਅਤੇ ਕਹਿ ਕਹਿ ਕੇ ਕਿ ਅਸੀਂ ਚਨਾਬ ਜ਼ਰੂਰ ਮਨਾਵਾਂਗੇ। ਉਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਰਾਵੀ ਦੇ ਬਾਰੇ ਕਹਿਕੇ ਆਪਣਾ ਗਲਾ ਕਟਾਣ ਦੇ ਬਰਾਬਰ ਸੀ। 1942 ਵਿੱਚ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਇਹ ਗੱਲ ਕਹੀ ਸੀ ਪਰ ਪਿਛੋਂ ਬਦਲ ਗਏ ਸੀ।

ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ : ਜਿਨਾਹ ਨੇ ਜਿਹੜੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਟੇਟ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਦੇਣ ਦੀ ਪੇਸ਼ਕਸ਼ ਕੀਤੀ ਸੀ, ਉਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਉਤਰ : ਮਿਸਟਰ ਜਿਨਾਹ ਨੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੇਲੇ ਵੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਟੇਟ ਦੀ ਪੇਸ਼ਕਸ਼ ਵਿਦਿਨ ਪਕਿਸਤਾਨ (Within Pakistan) ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਕੀਤੀ। ਉਹ ਇਹੀ ਕਹਿੰਦਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਆ ਜਾਓ। ਤੁਸੀਂ ਹਿੰਦੂਆਂ ਦੀ ਗਲ ਨਾ ਕਰੋ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਮੈਂ ਆਪ ਸਾਰੇ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਸੈਟਲਮੈਂਟ ਕਰਨੀ ਹੈ। ਅਸੀਂ ਜਦੋਂ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਇੰਨੀ ਫੀਸਦੀ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲੇ। ਇੰਨੇ ਫੀਸਦੀ ਹਿੰਦੂਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲੇ। ਇੰਨੇ ਫੀ ਸਦੀ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਰਹਿ ਜਾਣ। ਉਹ ਕਹਿੰਦਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਹਿੰਦੂਆਂ ਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਨਾ ਕਰੋ। ਦੂਜੀ ਗੱਲ ਇਹ ਕਿ ਜਦੋਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਾਂ। ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕੀ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਹੋ ? ਤਾਂ ਜਿਨਾਹ

ਕਹਿੰਦਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਦਾ ਅਸੂਲ ਮੰਨੋ। ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਗਲ ਕਰਾਂਗੇ ਤੇ ਜਦੋਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਅੱਛਾ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸ਼ਰਤਾਂ ਤੇ ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਨਾਲ ਗਲ ਕਰਨੀ ਮੰਨਦੇ ਹਾਂ ਤਾਂ ਉਸ ਨੇ ਗਲ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਮਝੀ ਬਲਕਿ ਉਹ ਕਹਿੰਦਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਦੋ ਸਫਿਆਂ ਦਾ ਡਾਕੂਮੈਂਟ ਵੀ ਮੈਂ ਦੋ ਮਹੀਨਿਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਪੜ੍ਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਕਿਆ। ਇਸ ਦਾ ਮਤਲਬ ਇਹ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਉਸ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਤੇ ਸਾਡੀ ਇਨਟੈਲੀਜੈਂਸੀ ਨੂੰ ਬਿਲਕੁਲ ਤੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਫਿਊਚਰ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਇਨਸਲਟ ਕਰਨਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦਾ ਸੀ। ਦੇਣ ਲਈ ਕੁਝ ਵੀ ਤਿਆਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ।

ਇਹ ਗਲ ਬਿਲਕੁਲ ਗਲਤ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਕੁਝ ਦਿਵਾਣ ਲਈ ਤਿਆਰ ਸੀ ਜਾਂ ਮਿਸਟਰ ਜਿਨਾਹ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਟੇਟ ਦੇਣ ਲਈ ਤਿਆਰ ਸੀ। (Evin within Pakistan) ਇਹ ਸਭ ਕੁਝ ਝੂਠ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਇਹ ਝੂਠੀ ਕਹਾਣੀ ਘੜੀ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ।

ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ : ਮੇਜਰ ਸ਼ਾਰਟ ਬਾਰੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਖਿਆਲ ਦੱਸੋ ?

ਉਤਰ : ਮੈਂ ਮੇਜਰ ਸ਼ਾਰਟ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਘਰ ਵੀ ਦੋ ਵਾਰ ਬੁਲਾਇਆ ਸੀ ਉਹ ਬਜਾਇ ਇਸ ਗੱਲ ਦੇ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਚਾਹੁੰਦਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖ ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹੋ ਜਾਣ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਵੀ ਇਹੀ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੀ ਸੀ। ਉਹ ਹਮੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਇਹੀ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖ ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਾਣ। ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਜਿਨਾਂ ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਤਕੜਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਸੀ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਹੀ ਜਿਆਦਾ ਬ੍ਰਿਟਿਸ਼ ਇਮਪੀਰੀਅਲਇਜ਼ਮ ਇਥੇ ਤਕੜੀ ਹੋਣੀ ਸੀ। ਅਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਗਲ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਦੇ ਸਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਬਹੁਤੇ ਅਸੀਂ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਨਾਲ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਸੀ ਪਰ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਧਕ ਕੇ ਰਾਜ਼ੀ ਸੀ। ਉਹ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ ਜਿਨੇ ਵੀ ਆਦਮੀ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਮਿਲਦੇ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਦੋ ਹਿੱਸਿਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੰਡੇ ਜਾਓਗੇ ਪਰ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਦੇ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਨਾ ਨਿਕਲੋ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਮਿਲ ਜਾਓ ਅਤੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਮਿਲਕੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਤੇ ਰਾਜ ਕਰੋਗੇ।

ਲੇਕਿਨ ਮੈਂ ਸਮਝਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਨੂੰ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਬਣਾਕੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਜਿਹੜੀ ਜੜ ਗਾਲੀ ਹੈ ਸ਼ਾਇਦ ਸਾਡਾ ਤਾਂ ਜੋ ਕੁਝ ਹੋਣਾ ਸੀ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ, ਪਰ ਮੈਂ ਸਮਝਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਵਾਰ ਇਕ ਅਜਿਹਾ ਇਲਾਕਾ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਹੈ ਜਿਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਸੀਂ ਬਹੁ-ਗਿਣਤੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਹਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਇਹ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਕੁਰਬਾਨੀ ਦੇ ਕੇ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਬੜੀ ਇਕ ਲਹੂ ਦੀ ਨਦੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਦੀ ਲੰਘ ਕੇ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਹੈ।

ਲੇਕਿਨ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਜੋ ਆਪਣੀ ਜੜ ਗਾਲੀ ਹੈ ਜਿਤਨੇ ਛੇ ਸੱਤ ਕਰੋੜ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਹਨ, ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਸੈਕੰਡ ਸਿਟੀਜ਼ਨ ਬਣਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਹੈ। ਦੋ ਹਿੱਸਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਈਸਟ ਅਤੇ ਵੈਸਟ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੰਡ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਹੈ। ਹੁਣ ਈਸਟ ਵੀ ਵਖਰਾ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਵੈਸਟ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਝਗੜਾ ਚਲ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਇਸ ਕੌਮ ਦਾ ਕੀ ਹੋਣਾ ਹੈ? ਉਹ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਕੌਮ ਜਿਸ ਨੂੰ 40% ਮਹਾਤਮਾ ਗਾਂਧੀ ਜੀ ਸੈਟਰਲ ਗੌਰਮਿੰਟ ਵਿੱਚ ਦੇ ਕੇ ਰਾਜ਼ੀ ਸੀ। ਸੈਟਰਲ ਗੌਰਮਿੰਟ ਦੀਆਂ ਪਾਵਰਜ਼ (Powers) ਘਟਾ ਕੇ ਰਾਜ਼ੀ ਸੀ। ਪਰੋਵਿੰਸੀਅਲ ਗੌਰਮਿੰਟ (Provincial Govt) ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਕੋਲ ਪੰਜ ਹੋਣੀਆਂ ਸਨ ਅਤੇ ਕੋਈ ਵੀ ਤਾਕਤ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਦੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਅਤੇ ਬੰਗਾਲ ਨੂੰ ਵੰਡ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਕਦੀ ਸੀ। ਅਗਰ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਨਾ ਬਣਾਉਂਦੇ। 50% ਉਹ ਫੌਜ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਨ। 40% ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਗੌਰਮਿੰਟ ਵਿੱਚ ਦੇਣ ਲਈ ਤਿਆਰ ਸਨ। ਪੰਜ ਸੂਬੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਰਹੱਦ ਦੇ ਸਾਰਾ ਆਸਾਮ, ਫਰੰਟੀਅਰ ਪੰਜਾਬ, ਸਿੰਧ ਇਹ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਕੋਲ ਹੋਣੇ ਸਨ। ਅਤੇ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਹਾਲਾਤਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਬਾਕੀ ਮੀਨੋਰਟੀਜ਼ (Minorities) ਤੇ ਰਾਜ ਕਰਨਾ ਸੀ। ਸਾਰਾ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੀ। ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਬਣਾਕੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਕੌਮ ਨੂੰ ਹਮੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਇਸ ਸਬ ਕੰਟੀਨੈਂਟ (Sub continent) ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਖਤਮ ਕਰ ਲਿਆ।

ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ : ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਾਰੇ ਕੀ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਹਨ ?

ਉਤਰ : ਗਿਆਨੀ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਮੁਤਅਲਕ ਮੇਰੇ ਖਿਆਲ ਬਹੁਤ ਚੰਗੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਹਨ; ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਇਹ ਆਦਮੀ ਬੜਾ ਮੌਕਾ ਤਲਾਸ਼ ਸੀ। ਇਹ ਆਦਮੀ ਬੜੇ ਦਰੋਹਾਸ਼ ਸੀ। ਇਸ ਆਦਮੀ ਦਾ ਬਾਹਰ ਦਾ ਜੋ ਪਹਿਰਾਵਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਆਦਮੀ ਆਪਣੇ ਲਈ ਕੁਝ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦਾ। ਇਹ ਕੌਮ ਦਾ ਫਕੀਰ ਹੈ। ਇਹ

ਕਪੜੇ ਮੈਲੇ ਪਾਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਆਪਣੇ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਕੁਝ ਨਹੀਂ ਰਖਦਾ। ਘਰ ਬਾਰ ਛੱਡ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਸਾਰਾ ਇਸਦਾ ਪੋਜ਼ (Pose) ਸੀ।

ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਜਿਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਵੀ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਤਾਕਤ ਮਿਲੀ ਇਸ ਨੇ ਛੱਡੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਚਾਹੇ ਅਕਾਲੀ ਦਲ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਹੋਣ ਵੇਲੇ ਤੇ ਖਾਸ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਅਕਾਲੀ ਦਲ ਨੂੰ ਤੋੜ ਕੇ ਇਹ ਅਗੇ ਤੋਂ ਸਿਆਸਤ ਵਿੱਚ ਦਖਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਦੇਵੇਗਾ ਤੇ ਕੇਵਲ ਇਹ ਕਲਚਰਲ ਬਾਡੀ (cultural body) ਰਹੇਗੀ। ਸਿਰਫ ਇਸ ਲਈ ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਵਜ਼ੀਰ ਬਣ ਜਾਵਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਇਹ ਦੋ ਵਾਰੀ ਉਸਨੇ ਕੀਤਾ ਤੇ ਅਕਾਲੀ ਦਲ ਇਕ ਨਵਾਂ ਬਣਿਆ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਕਿ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਨੂੰ ਮਦਦ ਕਰਦਾ ਸੀ। ਇਹ ਮਾਸਟਰ ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਅਕਾਲੀ ਦਲ ਦੇ ਬਰਖਿਲਾਫ ਸੀ।

ਜਿਤਨੀ ਉਸਦੀ ਹਿਸਟਰੀ ਉਸਦੇ ਬਾਅਦ ਦੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ ਉਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਦੇਖੋ ਤਾਂ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਪਤਾ ਲਗੇਗਾ ਕਿ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਸਿਰਫ ਅਪਰਚਿਊਨਿਸਟ (opportunist) ਰੋਲ ਕਰਨ ਦੇ, ਭਰਾ ਤੋਂ ਭਰਾ ਪਾੜਨ ਦੇ, ਸਾਜ਼ਸ਼ ਕਰਨ ਤੇ ਇਕ ਦੂਜੇ ਤੇ ਚਿਕੜ ਸੁਟਣ ਤੇ ਬਲਕਿ ਆਪਣੇ ਸਾਥੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਕੈਦ ਕਰਾਉਣ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਦੂਜਿਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਰਲਕੇ ਜੋ ਉਸਨੇ ਰੋਲ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ ਮੇਰੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਸਾ ਲਈ ਕੋਈ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਨਹੀਂ ਹਨ। ਔਰ ਮਾਸਟਰ ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਵੀ ਖੁਸ਼ਕਿਸਮਤੀ ਨਾਲ ਜਿਸ ਨੂੰ ਉਸ ਨੇ ਬਿਲਡ (Build) ਕੀਤਾ ਸੀ ਉਸ ਨੇ ਵੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਰਾਏ ਆਪਣੀ ਜੀਵਨ ਕਥਾ ਜੋ ਕਿ ਤਾਬ “ਜੀਵਨ ਅਤੇ ਸੰਘਰਸ਼” ਹੈ ਉਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਇਹੀ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਬਾਅਦ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਲੜਕੇ ਜਸਵੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਛਾਪੀ ਹੈ।

ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ : ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸੂਬੇ ਦੇ ਸੰਘਰਸ਼ ਲਈ ਜੋ ਜੋ ਯੋਗਦਾਨ ਹੈ, ਉਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਉਤਰ : ਮੈਂ ਤਾਂ ਇਹੀ ਸਮਝਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸੂਬੇ ਦਾ ਪਹਿਲਾ ਨਕਸ਼ਾ ਜੋ ਸੀ ਉਹ ਮੈਂ ਲਿਬਰੇਟਰ (Liberator) ਅਖ਼ਬਾਰ ਦੇ ਵਿੱਚ 1947 ਦੇ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਵਿੱਚ ਹੀ ਛਾਪ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਇਹ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਵਾਰੀ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਜਿਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਅਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਨਕਸ਼ਾ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੀਤਾ ਕਿ ਇਕ ਇਲਾਕਾ ਐਸਾ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜਿਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਡੋਮੀਨੇਸ਼ਨ (Domination) ਹੋਵੇ ਹਾਲਾਂ ਕਿ ਉਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਮੈਜੋਰਿਟੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ। ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਮਹਾਤਮਾ ਗਾਂਧੀ ਨੂੰ ਜਦੋਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਮਿਲੇ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਵੀ ਇਹੀ ਗੱਲ ਕਹੀ ਸੀ। ਲਿਬਰੇਟਰ ਅਖ਼ਬਾਰ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਪੰਜ ਸਾਲ ਚਲਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਮੈਂ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸੂਬੇ ਦੀ ਹਮਾਇਤ ਕਰਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਲੇਕਿਨ ਇਕ ਗਲ ਮੇਰੇ ਮਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਜੋ ਰੜਕਦੀ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸੂਬਾ ਬਿਨਾ ਸੰਘਰਸ਼ ਮਿਲ ਸਕਦਾ ਸੀ। ਕੈਬਨਿਟ ਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਨੇ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੀਤੀ ਸੀ। ਮਹਾਤਮਾ ਗਾਂਧੀ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਬਲਿਊ ਪਰਿੰਟ (Blue Print) ਬਣਾ ਕੇ ਦਿਉ। ਜਦ ਇਹ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹੋ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ ਤਾਂ ਜ਼ੋਰ ਪਾ ਕੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸੂਬੇ ਦਾ ਅਸੂਲ ਮਨਵਾ ਕੇ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੇ ਸਨ।

ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਜਦੋਂ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਰਿਜ਼ਨਲ ਫਾਰਮੂਲਾ 1956 ਵਿੱਚ ਮੰਨ ਲਿਆ ਉਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸੂਬੇ ਨੂੰ ਮੰਨਵਾ ਸਕਦੇ ਸਨ। ਮੈਂ ਸਮਝਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਜਿਤਨਾ ਸੰਘਰਸ਼ ਤੇ ਨਾਅਰਾ ਬਾਜ਼ੀ ਤੇ ਕੌਮ ਦਾ ਪੈਸਾ ਲੱਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਕੌਮ ਵਿੱਚ ਫੁਟ ਪਈ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਤਕਾਜ਼ਾ ਚਲਿਆ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਨਾ ਚਲਦਾ ਜੇਕਰ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਬਤੌਰ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਲੋਗਨ (Sikh slogan) ਦੇ ਪਰੋਜੈਕਟ ਕਰਨ ਦੇ ਬਜਾਏ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸਪੀਕਿੰਗ ਪੀਉਪਲ ਦੇ ਫਰੰਟ ਦੀ ਮਾਰਫਤ ਪਰਚਾਰ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਤਾਂ ਇਸਦਾ ਨਕਸ਼ਾ ਕੁਝ ਹੋਰ ਹੋਣਾ ਸੀ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਅਸੀਂ ਅੱਜ ਵੀ ਕਹਿ ਰਹੇ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਸਾਡੇ ਇਲਾਕੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਕੱਢ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਹਨ ਇਹ ਕਦੇ ਵੀ ਨਾ ਕਢੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ। ਜੇ ਇਸਦੀ ਸਟਰੱਗਲ (Struggle) ਦੀ ਬੁਨਿਆਦ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਲੋਕ ਹੁੰਦੇ। ਉਹ ਨਿਰੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਨਾ ਹੁੰਦੇ। ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਮੈਂ ਉਸ ਬੇਸਿਸ ਦੇ ਉਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸੂਬਾ ਬਣਾਣ ਦੇ ਹੱਕ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ। ਹੁਣ ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਹਾਂ। ਮੈਂ ਅਜੇ ਵੀ ਕਹਿੰਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖ ਉਥੇ ਸਰਦਾਰੀ ਕਰਨਗੇ। ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਕਲਚਰ ਉਥੇ ਪ੍ਰਫੁੱਲਤ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ ਲੇਕਿਨ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੂਬਾ ਬਣਾਕੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਬਾਕੀ ਦੁਨੀਆਂ

ਦੇ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਕਟ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਕਦੇ।

ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਦੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਰਹਿ ਕੇ ਅਗਰ ਇਹ ਕਹੀਏ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੂਬਾ ਬਣ ਜਾਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਸਾਡੇ ਲਈ ਗਲਤੀ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ। ਕਸ਼ਮੀਰ ਦੇ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਵੀ ਇਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਹਿ ਰਹੇ। ਉਹ ਵੀ ਕਹਿ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਜੰਮੂ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਜ਼ਰੂਰ ਰਹਿਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ ਉਹ ਜੰਮੂ ਨੂੰ ਕਟਵਾਕੇ ਰਾਜੀ ਨਹੀਂ। ਉਹ ਵੀ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਕਸ਼ਮੀਰ ਨੂੰ ਸੈਕੂਲਰ ਪਾਰਟ ਅਤੇ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਨਾਲ ਰਖਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਾਂ। ਸਾਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਇਹ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਇਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਡਾ ਭਲਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਿ ਅਸੀਂ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਖਿਲਰੇ ਹੋਏ ਹਾਂ ਬਲਕਿ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਦੀ ਤਾਕਤ ਜਦ ਤਕ ਸਾਡੇ ਪਿਛੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ ਤਦ ਤਕ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸੂਬਾ ਕਦੇ ਪਰਫੁੱਲਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ। ਇਹ ਮੇਰੀ ਵਿਚਾਰਧਾਰਾ ਹੈ। ਅਗਰ ਮੇਰੀ ਮੁਖਾਲਫਿਤ ਮਗਰੋਂ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸੂਬੇ ਬਾਰੇ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸੂਬੇ ਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੂਬਾ ਬਣਾ ਕੇ ਨਾ ਰਖੋ। ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸਪੀਕਿੰਗ ਦਾ ਪਲੇਟ ਫਾਰਮ ਬਣਾ ਕੇ ਲੜੋ ਵੀ ਅਤੇ ਲਵੋ ਵੀ।

ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ : Kindly throw some light on the Akali Congress relations during the fifties of the present century.

ਉਤਰ : ਇਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਤਾਂ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਸਮਝ ਲਉ ਕਿ ਕਈ ਵਾਰੀ ਅਕਾਲੀ ਦਲ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਇਕ ਕਲਚਰਲ ਬਾਡੀ ਬਣਾਣ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ ਪਹਿਲੀ 1948 ਦੇ ਮਾਰਚ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਦੋਂ ਇਹ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਮਰਜ (Merge) ਕਰ ਗਏ ਸਨ ਫਿਰ ਮਾਸਟਰ ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਰਿਵਾਈਵ (Revive) ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕੀਤੀ ਐ। ਉਹ ਗਲ ਬਣੀ ਨਾ। ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਮਿਨੀ ਅਕਾਲੀ ਦਲ ਬਣਾ ਲਿਆ। ਫਿਰ 1956 ਦੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਰਿਜਨਲ ਫਾਰਮੂਲਾ ਬਣਾ ਕੇ ਇਹ ਗਲ ਕੀਤੀ ਕਿ ... ਸੋ ਮੈਂ ਦਸ ਰਿਹਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਦੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਲੋਕੀਂ ਬਹੁਤੇ ਇਸੇ ਕਰਕੇ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹੋ ਗਏ ਕਿ ਜਦੋਂ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੇ ਦੇਖਿਆ ਕਿ ਅਕਾਲੀ ਦਲ ਦੇ ਵਾਰ ਆਪਣੀ ਆਜ਼ਾਦ ਪੁਲੀਟੀਕਲ ਹਸਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਮਰਜ (Merge) ਕਰ ਗਿਆ ਲੇਕਿਨ ਅਚਾਨਕ ਹੀ ਜਦੋਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਅੰਦਰ ਜਾਣਾ ਠੀਕ ਲਗਦਾ ਤਾਂ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਤਾਂ ਸਾਡਾ ਧਰਮ ਤੇ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਵਖਰਾ ਵਖਰਾ ਹੈ। ਜਦੋਂ ਸੂਟ ਲਗਦਾ ਤਾਂ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਕਿ ਇਕੱਠਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਜਿਹੜੇ ਲੋਕ ਸੀਰੀਅਸ ਸੀ ਉਹ ਜਾਂ ਤਾਂ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਮਰਜ ਕਰ ਗਏ ਜਾਂ ਬਹੁਤ ਥੋੜੇ ਜੋ ਅਕਾਲੀ ਦਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਰਹੇ ਵੀ ਉਹ ਜਦੋਂ ਮੌਕਾ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਸੀ ਤਾਂ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਚਲੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ। ਤੁਸੀਂ ਦੇਖੋਗੇ ਕਿ ਕੋਈ ਵੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਲੀਡਰ ਅਜੇਹਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਅਕਾਲੀ ਦਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੋਵੇ ਅਤੇ ਫਿਰ ਉਹ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਾ ਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੋਵੇ ਜਾਂ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਦੇਖਿਆ ਕਿ ਮੇਰੇ ਲਈ ਹਾਲਾਤ ਚੰਗੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਹਨ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਅਕਾਲੀ ਦਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਚਲਿਆ ਗਿਆ। ਜਦੋਂ ਪੁਲੀਟੀਕਲ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਦਾ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਆਪਰਚਿਊਨਿਸਟਿਕ (Opportunistic) ਰੋਲ ਹੋਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਉਸ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਨੂੰ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਸੀਰੀਅਸ ਨਹੀਂ ਲੈ ਸਕਦੇ।

ਅਕਾਲੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਨੇ ਵੀ ਸੀਰੀਅਸਲੀ ਲੈਣਾ ਬੰਦਾ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਤੁਸੀਂ ਦੇਖਿਆ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ ਕਿ ਸਿਵਾਏ ਹੁਣੇ ਹੁਣੇ ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲੇ ਅਕਾਲੀ ਦਲ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਦੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਾ ਕਦੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਅਸੰਬਲੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਅਤੇ ਨਾ ਹੀ ਪਾਰਲੀਆਮੈਂਟ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਸਨ ਅਤੇ 1947 ਤੋਂ ਲੈ ਕੇ 1977 ਤੱਕ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਕੋਈ ਅਫੈਕਟਿਵ ਰੋਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤਾ। ਜਿਸ ਤੋਂ ਪਤਾ ਲਗੇ ਕਿ ਅਕਾਲੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਮੋਹਰ ਛਾਪ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੀ ਸਿਆਸਤ ਜਾਂ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਦੀ ਸਿਆਸਤ ਉਤੇ ਲਗੀ ਹੋਵੇ।

ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ : ਦਰਦੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ ! ਇਹ ਦੱਸੋ ਕਿ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸੂਬਾ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਬਣਿਆ ?

ਉਤਰ : ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸੂਬਾ ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਸੰਤ ਫਤਹਿ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਸਮਝਿਆ ਕਿ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਮੋਰਚਾ ਲਾਉਣ ਨਾਲ ਬਣ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਪਰ ਅਸਲ ਗਲ ਇਹ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਮਿਸਿਜ਼ ਇੰਦਰਾ ਗਾਂਧੀ ਨੇ ਜਦੋਂ ਰਾਜ ਸੰਭਾਲਿਆ ਸੀ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਸਮਝਦੀ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਹਮਦਰਦੀ ਆਪਣੇ ਨਾਲ ਰੱਖੀ ਜਾਵੇ। ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਹ ਸੂਬਾ ਮਿਸਿਜ਼

ਇੰਦਰਾ ਗਾਂਧੀ ਕਰਕੇ ਬਣਿਆ ਹੈ ਨਾ ਕਿ ਮੋਰਚੇ ਕਰਕੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸੂਬਾ ਬਣਿਆ ; ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਮੋਰਚੇ ਕਰਕੇ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਚੀਜ਼ ਦੋਨੋਂ ਵਾਰ ਫੇਲ੍ਹ ਹੋ ਗਈ ਸੀ। ਸੰਤ ਫਤਹਿ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਦੋਨੋਂ ਵਾਰ ਜਦੋਂ ਵੀ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਮੋਰਚਾ ਲਾਇਆ ਜਾਂ ਉਸ ਨੇ ਵਰਤ ਰਖਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਉਦੋਂ ਸੂਬਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਬਣ ਸਕਿਆ। ਨਾ ਮਾਸਟਰ ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਵੇਲੇ ਇਹ ਬਣਿਆ। ਨਾ ਹੀ ਸੰਤ ਫਤਹਿ ਸਿੰਘ ਵੇਲੇ ਬਣਿਆ। ਬਲਕਿ ਮਿਸਿਜ਼ ਇੰਦਰਾ ਗਾਂਧੀ ਨੇ ਇਹ ਸੋਚ ਕੇ ਕਿ ਸਰਹੱਦ ਦੇ ਉਤੇ ਹਰ ਵੇਲੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਨਾਰਾਜ਼ ਨਹੀਂ ਰੱਖਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ। ਅਤੇ ਮੰਗ ਜਾਇਜ਼ ਵੀ ਹੈ। ਜਦੋਂ ਉਸਨੇ ਹਕੂਮਤ ਸੰਭਾਲੀ ਸੀ ਉਸ ਨੇ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਕੰਮ ਇਹੀ ਕੀਤਾ ਕਿ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸੂਬੇ ਦਾ ਐਲਾਨ ਕੀਤਾ।

ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ : ਰਿਜਨਲ ਫਾਰਮੂਲੇ ਬਾਰੇ ਵੀ ਆਪਣੇ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਦੱਸੋ ?

