

**MORCHA OF JAITO, ITS HISTORICAL
IMPORTANCE AND ITS ROLE IN
GURUDWARA REFORM ACT 1925**

A

DISSERTATION

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PREFACE

History is the series of events. Since the beginning of mankind many historical events took place in the history. The *Morcha of Jaito* is one among of them. The ruler of Nabha Maharaja Ripudman Singh had sympathy for the *Gurudwara* reform (or) *Akali* movement with the result the British Government forced him to abdicate on July, 1923. The *Akalis* launched an agitation in his favour which is known as '*Jaito Da Morcha*' on 9th September Nabha day was observed by the Sikhpanth. The Sikhs started *Akhand Path* of '*Shri Guru Granth Sahib*' in the *Gurudwara of Gangsar, Jaito*. The British Govt. Proclaimed the S.G.P.C and *Akali Dal* unlawful bodies on 21st February 1924 a *Jatha* of 500 sikhs proceeded forward to Jaito while reciting *Gurbani*. In the government action, many Sikhs were martyred while many were injured. Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru, K. Sathnam and Dr. Kitchlu also visited *Jaito* and participated in the *Morcha*. They were detained and kept custody for some time. The *Jathas* of Sikhs from outside also began to come. Sixteen *Jathas* of 500 Sikhs each took part in the *Morcha of Jaito*. The Government tried to stop that *Morcha* but Sikhs kept up their confidence and the efforts of William Birdwood as well as Government were failed.

At last the Government was successful to get agreement of Sikhs and passed the *Gurudawara Reform Act 1925*. On the other hand, Sikhs got a stable platform of law in the form of the *Gurudwara Reform Act 1925*. After passing this act the Sikhs stopped the *Morcha*.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:-

The literature of Sikh shrines had been studied of various of scholars who dealt directly with the activities of *Gurudwara Sudhar Lahar/* movement. The details are given below:-

The important book is *Akali Morchian Da Itihas*, Arsi Publisher, Patiala, 2007 was written by Sohan Singh Josh. This book gives us information about all sikh shrines and *Gurudwara Sudhar Lahar. The Shahi Country of Nabha*, published by P.C.P. Publisher, Nabha, 2000, was written by Ravinder Singh Sodhi from this book we learn about the roll of Maharaja Ripudman of Nabha in the *Morcha of Jaito*. The book on the subject, *Akali Movement*, published by publication Bureau Punjabi University, Patiala, 2015 was written by Mohinder Singh. This book explained the starting of *Gurudwara sudhar lahar* (or) *Akali Movement* and different shrines as well as the response of Government toward these shrines. Harjinder Singh Dilgir's books are *S.G.P.C. Kive Bani*, and *Shiromani Akali Dal*, published by S.G.P.C Amritsar, 2000 tells us about the

formation of S.G.P.C. and *Akali Dal* and gives us the information about the contribution of these bodies in Sikh shrines.

Gurudwara Reform Movement And Sikh Awakening, Published by S.G.P.C., Amritsar, 2000 was written by Teja Singh gives us the information about the history of all Sikh Shrines .

Ganda Singh's *Short History of Sikhs* published by S.G.P.C., Amritsar, 1962 is related to the Sikh Shrines as well as the History of Punjab. An *Autobiography of J.L. Nehru* is published by allied publisher, New Delhi, 1972. Tells us about the Sikh Struggle toward British Government and the policies of British government towards Sikhs.

Khushwant Singh's book *History of Sikhs*, published by Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1972 gives us the details of Sikh struggle as well as Sikh Shrines and other movements of Punjab during 20th century.

SCOPE

The *Morcha* of Jaito is a historical event of history of Punjab. The Maharaja of Nabha's dispute was with the Maharaja of Patiala not with the Government of India. But he had taken interest in the affairs of the Sikh community and the Government was aware of his sympathy with the nationalist and *Akali* movement, so government pretended to solve the dispute with the state. The Sikhs were stopped to recite The *Gurbani* in their *Gurudwaras*. One such ceremony held at the temple of *Gangsar Jaito* was interrupted by the police. The Sikhs felt it as insult of *Shri Guru Granth Sahib*, so they launched a *Morcha* at *Jaito*.

The S.G.P.C and *Akali Dal* were declared illegal. The Indian National Congress declared its full sympathy with the *Morcha*. The Government tried to isolate the *Akalis* by giving wide publicity to the story that they wished to restore Sikhs rule in Punjab. But the Sikhs felt that it was their duty to support a party which intended to restore their kingdom. The Sikhs kept their confidence and continued the *Morcha*. When the Government realized that it was very difficult to stop the Sikhs, it tried to solve their questions. The Sikhs got sympathy from all national political parties and with the help of those parties, the Sikhs were able to change the Government and to compel the Government to pass the Sikhs *Gurudwara Reform Act*. 1925. At last, Government passed the Act, 1925 for which the Sikh agreed with Government and stopped the *Morcha*. The Sikhs won this *Morcha* in a very peaceful manner and got a permanent law for them which is enacting till now.

THE NEED FOR STUDY

The *Morcha of Jaito* is an important event in the history which was took place in 1923 to 1925. This event plays an important role in changing the policies of British Government and to give a stable platform to Sikhs in form of *Gurudwara Reform Act 1925* and S.G.P.C. which is working for Sikhs till now. After this event, The Sikhs were enable to get permanent law for themselves in the form of *Gurudwara Act 1925*. So it is very important to study this event.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

- I. To know about historical importance of *Morcha of Jaito* in the history
- II. To explore the contribution of *Morcha of Jaito* in the *Gurudwara reform Act 1925*.
- III. To explore the struggle to get freedom of religious worship by Sikhs .
- IV. To Know about the role of Maharaja of Nabha in the *Morcha of Jaito*.
- V. To know about the policies of British Government regarding Sikhs.
- VI. To know about the coutribution of S.G.P.C.& all political parties in the *morcha*.

THE RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGY

The study perspective of my work is historical The study is based on the proceedings of government ,work of S.G.P.C,files and reports of home political department of India,Newspapers,Files of Punjab State Archive Patiala and National Archive New Delhi. Relevant information had also been gathered from secondary sources such as books ,Journals,Unpublished thesis works .And I have done my work.

CHAPTERIZATION:-

The study had been divided into five chapters for the sake of convenience.The first chapter highlites the formation of Gurudwaras and sikh religion. Many Sikh shrines are described in this chapter also.The second chapter deals with whole circumstainces in which Maharaja Ripudman Singh had to give resignation and description of whole event of *Morcha of Jatio*.The third chapter concern with the efforts of S.G.P.C,*Akali Dal* and all Political parts these were in favour of Sikhs.The action (or) response of British Government regarding this agitation is described in the chapter. The forth Chapter highlites the formation of *Gurudwara Reform Act 1925*.The fifth and the last chapter concludes the research study ,which is based on the Primary and secondary sources.

CHAPTER – 1

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Gurudwaras have an important place in the Sikhism. From the beginning, *Gurudwaras* are working as conventional centre of religious, social and political life of the Sikhism. The history and development of religious activity established by Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, as social and moral educational centre and for providing food/*Langar* and residence to the poor and needy people, was older even the history of Sikhism . The use of word *Gurudwara* was started for the religious places of Sikhism from the ending of 18th century and beginning of 19th century, although this word was mentioned in the *Gurbani* by the Sikh Gurus.¹

Gurdware Hoya Sojhi Paiaasi

*Gurdware Hari Kirtan Suniye*²

But during the period of all the Sikh Gurus, the word *Gurudwara* was not being used for the religious places of Sikhism. Then the same word was been used for the Holy *Charan of Gurus*, their *Bani* and its Matt. At that time, religious places had been called as *Dharamshala*. Guru Nanak Dev Ji had sermonised that a *dharamshala* would be established for the people where they would sit together.

“Ghar Ghar Ander Dharamshal

Hoya Kirtan Sadda Visoa”

Word “*Dharamshala*” was being used for the religious places till the period of 10th Guru Gobind Singh. When Guru Teg Bahadur Ji visited Delhi, he stayed at Dharamshala of Bhai Kalayan Ji.

In course of time, those *Dharamshalas* were replaced by the places where the Sikh people would sit together to consult their problems. In course of time, it became the free places for the poor, orphans, needy and passengers. People from all castes and without having any discrimination were sheltering in *Dharamshalas* established by the Sikh People and were taking food, *Parshad* etc. Other Sikh Gurus continued the modesty of *Sangat* and *Pangat* which was started by Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. Guru Amar Dass Ji ,the third guru of Sikh ,had also developed the Sikhism by establishing 22 *Manjis*. Except the preaching of Sikhism, those *Manjidars* had also been collecting the donation from the Sikhs for Guru *Ka Langar* and the

same were offered to the Gurus. For the development of Sikhism and its preach, 4th Guru Ramdass Ji appointed *Masands*.³

Fifth Guru Shri Guru Arjan Dev Ji started restructuring the *Masands* practices (an organization that was preaching about the Sikhism). With the help of Sikh *Sangat*, the *Masands* had become the pivot of Sikhism and served the Sikhism for long time. But after 7th Guru and during long absence of Sikh Guru, the *Masands* started misusing the donation of Sikhism and started creating many problems between the Sikh people. In such circumstances Guru Gobind Singh permanently discontinued the *Masand* Practices and ordered the Sikhs that they themselves would deliver their donation before the Guru.⁴

In the beginning according to Sikhism the *Pujaries*, presidents of Sikhs, officials of *Dharamshalas* did not take Sikh donations as their own property, rather they used the same for the purpose of service of people; free food (*Langar*) etc, but in course of time the *pujaries* started thinking themselves as the owner of the *Gurudwaras*. It was due to the fury of atrocities by the Mughals in the beginning of 18th century.⁵

In the past, Sikhs had to bear the torture during the invasions of Mughal Governors like Abdus Samad Khan, Zakriya Khan, Mir Mannu and Ahmad Shah Abdali. A number of Sikh preachers had been turned out of the Punjab. During that torture, the *udasi Sadhu*/Saints served the Sikhism, but some of them appointed their own disciples and they forcibly became owner of the *Dera*, *Gurudwaras* who were later called as *Mahants*.⁶

In the beginning, the behavior of those *Mahants* was very good. They followed the instructions of Guru Nanak Dev Ji in the matter of use of donation and warned their disciples to keep away from disorders. But due to free properties given to the *Gurudwaras* and religious places by Maharaja Ranjit Singh and increased income of *Gurudwaras* and religious places, the holiness and simplicity of the *Mahants* started declining.

In the year 1849 A.D, British Government merged Punjab in their state and a number of religious places fell in to the hands of cultural *Masands* and *Sarbarahs*. Managers and pioneers of Sikh were becoming victims of various disorders. Due to lack of unity and awakening among the Sikhs, there was no movement against Sikh corruption. In the beginning of 20th century, it was the time for the awareness among the Sikhs due to some movements like *Nirankari Mission*, *Namdhari Mission* and *Singh Sabha Lahar* etc. which came into force with the help of *Brahmo Samaj* and *Arya Samaj*.⁷

Singh Sabha Lahar was deeply concerned with the opening of new schools, preaching about Sikhism and to maintain sikh culture, but that movement neither bothered about the politics of Sikhs and nor watched the maintenance of *Gurudwaras*. *Mahant, Pujaries and Sarbarah* in course of time were becoming corrupt. Sikh rituals had not been performed in the *Gurudwaras*. The officials of *Singh Sabha Lahar* demanded help from Government and British Officers. Due to this, on 5th March 1892, Khalsa College was established at Amritsar Sahib. The professors and students of that college played their important role in the leadership of sikhism.⁸

During those days, *Panch Khalsa Bhasaur* was also working actively to preach Sikhism. On 30th October 1902, Chief Khalsa Diwan was also appointed. Both Panch Khalsa and Chief Khalsa Diwan started the program of *Singh Sabha Lahar*. Besides this “Sikh Education Conference” played its better role to aware the Sikhs about their rights and to keep unity among the Sikhs. On 08th April 1907, *Khalsa Diwan* Lahore, during its session demanded that *Sarbarah* would be removed from *Gurudwaras* and a committee for the management of *Gurudwara* Sahib should be established in *Gurudwaras*, but Government did not bother the same.⁹

During that period, a case was filled in the Court raised among the *Pujaries*. In case No. 807, titled as “Narain Singh VS Bhagat Singh” court held that at 35 year old age, a true Sikh would be appointed as *Granthi of Gurudwara Sahib*. Due to this order, the interference of Hindus in *Gurudwaras* would have been discontinued. In the year 1912, *Jathedar* Kartar Singh Jhabbar established a *Jathebandi*/Union in the name of *Diwan Khalsa Khra Sauda Bar* and started working for the welfare of *Gurudwaras* and in the year 1914 Bhai Mehtab Singh Bir also established *Khalsa Biradari Jatha* and started working for the welfare of *Gurudwaras*.¹⁰

