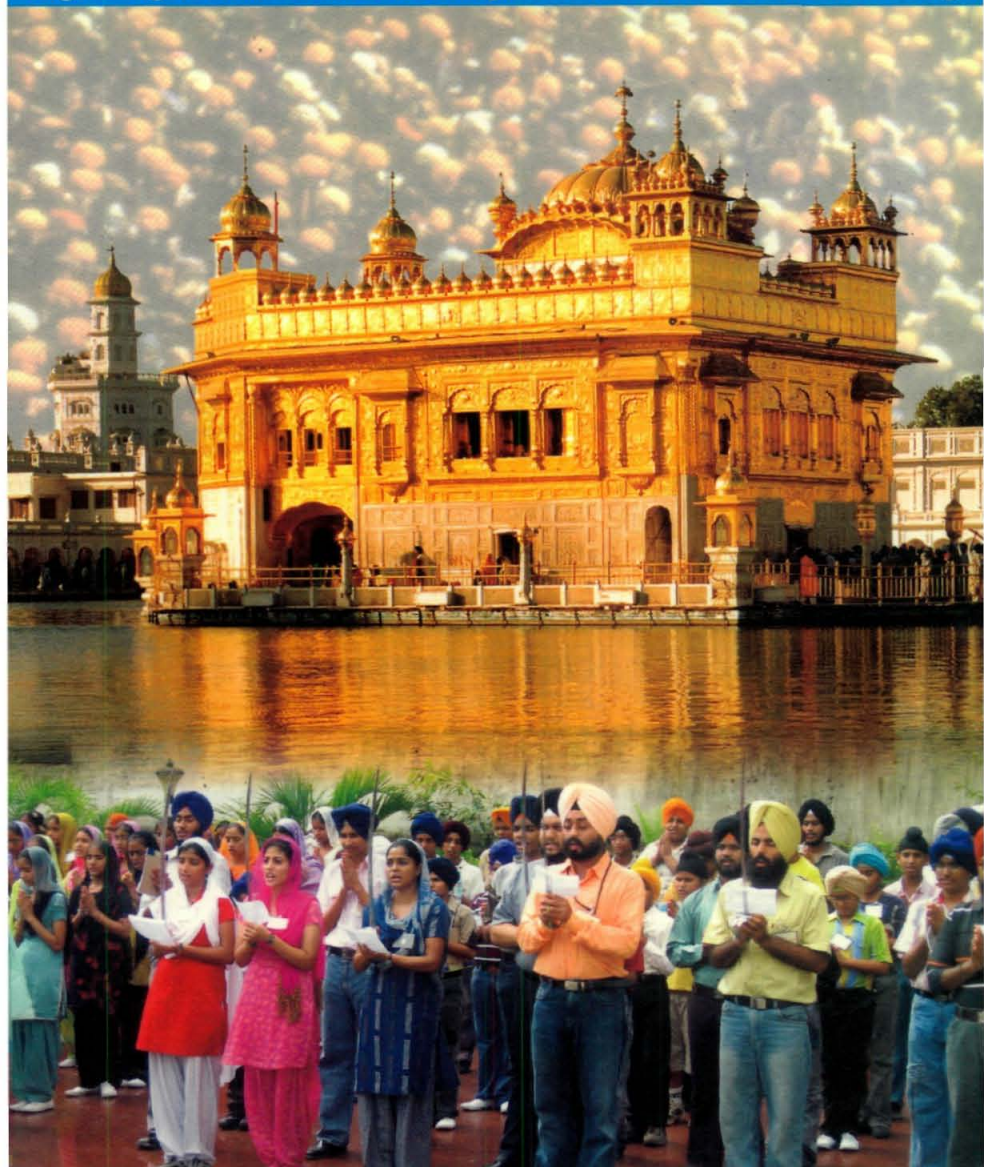


WHO ARE THE **SIKHS?**



Degh-o-teg-o-fateh-o-nusrat bedirang. Yafat az Nanak - Gurú Gobind Singh.



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WHO ARE THE SIKHS?