ਉਤਰ : ਮੇਰਾ ਰਿਜਨਲ ਫਾਰਮੂਲੇ ਦੇ ਮੁਤਅਲਕ ਬੜਾ ਹੀ ਭੈੜਾ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਹੈ। ਮੈਂ ਸਮਝਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਮਨਜ਼ੂਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਨਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਸੀ। ਇਹ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਸਿਰਫ ਆਪਣੀਆਂ ਮਨਿਸਟਰੀਆਂ ਲਈ ਕੀਤਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਆਹ ਆਹ ਆਦਮੀ ਵਜ਼ੀਰ ਬਣਾ ਜਾਣਗੇ। ਇੰਨੀਆਂ ਟਿਕਟਾਂ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਮਿਲ ਜਾਣਗੀਆਂ। ਇਹ ਇਹ ਆਦਮੀ ਸੈਂਟਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਵਜ਼ੀਰ ਬਣ ਜਾਵੇਗਾ। ਇੰਨੀਆਂ ਟਿਕਟਾਂ ਅਸੰਬਲੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਮਿਲ ਜਾਣਗੀਆਂ। ਇਹ ਸਿਰਫ ਸਮਝੌਤਾ ਸੀ। ਇਸ ਫਾਰਮੂਲੇ ਦੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਕੁਝ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ। ਅਤੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਦੇਖਿਆ ਕਿੰਨਾ ਰਿਜਨਲ ਫਾਰਮੂਲੇ ਨੇ ਵਰਕ (Work) ਕੀਤਾ। ਨਾ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਵਰਕ ਕਰਨ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਗਿਆ।

ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ : ਇਸ ਫਾਰਮੂਲੇ ਦੇ ਆਰਕੀਟੈਕਟ (Architect) ਕੌਣ ਸਨ, ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਉਤਰ : ਇਸ ਦੇ ਆਰਕੀਟੈਕਟ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਸਮਝ ਲਉ ਕਿ ਜਿੰਨੇ ਵੀ ਆਦਮੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਫਾਇਦਾ ਉਠਾਇਆ ਉਹ ਸਾਰੇ ਹੀ ਉਸਦੇ ਆਰਕੀਟੈਕਟ ਸਨ। ਹੁਕਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਹੋਰੀ ਵੀ ਸਨ। ਸਰਦਾਰ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਰਾੜੇਵਾਲਾ ਵੀ ਸੀ। ਉਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਵੀ ਸੀ। ਉਸਦੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਬਕਾ ਗਵਰਨਰ ਸਰਦਾਰ ਜੁਗਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਵੀ ਸਨ, ਮਾਸਟਰ ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਵੀ ਸਨ। ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਮਾਸਟਰ ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਅਲਟੀਮੇਟਲੀ (Ultimately) ਇਹ ਕਿਹਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਅਕਸੈਪਟ (Accept) ਕਰ ਲਵੋ। ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਫਿਰ ਮੋਰਚਾ ਲਾ ਕੇ ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਡੀ ਗੱਲ ਲੈ। ਲੇਕਿਨ ਹਰ ਵੇਲੇ ਕੌਮ ਨੂੰ ਮੋਰਚੇ ਉਤੇ ਹੀ ਪਾਈ ਰਖਣਾ ਅਤੇ ਜਿਹੜੀ ਗਲ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੋਵੇ ਉਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੀ ਸੀ। 1956 ਵਿੱਚ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਤੇ ਇੰਨਾ ਪ੍ਰੈਸ਼ਰ (Pressure) ਪਿਆ ਸੀ ਉਹ ਕੋਈ ਵੀ ਗੱਲ ਮੰਨਣ ਲਈ ਤਿਆਰ ਸਨ। ਇਹ ਆਪ ਹੀ ਕਿ ਥੋੜੀ ਬਹੁਤੀ ਗਲ ਮੰਨਵਾਈਏ ਕਿਤੇ ਬਹੁਤੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਟੁਟ ਨਾ ਜਾਵੇ।

ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ : ਸੁਣਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਨਹਿਰੂ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸੂਬੇ ਬਾਰੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਮੰਨਦਾ ਸੀ, ਇਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਉਤਰ : ਪੰਡਿਤ ਨਹਿਰੂ ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਮੰਨਦਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਨੁਕਸਾਨਦੇਹ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ। ਸਿੱਖ ਇਕਸਪੈਂਡ (expand) ਕਰਨਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਨੇ। ਸਿੱਖ ਪਰੋਗਰੈਸਿਵ (Progressive) ਕੌਮ ਨੇ। ਛੋਟੀ ਜਿਹੀ ਜਗ੍ਹਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਐਕਸਪੈਨਸ਼ਨ (Expansion) ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਣੀ। ਹਰਿਆਣੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਜਮੀਨਾਂ ਨੇ, ਇੰਡਸਟਰੀ ਹੈ। ਹਿਮਾਚਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਐਸੀ ਚੀਜ਼ ਹੈ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਕਸਪੈਂਡ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਹੋਰ ਮੌਕਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ। ਬਾਕੀ ਸੂਬੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਵਧਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਉਹ ਇਸ ਗੱਲ ਸਮਝ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਸਕੇ। ਉਹ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਹਮਦਰਦੀ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਸਨ। ਜੇ ਐਸੀ ਗਲ ਨਾ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਤਾਂ ਉਸਦੀ ਲੜਕੀ ਇੰਦਰਾ ਗਾਂਧੀ ਵੀ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਗਲ ਨਾ ਮੰਨਦੀ। ਪੰਡਿਤ ਨਹਿਰੂ ਕਹਿੰਦਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਹਮਦਰਦੀ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੀ ਇਹ ਗਲ ਕਹਿੰਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਮੈਂ 50% ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕੈਬਨਿਟ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦਾ ਹਾਂ। ਚੀਫ ਮਨਿਸਟਰ ਹਮੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਲਈ ਸਿੱਖ ਬਣਾਣਾ ਚਾਹਦਾ ਹਾਂ। ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਜੁਬਾਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਡੋਮੀਨੇਟ ਲੈਂਗੂਏਜ (Dominate language) ਮਨਣ ਲਈ ਤਿਆਰ ਹਾਂ। ਸਿੱਖ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਨੂੰ ਹੋਰ ਛੋਟਾ ਨਾ ਕਰਨ। ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਕਲ ਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੇ ਫਿਰ ਕਹਿਣਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਸੂਬਾ ਹੋਰ ਵਧਾ ਕੇ ਦਿਉ। ਹੁਣ ਉਹੀ ਹੀ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਹੁਣ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਵੀ ਰਹਿ ਗਿਆ। ਇਹ ਵੀ ਨਾਲ ਪਾ ਲਉ। ਇਹ ਵੀ ਰਹਿ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਕੋਈ ਪੁਛੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਦਸੋ ਕਿ ਕਾਂਗੜੇ ਦਾ ਜਿਲਾ ਕਿਉਂ ਕਢਿਆ ਗਿਆ। ਸਿਰਫ ਇਸ ਲਈ

ਕਢਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਕਿ ਉਥੇ ਆਬਾਦੀ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਸੀ। ਜਦੋਂ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਕੰਮ ਇਹ ਆਪ ਹੀ ਕਰਦੇ ਹੋ। ਹਿੰਦੂ ਅਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਦੀ ਬੁਨਿਆਦ ਤੇ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਵੰਡਣ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕਰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਫਿਰ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਕਿ ਕੁਝ ਇਲਾਕਾ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਵੀ ਨਾਲ ਆ ਜਾਏ ਤਾਂ ਮਾੜਾ ਨਹੀਂ। ਹਰਿਆਣੇ ਵਾਲਾ ਸੂਬਾ ਬਣਾਣ ਲਈ ਤਿਆਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਨ। ਅਸੀਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਘਰ ਆਪ ਗਏ ਕਿ ਮੰਗੋ। ਹਿਮਾਚਲ ਵਾਲੇ ਤਾਂ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਸਨ ਕਿ ਅਸੀਂ ਤਾਂ ਮਰ ਜਾਵਾਂਗੇ। ਪਰ ਅਸੀਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਕੋਲ ਵੀ ਗਏ ਕਿ ਜੇ ਮੰਗਦੇ ਹੋ ਸਾਰਾ ਪਹਾੜ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੇਵਾਂਗੇ।

ਇਹ ਸਾਰੀ ਚੀਜ਼ ਅਸਾਂ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ। ਆਰਥਿਕ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਅਸੀਂ ਕੋਈ ਬਹੁਤਾ ਫਾਇਦਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਉਠਾਇਆ। ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਵੀ ਕੋਈ ਫਾਇਦਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਉਠਾਇਆ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਐਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਦੇਖੋਗੇ ਕਿ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾ ਮਾਈਗਰੇਸ਼ਨ (Migration) ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਹੋਈ। ਇਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਦੇਖੋਗੇ ਕਿ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਜ਼ਬਾਨ ਜੇ ਘਟ ਪੜ੍ਹੀ ਜਾ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿੱਚ ਦੇਖੋਗੇ। ਹੁਣ ਵੀ ਹਿੰਦੀ ਉਥੇ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾ ਪੜ੍ਹੀ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਲੋਕ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਨੇ ਹਿੰਦੀ ਅਤੇ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੀ ਅਸੀਂ ਸਾਰੇ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਾਂ ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਕੰਮ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਾਂ। ਜਿਵੇਂ ਸਾਡੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸੂਬੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਹੋ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਹੀ ਬਾਕੀ ਸੂਬਿਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਹੋ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਅਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਸਿੱਖਾ ਦੀ ਕੌਮ ਇੰਨਾ ਭਾਰੀ ਪਰੋਗਰੈਸਿਵ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਨਿਰਾ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸੂਬੇ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਜ਼ਬਾਨ ਨਾਲ ਜੁੜਕੇ ਤਰੱਕੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰ ਸਦੀ। ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਬਾਹਰ ਜਾਣਾ ਪਏਗਾ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਹੋਰ ਜ਼ਬਾਨਾਂ ਸਿੱਖਣੀਆਂ ਪੈਣਗੀਆਂ ਸਹਿਯੋਗ ਦੇਣਾ ਵੀ ਪਵੇਗਾ ਅਤੇ ਲੈਣਾ ਵੀ ਪਏਗਾ ਅਤੇ ਬਾਕੀ ਇਹ ਕਹਿਣਾ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖ ਹੋਮ ਲੈਂਡ ਬਣ ਜਾਵੇ ਤੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਹੋਰ ਤਕੜਾਈ ਮਿਲ ਜਾਵੇਗੀ। ਇਸ ਨਾਲ ਸਾਡੇ ਕੁਝ ਨਹੀਂ ਬਣ ਸਕਦਾ।

ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ : ਤੁਹਾਡਾ ਸਾਚੀ ਸਾਖੀ ਜੋ ਸਰਦਾਰ ਕਪੂਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਹੋਰਾਂ ਨੇ ਲਿਖੀ ਹੈ ਉਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਕੀ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਹੈ ?

ਉਤਰ : ਮੇਰਾ ਖਿਆਲ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜਿਤਨਾ ਝੂਠ ਸਰਦਾਰ ਕਪੂਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਸਾਚੀ ਸਾਖੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਹੋਰ ਕਿਸੇ ਕਿਤਾਬ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲੇਗਾ। It is all cock and bull stories built on false. ਇਹ ਸਭ ਝੂਠ ਤੇ ਹੀ ਬਣਾਈ ਗਈ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਸਾਰੀਆਂ ਜਿੰਨੀਆਂ ਕਹਾਣੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਉਹ ਸਭ ਹੀਅਰ ਸੇ (Hear say) ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਹਨ। ਉਹ ਸਭ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਕੋਲੋਂ ਬਣਾਈਆਂ ਹੋਈਆਂ ਹਨ। ਉਹ ਜਿਹੜੇ ਉਸ ਸਾਰੇ ਲੋਕ ਮਰ ਗਏ ਹਨ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕੋਟ (Quote) ਕਰੀ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਇਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੋਚਦੇ ਕਿ ਨਾ ਡਾਰਡ ਬੇਵਲ ਨੇ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਮੈਮੋਆਇਰ (Memoire) ਆਪਣੇ ਛਾਪ ਦਿਤੇ ਨੇ, ਨਾ ਹੀ ਮਿਸਟਰ ਜਿਨਾਹ ਨੇ ਜਿਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਅਖਰ ਅਖਰ ਛਪ ਚੁਕਾ ਹੈ ਨਾ ਹੀ ਕੋਈ ਹੋਰ ਸਿੱਖ ਲੀਡਰ ਨੇ ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਕਿ ਆਪਣੀਆਂ ਜੀਵਨੀਆਂ ਛਾਪੀਆਂ ਨੇ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਮਾਸਟਰ ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ। ਕਿਸੇ ਨੇ ਇਹ ਕਦੇ ਕੋਈ ਗਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਹੀ ਕਿ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਟੇਟ ਮਿਲਦੀ ਸੀ ਜਾਂ ਮਿਸਟਰ ਜਿਨਾਹ ਨੇ (offer) ਕੀਤੀ ਸੀ ਜਾਂ ਅਗਰ ਅਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਕਰ ਲੈਂਦੇ ਤਾਂ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਟੇਟ ਮਿਲ ਜਾਣੀ ਸੀ। ਇਹ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਿਹਾ। ਇਹ ਸਰਦਾਰ ਕਪੂਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਾਰੀਆਂ ਸਾਚੀਆਂ ਸਾਖੀਆਂ ਨਿਰੀਆਂ ਝੂਠੀਆਂ ਸਾਖੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਤੇ ਉਹ ਨਿਰੀਆਂ ਝੂਠ ਤੇ ਬਣਾਈਆਂ ਗਈਆਂ ਹਨ।

ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ : ਤੁਸੀਂ ਅਕਾਲੀਆ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਸਾਰੀ ਉਮਰ ਰਹੇ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਰੈਜ਼ੋਲੇਸ਼ਨ ਤੇ ਮੈਮੋਰੈਂਡਮ ਲਿਖੇ। ਸਾਰਾ ਕੁਝ ਕੀਤਾ। ਤੁਸੀਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਕਦੋਂ ਵੱਖ ਹੋ ਗਏ ਤੇ ਇਹ ਰਿਫਟ (rift) ਜਿਹੜੀ ਸੀ ਕਦੋਂ ਕੰਪਲੀਟ ਹੋਈ?