On 14th January, 1914, British Government demolished the wall of *Gurudwara* Rakab Ganj to construct a road toward *Kothi* of Viceroy. In a conference held at Jalandhar, Harchand Singh of Layalpur put that issue in the conference. When Sikhs were going to pass a resolution against the Government, then they forced Teja Singh Samundri and his companion to get away from the conference. After turning out of the conference, Harchand Singh Layalpuri conducted a gathering at Station and told the people about the situation and asked them for reconstructing the wall of *Gurudwara*. *Chief Khalsa Diwan* by stiff resistance called a gathering of the Sikhs on 3 May, 1914 at Amritsar and six resolutions had been hold in the meeting. The resolution of *Chief Khalsa Diwan* had been pro Government, so local Sikhs did not accept it. In August, 1914, the First World War began. Deputy Commissioner of Layalpur called Harchand Singh and told that

“the first world war had been started and he might stop the struggle of wall. Government stopped the work of demolishing the wall. How could it be reconstructed, this will be settled after the end of world war. After consulting with Sikh respectables Sh. Harchand Singh accepted that.¹¹

Khalsa Diwan Hong Kong had also sent a call to Viceroy that they should reconstruct the wall of *Gurudwara* as early as possible, otherwise, the Sikh would be compelled to do everything like martyrdom. On the one hand, the government had demanded help from Sikhs and on the other hand, they had made cruelty to the passengers of *Kamagatamaru* ship. When Canadian Government had turned back *Kamagatamaru* ship, then Punjabi people felt slavery. Then ¼ members from *Gadar Party* came to India to start a revolution in Punjab and to free the Punjab from the British, but during their activities, some of them were arrested by British Government and some of them were killed by execution and some of them had been confined to Jails with life imprisonment.¹²

In the month of November 1918, the First World War came to an end, but Government did not reconstruct the wall of *Gurudwara Rakab Ganj* and passed a Rollat Act as ‘gift’ for people of Punjab. On 13 April, 1919, General Dyer had given ‘another gift’ by giving shoot order at Jalianwala Bagh in which 379 people were killed and 1137 were injured. They arrested number of Sikhs by passing Martial Law. The struggle of the Punjabi people against the British Government got power. The change coming in political field influenced the hearts of Sikhs and they did not show any further interest in *Chief Khalsa Diwan* and established a new league in the name of Central Sikh League.¹³

Although Sikh League started working in the year 1919, but it passed so many resolutions, but after the period of 4/5 months, it was reduced to a mere paper transaction and on the other hand main Sikh leaders had been mentally upset for the bad management of *Gurudwaras*. In various areas, Sikh leaders started consulting each others to reform the management of *Gurudwaras*. The matter of *Gurudwara Rakab Ganj* was also pending there.¹⁴

In the activities of year 1920, Sikh leaders started the movement of *Amrit Parchar* and consulted about correcting the management of *Gurudwaras*. On 1st May, 1920, Master Tara Singh, Sardar Harchand Singh Layalpuri, Sardul Singh *Cavishar*, Giani Hira Singh and other Sikh leaders decided to publish daily Sikh newspaper. On 21st May, 1920, the first Sikh newspaper was published. The main advantage of this newspaper was that the Sikh people were united as the earlier newspapers like *Khalsa Smachar*, *Khalsa Advocate*, *Panth Sewak*, The

Khalsa, Loyal Gazette were only publishing the news regarding managements of *Gurudwaras*, but they did not change the activities of Government as well as *Pujaries*.¹⁵

Due to Akali Newspaper, it seemed that all Sikhs were *Akalis*. In such conditions, a new movement was coming in force without any meeting or gathering. Akali workers tried to do their best to reform the management of *Gurudwaras*. With the passage of time, people were being balanced and *Gurudwara Sudhar Lahar* came into force. Some people had the ideas that the *Lahar* should start at the beginning of the possession of *Akal Takhat Sahib*, but in fact that *Lahar* started prior to possession of *Akal Takhat Sahib* and its first phase was *Chamola Sahib Lahore* which was successfully completed.¹⁶

Granthi Hari Singh of *Gurudwara Chamola Sahib* created an illegal situation there. *Khalsa Parcharak Jatha* called a meeting on 21st August, 1920, but *Granthi* had created nuisance in meeting and that fact was consulted next day during a *Diwan*. On 27th September, 1920, all Sikh Sangat got the possession of *Gurudwara Sahib*. *Granthi* registered a case but the said case had been dismissed by the D.V Smith (Deputy Commissioner) officer of Secret Department of Punjab and sent a report to British Government and mentioned the wrote fact in his report that according to *Gurudwara Sudhar Lahar*, Sikhs had the possession of *Gurudwara Sahib*.¹⁷

During those days, the matter of *Gurudwara Babe Di Ber* had also been approached to the *Lahar*. After *Gurudwara Chamola Sahib*, all the Sikhs had become aware of that matter. When *Mahant Harnam Singh* died, his widow with the help of Hon'ble Magistrat Ganda Singh appointed her minor son as inheritor of Harnam Singh. Due to that proceeding, a wave of anger had been created among all the Sikhs of Punjab. *Singh Sabha* had also sent many calls to the Governor of Punjab showing their anger toward that, but collector did not consider that fact. Reformers filed a case before Court of District Judge, who ordered the Sikhs to pay 50,000/- as Court fee, but Sikhs had failed to do so and had got a new way of peaceful gathering. They balanced themselves and established a *Khalsa Sewak Jatha*. On the basis of that new programme, Sikhs started weekly *Kirtan*. In course of time, they started daily *Kirtan*. Ganda Singh created so many obstructions in the peaceful programme of reformers, but they got success. On 5th October, 1919 the Sikhs held a big *Diwan* and created a committee of 13 members for the management of *Gurudwara Sahib*.¹⁸

During that, in the matter of Harmander Sahib and *Akal Takhat Sahib* some new incidents had happened. Due to this, the attention of reformers turned towards it and union of struggle

moving from small cities reached Amritsar Sahib. There were so many disorders in the management of both of the religious places. The demand of Sikhs was pending to reform the disorder of management and to end the designation of *Sarbarah*, but Government was not ready to do so. They thought if they want to control Sikhs, they should have to control the main religious places of Sikhs. After the refusal of Government, Sikhs had conducted a gathering at *Jalianwala Bagh* and decided that if *Sarbarah* did not give his resignation till 29th August, 1920, they would take strong action. *Sarbarah* feared from it and ultimately gave resignation.¹⁹

After some time, another gathering was organized and the reformers told the *Mahants* of *Gurudwara Akal Takhat Sahib* and *Gurudwara Darbar Sahib* that they should give up their bad behavior toward Ravidas Sikhs. After seminar, all Sikhs entered into *Darbar Sahib* and *Mahants* did not change their behavior and did not accept *Parshad* from Ravidas Sikh. At last they decided to take *Hukamnama* from Shri Guru Granth Sahib and it was the order of Guru Granth Sahib Ji.

*“Nirgunia Nu Appe Baksh Laye Bhai Satgur Ki Sewa Laye II
Satguru Ki Sewa Uttam Hai, Bhai Ram Nam Chit Lai II.....(Sorth Mahalla 3 ii
Dutuki)”*

Hukamnama was also against the *Mahants* and after watching the power of Sikhs, *Mahants* accepted the *Parshad* and got away from *Gurudwaras*.²⁰

On 13th October, Deputy Commissioner Amritsar Sahib convened a meeting of Sikh leaders, *Sarbarahs* and *Pujaries*. Only Sikh leaders visited there and Deputy Commissioner for the management of *Darbar Sahib* established a committee of 9 members. Teja Singh Bhuchar was appointed as its *Jathedar*. This committee issued a *Hukamnama* and Gurbakhsh signed below the *Hukamnama* as Sewak of *Akal Takhat Sahib*. This is one *Hukamnama*.

*“Samuh Khalsa Ji Prati Vidat Hove Ke 1 Maghar 1977 Mahanta 15 November
1920 Din De Savere 9 Vje Panthak Ikath Akal Takhat Sahmne Hovga Jis Vich
Darbar Sahib ate Samuh Gurdwaria Aad de intzam vaste dungi vichar karke, ik
numainda Panthak committee banai javegi. Jis Lai sarbat Gurutakhtan har taran
Gurdwaria khalsa 100 Jathia pichhe Sikh paltan 5-5 puri reasti Sikh fauja
rahatdhari singhan nu viaunt mutabik bhejan”.*²¹

Sarbat Khalsa was to be held on 15 November. Two days before of *Sarbat Khalsa*, Maharaja Bhupinder Singh Patiala, Sunder Singh Majitha, Nihal Singh Patiala, Mehar Singh

Lahore, Mann Singh Ambala and Prof. Jodh Singh met the Governor of Punjab. They launched a scheme to stop the establishing of S.G.P.C. Governor of Punjab announced a committee of 36 members, however gathering of *Sarbat Khalsa* was conducted on 15 November, 1920. During this Shiromani Committee was established. They selected 150 members from the gathering. They included the members which were selected by Government. Total 175 men were included in the committee. On 30th April, 1921, they had registered the committee as S.G.P.C.²²

In the month of July and August 1920, *Rakab Ganj* issue was also been raised. On 2nd September, 1920, the news was published in *Akali* Newspaper to establish a martyr *Jatha* including 100 Sikhs against demolishing the wall of *Rakab Ganj*. In a few days, there were 800 names to join the *Jatha*. This was badly pressurised by the Government. Government sent a call to S.G.P.C. and stated that they could reconstruct the wall within a week and requested not to send the *Jatha*. Next day the news was received that Mitha Singh, *Mahant* of *Gurudwara Panja Sahib* had died, a *Jatha* of 25 Sikhs under the supervision of Kartar Singh Jhabbar went from Amrtisar to Hasan Abdal.²³

When this news was received by some Congress men, they gathered at *Kothi* of *Kavishar Sardul*. After consulting each other, they assigned duty of Amar Singh Jhabaal to stop the *Jatha*. Jhabaal stated to Jhabbar that till 31st October they would get Swaraj they ought to do work for congress. Then Jhabbar stated that he did not have any faith on Gandhi and the British. If they had gone, and really a Hindu State was to be developed, then no one would be allowed to enter into *Gurudwaras*. Therefore, Jhabbar reached *Panja Sahib* along with *Jatha*. *Mahant of Panja Sahib* attacked upon them but he could not stop the *Jatha*. Sikhs established a committee and management of *Gurudwara* was handed over to the said committee.²⁴

After the victory of *Gurudwara Panja Sahib*, Kartar Singh Jhabbar felt that to take the possession of *Gurudwaras* in his hand, there was a need of a permanent *Jatha*. On 14th December, a gathering was called at *Akal Takhat* Sahib to establish the Central Body. In that gathering, a *Sikh Jathebandi* was established in the name of “*Gurudwara Sewak*”, but after some time as per their 6th resolution in the year 1922, that *Jatha* had changed its name as ‘Shiromani Akali Dal’. It raised a programme to work on two theorems i.e. to include all Akali *Jathas* and to serve the *Panth* and for doing this, they obeyed the orders of S.G.P.C..²⁵

On 22nd February, 1922, S.P. of Punjab Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of British Government of Punjab sent a big secret report about Akali Dal and S.G.P.C..²⁶

Local *Jatha* said to *Mahants* of *Gurudwara* Taran Taran Sahib to improve their management, but soon information regarding disorders of *Mahants* of Tarn Taran came to *Akal Takhat* Sahib. On 25th January, 1920, a *Jatha* from *Akal Takhat* Sahib reached Taran Taran to talk with *Mahants*. But when talk between *Mahants* and Sikhs was started, men of *Mahants* attacked upon Sikhs and two Sikhs namely Bhai Hazara Singh and Bhai Baghel Singh Crore got martyred, who are known as first martyrdoms of *Gurudwara* Sudhar Lahar and many Sikhs were injured severely. Due to that incident, a wave of anger was raised in the Sikhs. *Mahants* were also feared from that anger of Sikhs and ran away from the *Gurudwaras*. After that, a committee was established and the management of *Gurudwara* was also handed over to that committee.²⁷