A Sikh can easily be identified from amongst the crowds of hundreds and thousands. A man with beard and turban can well be easily recognized. Most of the Sikhs, wearing traditional dress, give impression of a monarch. Throughout the world one can observe Sikh men, women and children, dressed in fine clothes and colourful turbans (females with turbans as well as dupattās), going to Gurdwārās. A congregation in a Gurdwara makes one think of an august assembly of pious people. The sacred kitchen of a Gurdwara looks like the scene of a family feast where everyone seems to be trying to surpass each other in doing voluntary and selfless service.

One observing people contributing a share of their honestly earned money for *Langer* (sacred community kitchen) and trying to surpass others in performing service in Gurdwara kitchen, cleaning dishes, sweeping floors, washing toilets, serving guests, cleaning silt from *sarovars* (tanks); and all this being done by them devotionally and whole-heartedly; asks, "Who are these turbaned and bearded selfless people?"

In June 1984 the world saw a handful of people fighting against hundreds of thousands of heavily armed soldiers of the Indian army, which attacked Darbār Sāhib Amritsar under orders from Indira Gandhi (the then prime-minister of India). The world was amazed to learn that hundreds of thousands of soldiers of the Indian army, fully equipped with helicopters, tanks, guns, missiles and other most modern arms and ammunition; and on the opposite side, there were a few dozen people having not more than a hundred rifles. The world observed it with great astonishment how these few people could stop the advancement of a mighty army for several days. The thousands of Sikh soldiers abandoned their barracks and renounced their jobs to protest against attack on their shrines. These saintly soldiers did not bother for their jobs and careers for the sake of dignified living. Throughout the world hundreds of thousands of Sikhs expressed their sentiments of resentment against injustice done to their nation by the Indian army. The world could not help inquiring about these people. Who are they? Who are the Sikhs?

When people of the world came to know that they are the same persons whose ninth Gurū had sacrificed his life in order to ensure right to religious worship and faith to the Hindus (as well others), they were amazed. It was more surprising for them to know that the Hindu rulers of India whose women folk had been forcibly taken away by Ahmed Shah Durrānī (the ferocious Afghan terror of

the eighteenth century) and the Sikhs, not bothering for their lives, had fought against that mighty invader in order to save the Hindu girls from being taken to Afghanistan for sale as sex-slaves. The world came to know about the Sikhs who sacrificed several of their comrades to restore the wife of a Hindu Brahmin who appeared at Akal Takht Sāhib on April 10, 1763 and submitted a petition that his wife had forcibly been taken away by the tyrant chief of Kasur. The world was shocked to see inhuman, merciless, savage, so far unknown to history, awesome massacre of the Sikh men, women and children by terrorist Hindu mobs at Delhi and other areas of Hindu monopoly in India. The world saw all this with disgust when Indian media, instead of condemning inhuman treatment of the Sikhs by terrorist Hindu mobs and their leaders, defamed the noble Sikh people as terrorists and extremists. The world was shocked at the inhuman style of the Hindu leaders, Hindu press, Hindu elite and majority of common Hindu folk. The world was shocked when Rajiv Gandhi, the then prime minister of India 'justified' the killings of the Sikhs by saying 'when a big tree falls, the earth trembles'.

It is noteworthy that the Sikh-Punjab contributes 70% of India's wheat, rice and other food grains. If Punjab stops giving (or becomes barren land) or cannot produce/provide food to India, the latter will reach the stage of starving; hence the Sikh-Punjab is 'the preserver of India'. Similarly, the Sikh-Punjab is the arm-sword of India. It is mainly the Sikhs with turbans and beards who have always been the real defenders of India. Thousands of Sikhs have lost their lives for the defence of India. The Sikhs have made sacrifices not only for India but also for the freedom of European countries (like England, France, Italy, Belgium) as well as countries in Africa, the Far East and the other parts of the world. The records of the martyrs and the details preserved in the war memorials in France, Italy, Belgium, Holland etc. contain the names of several thousand Sikh who died in the World Wars.