ਉਤਰ : ਮੇਰੇ ਮੁੱਠਅਲਕ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਵਹਿਮ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਜਦੋਂ ਅਕਾਲੀਆ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਰਿਹਾ ਹਾਂ। ਇਹ ਗਲਤ ਵਹਿਮ ਹੈ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਸਟੂਡੈਂਟ ਦੇ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਜਦੋਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਐਜੀਟੇਸ਼ਨ ਲੜ ਰਹੇ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਪ੍ਰੋਫੈਸਰ ਨਿਰੰਜਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਹੱਕ ਵਿੱਚ ਲੜਦੇ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਪ੍ਰੋਫੈਸਰ ਨਿਰੰਜਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਮਾਸਟਰ ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਾ ਭਰਾ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਉਹ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਸਪੋਰਟ (Support) ਕਰਦੇ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਅਤੇ ਅਕਾਲੀ ਸਾਰੇ ਸਾਂਝੇ ਸਨ। ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਅਕਾਲੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਪੋਰਟ ਕਰ ਰਿਹਾ ਸੀ ਉਹ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਮਦਦ ਕਰ ਰਿਹਾ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਨੂੰ ਮਦਦ ਕਰ ਰਿਹਾ ਸੀ ਉਹ ਅਕਾਲੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਮੱਦਦ ਕਰ ਰਿਹਾ

ਸੀ। ਜਿਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਮੈਂ ਇਹ ਦੇਖਿਆ ਕਿ ਸਰਦਾਰ ਬਲਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਸਾਰੀ ਤਾਕਤ ਸੰਭਾਲ ਲਈ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਉਹ ਨਿਕਲਿਆ ਉਸ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ 1940 ਵਿੱਚ ਆ ਕੇ ਮਾਸਟਰ ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਖਰੇ ਹੋ ਗਏ ਨੇ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਨਾਲੋਂ। ਉਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਮੈਂ ਵੀ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਲੜ ਛੱਡ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਲੇਕਿਨ ਜਿਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਮੁੜਕੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਬਾਰੇ 1944 ਤੋਂ ਮੁੜ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਕਰਨੀ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਤਾਂ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਉਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਦ੍ਰਿੜ ਨਿਸਚਾ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਬਣਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਹੈ। ਰਾਜ ਗੋਪਾਲ ਅਚਾਰੀਆ ਨੇ ਕਹਿਣਾ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਮਹਾਤਮਾ ਗਾਂਧੀ ਮਿਸਟਰ ਜਿਨਾਹ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲੇ ਸੀ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਵੀ ਇਹੀ ਕਹਿਣਾ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਸੀ। ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਫਿਰ ਜਦੋਂ ਕੈਬਨਿਟ ਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਆਇਆ ਉਦੋਂ ਵੀ ਦੇਖਿਆ। ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਬਣਨ ਦੇ ਵੇਲੇ ਅਤੇ ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਤਿੰਨ ਚਾਰ ਸਾਲ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਮੈਂ ਪੂਰੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਅਕਾਲੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਮਦਦ ਕੀਤੀ ਕਿ ਜੇ ਇਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਕੌਮ ਦਾ ਬਣ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਉਹ ਬਣੇ ਤੇ ਕੋਈ ਵੀ ਵਖਰੀ ਆਵਾਜ਼ ਨਾ ਕਢੀ ਜਾਵੇ। ਲੇਕਿਨ ਫਿਰ 16 ਮਾਰਚ 1948 ਦੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਦੋਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਰੈਜ਼ੋਲੇਸ਼ਨ ਡਰਾਫਟ ਕੀਤਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਅਸੀਂ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸੂਬੇ ਦੇ ਹੱਕ ਮੰਨਵਾਣ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਾਂ ਲੇਕਿਨ ਚੁੱਕਿ ਰੈਜ਼ੋਲੇਸ਼ਨ ਸਵੇਰੇ ਛਪਿਆ ਨਾ। ਮੈਂ ਉਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਅਖਬਾਰ ਲਿਬਰੇਟਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਸਖਤ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਕੀਤੀ। ਅਕਾਲੀ ਦਲ ਦੀ ਕਿ It is an opportunistic party ਕੋਈ ਸੂਝਵਾਨ ਆਦਮੀ ਇਸ ਨਾਲ ਰਹਿ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਕਦਾ। ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਮੈਂ ਅਕਾਲੀ ਦਲ ਦੇ ਕਦੀ ਨੇੜੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਗਿਆ।

1948 ਦੇ ਦਿਨ ਤੋਂ ਅੱਜ 1979 ਦਾ ਦਿਨ ਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਅਕਾਲੀ ਦਲ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਕਦੀ ਵੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਮਾਮਲੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਹੀਂ ਗਿਆ। ਫਿਰ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ 1956 ਦੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਦੋਂ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਆਪਣੇ ਰਾਈਟ ਲਈ ਕਦੀ ਵੀ ਅਕਾਲੀ ਦਲ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਲੜਾਂਗੇ ਅਤੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਫਿਰ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਮਰਜ਼ (Merge) ਕਰਦੇ ਹਾਂ। ਆਪਣੀ ਅਡੈਂਟੀਟੀ (identity) ਨੂੰ ਹਮੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਲਈ ਖਤਮ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਾਂ। ਤਾਂ ਮੈਂ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਜਦ ਉਹ ਇਕ ਵਾਰੀ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਮਰਜ਼ ਕਰ ਗਏ ਤੇ ਫਿਰ 1956 ਦੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਰਪੀਟ ਕਰਦੇ ਨੇ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਹੋਣਾ ਜਾਂ ਨਾ ਹੋਣਾ ..... ਇਹ ਨਾਨ ਸੀਰੀਅਸ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਜੇ ਸੁਝਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਰ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਨੇ। ਇਹ ਅਪਰਚੂਨਿਸਟ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸਦਾ ਮਨ ਸੀਰੀਅਸ ਨਹੀਂ ਅਤੇ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਕਾਨਸੀਅਸ (Conscious) ਹੋਣ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਅਤੇ ਮੈਂ ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਮਗਰੋਂ ਕਦੇ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਗਿਆ।

ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ : ਦਾਸ ਕਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਬਾਰੇ ਵੀ ਆਪਣੇ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਦਸੋ ?

ਉਤਰ : ਦਾਸ ਕਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਬਾਰੇ ਇਹ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਮਾਸਟਰ ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਆਪਣਾ ਵਰਤ ਤਦ ਛੱਡਿਆ ਕਿ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਇਕ ਕਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਬਣਾਕੇ ਦਿਉ ਕਿ ਜਿਸ ਕਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਦੇ ਅਗੇ ਅਸੀਂ ਆਪਣੀਆਂ ਮੰਗਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰ ਸਕੀਏ। ਇਹ 1961 ਦਸੰਬਰ ਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਹੈ। ਜਦੋਂ ਕਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਗੌਰਮਿੰਟ ਨੇ ਬਣਾਣਾ ਮੰਨ ਲਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਉਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਇਹ ਕਹਿਣਾ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਕਿ ਇਹਦੇ ਮੈਂਬਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਬਣੇ ਜਿਹੜੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਚਾਹੀਦੇ ਸੀ। ਮੈਨੂੰ ਹੈਰਾਨੀ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਮੁਕੱਦਮਾ ਕਰਨ ਜਾਵੇ ਅਤੇ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਇਹ ਕਹੇ ਕਿ ਕਚਹਿਰੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਮੈਂ ਜਾਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਜੱਜ ਵੀ ਮੇਰੇ ਮੁਤਾਬਿਕ ਹੀ ਹੋਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ। ਉਹੀ ਜੱਜ ਬਣਾਉ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਮੈਂ ਕਹਿੰਦਾ ਹਾਂ। ਫਿਰ ਫੈਸਲਾ ਉਹ ਆਪ ਹੀ ਘਰੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਕਰ ਲਵੇ। ਕਚਹਿਰੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਾਣ ਦੀ ਕੋਈ ਲੋੜ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਠੀਕ ਹੈ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਕੋਈ ਨਾਮ ਜੇ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਸੁਜੈਸਟ ਕੀਤੇ ਹੋਣ ਉਹ ਨਾ ਲਏ ਗਏ ਹੋਣ। ਪਰ ਜਿਹੜੇ ਤਿੰਨ ਨਾਮ ਮੰਨੇ ਗਏ ਸਨ ਉਹ ਇਨ੍ਹੇ ਉਚੇ ਸਨ - ਇਕ ਮਿਸਟਰ ਐਮ ਸੀ ਛਾਗਲਾ, ਇਕ ਸੀ ਪੀ ਰਾਮਾਸੁਆਮੀ ਆਇਰ ਜੋ ਕਿ ਖੁਦ ਆਜ਼ਾਦੀ ਦੇ ਹੱਕ ਵਿੱਚ ਸੀ, ਤੀਜਾ ਮਿਸਟਰ ਦਾਸ ਜੋ ਸੁਪਰੀਮ ਕੋਰਟ ਦਾ ਚੀਫ਼ ਜਸਟਿਸ ਰਹਿ ਚੁਕਾ ਸੀ। ਉਹ ਚੇਅਰਮੈਨ ਸੀ। ਅਸੀਂ ਕੁਝ ਇਨਟਲੈਕਚੁਅਲ ਨੇ ਇਕ ਡਰਾਫਟ ਤਿਆਰ ਕੀਤਾ ਜੋ ਕਿ 16 ਸਫੇ ਦਾ ਸੀ। ਜਿਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਦਸਿਆ ਕਿ

ਇਥੇ ਇਥੇ ਡਿਸਕਰੀਮੀਨੇਸ਼ਨ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਹੋ ਰਹੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਮੇਰੇ ਮਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਆਇਆ ਕਿ ਇਥੇ ਕਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਬੈਠਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਕੋਈ ਆਦਮੀ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਜਦੋਂ ਕਹੇਗਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਿ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਡਿਸਕਰੀਮੀਨੇਸ਼ਨ ਹੋ ਰਹੀਆਂ ਨੇ। ਜਦੋਂ ਮਾਸਟਰ ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਬਾਈਕਾਟ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਤੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਇਸ ਕਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਅਗੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਗਲ ਪੇਸ਼ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਨਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦਾ। ਅਸੀਂ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਘਟੇ ਘਟ ਸਾਡਾ ਕੇਸ ਜੋ ਹੈ ਬਾਈ ਦਾ ਫਾਲਟ (By the fault) ਨਾ ਚਲਿਆ ਜਾਵੇ। ਮੈਂ ਉਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਅੱਠ ਥਾਵਾਂ ਤੇ ਡਿਸਕਰੀਮੀਨੇਸ਼ਨ ਮੈਨਸ਼ਨ (mention) ਕੀਤੀ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਐਥੇ ਐਥੇ ਵਿਤਕਰਾ ਹੋ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਗਲ ਗਲਤ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਉਥੇ ਜੇ ਕੇ ਕਹਿਆ ਹੋਵੇ ਕਿ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਕੋਈ ਵਿਤਕਰਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋ ਰਿਹਾ। ਮੇਰੇ ਕੋਲ ਉਸ ਮੈਮੋਰੈਂਡਮ ਦੀ ਕਾਪੀ ਵੀ ਹੈ। ਤੁਸੀਂ ਹੈਰਾਨ ਹੋਵੋਗੇ ਕਿ ਕਈ ਸਿੱਖ ਪੇਪਰਾਂ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਬਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਮੈਮੋਰੈਂਡਮ ਪੜ੍ਹੇ ਹੀ ਇਸ ਚੀਜ਼ ਨੂੰ ਕਨਡੈਮ (condemn) ਕਰ ਦੇਣਾ ਕਿ ਕੋਈ ਸਿੱਖ ਉਸ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਿਉਂ ਹੋਵੇ।

ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ : What are your relations with Sardar Patel and Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru ?