Gurudwara Nankana Sahib, had been a place of spiritual importance where 1st Sikh Guru Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji was born and apart from this, half dozen religious places remind us the parental life of Guru Nanak Dev Ji. In the beginning of 20th century, *Mahant* Ram Sandhu had the possession of *Gurudwara* Nankana Sahib. He had spent his time in luxury. After his death, *Mahant* Narain Dass started doing the same. He would think the income and land of *Gurudwaras* as his own and Sikhs were upset from disorders of *Mahant* Narain Dass. Many times they requested the *Mahants* to change the wrong way, but *Mahant* did not bother. *Akalis* decided to conduct a gathering at *Gurudwara* Nankana Sahib in the beginning of month of March to find a solution.²⁸

But before the seminar, Sikhs established two *Jathas*. First *Jatha* departed for Nankana Sahib under the supervision of Lachhman Singh Dharowali and second *Jatha* which was going under the supervision of Kartar Singh Jhabbar was stopped in the passage and one *Jatha* of Lachhman Singh was left nearby. A message was sent by S.G.P.C. through Dalip Singh Harkara to stop them, but after hearing other Sikhs of *Jatha*, Dharowali also got ready to see *Gurudwara* Sahib, and *Jatha* reached *Gurudwara* Sahib and they started the *Kirtan*.²⁹

On the other hand, when this news was received by *Mahant*, who was ready to go to Delhi, came back from station and made his followers aware.³⁰

After about half an hour, the volunteers of *Mahants* were started firing at the Sikhs of *Jatha* who were doing *Kirtan* in *Gurudwara* Sahib. Government Advocate was concerned to that case and that men of *Mahants* start throwing stones, but Sikhs did not say even a single word.³¹

Many Sikhs got martyred and so many Sikhs were injured badly. Murdered Sikhs were

burnt with Kerosene and some Sikhs were thrown into the furnace. Although Deputy Commissioner reached the spot at night at 12:30 AM, but he did not do anything without any police official. As per the news of Local Newspapers, dead bodies were burnt about 1½ hour after reaching of Deputy Commissioner.³²

Gandhi, to sympathise with Sikhs reached Nankana Sahib on 3rd March and compared that incident to the incident of Jalianwala Bagh and stated that this is the second form of Dayarism and this incident was crueller than Jalianwala Bagh Incident. Gandhi said to Sikhs to take the way of non cooperation and Courts.³³

Therefore, national leaders Maulana Shaukat Ali, Dr. Kichlu, Lala Duni Chand, Lala Lajpat Rai also reached the spot. Senior Sikh Leaders, Legislative members, members of Sikh League, *Chief Khalsa Diwan* and other Sikh *Jathebandies* also reached there and sympathised with the *Akalis*. Maulana Shaukat Ali stated that keeping hope of justice from the Government during that terror spread by the Government in those Martial Law days, would be a folly.³⁴

Disordering of local official and negligence of local administration forced the Princes of Delhi and London to think that they should have to change the policy of interference in the religious places of minorities.³⁵ Government established a Sikh Committee to enquire the *Saka*, but the Sikhs were not satisfied with the enquiry of that committee and did boycott the same, and reached so near the *Khilafat* of Congress. Due to that, Government adopted suppression policy against the Sikhs. Government had awarded federal on Sikh Newspapers. *Akali* Leaders were sent to *Jail*. They got back the keys of *Akal Takhat* Sahib and *Toshakhana* from Secretary of Shiromani Committee Sunder Singh Ramgarhia and they announced to appoint a *Sarbarah* and handed over its management to him.³⁶

But refused to manage the post. Sikhs thought it as interference in their religion. The *Panthak Sewak Newspaper* wrote that Government had no right to interfere in the issue of *Gurudwaras*. *Akali* Newspaper wrote as “On the one hand, they had taken the keys of *Harmandir Sahib* and on the other hand Government was crossing the boundaries”.³⁷

S.G.P.C. also passed a resolution that Government should not be allowed to interfere in the issues of *Gurudwaras*. The Sikh gave full support to non cooperation movement. According to C.I.D. reports, movement was spreading rapidly in the villages of Sikh districts specifically Lahore and Amritsar. Due to the serious effect of that on the Sikhs, it seemed that *Hakams* were upset. When protests of Sikhs were enlarged, Government realized their mistake and decided to

return the keys to Sikhs, but Sikhs raised a condition that at first they want the release of their Sikhs from Jails. Sikhs were not ready to talk to Government.³⁸ In course of time, Government took it seriously, but Baba Kharak Singh, President of S.G.P.C. still denied collecting the keys from House of Commissioner and streped that Government itself must return the keys by reaching at *Akal Takhat Sahib*. On that victory of *Akalis*, M.K. Gandhi sent a call and congratulations to Sikhs and stated that they had took the first decisive victory of freedom.³⁹

The Government started making atrocities to the Sikhs and Sikh leaders were sent to Jails and the Sikh newspapers were banned. During that pull stretched period, a new front was created. Historical *Gurudwara Guru Ka Bagh* also came under the possession of Sikhs from the possession of *Mahants*. There was an area of trees near the *Gurudwara*, where Sikhs cut off the woods for *Langar*. *Mahants* raised objections and Government helped *Mahants* and restrained the Sikhs from cutting the trees from the area. At that time, *Akalis* as a protest started sending *Jathas*. A *Jatha* from *Akal Takhat Sahib* reached there daily, but police arrested them and sent them to Jail. This process went on for quite a while and this peaceful struggle of Sikhs surprised all the leaders of country and celebrities like Madan Mohan Malaviya and C.F. Andrio. They reached Punjab to see the struggle of Sikhs and fully appreciated the struggle of Sikhs. The Government was once again proved a liar and Sikhs won the front.⁴⁰

The front did not mean winning the Sikh problem; that would be solved, if the Government made a law regarding management of *Gurudwara*. The Government had already taken several steps but all in vain. For it did not clear the Government's intentions and did not get the support of community. In July 1923 in the case of Maharaja Ripudamman Singh as *Hiteshi* of Sikh *Akali* got activated once again and a new front started.⁴¹

The problems of the Sikhs had always been the problems of identity and existence. From the very beginning of the Sikh history, we come to know that Sikhs had always struggled against the ruler, may it be Mughals or the British. Each and every government had tried to suppress the Sikhs. They had faced a lot of tortures at the hands of the rulers, but their struggle had never been stopped.

It was the beginning of 20th century, that the British government tried to suppress the Sikhs in one way or the other. The government of officials started interfering into the religious matters of the Sikhs. On the one side, the British government wanted to minimise the power of the Sikhs, but on the other hand, it was trying to divide the Sikhs so that they could not get the

power. The British government tried to tempt some of the moderate Sikhs with some greed or offer, but it became clear to the government very soon that it was impossible to suppress or divide the Sikhs. The issues of Maharaja Ripudaman Singh of Nabha and the religious problems created at Jaito made it clear that the Sikhs could do anything for their religion, freedom as well as identity.

The history of *Gurudwaras* in Punjab and the problems related to the Sikhs regarding the ownership of *Gurudwaras* have been the major issues in the history of Sikh religion. It described that the *Gurudwaras* were started as *Dharamshalas* but later turned to the spiritual places for the Sikhs as well as for the whole world. The chapter also describes the hurdles created by British Government in the development of *Gurudwaras*.

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CHAPTER–2

ROLE OF RIPUDMAN SINGH IN

THE MORCHA OF JAITO

ROLE OF RIPUDMAN SINGH IN THE MORCHA OF JAITO

Nabha state was having 2nd place in the Punjab state. This area was 968 square mile and according to the census of 1921, its population was 263, 394 and its revenue population was 24,00,000.¹

Nabha was a famous and prosperous state. Hamir Singh was the founder of Nabha state, who was the son of Tirlok Singh. Tirlok Singh was son of Bhai Phul Singh, who was concerning to the joint ancestors of Fulkiea, Patiala, Nabha and Jind. The kings of Fulkiea state were cousins.²

Maharaja Ripudaman Singh was born on 4th March, 1883 in the house of Maharaja Hira Singh. Maharaj Ripudaman Singh ascended to throne on 24th January, 1912 when he was 28 years old. Maharaja Ripudaman Singh was the king of a different type. He was a patriot, supporter of the social and political progressive movements. He was well educated but his upbringing was according to Sikh traditions. Therefore, he was the person to obey the Sikh religion.³

Maharaja Ripudaman Singh had been additional member of Council of Governor General from 1906 to 1908. He altogether with the National leaders Gopal Krishan Gokhle and Madan Mohan Malaviya, expressed their protest against the Press Bill of Government and became anti Government.⁴

He submitted the `Anand Marriage Act`, Bill before the council in an effective way.⁵

Maharaja Ripudaman Singh opposed every wrong act of the British Government and expressed his protest against bureaucracy. Maharaja Ripudaman Singh, from the very beginning was the supporter of *Akali Lahar*/movement. He gave full powers to the *Akalis* regarding *Sudhar* of *Gurudwaras*. In 1922, The Britishers started a campaign to arrest the *Akalis*. Police arrested 1700 *Akalis* from the different states but Maharaja Ripudaman Singh did not help the British Government.⁶

S.G.P.C. announced to celebrate the protest day against the massacre of Nankana Sahib and suggested the Sikhs to wear black turban. Maharaja himself wore Black turban and announced holilday on *Ardas* Day of Nankana Sahib. Due to this, Government was in trouble because Government was going to arrest all black turban men.⁷

The date to send the Martyr *Jatha* was announced to reconstruct the demolished wall of *Gurudwara* Rakab Ganj, Maharaja helped the Government by being the mediator between the

Government and Sikhs, but still Government was against the Maharaja and the Government was in search of the opportunity to cause loss to him.⁸

Besides this, the King of Patiala Raja Bhupinder Singh had good relation with the Government. In those days a dispute was running between both the states, and Government found that opportunity and appointed Mr, Stuart as Judge of High Court of Allahabad to enquire the matter of Maharaja Ripudaman and Bhupinder Singh. That Judge investigated the matter for 4 months and submitted his report to Governor General and declared the matter against the Maharaja Nabha and forced the Maharaja to quit the throne. On 9th July, 1923 Maharaja Nabha Ripudaman Singh was removed from the throne and was sent to Dehradun after agreement to pay Rs.3,00,000/- annually.⁹

King of Nabha had no permission to walk, nor had the permission to provide education to his children. The following statement was related to this fact:

“When Justice Stuart investigated the matter of State Nabha, then on 21st April 1923, Chief Minister of Nabha submitted a proposal before the Indian Government that Maharaja Nabha dynamically be permitted to establish his control over state administration, its aim was to give permission to the Maharaja for rest to reinstate his health which was bring deteriorated after the depression created due to wrong investigation of Government.”¹⁰

It was known from the letter of Government written by Karnal Minchin to Political secretariat J.P. Thompson, that Maharaja reached Kasoli on 05 June, 1923 to consult with representatives of the state regarding matter of dispute of State Nabha and to solve the dispute but it was heard at one time that Maharaja Ripudaman Singh was ready to consider the conditions of the Government but Maharaja refused to admit the same and Maharaja wrote about the situation regarding dynamically retiring from administration of his state that:

“They took wrong advantage of my weak health, my selfish officials were under the influence of my opponents and other officials of British Government suggested me to cool down the temper of Government by handing over my all powers.”¹¹

On 5th June, 1923 after meeting with Karnal Minthin and in the month of July, 1923 during his quit claim, there were occurred some new incidents. Due to that the situation was changed. When the Indian Government was busy to decide the conditions on which the permission might be granted to Maharaja. Government also wrote letter to Lord Peal, Secretary

of state to allow the said conditions, then some *Akali* leaders like Master Tara Singh, Bawa Harkrishan Singh and Teja Singh Samundary went to Maharaja and suggested the Maharaja not to break the connection with the Government.¹²

They assured Maharaja that either he would be enthroned again or all Sikhs would offer their martyr for the aim.¹³

After the assurance of *Akali* leaders, Maharaja changed his behavior and decided not to bow his head before the Government and started consulting with the *Akali* leaders. He took help from the editors of newspapers like *Sacha Dhandora*, *Daler-E-Hind*, *Bir Akali* and *Kirpan Bahadur*. Those newspapers declared Maharaja as Nationalist Maharaja, a hardcore *Khuddar Sikh Hakam* and religious leader of Sikh population. This *Akali* newspaper thought the quit claim of Maharaja as an interference in the Sikh religion, because Guru Gobind Singh sent a *Hukamnama* to the ancestors of Nabha State and as per the said *Hukamnama*, Guru Gobind Singh stated that “*Guru Ka Apna Ghar Tera Ghar Mera Asse*”.¹⁴

On the other hand when the Maharaja was sent to Dehradun, the Government announced that Maharaja had left the throne at his own desire but people knew the reality. On the same day, S.G.P.C. announced to conduct a protest against that illegal Act of the Government. To show the protest against that action of the Government, S.G.P.C. announced to celebrate *Ardas* Day on 29th July and Nabha day on 9th September. Sikhs had the belief that Government had removed Maharaja from the throne to take revenge from him. The confidence of Sikhs was high due to the front of Nankana Sahib and victory of *Guru Ka Bagh*. They had full confidence and trust on themselves and had courage to remove injustice by their sacrifices.¹⁵

On 2nd August, S.G.P.C. sent a call to Governor General and demanded to conduct inquiry of matter in which Government forcibly got the signature of Maharaja Nabha on the papers to leave the throne himself, but Government did not consider the request of S.G.P.C.