Besides making sacrifices for the freedom of the western and eastern nations, the Sikhs have contributed a lot to the economy of different nations. Wherever a Sikh resides, he is known for his enterprising nature, courage, will to struggle, endeavour to make progress (and also to contribute for human cause). One cannot find a pauper Sikh in any part of the world. It is impossible to find a Sikh begging for living. The Sikhs have played role in the progress and prosperity of the country of their residence. The Sikhs have contributed a lot to the economy of the U.S.A, England, Canada, Australia, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, etc. and also

have made sincere efforts to improve the economy of Kenya, Ethiopia, and Philippines etc.

On September 9, 2001, when Al-Qaida terrorists attacked the World Trade Centre towers in New York, most of the white American mistook the Sikhs as Al-Qaida associates, because the media (especially the electronic media) showed the leaders of the terrorists groups as 'turban wearing people'. Due to this, some white Americans made violent attacks on the Sikhs, in some parts of the USA (because the Sikhs were wearing turbans). This resulted into murder of a few Sikhs. Later, the USA authorities printed posters to inform the public about the difference between a Sikh and others.

Almost in every country the Sikh residents have established major business, industrial and even agricultural units which helped in giving jobs to hundred of thousands of people. It has its genesis in the Sikh ideology of honest earning, sharing with others, humanism, love for service enterprising nature, *Chardi-kala* (the Sikh-psyche of living in high spirit), positive thinking; and a Sikh achieves all this not by cleverness or negative means but by hard work and efforts. Almost in every part of the world, one can find hard-working Sikh businessmen, judges, ministers, engineers, scientists, mayors, parliamentarians, Sikh army officers.

Daswandh (tithe), in Sikhism, is an important institution. It is a pious duty of a Sikh to contribute a share of his honestly earned income for the needy, the poor and the weak. If a Sikh cannot find such needy persons among his nears and dears then he contributes his tithe for Gurdwara, for *langar* (sacred community kitchen) or for some other charitable purposes. In Sikhism tithe is not "donation"; it is an obligatory duty, neither should it be done for pretension nor is it an investment for any material gain/return.

In Sikhism, doing *Sewā* (service) is a central virtue. A Sikh has an obligation to participate in some kind of service regularly. Some people consider serving in Gurdwara or in *langar* (sacred kitchen) as sacred. Service in any form and in any situation has the same sanctity. The only consideration is that it should be done with most humility, devotion and from the core of one's heart. A Sikh does not perform service under compulsion or coercion; rather it is a matter of pride for a Sikh. One might have seen thousands of Sikhs performing *Kār Sewā* (usually cleaning the silt of tanks of Gurdwārās) and in this *Kār Sewā* royal family, feudal and billionaire people too make participation with utmost zeal, devotion and pride. It is remarkable that every Sikh wants to surpass others in participating in one or the other form of *Sewā*.

The concept of 'sharing with others' is no less significant in Sikhism. A Sikh feels it a pleasure in contributing a part of his income for some religious cause or for the social welfare. He believes in giving something to others. However, it does not mean that a Sikh is prohibited to accept help even if one badly needs it. He loves in participating in social activities to the extent of one's capacity. He is normally not expected to shirk work or duty of responsibility or accountability.

A Sikh is a man of words. If he promises to help some one he shall never turn his back even if he has to pay a very high price for it. Gurū Sāhibs themselves practiced these ideals in their lives.

In Sikhism, meditation is not an imbalanced approach. It is not a mere ritual or formality. A Sikh need not renounce world in order to achieve liberation or union with God. He can achieve spiritual heights even as a householder. He does not believe in "other wordiness". For him there is no heaven or hell beyond this world. Living truthful life, in noble fear of God, is heaven. Having no faith in God and living an unethical life is hell.

A Sikh does not worship gods, goddesses, idols, prophets, martyrs or heroes. He does not have to adopt any type of hypocritical worship or rituals. Sikhs worship only God. Concentrating on God, meditating in the Name of God, practicing truthful life, loving human beings, living in the fear of God is the Sikh way of life. Sikhs need not first worship a prophet or Gurū in order to achieve union with God. A Sikh is a direct subject of God and there is none in between him and Him.