ਉਤਰ : ਸਰਦਾਰ ਪਟੇਲ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਮੇਰੇ ਸਬੰਧ ਕਦੀ ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਏ। ਇਕ ਵਾਰੀ ਮੈਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਹੁਰਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਸਾਂ। 1946 ਦੀ ਇਹ ਗਲ ਹੈ। ਉਦੋਂ ਸ਼ਾਇਦ ਉਹ ਸ਼ਿਮਲੇ ਇਨਟੈਰਿਮ ਗੌਰਮਿੰਟ ਬਨਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ। ਉਦੋਂ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਕੁਝ ਗੱਲਾਂ ਹੋਈਆਂ ਸਨ। ਮੇਰੇ ਸਰਦਾਰ ਪਟੇਲ ਨਾਲ ਕੋਈ ਤਅੱਲਕਾਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਰਹੇ। ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਮੈਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕਦੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲਿਆ।

ਪੰਡਿਤ ਜਵਾਹਰ ਲਾਲ ਨਹਿਰੂ ਨੂੰ ਇਕ ਵਾਰ ਮੈਂ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਹਾਂ ਜਦੋਂ ਮੈਂ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਸਟੂਡੈਂਟ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰੈਜ਼ੀਡੈਂਟ ਸੀ। ਉਦੋਂ ਉਹ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਸਟੇਸ਼ਨ ਤੋਂ ਲੰਘ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ। ਮੈਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਰਸੀਵ ਕਰਨ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ। 1946-47 ਤੋਂ 48 ਤੱਕ ਮੇਰਾ ਜਵਾਹਰ ਲਾਲ ਨਾਲ ਕੋਈ ਤਅੱਲਕਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਰਿਹਾ। ਮਹਾਤਮਾਂ ਗਾਂਧੀ ਨੂੰ ਮੈਂ ਇਕ ਵਾਰ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਮਿਸਟਰ ਜਿਨਾਹ ਨੂੰ ਦੋ ਵਾਰ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਹਾਂ। ਇਹ ਦੋਨੋ ਵਾਰ ਮੈਂ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਾਲ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਹਾਂ। ਨਾ ਮੈਂ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਜਵਾਹਰ ਲਾਲ ਨੂੰ ਫਿਰ ਕਦੀ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਹਾਂ।

ਮੈਂ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਜਵਾਹਰ ਲਾਲ ਨੂੰ 1960 ਵਿੱਚ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਵਾਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦਾ ਚਾਰ ਵਾਲਿਯੂਮਜ਼ ਦਾ ਤਰਜਮਾ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਕੀਤਾ ਸੀ ਉਹ ਭੇਟਾ ਕਰਨ ਗਿਆ ਤੇ ਨਾਲ ਮੇਰੇ ਨਾਲ ਪੰਦਰਾਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਹੋਰ ਸਨ। ਸਰਦਾਰ ਸੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਲਾਇਲਪੁਰੀ, ਸਰਦਾਰ ਗੁਰਬਖਸ਼ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਾਲ। ਸਰਦਾਰ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਆਦਿ ਮੇਰੇ ਨਾਲ ਗਏ ਸਨ। ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਮੈਂ 1960 ਤੋਂ 1964 ਤੱਕ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਜੀ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹਾਂ। ਉਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਮੈਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਕਈ ਵਾਰ ਲਿਖਤ ਪੜ੍ਹਤ ਵੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ। ਮੇਰੇ ਮਨ ਅੰਦਰ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਬੜਾ ਸਤਿਕਾਰ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਬਲਕਿ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਇਹ ਵੀ ਕੀਤਾ ਕਿ ਜਦੋਂ ਸਵਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਕਸ਼ਮੀਰ ਬਾਰੇ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਜਵਾਹਰ ਲਾਲ ਨੇ ਭੇਜੇ ਸਨ। ਇਹ 1963 ਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਹੈ। ਚੀਨ ਦੇ ਹਮਲੇ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਦੀ ਗਲ ਹੈ। ਮੈਂ ਉਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਜੀ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਅਤੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਮੇਰੀ ਵੀ ਇਕ ਬੇਨਤੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਨਨਕਾਣਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੂੰ ਵੈਟੀਕਨ ਦਾ ਦਰਜਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਜਾਵੇ। ਪੰਡਿਤ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਲਿਖਕੇ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰ ਦਿਉ। ਉਹ ਮੈਂ ਲਿਖਕੇ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੀਤਾ ਤੇ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਜੇ ਡਾਕਟਰ ਗੋਲਾਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਕਹਿ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ ਇਹ ਜਰੂਰ ਕਰਕੇ ਆਉਣਾ।

ਸਰਦਾਰ ਸਵਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਜਦੋਂ ਮੈਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਵਿੱਚ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਮੌਕਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲਿਆ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਮੈਂ ਗਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰ ਸਕਿਆ। ਪਰ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਜਵਾਹਰ ਲਾਲ ਨਹਿਰੂ ਨੇ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਮਾਮਲੇ ਉਤੇ ਪੂਰੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਇਨਕਰੇਜ਼ (encourage) ਕੀਤਾ। ਜਿਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਵੀ ਕੋਈ ਗਲ ਕੀਤੀ ਮਿਸਾਲ ਦੇ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਜਦੋਂ ਮੈਂ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੀ ਡੋਮੀਨੇਟ ਜੁਬਾਨ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਹੋਣੀ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ। ਮੇਰੇ ਕੋਲੋਂ ਕਿਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਵੀ ਲਿਖਾ ਲਊ। ਇਹ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ।

ਜਦੋਂ ਮਾਸਟਰ ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਇਥੇ ਆ ਕੇ ਵਰਤ ਰਖਣਾ ਚਾਹਿਆ ਤੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ

ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨਗੀ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਕੱਢਣ ਲਈ ਜਵਾਹਰ ਲਾਲ ਨਹਿਰੂ ਦਾ ਹੱਥ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਮੈਂ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਜਵਾਹਰ ਲਾਲ ਨੂੰ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਤੇਰਾ ਦਿਲ ਦੁਖਿਆ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਮੈਂ ਤੇਰੇ ਕੋਲੋਂ ਮਾਫੀ ਮੰਗਦਾ ਹਾਂ। ਇਹ 1960 ਅਖੀਰ ਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਇਸ ਗੱਲ ਦਾ ਮਾਸਟਰ ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਤੇ ਇੰਨਾ ਅਸਰ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਜੀਵਨਕਥਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਦੋ ਭਲੇ ਮਾਣਸ ਆਦਮੀ ਮੇਰੇ ਕੋਲ ਆਏ। ਉਹ ਇਕ ਮੈਂ ਸੀ ਤੇ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਆ ਕੇ ਫੈਸਲਾ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਸੀ। ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਇਲਾਵਾ ਜਦੋਂ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸੂਬਾ ਬਣਿਆ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਬੋਲਦੇ ਕਈ ਇਲਾਕੇ ਬਾਹਰ ਕਢੇ ਗਏ। ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਟਰ ਸਪੀਚ ਜਿਹੜੀ ਰਾਜ ਸਭਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਸੀ ਉਹ ਮੇਰੀ ਸੀ। ਇਹ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਦੇ ਵਿਰੁਧ ਮੇਰੇ ਵਲੋਂ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਕਢਕੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਟੇਟ ਬਣਾਣ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ। ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸੂਬਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਬਣਾਇਆ ਅਤੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਵੀ ਧੱਕਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ। ਮੈਂ ਰਾਜ ਸਭਾ ਦਾ ਮੈਂਬਰ 1962 ਤੋਂ 68 ਤੱਕ ਰਿਹਾ ਹਾਂ। ਜਿਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਇਹ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦਾ ਚਾਰ ਵਾਲਿਯੂਮਜ਼ ਦਾ ਤਰਜਮਾ ਛਪ ਚੁਕਿਆ ਤਦ ਫੌਰਨ ਬਾਅਦ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਰਾਜ ਸਭਾ ਦਾ ਮੈਂਬਰ ਨੋਮੀਨੇਟ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਸੀ।

ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ : ਪੰਡਿਤ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਬਾਰੇ ਹੋਰ ਵੀ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਮੇਲ-ਜੋਲ ਬਾਰੇ ਦੱਸੋ ?

ਉਤਰ : ਪੰਡਿਤ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਹੋਰ ਹਰ ਕਿਸਮ ਦੀਆਂ ਗਲਾਂ ਮਿਸਾਲ ਦੇ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਨੇ ਸ਼ਰਾਰਤ ਕਰਨੀ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਕਸ਼ਮੀਰ ਉਤੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਫੈਸਲਾ ਕਰੋ। ਉਧਰ ਚੀਨ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਲੜ ਰਹੇ ਸੀ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਿਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਿਹੜੀਆਂ ਚਿੱਠੀਆਂ ਹੋਈਆਂ ਤਾਂ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਮੇਰੇ ਕੋਲ ਕੁਝ ਚਿੱਠੀਆਂ ਕਾਨਫੀਡੈਂਸਲ ਵੀ ਹਨ। ਉਹ ਮੇਰੇ ਕੋਲ ਹਨ। ਜਿਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਕਸ਼ਮੀਰ ਵਾਲੇ ਸਿਰਫ ਕਸ਼ਮੀਰ ਦਾ ਫੈਸਲਾ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਨਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ। ਇਹ ਸਾਡਾ ਹੋਰ ਵੀ ਬਹੁਤ ਸਾਰਾ ਕੁਝ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਮੁਲਕ ਨੂੰ ਡਿਸਰਪਟ (Disrupt) ਕਰਨਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਨੇ ਅਤੇ ਤੋੜਨਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਨੇ। ਇਹ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਲਿਖਿਆ।

ਮੇਰੀ ਇਨਟੈਲੈਕਚੁਅਲ ਸਾਂਝ ਸੀ। ਮੇਰੀ ਪੋਲੀਟੀਕਲ ਸਾਂਝ ਕਦੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਰਹੀ ਅਤੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਹੈਰਾਨ ਹੋਵੋਗੇ ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਕਦੀ ਵੀ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਜਾਂ ਅਕਾਲੀ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਦਾ ਅੱਜ ਤੱਕ ਮੈਂਬਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਰਿਹਾ। ਹੁਣ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਦੇਖੋਗੇ ਕਿ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਸਿਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਮੈਂ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ ਉਥੇ ਕਈ ਥਾਂ ਮੈਂ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਨੂੰ ਨਿੰਦਿਆ ਹੈ। ਜਿਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਮੈਂ ਅਕਾਲੀ ਦਲ ਦਾ ਕਰਿਟਿਕ (Critic) ਰਿਹਾ ਹਾਂ ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਅੱਗੇ ਕਈ ਵਾਰੀ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਦਾ ਮੈਂ ਸਿਵੀਅਰ ਕਰਿਟਿਕ (Severe Critic) ਰਿਹਾ ਹਾਂ ਬਲਕਿ ਕਈ ਦਫਾ ਮੈਂ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਜਵਾਹਰ ਲਾਲ ਨਹਿਰੂ ਅਤੇ ਮਹਾਤਮਾ ਗਾਂਧੀ ਦਾ ਵੀ ਮੈਂ ਕਰਿਟਿਕ ਰਿਹਾ ਹਾਂ। ਇਸ ਲਈ ਮੈਂ ਆਪਣੀ ਇਨਟੈਲੈਕਚੁਅਲ ਇਨਟੈਗਰਿਟੀ ਕਾਇਮ ਰਖੀ ਹੈ। ਅਗਰ ਮੈਂ ਅਕਾਲੀ ਨੂੰ ਕੁਝ ਕਹਿ ਸਕਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਤਾਂ ਕਾਂਗਰਸੀ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਮੈਂ ਕਹਿ ਸਕਦਾ ਹਾਂ। ਮੇਰੀਆਂ ਸਪੀਚਾਂ ਪੜ੍ਹੇ ਅਗਰ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਕੰਡਾ ਚੁਭਿਆ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਨੇ ਆ ਕੇ ਮੇਰਾ ਦਰਵਾਜ਼ਾ ਖੜਕਾਇਆ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਮੈਂ ਉਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਨਾਲ ਗਿਆ ਹਾਂ ਤਾਂ ਕਿ ਕੋਈ ਇਹ ਨਾ ਕਹੇ ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਹਾਂ ਤੇ ਇਹ ਕਿਤੇ ਕੋਈ ਕੋਮੂਨਲ ਗੱਲ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰ ਰਿਹਾ। ਮੈਂ ਇਸ ਗੱਲ ਤੋਂ ਕਦੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਡਰਿਆ। ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਇਲਾਵਾ ਧੀਬਰ ਭਾਈ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਮਾਨ ਨਰਾਇਣ ਤੇ ਪਰਤਾਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੈਰੋ ਨਾਲ ਖੜੇ ਖਿਤਾਬਤ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਰਹਿੰਦੀ ਸੀ।

ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ : ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਪਰਤਾਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੈਰੋ ਨਾਲ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸੂਬੇ ਬਾਰੇ ਖਿਆਲਾਤ ਮਿਲਦੇ ਹਨ। ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਕੀ ਸਾਂਝ ਸੀ ? ਉਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਉਤਰ : ਬਸ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਸਾਂਝ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਚਾਹੁੰਦਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸੂਬਾ ਬਣੇ ਲੇਕਿਨ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸੂਬਾ ਸਾਰਿਆਂ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਲਈ ਬਣੇ। ਸਿਰਫ ਸਿੱਖ ਉਸ ਲਈ ਨਾ ਫਾਇਦਾ ਕਰਨ ਸਗੋਂ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਾਂਝਾ ਪਲੈਟ ਫਾਰਮ ਬਣਾ ਕੇ ਕਰਨ। ਪ੍ਰਤਾਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਇਸ ਦੇ ਉਲਟ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸੂਬਾ ਬਣਨ ਨਾਲ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਹਸਤੀ ਖਤਮ ਹੋ ਜਾਵੇਗੀ। ਸਿੱਖ ਬੜੇ ਛੋਟੇ ਜਿਹੇ ਹਨ ਖਿੱਤੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਬੰਦ ਹੋ ਜਾਣਗੇ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਤਰੱਕੀ ਬੰਦ ਹੋ ਜਾਵੇਗੀ। ਉਸ ਦਾ ਵੀਉ-ਪੁਆਇੰਟ ਹੋਰ ਸੀ ਮੇਰਾ ਹੋਰ ਸੀ। ਪਰ ਜਿਹੜੀ ਤਰੱਕੀ ਪ੍ਰਤਾਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੈਰੋ

ਨੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿੱਚ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ ਉਹ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਮੁਲਾਜ਼ਮਤ ਵਿੱਚ 50% ਭਰਤੀ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਹਰ ਵੇਲੇ ਤਿਆਰ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਸੀ। ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਹ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਚੰਗਾ ਲਗਦਾ ਸੀ। ਉਹ ਹਰ ਵੇਲੇ ਤਿਆਰ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਸੀ। ਉਹ ਬੜਾ ਤਕੜਾ ਸੀ ਜੋ ਕਰਦਾ ਸੀ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਕੋਈ ਸ਼ੱਕ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦਾ ਸੀ ਉਸਦੇ ਆਲੇ-ਦੁਆਲੇ ਨਿਰੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਨ ਪਰ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਕੋਈ ਕਹਿ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਕਦਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਕਮਿਊਨਲ ਹੈ।

ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ : ਹੋਰ ਕੋਈ ਗੱਲ ਪ੍ਰਤਾਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੈਰੋ ਬਾਰੇ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਉਤਰ : ਪ੍ਰਤਾਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਅੰਗੁਣ ਵੀ ਸਨ। ਆਪਣੇ ਵਿਰੋਧੀ ਨੂੰ ਉਹ ਸਹਿ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਸਕਦਾ। ਬੁਰੀ ਭਲੀ ਗੱਲ ਕਹਿਣੀ ਸੋਚਦਾ ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ। ਵਿਰੋਧੀ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਰਨ ਲੱਗਿਆਂ ਸੋਚਦਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਿ ਬਹੁਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਾਰਨਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ। ਉਹ ਦੁਸ਼ਮਣੀ ਬਹੁਤ ਹੱਦ ਤੱਕ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਕੱਢਣ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕਰਦਾ ਸੀ। ਜਿਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਕਿ ਅਸੀਂ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਮਨ੍ਹਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਸੀ ਪਰ ਉਹ ਰੁਕਦਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਅਖੀਰ ਤੇ ਨਤੀਜਾ ਇਹ ਹੋਇਆ ਕਿ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਚੰਗਾ ਤੇ ਵੱਡਾ ਆਦਮੀ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਵੀ ਅੰਤ ਉਸ ਦਾ ਬੁਰਾ ਹੋਇਆ। ਗੁਣ ਉਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਏਨੇ ਚੰਗੇ ਸਨ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਸੋਚਦਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਨੂੰ ਇਕ ਨੰਬਰ ਦਾ ਸੂਬਾ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਬਣਾ ਦਿਆਂ। ਇਹ ਕੈਲੇਫੋਰਨੀਆਂ ਵਰਗਾ ਹੋਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ। ਅਤੇ ਉਨ੍ਹੀ ਹੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੀ ਆਰਥਿਕ ਤਰੱਕੀ ਹੋਣੀ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ। ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਬਤੌਰ ਨੈਸ਼ਨਲਿਸਟ ਦੇ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਨਾ ਸਿਰਫ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿੱਚ ਹੀ ਸਗੋਂ ਸਾਰੇ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਇਸ ਦਾ ਜਾਲ ਫੈਲਿਆ ਹੋਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ। ਨਾ ਬਲਕਿ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵਿੱਚ ਹੋਣ ਬਲਕਿ ਸੈਂਟਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਪੱਗੜੀ ਉਚੀ ਨਜ਼ਰ ਆਵੇ ਇਸਕਰਕੇ ਜਦੋਂ ਵੀ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਖਾ ਬਾਰੇ ਫਲਾਣੀ ਥਾਂ ਗੱਲ ਹੋ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਗੱਲ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਕਹਿੰਦਾ ਹੋਰ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸੀ ਪਰ ਕਰਵਾ ਲਿਆਉਂਦਾ ਸੀ। ਮਿਸਾਲ ਦੇ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਜਦੋਂ ਖੁਦ ਵੀ ਚੀਫ ਮਨਿਸਟਰ ਬਣਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਅੰਬਾਲੇ ਦਾ ਅਬਦੁਲ ਗੁਫਾਰ ਖਾਂ ਕਾਗਰਸੀ ਐਮ ਐਲ ਏ ਨੇ ਇਹ ਗੱਲ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਨਹਿਰੂ ਨੂੰ ਕਹੀ ਕੀ ਆਪ ਨੇ ਸੱਚਰ ਕੇ ਇਸ ਲੀਏ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਕਾ ਚੀਫ ਮਨਿਸਟਰ ਬਣਾਇਆ ਹੈ ਔਰ ਪ੍ਰਤਾਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਇਸ ਲਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਬਣ ਸਕਾ ਕਿ ਉਸ ਮੂੰਹ ਪਰ ਦਾੜੀ ਹੈ। ਪੰਡਿਤ ਜੀ ਹੱਸਣ ਲੱਗੇ। ਉਹ ਕਹਿਣ ਲੱਗਿਆ ਕਿ ਯਹ ਹੱਸਣੇ ਕੀ ਬਾਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਰੋਨੇ ਕੀ ਬਾਤ ਹੈ। ਮੈਂ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਹੂੰ ਔਰ ਮੈਂ ਆਪ ਕੋ ਕਹਿਨੇ ਆਇਆ ਹੂੰ ਕਿ ਕੱਲ ਮੇਰਾ ਕਿਆ ਹਸਰ ਹੋਗਾ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਕੇ ਸਾਥ ਤੋ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਹੀ ਕੋਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ। ਮੈਂ ਜੋ ਸਾਰੀ ਉਮਰ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਮੇ ਰਹਿ ਕਰ ਲੜਤਾ ਰਹਾਂ ਹੂੰ ਮੈਂ ਕਹਾਂ ਜਾਉਂ। ਇਹ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਜਵਾਹਰ ਲਾਲ ਨਹਿਰੂ ਨੂੰ ਸੂਟ (suit) ਕੀਤੀ ਅਤੇ ਲਗੀ ਵੀ ਬੁਰੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ। ਅਤੇ ਅਲਟੀਮੇਟਲੀ (Ultimately) ਭਾਵੇਂ ਸਰਦਾਰ ਪਰਤਾਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਡਿਵੈਲਪਮੈਂਟ ਮਨਿਸਟਰ ਬਣਿਆ ਪਰ ਅਸਲੀ ਤਾਕਤ ਸਰਦਾਰ ਪ੍ਰਤਾਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਹੱਥ ਵਿੱਚ ਸੀ। ਉਦੋਂ ਵੀ ਜਦੋਂ ਸੱਚਰ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਜਦੋਂ ਸੱਚਰ ਗਿਆ ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਕੋਈ ਕੰਮ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਪਰਤਾਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੈਰੋ ਨੇ ਨਹਿਰੂ ਨੂੰ ਕਿਹਾ ਹੋਵੇ ਅਤੇ ਉਸਨੇ ਨਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੋਵੇ। ਅੱਠ ਸਾਲ ਉਹ ਰਿਹਾ। ਮਰਵਾਣ ਵਿੱਚ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਨਹਿਰੂ ਦਾ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਹੱਥ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਮਾਸਟਰ ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਾ ਸੀ। ਦਾਸ ਕਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਬਣਿਆ। ਇਹ ਮਾਸਟਰ ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਹੋਰਾਂ ਨੇ ਲਿਖਕੇ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਸੀ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਹਿਰੂ ਦਾ ਕੰਮ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ। ਅਖੀਰ ਦੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਫੈਸਲਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ ਉਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ Master Tara Singh and others pleaded this case against Partap Singh ਬਨਾਣ ਵਿੱਚ ਮਾਸਟਰ ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਾ ਹੱਥ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਮਾਰਨ ਲਗਿਆਂ ਵੀ ਮਾਸਟਰ ਜੀ ਦਾ ਹੀ ਹੱਥ ਸੀ। ਜਦੋਂ ਉਸਨੇ ਦੇਖਿਆ ਕਿ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਿੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਰ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਤਦ ਉਸਨੇ ਇਹ ਯੂਜ਼ (Use) ਕਰ ਲਿਆ ਪਰ ਉਹ ਵੀ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਨਹਿਰੂ ਦੇ ਮਰਨ ਦੇ ਬਾਅਦ ਲਾਲ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਸ਼ਾਸਤਰੀ ਦੇ ਵੇਲੇ ਆ ਕੇ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਕਢਿਆ ਗਿਆ। ਜੇ ਨਹਿਰੂ ਜੀਉਂਦਾ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਤਦ ਵੀ ਉਸਨੇ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਉਥੋਂ ਕੱਢਕੇ ਕਿਧਰੇ ਹੋਰ ਪਾਸੇ ਪਾ ਦੇਣਾ ਸੀ।

ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ : What are your impressions about the Sikhs and Punjabi living abroad when you visited various countries as an Ambassador ?

ਉਤਰ : ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਇਲਾਕਿਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਮੈਂ ਰਾਜਦੂਤ 1970-76 ਤਕ ਬਣਕੇ ਗਿਆ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਇਲਾਕਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਿੱਖ ਨਾ ਹੋਣ ਦੇ ਬਰਾਬਰ ਸੀ। ਇਕ ਮੈਂ ਬਲਗੋਰੀਆ ਵਿੱਚ ਰਿਹਾ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਕਮਿਊਨਿਸਟ ਮੁਲਕ ਹੈ। ਉਥੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਕੋਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ। ਇਕ ਮੈਂ ਗਿਆਨਾ, ਇਕ ਮੈਂ ਸੁਰੀਨਮ ਫਰੈਂਚ ਗਿਆਨਾ। ਇਥੇ ਮੈਂ ਹਾਈ ਕਮਿਸ਼ਨਰ ਸੀ। ਉਥੇ ਕੋਈ ਵੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ। ਉਥੇ ਜਿਹੜੇ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨੀ ਸਨ ਉਹ ਬਿਹਾਰ, ਯੂ ਪੀ ਦੇ ਰਹਿਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਸਨ। ਲੇਕਿਨ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਮੈਂ ਆਪਣਾ ਕਾਇਮ ਰੱਖਿਆ। ਮੈਂ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਆਉਂਦਾ ਅਮਰੀਕਾ, ਇਗਲੈਂਡ, ਕਨੇਡਾ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਬੋਲਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਸਰਬ ਧਰਮਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਕੰਮ ਕਰਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹਾਂ ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਵਰਲਡ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਚਰਚਜ਼ ਨੇ ਨੈਰੋਬੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਬੁਲਾਇਆ। ਉਥੇ ਮੈਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦਾ ਅੰਗ੍ਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਦਾ ਤਰਜਮਾ ਪੇਪ ਨੂੰ ਸੁਣਾਇਆ। ਮੇਰੇ ਤਾਲੁਕਾਤ ਉਸ ਨਾਲ ਬਹੁਤ ਚੰਗੇ ਹੋ ਗਏ ਫਿਰ ਮੈਂ ਯੂਸੁ ਮਸੀਹ ਤੇ ਕਿਤਾਬ ਲਿਖੀ। "The Man Who Never Die". ਉਹ ਪੋਇਟਰੀ ਦੀ ਕਿਤਾਬ ਹੈ। ਉਹ ਵੈਟੀਕਨ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਰੇਡਿਉ ਉਤੇ ਆ ਕੇ ਉਹ ਸਾਰੀ ਕਵਿਤਾ ਰੀਸਾਇਟ ਕਰੇ। ਉਹ ਮੈਂ ਕੀਤੀ ਇਸ ਨਾਲ ਇਸ ਜਗਤ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਜਾਰੀ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ ਅਤੇ ਜਰਮਨ ਦੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਇਕ ਪਾਦਰੀ ਮਿਸਟਰ ਐਗਲੇ ਨੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਉਤੇ ਕੋਈ ਤੀਹ ਸਫੇ ਦਾ ਪੈਂਫਲੈਟ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਕਿ ਜਿਸ ਆਦਮੀ ਨੇ ਈਸਾ ਦੇ ਉਤੇ ਇਹ ਕਿਤਾਬ ਲਿਖੀ ਹੈ ਉਸ ਦਾ ਆਪਣਾ ਧਰਮ ਇਹ ਹੈ। ਇਸੇ ਤਰੀਕੇ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਮੈਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਈਸਾਈਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਕਰਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹਾਂ। ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਕਰਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਪਰਿਵਾਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਕਰਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹਾਂ। ਜਿਥੇ ਜਿਥੇ ਜਾ ਸਕਿਆਂ ਹਾਂ ਤੇ ਮੈਂ ਚਾਹੁੰਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਨਿਊਯਾਰਕ ਦੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਇਕ ਵਰਲਡ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੈਂਟਰ ਕਾਇਮ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਵੇ ਕਿ ਜਿਥੋਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਨਿਰੋਲ ਪੋਲੀਟਿਕਸ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਖਰਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਵੇ। ਉਥੋਂ ਫਿਰ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਸਾਰੇ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਤੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਗੋਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਸਾਰੀ ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਵੇ।

ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ : ਡਾਕਟਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਸਾਰੀ ਜਿੰਦਗੀ ਇੰਨਾ ਕੰਮ ਕੀਤਾ - ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦਾ ਟੀਕਾ ਕੀਤਾ, ਹੋਰ ਬਹੁਤ ਕੁਝ ਲਿਖਿਆ, ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਾਰੀਆਂ ਗਲਾਂ ਦੇ ਪਿਛੇ ਕੀ ਇਨਸਪੀਰੇਸ਼ਨ (Inspiration) ਸੀ ?