National Newspapers wrote a lot about Maharaja Nabha that, “*There was injustice with a great electric Indian Maharaja, who had to bear the cost of his electric mind and its result was that Akalis were going in depression*”.¹⁶

Moti Lal Nehru reached the railway station of Nabha, talking to the people, he put a question before them, “Do you believe in the false things about Maharaja Nabha?” People answered that, campaign of dishonour was done by some traitors. Moti Lal Nehru put another question, “Do you want to reinstate Maharaja Nabha on throne again?” Then people answered in

one common voice that they want to reinstate the throne of Maharaja Nabha with great honour.¹⁷

In the beginning to express the desires of the people, a grand *Diwan* was conducted at *Gurudwara Gangsar Jaito* and *Akhand Path* was started. Administration of Nabha Wilson Johnston and other officials opposed the same and he sent some armed and uniformed police men and arrested the Sikhs and *Sewadars* who were peacefully enjoying the *Path*. They also arrested Bhai Inder Singh who was reciting the *Path* of *Guru Granth Sahib* in a peaceful manner and *Akhand Path* was disrupted.

Except the matter of Maharaja Nabha, matter to reinstate of *Akhand Path*, the matter of disruption in the *Akhand Path* due to bullying of police assumed more significance among the Sikhs and S.G.P.C. decided to conduct a front against all those incidents. This front became more religious than political. The Sikh *Panth* decided that until the *Akhand Path* was performed in a peaceful manner at the same place, they would not remove the front from the spot and they would not fear to make any type of sacrifice.¹⁸

On 15th September, 1923, a *Jatha* including 25 Sikhs moved to *Jaito*, and Sikhs from the *Jatha* reached *Jaito* in a peaceful manner preaching about reinstate of *Akhand Path*. They were arrested by the police at *Jaito* as per Government order and were left them in the forests without food and gave severe beating to them, Sikhs without money and food, after bearing difficulties tried to reach Amritsar to rejoin the *Jathas*.¹⁹

A big seminar of all India Congress was organized at Delhi in which they discussed the difficulties being faced by the Sikhs. Pandit J L Nehru, Principal Gidwani and Shri K Satnam moved to *Jaito*. On 21st September, when they reached *Jaito*, got arrested by the police and in the month of November, 1923 they were released. Nehru talked about the difficulties of those two months in his autobiography and said that whole day they were confined in the *Jail* and in the evening they were sent to the Station and next night they faced hard difficulties and spent half night in a train box and half night at Nabha *Jail*. They were left at Nabha *Jail* in a small *Kothri*. Nehru gave his best support to the *Jaito* front by giving his arrest and also his father Moti Lal Nehru, who was a senior Advocate in profession, went back without meeting his son.²⁰

When *Jathas* including 25-25 Sikhs each reached *Jaito* Front, police arrested them and left at a so long distance in the forests. Except this some great *Akali* leaders were also arrested by the police at *Jaito* front and they were sent to the Jails. Thousands of *Akali* leaders were confined in *Bhai Ferru* fort. At that time, the leaders who were not arrested by the police, they were

consulting with the arrested leaders and decided that they had to send a *Jatha* including 500 *Sikhs* on 09 Feb, 1924 to begin *Akhand Path* Sahib at *Jaito* and on 7th January, 1924, 56 members from 2nd S.G.P.C. were also arrested and at 3rd time they created another Executive Committee.²¹

On 9th February a big gathering of *Sikhs* was organised at *Akal Takhat* Sahib, because on the same day, first Martyr *Jatha* was to be sent to *Jaito* and for this *Jatha*, about 3000 Sikh people reached there.

They recited *Ardas* and got *Hukamnama* that—

“*Yudh Jite Inhi Ke Parshad Su Dan Kare*
Su Dan Kare
Aaghugh Tare Uni Ke Parshad, Inhi ki Kirpa
Fun Dham Kare”

When *Jatha* was about to go after the *Ardas*, there was a *Vairagmai* view and S. Udham Singh Varpal was appointed as a head of *Jatha* and *Jathedar* of *Akal Takhat* gave message to the *Jatha*

Sikhs took oath to recite the *Path* in a peaceful manner and moved to *Jaito*.²¹

This *Shahidi Jatha* was going to *Jaito* via Chabba, Taran Taran, Nushehra, Makhu, Zira, Talwandi Bhai etc. Sikh people without having any fear welcomed the *Jatha* and served the *Jatha*. The last stage of *Jatha* was at village Bargari 6 km away from *Jaito*. After night rest, morning *Kirtan* was done and after took food on 21st February at midday they moved to *Jaito* and thousands of *Sikhs* joined the same. Some National Congress leaders like Dr. Kichlu, Principal Gidwani, Mr. Jimand Editor of New York Times, American Newspaper and Noor Muhamad Nama Nigar of *Khilafat* movement and Muhammad Amin also joined the *Jatha*.²²

Jatha recited words like “*Moh Marn Ka Chao Hai Mart Tan Hari Ke Duar, Sura Soi Jo Lahre Din Ke Hait*” as they moved toward *Tibbi Sahib*. Administrative Mr. Johnston announced an order to stop moving forward or they would be fired. There was army standing and in the fort they established Machinery weapons and they created a net with fencing wire to arrest the *Jatha*.²³

When *Jatha* did not stop after announcement of Mr. Johnston, he gave order of firing. They started firing at about 2:00 Minute to 2:30 Minute and second part of firing was started at 2:55 and remained till 3 Minute.²⁴

Jatha had already known that to reach *Jaito* was to face death and *Jatha* was ready achieve martyrdom, so it *Jatha* did not stop during the firing, and kept on moving forward without having fear of death.²⁵

Sikhs were moving forward toward *Gurudwara Gangsar* from *Tibbi Sahib*, at that time, Fauji groups started giving severe beating to the Sikhs with sticks as *Saka Guru Ka Bagh*. During this so many *Sikhs* gave martyrdom and were injured. *Jatha* was arrested and tortured badly. Gidwani and Kichlu also got confined in the Jail.²⁶

At the time of sending the 2nd *Jatha*, S.G.P.C. requested the Sikh population that wherever the *Jatha* was stopped for rest and food other Sikhs could only serve the *Jatha* and say goodbye to them and not to go with *Jatha*.²⁷

The *Jatha* stopped at various places and on 13 March reached a village which was nearby *Jaito* and next day the *Jatha* was going to enter *Jaito*. On the other hand, on 14 March at morning Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Kartar Singh, Gulab Singh and others joined the *Jatha*, but it was not ready to admit anything. When *Jatha* reached at distance of 100-150 yards from *Jaito*, Johnston was present at the spot. Malaviya said that, there was no weapon with the *Jatha* and army could not fire the peaceful and armless *Jatha*. *Jatha* started moving forward, then Johnston ordered to arrest the *Jatha* and the officers arrested the Sikhs of *Jatha* and confined them at fort of *Jaito* and after some time Sikhs were sent to Nabha Jail. The news about the *Jaito* Front and courage of *Sikhs* was published in all the newspapers of the world. People from whole world appreciated the bravery of the Sikhs and forced the Government to reinstate its religious freedom.²⁸

After that on 22nd March, 3rd *Jatha* departed from *Akal Takhat Sahib* and on 7th April, 1924 reached *Jaito*. Army and police already maintained the position to welcome *Jatha* as earlier. At that time, Tara Singh M.L.A., Mia Fazal Had and S. Kartar Singh Member Legislative assembly also reached the spot. *Jatha* was arrested in small groups and sent to the fort and after some time they were sent to Jail.²⁹ Dr. Kichlu said that “they were fully satisfied that except normal small sticks, *Jatha* did not have any type of weapon etc.”³⁰

S. Jimand also wrote a letter to Mahatama Gandhi that,

*“I want to repeat this again that on 21st February at 2P.M. when Jatha entered the area of Nabha, then I watched the crowd which was going behind the Jatha, as far as I think the crowd were not armed and they behaved peacefully”.*³¹

When the Government demanded inquiry regarding *Jaito* Front, *Akali* leaders started sending more *Jathas*. Although some of the national leaders suggested the *Akalis* not to send more *Jathas*. It was also an interesting thing that Mahatma Gandhi, who was the inspiration, also suggested the *Akalis* to stop the *Lahar* and not to send more *Jatha*. On 4th March, 1924 Mahatma Gandhi wrote a letter in the name of Secretariat of S.G.P.C. that he would help them, if the *Akalis* got separated their *Dharmik Sudhar Lahar*/movement from political matter of Nabha state, but the reality was that at the time of *Saka* Nankana, he himself suggested the Sikhs to conduct non cooperation movement against the Government.³² S.G.P.C. and *Akali* leaders refused to consider the advice of anybody and 4th*Shahidi Jatha* departed on 21st March from Anandpur Sahib, 5th*Jatha* departed on 12 April from Layalpur. At first, all *Jathas* were presented before *Akal Takhat* Sahib and departed from *Akal Takhat* Sahib and reached *Jaito* and gave their arrests.³³

When sixth *Jatha* which was of *Sikhs* of Ferozpur reached *Jaito* on 10 May, Government continued the difficulties towards the *Jatha* and arrested the sixth *Jatha*. After the arrest of this *Jatha*, Government created a committee under the supervision of William *Birdwood* to consult with Sikh leaders. Bhai Fateh Singh, Head *Granthi* of Shri Darbar Sahib said in his statement that Babar Badshah arrested many Fakirs and Guru Nanak Dev Ji, but when he knew the reality, he repented and today the Government was bullying like past. William *Birdwood* committee could not do anything, as long as all *Gurudwaras* were not released.³⁴

7th*Shahidi Jatha* of Districts of Doaba departed on 1st June, 8th*Jatha* of District Shekhupura departed on 22 May from Nankana Sahib, 9th*Jatha* of District Amritsar on 25th June, headed towards *Jaito*. In the 10th *Jatha* Sikhs from Lahore, Amritsar and Gurdaspur joined. In the 11th *Jatha* Sikhs from Ludhiana and Ferozpur joined, they all departed from Amritsar on 13th July and reached *Jaito* at different times.³⁵

Jathas were not coming from Punjab only, rather on 29th June, 1924, a *Jatha* including 100 *Sikhs* from Bengal, (Kolkata) departed from Sikh Sangat *Gurudwara* via Patna, Banaras, Allahabad, Lucknow, Kanpur, Saharanpur, Ambala and reached Amritsar on 13th July. In whichever city the *Jatha* stayed, the Sikh Sangat gave big welcome to them and served them. Discussion of *Saka* happened at *Jaito* had raised and Sikhs from other states started coming to Amritsar and joined the *Jatha*. A *Jatha* of 11 *Sikhs* from Canada departed from Canada on 17th July, 1924 and landed from the plane in the month of September at Kolkata and via big cities

reached Amritsar on 28 September. Similarly a *Jatha* from Hong kong reached Amritsar on 24 Feb, 1925 and a *Jatha* of 25 *Sikhs* from Shanghai (China) reached Amritsar on 19 July, 1925.³⁶

Due to the decision of *Akali* leaders not to stop sending *Jatha*, the number of *Akali* prisoners was increasing and Punjab Government was becoming upset. Due to the failure of Government to find the solution of *Akali* problem as well as failure of Government to submit the bill regarding it, the efforts of Muhamad Ali Jinha and Madan Mohan Malaviya got freedom to submit *Gurudwara* Bill before the Central Legislative Assembly. During such situations, British Officials and *Akali* leaders started doing efforts to find the solution of *Jaito* problem.³⁷

After considering the suggestion of Mahatama Gandhi, the executive of S.G.P.C. sent its representative to meet Maharaja Nabha at Dehradun, because Mahatama Gandhi told S.G.P.C. in his letter that *Akalis* might leave the question of political matter of Nabha. When delegation reached to Maharaja, Raja Singh President of delegation put more emphasis upon Maharaja that there was difficulty to move forward of S.G.P.C., Maharaja said to leave the question of Nabha.³⁸

But the interesting thing was that in the month of July, 1925 Maharaja came to know that more *Akalis* were ready to get the bill passed and were ready to give their oath regarding this, then Maharaja suggested the *Akalis* not to accept the bill and wrote that the result to leave the question of Nabha state would be that after some time the Government would ruin him and his family.³⁹

12th *Jatha* departed on 17th August, 1924, 13th *Jatha* left on 18th September, 14th *Jatha* left on 15 December, 1924, 15th *Jatha* on 1st March, 1925 and 16th *Jatha* on 17 April, 1925 from Amritsar and reached *Jaito* passing through villages and cities and was arrested by the police at *Jaito*. On 17th April, 1925 a special *Jatha* of 100 Singhs departed from *Akal Takhat*, as it was on the way, they got news that Government reinstated the *Akhand Path* and and this *Jatha* reached *Jaito* and started the *Akhand Path*.⁴⁰

To perform this *Akhand Path*, Sikhs faced so many difficulties and many Sikhs were terminated from the services, posts and Sardaries. As per a Government report, about 10,000 sikhs were arrested at *Jaito* Front and Sikhs which participated in the said front have to pay 1,00,000/- as fine.⁴¹

During that when the *Gurudwra* Act was fully prepared the Government agreed with the Sikhs and *Akhand Path* was started at *Jaito*. The *morcha* was won by the Sikhs but the S.G.P.C.

left the question of Maharaja Nabha.⁴²

Although the Sikhs did never interfere into the politics of the British government as they were not concentrated to the political matters, but the British government started disturbing the personal, public and religious life of the Sikhs. On the political front, the British government started torturing and insulting Maharaja Ripudaman Singh because it was clear to the government that Maharaja was a great ruler and a powerful soldier of the Sikh community. It was the fault of the government that they decided to remove Maharaja from the throne. That removal became a great and crucial issue for the Sikhs.