A Sikh is an enthusiastic, diligent, spirited and vivacious being. He gets up early in the morning, takes a bath, meditates in the Name of God, joins *Sangat* (holy congregation) in Gurdwara and then begins his day sincerely. This is the discipline of a Sikh. A Sikh cannot be lazy, indolent or inactive; nor can he remain idle, stagnate, slothful or lackadaisical. Lethargy or life of inactivity is alien to a Sikh. A Sikh is always active, agile, robust, vigorous and vivacious. He is ever-ready to do something positive; it may be his own work or helping/serving others.

Punjab, the Sikh homeland, is inhabited not only by the Sikhs. There are Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Jains and others. There are several casts, creeds and clans in Punjab e.g. *Jats, Khatrīs, Arorās, Brahmins, Rājputs, Lubānās, Sainīs, Kambojs, Chamārs* etc. But, it is remarkable to note that when a person from the above castes/creeds gets *Khande Dī Pahul* (the Sikh initiation) he/she becomes altogether 'different' person. *Khande Dī Pahul* turns an

ordinary person into a vivacious, robust, vigorous, chivalrous, courageous, as well as polite, sophisticated and humane being.

There is some miraculous power in *Amrit* (His Name), which turns a coward into a gallant; an indolent into a vigorous and vivacious person; a weak person into a mighty person; a loutish, uncouth and ungracious person into a polite and human being; an atheist into a devoted pantheist; and a *sant-sipāhī* (saint-soldier). The writers, thinkers and leaders of world have always wondered over the miracle of *Amrit*.

A Gurdwara has a significant role in the life of a Sikh. For him, it is a spiritual centre. It is door (of the abode/court) of God. Besides, it is the nucleus of Sikh nation. Here, he learns how to live among other family members (i.e. fellow Sikhs). *Langar* hall (sacred community kitchen) and a *Sarān* (inn) are usually a part of all the major Gurdwārās. It provides boarding and lodging to travellers and other needy persons. A Sikh has an obligation to contribute something positive to the society. Gurū Sāhib themselves practiced the same. Gurū Sāhibs built several *sarovars* (tanks), *Bāolīs* (deep wells), gardens, inns etc. and taught the Sikhs that they too should practice the same, as that is a part of their duty towards the Sikh brotherhood.

Earning honestly; sharing with others; serving the humanity; defending the weak, the poor and the suffering; contributing *Daswandh* (tithe); achieving prosperity by doing hard work, efforts and struggle; fighting against injustice and tyranny; doing job sincerely; working hard to provide food to the people of the world; performing duty honestly; always telling truth; practicing honesty in every situation; never cheating, stealing or snatching; never encroaching upon others' rights; never tolerating nor being a party to injustice; always being polite; never hurting the feelings of others; always contributing for service of mankind... is the real Sikh way of life.

BIRTH OF SIKHISM

Sikhism is the only indigenous religion of Punjab. All other religions, adopted by the people of Punjab from time to time, have their origin in some other land; only Sikhism is born in Punjab. Besides, Sikhism is, perhaps, the only religion, which has been accepted by the Punjabis from the cores of their hearts. The Punjabis had accepted other religions under force, coercion or greed. They accepted Buddhism because the ruler was a Buddhist and some people wanted to be associated with the ruling class. When Hindus conquered the Punjab from the Buddhists, several Punjabis embraced Hinduism. When Afghan Muslims came to the Punjab, they forcibly converted a large number of Hindus to Islam. Besides, some Punjabis adopted Islam with the intention of enjoying the benefits of being on the side of the new rulers. The Moguls, too, forcibly converted a large number of Hindus into Islam.

In Punjab, the history of institutional religion is not more than a couple of thousand years old. Before Buddhism, the people of the Punjab, like the people of the rest of the South Asia, did not have any organised religion. The Punjabis used to worship fire, water, rivers, sky, sun, ocean, mountains, rain, clouds, stars, sun, moon etc. The cunning elite (later known as Brahmins) presented these natural forces and calamities as anger of mythical gods and goddesses and be fooled the simple and ignorant people and made them slaves of these forces. These cunning elite began rituals and black magic activities to suck common man's blood. Simple people accepted these fraudulent rituals as genuine and thus began the business of the priestly class.