ਉਤਰ : ਮੈਂ ਇਹ ਸਮਝਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਕੋਈ ਮੋਹਰ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ। ਇਕ ਵਾਰੀ ਐਸਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਸੁਤਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਬਿਮਾਰੀ ਤੋਂ ਉਠਿਆ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਮੈਂ ਦੇਖਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੱਚੇਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਮੇਰੀ ਪਿਠ ਉਤੇ ਥਾਪੀ ਦੇ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਅਤੇ ਮੈਂ ਘੱਟਾ ਭਰ ਸੁਤਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੋਵਾਂਗਾ ਅਤੇ ਮੈਂ ਦਿਨ ਵੇਲੇ ਸੁਤਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਸੀ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਸਾਰਾ ਟਾਇਮ ਮੇਰੀ ਪਿਠ ਤੇ ਥਾਪੀ ਦਿਤੀ ਅਤੇ ਮੈਂ ਜਦੋਂ ਉਠਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਨਿਹਾਲ ਜਿਹਾ ਸੀ। ਤੇ ਮੈਂ ਸੋਚਿਆ ਕਿ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਮੇਥੋਂ ਕੋਈ ਅਜੇਹਾ ਕੰਮ ਕਰਾਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਮੇਰੇ ਤੇ ਮਿਹਰ ਹੈ। ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਮਗਰੋਂ ਮੈਂ ਮੁੜ ਕੇ ਪਿਛੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਤੱਕਿਆ। ਕਿਤੇ ਵੀ ਭਾਵੇਂ ਮੈਂ ਰਿਹਾ। ਮੈਂਬਰ ਪਾਰਲੀਮੈਂਟ ਵਿੱਚ ਰਿਹਾ ਹਾਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਰਿਹਾ ਹਾਂ। ਚੰਗੇ ਹਾਲਾਤ ਵਿੱਚ ਰਿਹਾ ਹਾਂ। ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਅਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਦਾ ਕੰਮ ਹੀ ਕਰਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹਾਂ। ਨਤੀਜਾ ਇਹ ਹੋਇਆ ਕਿ ਖਰਬਰਕ ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਵਾਰੀ ਮੇਰਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦਾ ਤਰਜਮਾ ਦੇਖਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਉਸ ਨੇ ਇਹ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਕਿ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਬਾਕੀ ਦੇ ਧਰਮਾਂ ਦੇ ਪੜਨ ਦਾ ਵੀ ਮੌਕਾ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਜਿਹੜੇ ਜਿਹਾ ਇਸ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਨੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਮਨ ਤੇ ਅਸਰ ਪਾਇਆ ਹੋਰ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਪਾਇਆ ਹਾਲਾਂਕਿ ਉਹ ਆਪ ਰੋਮਨ ਕੈਥੋਲਿਕ ਤੇ ਉਸ ਦਾ ਬਾਪ ਪਾਦਰੀ ਸੀ ਅਤੇ ਉਸ ਨੇ ਮੇਰਾ ਨਾਮ ਨੋਬਲ ਪਰਾਇਜ਼ ਲਈ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੀਤਾ। ਉਸ ਨੇ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੀਤਾ ਅਤੇ ਰਾਧਾ ਕਰਿਸ਼ਨ ਨੇ ਸਪੋਰਟ ਕੀਤੀ। ਇਹ ਸਾਰੇ ਲਈ ਉਸ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਦੀ ਜੋ ਮਿਹਰ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਸਾਰਾ ਦਿਨ ਵਰਸਾਇਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਤੁਰਿਆ ਫਿਰਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਨਿਹਾਲ ਹੋਇਆ ਫਿਰਦਾ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਜਿਸ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਨੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਤੇ ਇੰਨੀ ਮਿਹਰ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ। ਮੈਂ ਕੁਝ ਨਾ ਕੁਝ ਉਸ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਲਈ ਆਪਣੀ ਢੋਆਈ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰਨਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦਾ ਹਾਂ।

## NEWS & VIEWS

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### ANTI-SIKH RIOTS PROBE REPORT LIKELY BY MARCH 31

New Delhi, November 20. Justice Nanavati Commission, probing the 1984 anti-Sikh riots, has completed recording of evidence and is likely to submit its report to the Government by March 31 next year.

'I will soon start writing the report as all necessary evidence relating to the riots have been recorded and the written submissions have been submitted by parties-concerned,' said Justice Nanavati, who is heading the one-man Commission probing into the riots that shook the national capital in the aftermath of Indira Gandhi's assassination.

He said after recording preliminary findings about the nature of lapses against officials and involvement of other persons on appreciation of evidence, they would have to be issued notices under Section 8(b) of the Commission of Inquiry Act so as to give them a chance to defend themselves.

After hearing these officials and persons and taking into account their defence, the final report would be written, he added. (Courtesy : The Hindustan Times, November 25, 2002).

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### RACE ATTACK ON UK SIKH LEADS TO TENSION

London, November 22. A Sikh councillor's son was hit on the head with baseball bats after he stepped in to save his turban-wearing friend from a gang of Muslim attackers. Goodmayes Ward councillor Satnam Singh believes it is not the first time the gang has hunted and assaulted Sikh youths and is calling on Muslim leaders to condemn the attacks.

His 15-year-old son was walking with friends from Loxford High School last week when a car pulled up alongside them in Henley Road, Ilford, news reports said today. The occupants singled out one youngster with a traditional Sikh turban and started pushing and hitting the terrified 15-year-old.

Satnam Singh's son stepped in and soon became the gang's target. The gang members – all in their early 20s and wearing traditional Muslim dress – took baseball bats from the car and attacked both teenagers before driving off.

Both boys were taken to hospital where they each received stitches. 'It's not right that people are doing this... this gang is going around to schools in the area looking for Sikh boys.'

'We are now looking to Muslim

leaders to come forward and publicly condemn the attacks. The situation is very volatile at the moment but something needs to be done,' Satnam Singh said. (*Courtesy : The Tribune, November 23, 2002*).

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AFGHAN GURDWARAS IN BAD SHAPE PM REFUSES TO SEND SGPC TEAM

Amritsar, November 29, Historical Sikh shrines in Afghanistan damaged during shelling in the recent past are beyond repair and, hence, will have to be re-constructed, which involves huge money.

However, refusal by Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee to send a delegation of the SGPC to carry out repair of gurdwaras to Afghanistan has annoyed Sikhs there. Residents of Kabul, who met this correspondent at Nankana Sahib and Lahore during Gurburb celebrations, said almost all gurdwaras built in memory of Guru Nanak and his son had been destroyed.

While the Taliban had destroyed ancient statues of Mahatma Buddha, Sikh shrines had been destroyed in the US attacks.

The letter of Mr Vajpayee, addressed to Mr Kirpal Singh Badungar, SGPC chief, reads: "I understand the compelling desire of the Sikh community to restore and renovate holy Sikh shrines in Afghanistan. However, I think it would be a good idea for the visit of the SGPC delegation to be deferred to a later date when the security situation, especially in and around Jalalabad and Kandahar is more conducive."

The historical gurdwaras in Afghanistan are Gurdwara Bhai Nand Lal Goya (Ghazni), Gurdwara Guru Nanak Dev (Jalalabad), Gurdwara Baba Shree Chand (Kabul), Gurdwara Karteparwan (Kabul), Gurdwara Kotha Sahib (Kabul), Gurdwara Kotha Sahib (Ghazni), Gurdwara Baba Nanak (Kabul), Gurdwara Guru Har Rai (Kabul), Gurdwara Khalsa Dewan and Chashma Sahib (Sultanpur).

Though most Afghan Sikhs who had fled to Pakistan, India and other countries have gone back to their native land, yet they are unable to re-construct their places of worship. Mr Partap Singh and Mr Nirmal Singh, both brothers from Kabul, said there was an urgent need to send a delegation of the SGPC to carry out a survey of the damaged Sikh shrines so that the rich heritage of the community could be saved.

Vice-Chairman of the National Commission for Minorities Tarlochan Singh said he would take up the matter with the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister and the External Affairs Minister for sending an SGPC delegation to Kabul, Kandahar, Jalalabad and other cities of Afghanistan so that the gurdwaras there could be re-constructed at the earliest. (*Courtesy : November 30, 2002*)

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#### WHERE DO RSS FUNDS COME FROM?

NEW DELHI: For the last 13 years, the India Development and Relief Fund (IDRF), a US-based charity has reportedly misused American corporate

philanthropy to fund RSS-affiliated organisations here. For instance, the IDRF obtained vast sums from CISCO, a leading technology company in the US with a substantial number of NRIs on its rolls by saying its activities are "secular" since company rules explicitly prohibit donations to organisations of a "religious" nature.

These are some of the findings presented in a 91-page report by The Campaign to Stop Funding Hate (TCTSFH), a coalition of professionals, students, workers, artists and intellectuals. In the first phase of its campaign, "Project Saffron Dollar", the TCTSFH plans to write to large American corporates to guard against funding the IDRF, Biju Mathew, a spokesman for the TCTSFH said.

The TCTSFH report says that though the IDRF claims to be a non-sectarian, non-political charity that funds development and relief work in India, the IDRF filed a tax document (at its inception in 1989) with the Internal Revenue Service of the US Federal government, identifying nine organisations as a representative sample of organisations it would support. All nine were Sangh organisations.

The report also says that 82 per cent of IDRF's funds go to Sangh organisations. It documents the fact that 70 per cent of the monies are used for "hinduisation/tribal/education" work, largely with the view to spreading the Hindutva ideology among tribals. Less than 20 per cent is used in "development and relief" activities, but the report concludes that since there is a sectarian slant to how the relief money is disbursed, these are sectarian funds, too.

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PRESS NOTE

In the annual general body meeting of the Institute of Sikh Studies held on Dec. 23, 2002, Sardar Gurdev Singh was unanimously re-elected as President of the Institute for the year 2003.

He nominated the following office bearers and members of the Executive Committee.

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|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Maj Gen (retd.) Narindar Singh | Vice President |
| Bhai Ashok Singh | Secretary |
| Maj Gen (retd.) Jaswant Singh | Finance Member |
| Bibi Baljit Kaur | Joint Secretary |
| Dr Gurcharan Singh | Member |
| Brig. Hardit Singh | Members |

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## LETTER TO EDITOR

Dear Editor,

I want to draw your attention to the statement made by Gurnam Singh Mukatsar in his article on page 39 of Sikh Virsa of September 2002. He has stated “ I have noted hundreds of Shabads from Guru Granth Sahib written by Guru Nanak, Guru Amardas, Guru Ramdas and Guru Arjan Dev. In these Shabads the Gurus have made it very clear again and again that the untouchable Bhagat, Namdev, Bhagat Kabir, Bhagat Ravidas and Bhagat Sain were their spiritual leaders, and true Gurus in the image of Almighty. (ਮੈਂ ਸੈਂਕੜੇ ਉਹ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਗੁਰੂ ਗਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਨੋਟ ਕੀਤੇ ਹਨ, ਜੋ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਗੁਰੂ ਅਮਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ, ਗੁਰੂ ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਜੀ, ਅਤੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਰਜਨ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੇ ਲਿਖੇ ਹਨ, ਜਿਹਨਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵਾਰ-ਵਾਰ ਸਪੱਸਟ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਅਛੂਤ ਭਗਤ ਨਾਮਦੇਵ, ਭਗਤ ਕਬੀਰ, ਭਗਤ ਰਵਿਦਾਸ ਅਤੇ ਭਗਤ ਸੈਣ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਰਹਿਬਰ ਹਨ, ਸੱਤ ਪੁਰਖ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਹਨ। ਇਹ ਗੱਲ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਨਾਂ ਲੈ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਕਹੀ ਹੈ।) . As far as I know, there is no support in Guru Granth Sahib for what he has stated. It is his imagination or misunderstanding of Shabads, which has led him to make this statement. If there were Shabads like ones he says, surely scholars like W. H. McLeod and others would have pointed them out. I urge Gurnam Singh to provide a single Shabad or even a single verse from Guru Granth Sahib, which supports his false assertion.

Before discussing this issue further, let me make it clear that the Sikh Gurus appreciated and accepted some of the thoughts of these Bhagats, otherwise their works would have not been included in Guru Granth Sahib. However, only those compositions (Banis) of Bhagats were incorporated in the Guru Granth Sahib, which were consistent with Guru Nanak's philosophy. Wherever there were minor differences, the Gurus added their comments alongside the hymns of Bhagats. . It is well known that Guru Arjan Dev rejected the compositions of Sufi divine Shah Hussein and others due to their lack of consistency with the Nankian philosophy. Had the compositions of Bhagats been not incorporated in Guru Grant Sahib, their contents would have been distorted beyond recognition through interpolation.

Here, I want to emphasize that Guru Nanak's philosophy is much more in scope than the thoughts of Bhagats.

Coming back to the issues of who was Guru Nanak's Guru and who was the founder of Sikhism? It is explained many times very clearly in the Guru Granth Sahib that Guru Nanak's Guru was God and Guru Nanak was the founder of Sikhism. For Guru Nanak, God is knowledge and the source of all knowledge. God made Himself manifest through His creation. His creation is the laboratory for gathering knowledge and testing it. Guru Nanak attributed all his knowledge, understanding and experience to God. What he was saying and doing was at the command of God is clearly stated in the following verses.

ਹਉ ਢਾਢੀ ਵੇਕਾਰੁ ਕਾਰੈ ਲਾਇਆ॥  
 ਰਾਤਿ ਦਿਹੈ ਕੈ ਵਾਰ ਧੁਰਹੁ ਫੁਰਮਾਇਆ॥  
 ਢਾਢੀ ਸਚੈ ਮਹਿਲ ਖਸਮਿ ਬੁਲਾਇਆ॥  
 ਸਚੀ ਸਿਫਤਿ ਸਾਲਾਹ ਕਪੜਾ ਪਾਇਆ॥

GGS, M 1, p 150.