The British government did also interfere into the religious matters of the Sikhs and it violated the sanctity of the *Holi Gurudwara* of Jaito. The Sikhs wanted to protest against the government in a very peaceful manner. A number of Sikh devotees tried to visit Jaito, but the British officials created a lot of problems in the peaceful religious programmes of the Sikhs. Not only this, the government also attacked the peace loving devotees who were moving to Jaito.

Maharaja was a brave Sikh ruler and he opposed the wrong policies of British Government. He raised his voice against all the wrong activities of the British Government, hence he was removed from the throne. It was a time when the Sikhs wanted to organize an *Akhand Path* at Jaito but Government did not allow this and various problems were created for the Sikhs that resulted the *Jaito Morcha*. Various national leaders appreciated the courage and struggle of the Sikhs.

This interference in the political and religious life of the Sikhs became a great problem for the British government. It was the struggle and courage of the Sikhs that compelled the government to surrender before the Sikhs.

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CHAPTER–3

**RESPONSE OF S.G.P.C.,
POLITICAL PARTIES AND THE
BRITISH GOVERNMENT TOWARD
MORCHA**

RESPONSE OF S.G.P.C., POLITICAL PARTIES AND THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TOWARD MORCHA

Growing rise in the struggle to improve every day, a union representative with possession of reformers on the most sacred shrines of the Sikhs was the need to establish an organization that works to improve at various levels and keep pace. Requiring such organization as important as the Golden Temple at Amritsar and *Akal Takhat* came in possession of the *Akali* reformers. Emerging *Akali* Leaders saved the opportunities and Harimander Sahib and *Akal Takhat* came in the possession of *Akalis*. For the management of other *Gurudwaras*, a gathering including all local Sikhs were called before *Akal Takhat Sahib* to establish a local committee on 15 November, 1920.¹

According to basic plan *Akali Jathebandies* called a gathering at *Akal Takhat Sahib* on 15-16 November and about 10,000 Sikhs participated from the whole country.²

On the other hand, Punjab Government that was already in the contact of Viceroy and members of its council to get the supervision of their policy, had decided to stop the gathering of *Akalis* and they after consulting with Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala announced their own Dynamic Advisory Committee and already established a committee including 36 members.³

But *Akali* Leaders rejected the said 36 membered committee, they established a committee including 175 members. 36 members of the committee of Government also joined the Sikh committee. Sardar Sunder Singh Majithia was appointed as President of Committee, Sardar Harbans Singh Atari was appointed as Vice President and Sunder Singh as Secretary.⁴

Government had the satisfaction that Committee President and all its members were known because of their peaceful mind and they had the compromising behaviour towards *Akali Lahar*/movement. In new S.G.P.C. committee, there was a number of peace loving members and its new reform movement did not oppose the Government. But there was a new twist in the last days of year 1920, some bold leaders like Teja Singh Bhuchar and Kartar Singh Jhabbar started a new campaign to get the *Gurudwaras* free from the *Mahants*. *Diwan* that was conducting according to Non cooperation programme of Mahatama Gandhi, became a centre of religious and political preaching for the Sikh community. Government was upset due to that sudden changing.⁵

In the meeting held on 20th March, 1921, S.G.P.C. demanded a law to get all *Gurudwaras* free from the *Mahants* and to release all Sikh leaders who were arrested by the Government. They declared, if Government failed to do so, they would hold the way of non cooperation.

Officials got upset from the said threat of the S.G.P.C., because earlier congress had been using Sikh leaders and soldiers as volunteers of Non-cooperation and *Khilafat* movement. Election of S.G.P.C. in July 1921 was done as per new constitution (There was a condition in new constitution that four members of total five members were chosen from Sikh communities from different places and further these chosen members had selected a member).⁶

During the poles, there were some issues like better management of *Gurudwaras* and bureaucracy of *Mahants*, *Saka of Nankana Sahib* and after that policy of suppression, arresting of supporters of *Akali Lahar*, supporting of *Mahants* and bureaucracy, all these facts motivated the Sikhs to get down the level of their combat.⁷

Khilafat Seminar, Muslim League and Sikh League also passed resolution in favour of Akalis. Whereas S.G.P.C. provided the *Akalis* an organized *Jathebandi*. On the other hand, *Shiromani Akali Dal* provided their control to organize them in small *Jathas*/groups and they lead the Sikhs on every defense.⁸

Akali leaders and S.G.P.C. members to get the support and *sympathy* for the success of their Lahars/movements, published newspapers namely *Akali*, *The Tribune*, *Kesri*, *Milap*, *Jimidar*, *Bande Matram* etc. In the year 1924, *Akalis* started a newspaper *Hindustan Times* and they expressed their interest in *The Nation* newspaper of Lahore. Some main leaders of S.G.P.C. joined the newspaper. Mehtab Singh, Bawa Harikrishan, Mangal Singh, Teja Singh Samundari, Giani Sher Singh also joined the director's post of these newspapers. A new zeal was mounted as all news of incidents from various places started coming to *Akalis* and newspapers played their best role to unite the Sikhs.⁹

After successful demonstration of peaceful job of non cooperation the *Saka of Nankana Sahib*, and movement of *Guru Ka Bagh*, the lead of S.G.P.C. came in the hands of members of Non cooperation and *Garam Khialis* who wanted the aim of religious reforms as national freedom. Their aim was to possess their religious places and to fight against the British bureaucracy.¹⁰

It was the primary aim that *Garam Khialis* members of S.G.P.C. raised a question regarding reinstatement of king of Nabha, but some members of S.G.P.C. raised objection regarding that. They called it a political issue, but *Garam Khialis* members gave their advice that they would take up any issue to fight against the bureaucracy of foreigners and according to that a front known as *Jaito da Morcha* was started at Nabha.¹¹

Government got down Maharaja Ripudaman Singh from the throne and sent him to Dehradun and handed over the management of Nabha to Mr. Johnston. S.G.P.C. wanted the enquiry of this matter and raised a demand before the Government that they would have established a committee for enquiry and in which half of members were to be selected from S.G.P.C. When S.G.P.C. did not receive any answer to their letter, in the month of August 1923, S.G.P.C. passed a resolution before all the gathering that "Maharaja Nabha was forcibly brought down from the throne. S.G.P.C. declared that Government wrongly took advantage of dispute of Maharaja Patiala to snatch the throne of Nabha. Now S.G.P.C. fully came into knowledge that this act of Government was a blow on the face of Sikh state and its unity. S.G.P.C. sent a message against the act and conduct of Government and regarding Maharaja Sahib, his forefathers and his state for *sympathy*.¹²

S.G.P.C. gave its rights to Clerk committee to enquire the matter regarding Nabha and atrocities conducted with the Sikhs by the Government.¹³ S.G.P.C. sent a message to Sikh community to sympathise with Maharaja Nabha and to celebrate the Nabha Day. They organized *Akhand Path* at Jaito for protest, but police reached the spot and arrested the *Granthi* and *Sikhs* and disrupted the *Path* ceremonies and it forced the S.G.P.C. to plan a front. S.G.P.C. declared until Government did admit its guilt, the *Path* ceremonies would be played continuously. In the beginning, S.G.P.C. started sending *Jatha* of 20/25 *Sikhs* so that they may reinstate the religious freedom.¹⁴

On the other hand, Government stated that it was a political uprising. Whenever Sikhs reached Nabha front, police arrested them and left them a distant away or sent them into prison without any food. All movements and Front of Jaito upset the Government and it decided to take drastic action. But suddenly on 12 Oct. 1923 Government declared that S.G.P.C., *Akali Dal* and other Sikh *Jathebandies* were illegal, but *Akalis* sent the *Jathas* continuously and Government arrested all the powerful *Akali* leaders.¹⁵

Atrocities upon the *Akalis* at Nabha had become the main issue in India. Congress leaders had shown their interest in the *Akalis* from the beginning and at that time so many *Akalis* were the leaders of Congress. All India Congress Seminar was conducted at Delhi in the year 1923, where Congress leaders decided to support the *Akalis* in every way. Doctor Kichlu gave his report regarding this, and some Congress leaders reached the spot along with J.L. Nehru, Prof. Gidwani, K. Satnam, Darbara Singh Mallan, where Government arrested them.¹⁶

It is worth mentioning here that behavior of the Hindustan Government was in favour of the Sikhs. Government thought that powers given to the *Akalis* by the non cooperation wave of Congress would increase the movement of freedom in India. Congress leaders also had the faith that without helping the *Akalis*, their movement toward Northern India would be ended.¹⁷

On 26th February, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya made his statement regarding martyrdom of Jaito front in full detail at Legislative Assembly Delhi. He raised charge upon the Government that they had given freedom to Administrator to stop Sikhs to enter *Gurudwara Sahib*. The sikhs did not conduct any illegal Act and they stood before the enemy of Government bravely. Any officer did not say that man of Government had been martyred. According to report of those people who were present there, that minimum 21 Sikhs from the *Jatha* had died and about 150 Sikhs were injured. He stated that it has come to know that about 150 Sikhs were killed and some were buried in the ground and some Sikhs were left at some unknown place. Mr. Lenzubni Labbar, M.P. Jaito also submitted a work stopping resolution and he put a question regarding enquiry of Jaito Front. *He stated in his examination that " he heard from the under secretary of Punjab that gathering people were having weapons. As a result 21 had died and 31 got injured, but the unique thing was that there was crowd of people and the police but why any army man or policeman did not get injury?, Under Secretary of Punjab said that we did not hurt any Sikh, but how 21 people had died and 33 injured."*¹⁸

As per *Akali* newspaper, on 28 February 1924, All India Working Committee Seminar was held under the supervision of Maulana Muhhamad Ali in which a resolution regarding *sympathy* with Sikhs had been passed and were given promise to give every type of help. Maulana Shaukat Ali President of *Khilafat* Committee also expressed his *sympathy* with Sikhs. Maulana sent a call to S.G.P.C. that if they shoot *Akali Jatha*, it was not an attack on the honour of Sikhs, rather it was an attack on the honour of India.¹⁹

On 2nd March, there was a heavy gathering at Kolkata, in which Des Bandhu, C.R. Dass, Shiam Sunder, Kharakvarti, Santosh Babu, Hemant Kumar and Maulvi Nasirudin submitted their suggestions and submitted a resolution that, "joint gathering of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs of Kolkata showed its protest for shoot out of Sikhs who were going to *Gurudwara Sahib* for *Path* and they gave hearty congratulations to *Akali* sikhs who peacefully achieved martyrdom for the safety of religion."²⁰

British Government thought the unity of *Akali* and Congress as a danger. Congress and

volunteers of *Khilafat Tehrik* were declared illegal by the Government. With that the S.G.P.C. and its presidents and staff members got arrested by the Government and were sent in to prison and planted false cases against them in U/S 120B/129A/124A/17A/17B etc. Police raided the office of S.G.P.C. took all documents in their possession. Sardar Harbans Singh Satnami a member of S.G.P.C. was arrested at Iran and brought back to Punjab. All arrested leaders convicted for the period of 2 ½ years and fined for Rs. 3000/- each.²¹