But, adoption of Buddhism by Ashoka changed the scenario and a good number of the Punjabis embraced Buddhism. Though in some areas of the sub continent Jainism too appeared, but due to its rigorous ideology the Punjabis did not accept it. King Ashoka and his successors were, however, successful in converting a large number of Punjabis to Buddhism but, still, majority of the people of the Punjab did not adopt it.

After the fall of the Buddhist rulers, the sub continent came under the rule of the Hindus. The Hindus massacred a large number of Buddhist and Jain monks as well as their followers. This brought an end to the spread of Jainism and Buddhism. Besides, some of the religious traditions, customs, rituals and symbols of Jainism were adopted by Hinduism; this too helped in bringing Jainism into the fold of Hindus. Hinduism, at that time was no religion. It was a conglomeration of worshippers of various natural powers. The elite

(Brahmins) had created various mythical gods and goddesses. Most popular among them were Shiv, Vishnū, Brahmā, Janak and Nārāyan etc. With the passage of time Nārāyan and Janak lost their separate identity but Vishnu, Brahma and Shivjī still remained popular. All the three had separate sets of priests and worshippers. The rulers of different areas of the subcontinent patronised different gods and goddesses. Some Brahmins began worshipping more than one god/goddess. With the passage of time the priestly class began keeping images of all these gods and goddesses in their homes, and they, like shopkeepers, began performing rituals for the people believing in different sets of gods and goddesses. With the passage of time, all this became exploitation, under the plank of religion, of the people of the zone around seven rivers beyond Sindhu River. The foreigners (traders and later invaders) used to call them residents of Sindh/Hind, most probably after the name of the river Sindhu. Later, they came to be known as Hindus.

Around 300 O.E. some literary epics were composed, which included the stories of battles and adventures of several kings of Kurū, Panchāl, Magadh and other countries. With the passage of time, these epics became very popular among the people of different countries. After a couple of generations, Brahmins began establishing these fictitious heroes as god-kings. From among these fictitious epic characters, Rāma and Krishna became idols. The priestly class concocted stories about their spiritual power and popularised them for their own interest. Now, the priests began constructing worship places for different gods and later goddess too.

In seventh century, the political scene of the Punjāb, Hindustān and Magadh etc led to massacre of the Buddhist missionaries and with this began the advent of Brahmin hegemony which later developed into Vedic/epic-based ritualism (and finally Hinduism).

When Turks, Mogul and Afghan rulers came to this land and perpetrated atrocities on the people, helpless common folk resorted to help from supernatural forces, i.e. (mythical) God. Ritual worship, *havans*, prayers, *mantras*, and *yajna* became the shield of common folk. Though none of these rituals or black magic could help the people but they had no other resort, hence the business of the priestly class flourished. All this went on for a couple of centuries.

But, in the seventh decade of the fifteenth century, the Punjāb witnessed a real miracle. It was the birth of Gurū Nānak Sāhib. God gave him a command to bring an end to the hypocrisy of the priestly class. Gurū Nānak began his active mission in the year 1507. For the next fifteen years he toured different areas of the subcontinent as well

as the Arabian lands. He visited major centres of all the religions and faiths and discussed with their leaders the plight of the people. He talked to thousands of common people too. He met missionaries, leaders and the other elite. He found these missionaries as hypocrites and escapists. Finally, he (settled at Kartārpur and) began preaching the mission of God, the real religion, not of any god or goddess or any religious leader but of the God, God. He asked the people not to accept any mythical god or goddess or a human leader but worship God and the God only. He forbade them even from accepting him (Gurū Nānak) as God or semi-God. He told the people that he was a teacher, and an Enlightener but not God. He preached that there should be none between God and a man. The Enlightener shows the path but he himself is not the path. Thus the first contribution of Sikhism to Punjāb culture was the offer of freedom to the Punjābīs from worship of mythical gods and goddesses. The intelligent section of the Punjābīs accepted this freedom. With this, Sikhism brought an end to meaningless ritualism. The new religion was a practical religion. It was not renunciation of the world. It was a path of liberation/self-realisation for every person along with living the life of householder.