*“I was an unemployed minstrel (dhadi),  
But God gave me an occupation.  
He ordered me to sing His praises day and night.  
He called me to His abode of Truth and  
Honoured me with a robe  
Of ‘propagating His true glory’.”*

Furthermore, when the Jogis asked Guru Nanak, “Who is your Guru or whose disciple are you?” He replied, “The Shabad (Divine Revelation, Divine Knowledge) is my Guru and my mind which is focused on the Shabad and comprehends it is the disciple. Here he has made it abundantly clear that Guru is the *Shabad* (Divine Knowledge), not the personal Guru.

ਤੇਰਾ ਕਵਣੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਜਿਸ ਕਾ ਤੂ ਚੇਲਾ॥  
ਸਬਦੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਧੁਨਿ ਚੇਲਾ॥...

GGs, M, 1, p. 942

*That God is the Guru has been explicitly pointed out  
in the following verses.*

ਗੁਰੂ ਦੇਵਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਅਲਖ ਅਭੇਵਾ ਤਿਭਵਣ ਸੋਝੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਕੀ ਸੇਵਾ॥

GGs, M, 1, p. 1125

*Guru is God, the Enlightener, the Ineffable and Unreachable.  
He who follows God comprehends the nature of the universe.*

ਸਤਗੁਰੂ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਸੋਇ॥  
ਮਾਨੁਖ ਕਾ ਕਰਿ ਰੂਪੁ ਨ ਜਾਨੁ॥

GGs, M, 5, p. 895

*The true Guru is Niranjana (God) (who is beyond the influence of Maya).  
Do not believe that He is in the form of a man*

That Guru Nanak is the founder of Sikh philosophy (ਸਿਧਾਂਤ) is confirmed in the following verses.

ਤਿਨ ਕਉ ਕਿਆ ਉਪਦੇਸੀਐ ਜਿਨ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਉ॥

GGs, M 2, p.150

*“What teachings can be imparted to those  
who have been taught by Guru Nanak.”*

ਹੋਰਿਓ ਗੰਗ ਵਹਾਈਐ ਦੁਨਿਆਈ ਆਖੈ ਕਿ ਕਿਓਨੁ॥  
ਨਾਨਕ ਈਸਰਿ ਜਗਨਾਥ ਉਚਹਦੀ ਵੈਣ ਵਿਰਿਕਿਓਨੁ॥

GGs, Sttay Doom, p. 967.

“The people of the world say that Nanak, the Controller (Nath) of the world has promulgated a philosophy of highest order that has changed the course of Ganges.”\*

ਬਲਿਓ ਚਰਾਗੁ ਅੰਧੂਰ ਮਹਿ ਸਭਿ ਕਲਿ ਉਧਰੀ ਇਕ ਨਾਮ ਧਰਮ ॥  
ਪ੍ਰਗਟੁ ਸਗਲ ਹਰਿ ਭਵਨ ਮਹਿ ਜਨੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ॥

GGs, M5, p.1387.

\* That means that Guru Nanak’s philosophy has challenged many religious beliefs, scientific concepts and social, political and economic systems of his time.)

*“Nanak person, the Guru, an image of the Almighty, has appeared in the world as light in darkness to dispel ignorance of the whole world with Divine Wisdom.”*

ਸਭੁ ਤੇ ਵਡਾ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਜਿਨਿ ਕਲ ਰਾਖੀ ਮੇਰੀ॥

GGs, M5, p 750.

*“Satguru Nanak is the greatest of all, who protected my honour.”*

The nine successors of Guru Nanak preached and taught his philosophy by enriching and strengthening it by introducing innovative practices in the Sikh community over a period of two centuries.

Besides, his explanation of the evolution of Pali from Prakrit Brahmi (ਪ੍ਰਾਕ੍ਰਿਤ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੀ), the language of the original inhabitants (ਮੂਲ ਨਿਵਾਸੀ) of India is not correct due to the following reason. For example, he says, “Punjabi is the first born daughter of Pali, the original language (mUl bolI) of India. However, many words of modern Punjabi are found in modern German with the same meaning (*Abstracts of Sikh Studies*, Jan.-March, 1997, p 8-28). It is reasonable that Punjabi words are also present in other European languages, especially, Slavic languages. So if Pali evolved only from the languages of the original inhabitants (ਮੂਲ ਨਿਵਾਸੀ) of India, from where did German words enter into Punjabi or vice versa? A more logical explanation of the evolution of Pali is that it was a product of the interaction between original inhabitants of India and the Caucasian people, who migrated to India from central Asia. The infusion of the languages of the two groups led to the development of Pali.

Research is searching for truth nothing but truth. Research conducted to prove preconceived agenda or notions generally leads to wrong conclusions.

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‘DERSAS AND THE ECCLESIASTICAL ANARCHY AMONG SIKHS’  
OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2002 ISSUE

Dear Sir,

Permit me the liberty of responding to some of the questions raised in the above article. We, by nature are passionately attracted to so called ‘Babas’ because of the Sikh heritage. Our scriptures create a lot of space for ‘Sadhs’, ‘Sants’, ‘Braham Gyanees’ and ‘Bhaghats’ etc. (Refer inter-alia to Sukhmani Sahib.) The more we recite ‘Nitname’ the more manifests a desire within us to seek ‘Babas’ out for veneration. If some enterprising charismatic ‘Babas’ occupy this space, let us admit, they are fulfilling an obsessive yearning of the Sikh society.

How can one expect any Government to interfere in such a situation, a typical bureaucratic response will be that so called ‘Babas’ are essential part of the Sikh legacy as the Sikh scriptures glowingly praise and acclaim their contribution to

spirituality. As long they refrain from claiming any direct lineage to ten Guru Sahiban there appears nothing objectionable in practice of their profession. The SGPC, it would appear cannot stand up to a legitimate and fair competition from 'Babas' and rather than improving their own services to the Sikh 'Panth' are looking at Government to retrieve their chestnut. That the 'Babas' are professing to be Gurus incarnate would be dismissed as only a motivated story of SGPC for obvious reasons. The relevance of 'Baba' dispensation today stands time tested and admittedly it is thriving exponentially on its own steam. From mainstream Sikh point of view it is indeed distressing, to say the least but one should not miss the wood for tree to arrive at a preconceived conclusion.

The only sensible course, under the circumstances, open to SGPC and the Sikh Intelligentsia is to gracefully accept the scriptures and accord due recognition to contemporary 'Sadhs'/'Sants' and 'Braham Gyanees' on some sort of territorial basis to take the Sikh Guru's original agenda further in 21<sup>st</sup> century. Immediately SGPC does not have suitable talent available with them, so some of the existing captivating 'Babas' may be enlisted and recognized to start with. Such official 'Babas' will in their own interest eliminate the fake ones themselves and SGPC will sit on controls. Meantime SGPC should initiate steps to develop talent to take over the services currently rendered by

'Babas'. In course of time evolving situation would increasingly turn favourably win-win with initiative returning back to SGPC.

Before closing I would like to add that since 1925 the SGPC have only been rededicating their energies towards meeting the 'Jathedars' personal agenda. This new competition from 'Babas' duly equipped with modern management practices and state-of-the-art technology has indeed refreshingly brought the situation to head where SGPC has been left with only two options, either be proactive with Guru's original programme or just perish.

Trust you will find the above worth pondering.

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Dear Sardar Balwant Singh,

This is in reference to your letter regarding All India Gurdwara act. I congratulate you and thank you for such a thorough and unbiased critical review of the draft. It is a sincere and academic analysis of the Act. You have referred to many shortcomings in the Act and the working of the SGPC. I know and can add many more to those shortcomings. All these together will not be able to meet the purpose of providing the "light" of Guru Granth Sahib to the people, the mission of Guru Nanak.

You will be doing a landmark service to society, if you modify or even redraft

the bill to remove the faults of the bill. You may come up with any other alternative keeping in mind as to why the All India Gurdwara Bill was considered a necessity.

Long time back all Sikhs felt the need of organising all the Panthic sections into one body which represents the true Sikh teachings and not those necessitated by the vested interests of the individual sants or groups or registered organisation. SGPC is the only statutory and representative body of the Sikhs to manage the Gurdwaras and Panthic affairs. Later, one more body, DSGMC, was founded to manage the Delhi Gurdwaras. Two other centres of the Sikh Panth, Patna and Nanded, have their justified claims to be accepted as a part of the Panth. In addition to these four major units of the Panth, a significant section of the Sikhs has settled in other countries of the world. All this made Sikhs to think of an All India Gurdwara organisation to bring the Sikhs under one umbrella and present only one accepted version of the Sikh faith.

A draft has been prepared for this purpose and we cannot disagree with you that this draft needs modifications. However, we do not know any other alternative to achieve the above purpose of the Panth. All concerned Sikhs like you, rather every Sikh, has a right to give honest and sincere suggestions to present a proposal to organise the Sikh Panth. This need is already overdue, and we hope intelligent people like you will contribute their might to serve the Panth. I request you to send a copy of your suggestions to Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, DSGMC and also to Dr Kharak Singh (#959, Phase IV, SAS Nagar)

from whom I got a copy of your letter and review.

Yours sincerely
Gurbakhsh Singh

Copy submitted to the Editor, IOSS, with ref. to the article *The Sikh Gurdwaras Bill, 1999 – A Disaster in Waiting* published in AOSS, Oct.-Dec., 2002 with the remarks that no reply has been received till today (Nov. 6, 2002).

Does S. Balwant Singh want the stalemate and divisions in the Panth to continue. Why does he not propose some positive steps to improve the working of the Gurdwaras ? If he suggests any new draft or even some changes in the existing draft to make it acceptable to achieve its purpose, his name will be respected like those Sikhs who made sacrifices for getting the Gurdwaras released from the control of the *Mahants* in 1925.

Better late than never. He may do so now. As mentioned in the letter, Sardar Balwant Singh is a great Sikh scholar of Gurdwara management. The Sikhs have a right to request him for helping the Panth in devising suitable legislation to manage the Sikh religious places. No response may make the reader suspect that his reaction was born out of wrong intentions for not letting the Sikhs achieve their long standing and justified demand to overcome the shortcomings in the existing Gurdwaras Legislation.

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Dear Editor,

I wish to compliment Dr Kharak Singh for his very enlightening article *Deras*

*and Ecclesiastical Anarchy Among Sikhs (Abstracts of Sikh Studies, Oct-Dec 2002).*

With due apology to the author (Dr Kharak Singh ji), I wish to point out that whenever there is a big kirtan darbar or other wise ( A Gurburb celebration), a separate publicity staff for sale of books, Audio and Video etc. is set up by the 'followers' of Baba Nand Singh ji. I have no in-depth knowledge about revered Babaji but I can say with confidence that how great he may be he cannot surpass the glory or sainthood of revered Sikh Gurus. Extraordinarily highlighting Baba Nand Singh ji beyond reasonable proportions of appreciations / praise is an insult to Sikh Gurus. The followers of Babaji highlight him to the extent that sometime I feel that in the backdrop of this highlight Sikh Gurus are let down or sidelined. This fact has escaped the attention of hon'ble writer which he should have also highlighted in his article. This act of followers of Baba Nand Singh ji is a sort of insult to our revered Gurus and this must be checked and some steps be taken to give it a graceful shape. I also feel that the ushering of various *deras* is only due to the failure of our prestigious or premier agency SGPC because it has miserably failed to propagate the Sikhism. Credit (otherwise-discredit) of mushroom growth of *deras* goes entirely to the (failure of ) SGPC. SGPC no doubt is opening more institutions / colleges etc. but perhaps because these institutions are money earning institutions. There is need to recruit qualified (with vast knowledge of Sikhism) granthis like Sant Singh Maskeen, who could undertake *Parchar*, so that Sikhs at least must be guided properly to enable them not to depend upon 'deras'. Concrete steps must be immediately taken by SGPC to guide Sikhs to get rid of Dera culture.

Ujagar Singh  
1287, Sector 49-B  
Chandigarh

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Dear Sir

I have read with interest the latest issue of your esteemed journal *Abstracts*. You have rightly raised some pertinent issues which continue to agitate the present day Sikh minds. I also endorsed your view regarding the urgent need to adopt and implement the Sikh Nanakshahi calendar. This will clear all the uncertainties regarding important events of Sikh History once and for all, besides it will also send a clear message that the Sikh's have come of age. This calendar as we all know is the result of stupendous labour put in by Sardar Pal Singh Purewal. It was duly accepted by the SGPC and the Jantri was also got printed but at the last moment, as is always the case with important Sikh issues, its implementation was stalled by forces inimical to Sikhs. In the present scenario it would be too much to expect from the SGPC to take a lead in the matter. Restoring the religion to its pristine glory, spreading the universal message to every nook and corner of the world is on Institutes priority list.

I would like to make the following suggestion and like to share it with all your readers (1) The Institute of Sikh Studies and Sangat associated with Gurdwara

Kanthala should come forward and implement the Nanakshahi Calendar. Let them celebrate the forth coming Guru Nanak Gurburb on the day it rightly falls i.e. 14th April. I am sure the sangat in other Gurdwara around the world will follow the lead. Thus we will be able to usher in the much needed reforms bypassing the SGPC. (2) The SGPC has also stalled the publication of *Sachi Sakhi*, let the Institute also publish this and take a lead. This is not the time, to indulge in armchair pontification but to play a pro-active role. Truth it is said, "originates as minority of one and every custom is a broken precedent".

Paramjit Singh
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#### DEPRECIATING SIKHS ANDHURTING THE SENTIMENTS OF THE COMMUNITY

Dear Editor

Highly objectionable material has been published by *Economic Times* in its issue dated 28.11.2002 on page in its Travel section. It paints the Sikhs in a very poor light.

I had sent a letter of protest through email to Mr. Arindan Sengupta, Editor, *Economic Times*, Delhi on the same day. Neither any acknowledgement nor any reply has been received.

Please take up the issue appropriately in all forums and with the news paper, the editor, the owners etc. We cannot, and should not, allow the print media like *Economic Times* with very wide circulation, to degenerate the Sikhs like this. We have to nip the evil in the bud otherwise many more will be encouraged to follow suit.

Harbhajan Singh, Chairman  
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