S.G.P.C. stated in its announcement that, all Sikhs should have to come in battle field for their religious freedom. On 23 February, Swami Onkar published true brief of front of Jaito in the paper of his son, and Government lodged a case against editor Swami Onkar Nand and Printer Durga Dass and both were convicted for the period of two years and fined of Rs. 500/- each²². At this, Maulana Zaffar Ali Khan published a Nazam in his paper that,

"Kate Hai Jis Kadar Sir Gangsar De Gurdware Mein,

*Hai Darj un Sabh Ki Kurbanī Saja ke Goshware Mein"*²³

Congress working committee released *Akali Sahayak Fund*. On 14th December 1923, Pandit Moti Lal Nehru came to Amritsar Sahib to meet the president of first S.G.P.C. *Jatha*, but Government did not allow him to meet with the leaders. On 29th December 1923, a seminar was conducted to express *sympathy* with *Akali Lahar*, in which Dr. Kichlu stated that Government challenged association and *Mazhab* by declaring S.G.P.C. against the law. *Akalis* started civil disobedience, so without which they couldnot achieve independence. Smt. Naidu stated that, "*History of Sikh Community was the history of a brave community and this community was made by sorrows and troubles.*"

Earlier Mahatma Gandhi realised that Brave Sikhs would not remain peaceful. When other community raised disputes, then brave Sikhs faced all things in peaceful manner although they were having swords in their hand. Secret of the success of *Akali Lahar* was in their unity.²⁴

After the arrest of 6th *Jatha*, compromise talks began. Government established a committee under the supervision of Sir William Birdwood that he would talk with president of Sikhs, but due to some reasons matter was not compromised. Main reason was that there was so many atrocities on the Sikhs prisoners. Due to that, protest was increased rapidly in the Sikhs. Government sent all in the prisons. After sending 13th *Jatha*, the 14th *Jatha* was late and Government started rumours that S.G.P.C. did not have a man to send and coming of *Jatha* was

ended and Government won the front with its power.²⁵

At that time, Government tried to divide the Sikhs. It established a fake *Jatha* and tried to start the *Path*, but they failed to do so. On 26th October, that *Jatha* walked from Amritsar and Sikhs raised heavy protest against it but under the protection of police, this *Jatha* reached Jaito and they started the *Path*. On the other hand, S.G.P.C. sent a special *Jatha* including 60 Sikhs to Jaito, they were arrested by the Government at arrival. In *Jatha* Government arrested Sikh men and also arrested Mai Chand Kaur and other Sikh ladies, therefore, this front became more powerful.²⁶

Sir Malkam Hally, Governor of Punjab, also sent some members from Central Assembly and Counsel of State to Jaito and tried to explain the Sikhs that some Sikhs might go to *Gurudwara Gangsar* and start the *Path*, then Government would withdraw all restrictions. Mr. Wilson Johnston also requested that *Jatha* including 50 Sikhs could go to *Gurudwara* and could perform *Akhand Path*, but no Akali was ready to do so.²⁷

On the one side, Government had trouble to keep increasing number of *Akalis* in prisons, on the other hand, there were some political troubles which forced Government to think about the issue of Jaito Front. Government proceedings of Jaito, Nabha State, arrest and custody of people in a big number without any case etc. gave benefit to nationalist members of legislative assembly of India and some others to disobey the rules of Government. Finally, Government had to bow before the enthusiasm of *Akalis*, Congress, *Khilafat*, and Cooperation of Muslims. Pandit Mohan Malaviya was ready to talk through Jodh Singh and privately he was ready to submit Sikh *Bill* before the Assembly but Hally was not ready to lose that opportunity, so he ready William Birdwood to meet Sikhs, to win the confidence of Sikhs and to submit the proposal to end the front.²⁸

Whereas Government was ready to make compromise with the *Akali* leaders, their obstacle was of Nabha state. The *Akalis* and the British Government were ready to compromise the matter with fixed conditions. There in the matter of Nabha, Government was not ready to do so till *Akali* did not leave the question of reinstatement of Maharaja Nabha. Second trouble was that to end the *Path* at *Gurudwara Sahib*, there was less time and quantity of members who were sanctioned for entering in *Gurudwara*.²⁹

At that time, official of Nabha state and *Akali* leaders were busy in consulting about different issues and after submission of *Bill* of Sikh *Gurudwara* and religious places other issues

were solved. After passing the *Bill*, Bhai Jodh Singh, Sardar Narain Singh and other Sikh members of Legislative Assembly met *Akali* leaders in the *Jails*. They started departing *Jatha* for passing of *Bill*. Bhai Jodh Singh along with Wilson Johnston arranged the material for *Akhand Path*. First *Jatha* departed from *Akal Takhat Sahib* under the supervision of Bhai Jodh Singh and on 21st July, 1925 arrived Jaito. One another *Jatha* arrived on the same day and on 27th July, 1925 other *Jathas* after being released from Jails arrived Jaito. On 6th August, 1925 matter of *Akali* and Government was ended at the time of 101 *Akhand Path* ceremonies.³⁰

The social and religious life of people could never be separated from the political life. In the development of the *Morcha of Jaito*, various organizations played an important role. *Akali Dal*, S.G.P.C. and the British government were the primary participants in the struggle but later Congress also joined the struggle and helped the Sikhs in one way or the other. It was generally agreed that S.G.P.C. and *Akali Dal* had their roots in the Sikh religion. Not only they get the financial help from the Sikhs but also contributed a lot to solve the problems of the Sikhs as well as to grant them power.

Akali Dal has been considered the political wing of the Sikhs while S.G.P.C. is considered a religious organisation of the Sikhs. Since the time of the formation of S.G.P.C. and *Akali Dal*, the Sikhs have obtained a proper direction as well as power. Both of these organizations have started many movements for the upliftment of the Sikhs.

The British government had always been against the Sikhs and it tried to create hurdles in the progress of the Sikhs. Consequently the British government tried its best that S.G.P.C. and *Akali Dal* might not be formed, but the struggle and sacrifice of the Sikhs compelled the government to be at backfoot.

The wrong policies of British Government were opposed by various organization in Punjab as well as in India. Leaders of *Akali Dal*, members of S.G.P.C. and the leaders of Indian National Congress revolted against the wrong policies regarding Sikhs and the Punjab. The formation of S.G.P.C. helped the Sikhs to create an atmosphere of revolution against the British Government. The role of various *Jathas* in the development of Sikhism can never be forgotten.

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CHAPTER-4
THE GURUDWARA SUDHAR ACT,
1925

THE GURUDWARA SUDHAR ACT, 1925

Policy of Punjab Government had four phases of legislative measure to control and management of Sikh religious places. First phase started at the time of beginning of *Sudhar Lahar*. It had all incidents which happened earlier from *Saka Nankana*. First of all, Government adopted the policy not to interfere in the unconscious and conscious solution of that problem. It was come to know about the *Akali Lahar*/movement when we study the long correspondence between *Akali Lahar*/movement and Indian Government. When Viceroy told the Punjab Government regarding not to interfere in the tragedy of *Saka Nankana*, then Punjab Government stated in its argument that Government should not interfere in the religious issues of sensitive community.¹

During the first phase of reform, Government was excited to save itself from not to do so, because they did not want that devoted Sikhs were pushed at so distance, who gave devotion to the Government in the days of battles. There were some national issues also. Hindus and Muslims united with each other against the Government in the Punjab. *Khilafat* movement deprived the Government from the help of Muslims and Hindus also expressed their interest in the non cooperation movement of Mahatama Gandhi.²

If we talk about the Sikhs, hot tempered Sikhs showed their keen interest in the league and where also in favour of non cooperation movement and *Khilafat* movement. They passed a resolution in favour of non cooperation movement of Mahatama Gandhi and at that time Government could not displease the moderate Sikhs who were in favour of the Government. Therefore, officials of the Government did not take any step to reinstate the conditions of Punjab and due to that Sikh reformers came in possession of *Gurudwara Akal Takhat Sahib, Babe Di Ber, Panja Sahib, Chamola Sahib and some other Gurudwaras*.³

In 2nd phase, it was shown that Government expressed its interest to take some legislative

steps to solve the issues and disputes of Sikhs and *Gurudwaras*. Therefore, Government tried to deal with the conditions of time by issuing Ordinance in March, 1921 and in the meantime three membered Judicial Commission was established to talk all types of disputes regarding *Gurudwara* in their hand was its duty. But despite that, political depression increased rapidly and could not be stopped. In the month of April 1921, Government after consulting with Sikh president and leaders issued a draft of Sikh *Gurudwara Dharam Asthan Bill* and the same was presented before the Legislative Assembly Punjab and further in the year 1921, Fazzal Hussain submitted the *Bill* before the Assembly.⁴

As per the *Bill*, when the Government was satisfied after enquiring the matter regarding the property and president of the *Gurudwara*, the same place known as *Gurudwara* or disputed property and the board in this regard was established. Its costs would be awarded from the property of *Gurudwara*. In that regard, a committee including Mehtab Singh, Kartar Singh, Harnam Singh and Dasaundha Singh was established and they submitted their report that *Gurudwara* is a holy place, where Sikhs were in possession, a place related to Sikh Gurus. Sikhs demanded that members of *Gurudwara* board might be selected as per the will of Sikhs and costs not to be awarded from the *Gurudwara* fund. But as per the Government, members of the board to be selected as per the will of Government and a British to be selected as president of the board and one or two members might be selected from the *Mahants*. Akalis submitted their proposal that all members of the board should have to be Sikh and 3/4 members might be selected as per the will of members of Punjab Sikh Council and 1/4 members might be selected by the Governor and the salary of the members of the board might be awarded from the Government and a *Panthik* committee was also to be established for the management of *Gurudwaras*, and its account might be solved in the Sikh public or general public.⁵

At that time, Government was not ready to consider the proposal of the Sikhs because it did not want to displease other parties. They did not want to give such type of law to the Sikhs regarding *Gurudwaras*, which could not be given to Hindus or muslims in future. Sikhs submitted great suggestions to amend the *Bill* and as per the suggestions of the Sikhs, Government postponed the *Bill*.⁶

After the failure to pass the first Bill, Government was in pressure to submit second *Bill*. Government was in search of Sikh members from legislative members to submit second *Bill*. High Court gave instructions to all judicial officers of Lahore that disputes regarding

managements of *Gurudwara* should be settled as early as possible and also gave instructions to Deputy Commissioner to interfere in the disputes of *Gurudwaras* to start the proceedings for the better management of religious places.⁷

When that mildness appeared in the behavior of Government, some mild Sikhs gave their support to the Government to settle their disputes through the law. *Mahants* considered that Government officer would not help them to remain in possession of the properties of the *Gurudwaras*, so more than 15 *Mahants* were ready to transfer the mutation of the property of *Gurudwaras* in favour of *Gurudwaras*.⁸

When the mildness policy of Government and the policy of winning the confidence of mildness Sikhs was failed to stop the *Lok Lahar*, a Viceroy of India suggested the officer of the Punjab that a strong answer of this religious question should be found. Therefore, Punjab Government in the month of November issued another *Bill*. On 7th November, 1922, the new *Bill* was submitted in the Assembly by Fazzal Hussain as per the rules. To enquire its different sections and to submit the report, a committee was established. As per the new *Bill*, there was only one betterment than earlier *Bill* issued in the year 1921. In the earlier *Bill* there were 3 members from the board and in the second *Bill* there were 5 members from the board.⁹

There were two members from the *Sudhar Lahar* or *Akali leaders* in the *Bill*, but Sikhs were not satisfied with the second *Bill* and after that, they removed the British officer from the *Bill* for better management. Reform came in the hands of Sikhs and there was another betterment in *Bill* that all costs of the commission of the *Bill* would be awarded from the Government income of the state. They also tried to satisfy the other Sikhs in favour of said second will. All disputed *Gurudwaras* would be remain under the management of the commission of the *Bill* till the final decision.¹⁰

As per the draft of new *Bill*, Management committee of Amritsar was a committee to submit the nominations about the new *Bill*, now that committee did not have the same position, because a number of its members were in the jails and to compensate their absence S.G.P.C. was nominated for nomination. In the new board of the *Bill*, Sikh members were appointed as commissioners of the board. There was no other Sikh member who joined the board. Salaries of the commissioners were awarded from the Government and the list of disputed *Gurudwaras* should have to be made as which *Gurudwaras* came under the *Bill*. Then S.G.P.C. had no right to nominate the members.¹¹

As per the *Bill* announced that 1/3 members were to be nominated from the board and remaining members to be nominated from other religions. President of the board would be selected by the Government. *Mahants* also desired that a British official was to be selected as president of the *Gurudwara* board. In the *Bill* they held that *Mahants* did not own the property of *Gurudwaras*, but to maintain the account of *Gurudwaras* and its property was the responsibility of the *Mahants*. *Mahants* would be the member and secretary of the three members of committee of the *Gurudwara* which would be established for the management of *Gurudwaras*. Five Sikh members (Member of Punjab Council) participated to make the *Bill* as of 4 members in the end of month October and 1 member on 5th November, 1922 gave their resignations.

On 7th November, 1922, Fazzal Hussain submitted the *Bill* before the Punjab Council and the same was opposed by the Sikhs, because as per the *Bill*, all rights of the S.G.P.C. would come to an end, and Gurdwars would become the property of the Government. Government passed the *Bill* with the help of non Sikhs. But the *Bill* was postponed by the Government due to non nominations of Sikh members who had already given their resignations and lack of cooperation to the Government.¹²

After the Bill, the British Government made so many efforts to suppress the *Akali Lahar*/movement, but every time many new issues were raised like front of *Guru Ka Bagh* which was settled by the Government, but a new issue of Nabha was raised, because Government was in favour of Maharaja Patiala. The Government declared that the King of Nabha himself left the throne due to sickness, but Sikh Leaders and *Akali* leaders did not agree with the same. Front to reinstate the King of Nabha became very complex issue when official disrupted the *Akhand Path* ceremonies of the Sikhs at *Gangsar Jaito*.¹³

On 21st February, 1924, conditions became more complex due to firing at *Shahidi Jatha*. That place became death playground for bureaucracy of London, on the other hand for *Akali* Leaders and national parties of the State. Two efforts of Government were failed to solve the Sikh issue.¹⁴ Viceroy on the instructions of Sir Helly called Northern Command in Chief Sir William Birdwood to solve the issue and to establish friendship between Government and Sikhs. He started conversation with the *Akali* leaders who were confined in *Jails* and who remained outside the *Jail*. When William Birdwood considered that gathering of all *Akalis* (*Naram Khial* and *Garam Khial*) at one place was not a possible thing, he started conversation regarding compromise with moderate *Akalis* i.e. Bhai Jodh Singh, Raja Singh, Rasaldar, Ranjodh Singh.

After the efforts of William *Birdwood*, *Akali* leaders were ready to leave the issue of Nabha, but they demanded to perform the 101 *Akhand Path* ceremonies and release of all *Akali* leaders without any conditions. Finally on 2nd June 1924, *Birdwood* Committee stopped its efforts.¹⁵

In the said moment of crisis, national leaders Madan Mohan Malaviya and Muhhammad Ali Jinnah came ahead to solve the issue between the *Akalis* and Government. When Malaviya considered that new governor Helly was not ready to compromise the matter with the *Akali* Leaders or national leaders and intentionally gave encouragement to the opposing organization of the Sikhs to establish a *Bill*, then Malaviya with the consent of *Akali* leaders made a draft of *Bill* and said to the Hindu members to give their consent and also said to the members of legislative assembly to submit the *Bill*. Thus all malafide intentions of Helly were failed. If they failed to get the orders to submit the *Bill*, they had another way to submit the *Bill* in the meetings, because Sikh religious places were also established outside the Punjab and it would be passed with the help of National Leaders.¹⁶

The policy of the Malaviya and Jinnah to submit the said Bill forced the Governor Helly to compromise the matter with the *Akali* leaders. He motivated the Viceroy and its assembly members and on the other hand he started conversation for compromise with the Sikh Legislative members. In that situation, they said to one Sikh Member Tara Singh to submit the draft of Bill in the Legislative Assembly. On 7th May, 1925, before submission of Bill, they consulted with the *Akali* leaders who were confined at Lahore Fort and officials of Delhi and Lahore regarding the sections of the *Bill*. The new *Bill* was handed over to a committee, that submitted its report on 20th June, 1925.¹⁷

The Bill of 1925 A.D. was vested for the management and control of the *Gurudwaras*. In the *Bill*, it was stated that Sikhs had to be remained in *Gurudwara* Sikh Control and with religious behavior, a board (S.G.P.C.) under Section 42, Chapter VI of the Act was to be established. It was not possible in future that only *Akali Dal* held possession of religious places. Helly gave his statement that those Sikh *Gurudwaras* would be owned by its central body and it would be managed as local *Gurudwaras*. To fulfill the objective of the Act, a board committee, a tribunal and a commission would be also formed under it. To select the local committee, in the sixth chapter of S.G.P.C. board, Central Board was formed. In the Bill it was stated that for the forming of board, 84 members, 5 old officer designated members, 12 Members from Patiala, 4 from Nabha, 2 from Kapurthala, 2 from Faridkot, 1 from Jind and 1 from Kalsian would be

nominated. 4 members out of all 17 selected old members and nominated members, would be from the Punjab. *Jathedars* of the *Takhats* would have the right to select the members, to nominate, to give them designation, etc. That would lead the S.G.P.C. board inside the Punjab and outside the Punjab and it would also lead the outsider Sikhs.¹⁸

S.G.P.C. members would be selected at District Level, from an area where a big number of Sikhs people live. The area having a big crowd of Sikhs, there maximum members will be selected and the area having a small population of Sikh member, there minimum members would be selected. It means the counting of S.G.P.C. members would be depend on counting of its population. The selection of S.G.P.C. members would be free from the control of S.A.D. (*Shiromani Akali Dal*). Detail of the members of S.G.P.C. board was given at Section 44 of the *Bill*. The power of the selection would remain upon the British Government. As per the Subsection 2 of the *Bill*, at the selection of 20 members, 2 members-one from schedule caste and 1 from non schedule caste would be elected). As per subsection 43 (2), central Government would select the other 30 members at own despite a necessary consultation in which a lady must be selected. 5 seats out of total 30 seats would be reserved for the women. There were total 120 seats, in which 70 seats would be reserved for single Member of Constituencies and 50 would be reserved for double member of constituencies. There was a problem in Double Member seat that, Women could be elected by the voting from all 120 seats, but male member could not be elected from females seat.¹⁹

Full detail was given in the section 45 and 46 of the *Bill* regarding the qualifications of members. No qualification was fixed for the ex-officio members because they were already working as religious officers. As per section 45 (1), 45(2), 45(2A), elected members must have the qualities i.e., *Rahitdhari* Sikh, working in any local *Gurudwara* and *Takhat Sahib*, *Kesadhari*, old age about 25 years and not consuming wine. As per section 45(3), if any member failed to fulfil the conditions of membership, his membership would be discontinued. As per the section 46 (II) of the *Bill*, a person who did not have Sikhism and was not *Kesadhari*, could not be the member of S.G.P.C.. It was clearly shown in section (2) that if any member failed to fulfil the conditions of section 45 and 46 of the *Bill*, he would be terminated immediately.²⁰

It was held in the section 47 and subsection (47A), that to select the members of S.G.P.C., an election commission would be formed. To form the election cell, there was a condition in section 49 that the person elected would not smoke, was to be a Sikh, *Kesadhari*, did

not use wine, his age not less than 21 years. Voters would be prepared under section 50. Time of membership was specified in section 51, in which a provision was that until the tenure of members ended, the ex-member of S.G.P.C. had the right to work till the selection of new members. In section 52 of the *Bill*, full detail was given regarding the disqualifications of the members.²¹

Ways to fulfill the posts of S.G.P.C. which to be fulfilled according to the position, was given in section 53 of the *Bill*. In section 55 of the *Bill*, it was held that it was must for the members of the S.G.P.C. to conduct a meeting in a year and in the meeting they had the right to appoint a President, Vice President, executive members (1 to 11) and right in this regard was given in Section 62.²²

As per section 85, Central S.G.P.C. board would gather the Management committee of *Akal Takhat Sahib* and *Takhat Shri Kesgarh Sahib* and also S.G.P.C. board would fix the capacity of income and its property.²³

In section 87 it was held that Local *Gurudwara* committee would consist of five members in which one member would be selected by the Central Board, one member was to be selected from schedule caste and other members be selected by the people of the District in which the *Gurudwara* was situated. The *Gurudwara* having income more than 3000, its committee member would be selected from local area and if any *Gurudwara* having income less than 3000, its committee members would be selected by the S.G.P.C. board.

Detail of qualifications and nominations of the members was given in section 90-91, as the detail of members of the board was given in section 45 and 46. As per the section 93, a person having right for vote, must to be registered.²⁴ As per section 127, S.G.P.C. board had the right to establish the charitable trust for the state and committee had right to control the same as held in section 133 that detail of income and property of *Gurudwara* would be kept by its committee and committee would do all measurement and all functions celebrated in the *Gurudwaras*. All details regarding funds, income and property of the *Gurudwara* would be kept by its committee.²⁴

As held in chapter IX of the *Bill* that Government. Would fix the funds of S.G.P.C. and S.G.P.C. board was not fully free from Government regarding that matter. Despite it, Governemnt created a list of 50 Sikh historical *Gurudwaras* and held that a Sikh aged about more than 21 years had the right to get the details of *Gurudwara* by filing a petition. A judicial

tribunal would be formed for that petitions, which were stated in Chapter VII of the Act. That tribunal would be established with three members and to fix the income of *Mahants* was the work of that tribunal. In the section 41, Committees and Central board of S.G.P.C. would have the different powers from each other.²⁵

In Chapter III, section 12 of the Bill, there was stated regarding important Court of Sikhs that right to establish an important Court for the Sikh was with the local Government and a High Court judge would be the President of said Court and other two members would be selected for the Committee of Court, having 10 years of experience as advocate at High Court. The proceedings of that Court would be made according to the *Bill* and salary of members of the important Court would be given from the income of state.²⁶

As per section 38 Chapter IV, there was given detail of other Courts that could give the evidence regarding the foundation of *Gurudwaras*. After this there was a talk of management of *Gurudwaras*, which was the main proposal of the Act. There was provision to establish Board Committees and Commission under Section 39, 40 and 41 of Chapter V to fulfill the objectives of management of *Gurudwaras*.²⁷

Sikh *Gurudwara* Bill was accepted on 7th May 1925 A.D. at Shimla during the meeting of Punjab Legislative Council after a great consultation. On 28th July, 1925 A.D. Governor General of India formally approved the *Bill*, then new selected members of the *Bill* conducted a meeting on 4th September 1926 at Town Hall, Amritsar and they appointed 14 members. Meeting of fully formed board was conducted on 2nd October, 1926 A.D. and a new name was given to the board that was “Shiromani *Gurudwara* Parbandhak Committee” and Government ended the earlier federal from the S.G.P.C. and S.A.D. and due to that Act, Sikhs got the powers of Half State and its results were being seen even today.²⁸

Since a long time, it was the demand of the Sikhs that the conditions of the *Gurudwaras* must be improved, and this was possible only with the formation of an Act or a Bill. The *Akali Dal*, S.G.P.C. and the Sikhs wanted to form a Bill that could fulfil the demands and needs of the Sikhs as well as the needs of the humanity. For this purpose they struggled a lot against the British government. The Sikhs wanted such a Bill that could be according to the desires of the Sikh community.

The British government wanted such a Bill that could not provide total freedom to the Sikhs. It wanted to control all the financial and religious powers of the Sikhs. The government

was ready to pass a Bill in which the power could be in the hands of the British officers or the pro-British Sikhs. The *Akali Dal* and S.G.P.C. were determined to form a Bill according to their own choice. There was a clash between the British government and the Sikhs over the issue of the *Gurudwara Act*.

The role of S.G.P.C. and *Akali Dal* regarding the reformation in *Gurudwaras* can never be ignored. They wanted to form a Bill so that the act of reformation could be finalized but British Government was not agreed with any type of reforms. British Government tried to divide the Sikhs in the name of reforms but ultimately *Gurudwara Sudhar Act* was passed that provided strength to S.G.P.C. and *Akali Dal*. It also helped the Sikhs to organise themselves and to maintain their identity.

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CHAPTER–5

CONCLUSION

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Front of Jaito was conducted due to the removal of Maharaja Ripudaman Singh from the throne as he kept *sympathy* with *Akali* movement. He was an electric ruler, therefore, British Government was very tight. After *Saka Nankana*, S.G.P.C. sent mandatory instructions to every Sikh to wear black turban to show protest against the Government, then Maharaja Ripudaman Singh of Nabha also wore black turban and declared holiday in Nabha state to pay homage to the martyrs of *Saka Nankana*. When Maharaja Ripudaman Singh sat on the throne, he refused to get wear the crown from a British officers. British Government did not bear the activities of electric ruler Maharaja Ripudaman Singh. British Government sent Mr. Stuart (was a Judge in profession) to Ambala to enquire the dispute of Nabha and Patiala state. Mr. Stuart gave his decision against Maharaja Ripudaman Singh and Government with the help of other officials of Maharaja Ripudaman Singh forced Maharaja to leave the throne. On 9th July, 1923 they sent Maharaja to Dehradun.

British Government told the people that Maharaja himself left the throne. Some S.G.P.C. members like Master Tara Singh, Bawa Harkrishan Singh and Teja Singh Samundri approached Maharaja, then it came to know that Maharaja did not leave the throne at his own wish, rather British Government forced him to leave the throne by playing wrong moves. S.G.P.C. members suggested Maharaja not to leave his state and they assured that they would get his throne back or all Sikhs would offer their martyrdom for his legal right.

After suggestions of the above said members and after knowing the reality, both S.G.P.C. and *Akali Dal* sympathised with Maharaja Ripudaman Singh and they decided to help to this brave king of Sikh religion.

Maharaja became popular and the beloved of the Sikhs. There was protest in the people against the Government due to forcible removing of Maharaja from the throne by the Government. Indian National Congress leaders and other political leaders had *sympathy* with Maharaja. People of Nabha state were also with Maharaja. Moti Lal Nehru put a question before the gathering of the people at Nabha station regarding reinstatement of Raja. All people answered in one voice that they wanted to see the king on throne.

On 5th August, 1923, S.G.P.C. passed a resolution regarding *sympathy* with Maharaja and decided to do everything to reinstate Maharaja. They also decided that on 9th September they would celebrate Nabha Day. At that time, there was Martial Law in Nabha State. There was

federal on all type of meetings. S.G.P.C. decided to conduct a *Diwan* at *Gangsar Jaito*, an area of Nabha, to show protest against the Government, when Sikhs started *Akhand Path* at Jaitu, then Government through the police tried to dislocate the *Diwan* and disrupted the *Akhand Path* and thus ruined the holy ceremonies of the *Akhand Path*. Therefore, the protest against the Government increased in the *Akalis* and S.G.P.C. decided that they would complete the *Diwan* without stopping. The front of Jaito was started because it was a big insult of *Guru Granth Sahib* and Sikhs. Till that time, it was a political matter but later it became a religious matter. They related the matter of insulting the *Akhand Path* ceremonies of *Guru Granth Sahib* with matter of Maharaja Ripudaman Singh. Therefore, British Government of Nabha, forced the Sikhs to conduct another front against the Government regarding another religious matter.

Shiromani Gurudwara Parbhandhak Committee started sending a *Jatha* of 25 Sikhs daily to Jaito to show protest against the Government regarding insult of *Akhand Path*. British Government arrested them and gave severe beating to them and did not give them food for two/three days . After beating and abusing, they were left at a distance in forest of Nabha state, where Sikhs did not have any food to eat and clothes to wear. That series of protests kept on moving for months. With the passage of time, the matter of Maharaja Ripudaman Singh was becoming an interested issue among people of Hindustan. Congress had *sympathy* with the *Akalis* from beginning. In the meeting of Congress in 1923 A.D., they decided to give help to the movement of *Akalis* from every angle. Pandit Jwahar Lal Nehru, Professor Gidwani, D.K. Satnam visited Jaito but they were arrested by the Government at station and confined in the *Jail*. The said senior leaders were sent to the *Jail* by the police like local prisoners, where a fake case was planted upon them and they were released after 15 days. A senior Advocate Moti Lal Nehru did not get the permission to meet his son J.L. Nehru and he also went back.

All Government officials were upset by the big courage of the *Akalis*. Government tried to do everything to stop the *Akalis*. British Government announced *Akali Dal* and S.G.P.C. as illegal. They arrested all main leaders of S.G.P.C. and *Akalis* and sent them to the *Jails* and planted false cases upon them regarding seditions with the Government and the proceedings of the cases were proceeded till end of front 1926 A.D., but Government failed to break the courage of *Akalis* and S.G.P.C. Sikhs were angry as the Government normally arrested the *Jatha* of 25 Sikhs. S.G.P.C. decided to send *Jatha* of 500 Sikhs towards Jaito and on 9th February first *Jatha* with 500 Sikhs was sent to Jaito.

Congress leaders Dr. Kichlu, Principal Gidwani, Noor Muhammad and Mr. Jimand, representative of New York Times, were also going to Jaito along with first *Jatha* of 500 Sikhs. When the said *Jatha* reached Jaito, the officers started firing at them in which 70 to 150 Sikhs got martyred and many Sikhs were injured. But Government made the statement that the Sikhs started shooting.

The Sikhs did not leave their courage and they faced every type of torture from the Government. During that S.G.P.C. sent total 16 *Jathas* to Jaito, but Government gave them severe beating, abusing and torturing and confined them to the *Jails*. Except first *Jatha*, the British did not fire at any other *Jatha* and finally Government bowed before the courage of Sikhs.

Sikhs who were out to go to Jaito, first gathered at *Akal Takhat Sahib* and then moved to Jaito. Sikhs of *Jatha*, even after the torture of Government, reached Jaito. First *Jatha* was fired at by Government. All newspapers expressed their protest towards this policy of Government. The Tribune declared the said incident was like the *Saka Nankana*, and wrote that *Saka Nankana* was happened due to illegal conduct of selfish *Mahants* and that Jaito front was happened due to illegal conduct of the Government.

All newspapers wrote that it was the Government to maintain peace. They demanded to establish a committee to enquire the matter. People showed their protest and conducted gathering in Delhi, Kolkata, Bombay, Madras and Karachi in which senior leaders like Moti Lal Nehru, Pandit Malaviya, Shokat Ali, Muhammad Ali etc. participated. Mahatama Gandhi and Lala Lajpat Rai also showed their *sympathy* toward *Akalis*.

When Government failed to win over the *Akalis*, it decided to compromise the matter. Government thought if the *Akali Lehar* kept on moving in the *Akali* Soldiers, it would create a new problem because in the year 1914 during first world war, Sikh Soldiers gave their best help to the British Government, therefore, Government created *Birdwood* Committee. It started to talk with *Akalis* but they failed to compromise the matter. *Akalis* did not want to leave their conditions. Mahatama Gandhi asked the *Akalis* to leave the issue of Maharaja Nabha because it was a political matter and separate in nature from the issue of *Gurudwara Sudhar Lahar/movement*.

When on 28th February, 1924 A.D., S.G.P.C. sent 2nd Martyred *Jatha* from Amritsar, Mahatama Gandhi asked the S.G.P.C. not to send the *Jatha* but *Akalis* did not stop sending

Jathas. Governor of Punjab Mr. Helly established a Reform Committee of moderate Sikhs to break the courage of *Akalis*/ Sikhs. All members of that committee had devotion in favour of Government. The members of that committee conducted *Akhand Path* at Jaito to stop the front of Jaito, but Sikhs refused to take part as the Sikhs wanted to conduct *Akhand Path* Sahib as per their own desires that would be free from interference and interruption of the Government.

The Government wanted that Sikhs should have to be remained under their control. When Government refused the conditions of Sikhs, the Sikhs became more critical and their protest increased strongly. Even Sikhs from distant areas like Calcutta approached Jaito to show their protest against the Government and even a *Jatha* from foreign countries like Canada, China (Shanghai) also approached Jaito for showing their protest against the Government. When Government realised that they had failed to stop the courage of *Akali*/Sikhs, they started making efforts to compromise the matter, but Government refused to withdraw the cases that were pending against the Sikhs.

Finally in the year 1925 A.D., when Government observed its failure, they approached the Akali Sikhs and established a Committee to improve the management of the *Gurudwaras*. At this the Government submitted its proposal to create *Gurudwara Sudhar Act* for the Sikhs. *Sudhar* Committee got established by the Government in which representatives of the Government also participated. The Government said to the committee to create *Gurudwara Act*. On the other hand *Akali* Sikhs feared lest Helly should get the Bill passed which was against the Sikhs.

During that period, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and Muhhamad Ali Jinnah gave their best support to the Sikhs and they formed the *Bill* with the help of Sikhs who were confined in fort and the same was presented in the Legislative Assembly through Sikh representative Tara Singh. Helly did not want that the *Bill* be passed in the Central Assembly. He started a new proposal with the S.G.P.C. regarding *Gurudwara Sudhar Lahar/movement* and both parties were compromised the matter and the Act of 1925 A.D. came into existence. It was accepted by the *Akalis* because in the that Act, *Akalis* got success to make their conditions.

Sikhs had won the Jaito front and got permission to perform *Akhand Path* at Nabha. After interference of some *Naram Khiali* Sikhs, Akali left the issue of Mahraja Ripudaman Singh, who spent rest of his life in tortures. In 1926 A.D., Government removed the federal from the S.G.P.C. and *Akalis* and released the leaders from the *Jails*. In this way, the *Akalis* had won

that front after a long struggle. Another result of the front was that *Akalis* participated in National Movement because in the above said front, many national leaders helped the Sikhs to pass *Gurudwara Sudhar Act* in 1925 A.D. British Government had the illusion that Sikhs were having devotion toward them and after the above said front, this illusion was broken.

Although before this front, some incidents provoked the Sikhs against the Government i.e. Gadar Party, incident of *Jalianwala Bagh*, incident of *Saka Nankana*, incident of Kamagatamaru and other incidents related to *Gurudwara Sudhar Lahar*/movement had provoked the Sikhs against the Government. The torture given by the Government in the Jaito front increased the protest of the Sikhs rapidly. This Lahar/movement of Jaito front had made S.G.P.C. and *Akalis* more strong. Although Government tried its best to stop the courage of the Sikhs but Government failed. It got admirations from national leaders and British Government also when *Gurudwara Sudhar Act* 1925 was passed after the long struggle of *Gurudwara Sudhar Lahar*/movement.

Maharaja was a brave Sikh ruler and he opposed the wrong policies of British Government. He raised his voice against all the wrong activities of the British Government, hence he was removed from the throne. It was a time when the Sikhs wanted to organize an *Akhand Path* at Jaito but Government did not allow this and various problems were created for the Sikhs that resulted the *Jaito Morcha*. Various national leaders appreciated the courage and struggle of the Sikhs.

This interference in the political and religious life of the Sikhs became a great problem for the British government. It was the struggle and courage of the Sikhs that compelled the government to surrender before the Sikhs.

The British government had always been against the Sikhs and it tried to create hurdles in the progress of the Sikhs. Consequently the British government tried its best that S.G.P.C. and Akali Dal might not be formed, but the struggle and sacrifice of the Sikhs compelled the government to be at backfoot.

The wrong policies of British Government were opposed by various organization in Punjab as well as in India. Leaders of *Akali Dal*, members of S.G.P.C. and the leaders of Indian National Congress revolted against the wrong policies regarding Sikhs and the Punjab. The formation of S.G.P.C. helped the Sikhs to create an atmosphere of revolution against the British Government. The role of various *Jathas* in the development of Sikhism can never be forgotten.

The British government wanted such a Bill that could not provide total freedom to the Sikhs. It wanted to control all the financial and religious powers of the Sikhs. The government was ready to pass a Bill in which the power could be in the hands of the British officers or the pro-British Sikhs. The *Akali Dal* and S.G.P.C. were determined to form a Bill according to their own choice. There was a clash between the British government and the Sikhs over the issue of the *Gurudwara Act*.

The role of S.G.P.C. and *Akali Dal* regarding the reformation in *Gurudwaras* can never be ignored. They wanted to form a Bill so that the act of reformation could be finalized but British Government was not agreed with any type of reforms. British Government tried to divide the Sikhs in the name of reforms but ultimately *Gurudwara Sudhar Act* was passed that provided strength to S.G.P.C. and *Akali Dal*. It also helped the Sikhs to organise themselves and to maintain their identity.

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CANDIDATE'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work which is being presented in the dissertation entitled "MORCHA OF JAITO; ITS HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE AND ITS ROLE IN GURUDWARA REFORM ACT 1925" in fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy in Faculty of Arts, authentic record of my own work carried out during the period from 2015 to 2018 under the supervision of Dr. Sukhjot Kaur Bhullar.

The Matter embodied in this dissertation has not been submitted by me for the award of any other degree of this or any other university/institute.


Name of the Student

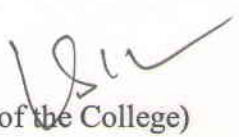
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This is to certify that the above statement made by the candidate is correct to the best of my/our Knowledge.


(Supervisor)

The M.Phil Viva-Voice examination of Mrs. Veerpal Kaur has been held on 11 April 2018 and accepted for the award of M.Phil Degree.


(Supervisor)


(Dean of the College)