Gurū Sāhib taught the people (who, so far, were known by the foreign aggressors as weak, fatalist, and slave people) the lesson of bravery. It was Gurū Nānak Sāhib who told the people not to fear the Mogul emperor Bābar (i.e. tyrant invaders or rulers). He challenged that only that person has a right to be the ruler who is acceptable to the people (*Takht bahe takhte ki laik* and *Kya sultan salam vihoona*). Gurū Hargobind Sāhib told the Sikhs to reject the *false* Takht and accept the supremacy of the Throne of God only. He actually formed an army and fought against injustice. He infused the spirit of chivalry among the people and made Jats, untouchable and traders as brave as Rājputs and Khatrīs were. He broke the veil of falsehood created by the Brahmins that only Rājputs and Khatrīs could fight and only Brahmins were intellectuals. Gurū Hargobind Sāhib's army comprised of soldiers from each and every caste and all of them were equally great fighters. He taught the people to fear none as none was invincible. *It is interesting to note that in those days, a large number of Rājputs, who were known as the great warriors as well as men of honour, too had submitted to the sword of the Moguls. Some of the Rājput rulers had offered their daughters and sisters in marriage to the Moguls in order to win offices and favours.* Gurū Sāhib told the Sikhs not to compromise their dignity. He taught them to fight against injustice howsoever powerful may be the enemy of justice and Righteousness.

Gurū Sāhib imbued the spirit of bravery, courage and chivalry among the people. The people, who had always surrendered before

every aggressor and accepted his slavery, now decided to fight against not only foreign invaders but also every tyrant and unjust person. Sikhism told them not to fear (nor even to frighten) any one. Sikhism taught the lesson of "defence of the poor, weak, helpless and downtrodden and destruction of terrorism". Those who embraced Sikhism became the finest soldiers on this earth. Before Sikhism, there was not much in the history of chivalry in the Punjāb but Gurū's teachings turned them into a valiant fighter and these warriors changed the course of the history of the subcontinent. It is amazing to note that those who did not embrace Sikhism still remained slaves of fate and surrendered their freedom to the invaders as well as powerful and cruel rulers.

A Sikh is his own master. He is a *Sirdar*, a leader. He is a *Khālsā* i.e. sovereign. (This word has its root in the Persian term *Khālsā* which was used for the land that belonged directly to the sovereign, meaning that *Khālsā* is Sovereign/God's own). A Sikh cannot be a subject of any power on this earth. He accepts no ruler except God. Gurū Sāhib taught that whereas a Sikh is not subject of any ruler (except God), the Sikh himself cannot be a ruler of the others. Every one is a master of oneself and only God is the Master of every one.

Gurū Sāhib brought an end to the illusion of the seniority or superiority of any caste. Gurū Sāhib condemned discrimination on the basis of caste, colour, area or gender.

The concept of *Langar* (sacred community kitchen) is unique to the Sikh nation only. If the others are adopting it in one or another form, it is just of imitation of the Sikh institution. *Langar*, *Sangat* (holy congregation) and *Pangat* (sitting, dining and sharing every thing equally) bring an end to the inferiority complex of the so-called low caste as well as the superiority complex of the so-called high caste/status people.

Gurū Nānak Sāhib rejected the caste system. For him Bhāi Lālo (a *Tarkhān*), Bhāi Changā (a *Bhātrā/Bhāt*), Bābā Buddhā (a *Jat*), Bhāi Mardānā (a *Mirāsī*), Bhāi Lehnā (a *Khatrī*), Bhāi Brahm Dās (a *Brahmin*), Bhagat Kabīr (a *Julāhā*), Bhagat Ravidās (a *Chamār*), *Rajput* ruler of the Mandi State all were Sikhs of the same stature and members of the same family. None was high or low.

With *Khanda Dī Pahul* (the Sikh initiation), Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib made all the Sikhs a part of one brotherhood. And now all were SINGH by name (females were given the name KAUR), with the same family name (nowadays using the caste/family name and even removing the suffix *Singh/Kaur* from one's name is against Sikh ideology. It is turning back to Sikh philosophy. One, using his/her caste

with his /her name and deleting *Singh/Kaur* from his/her name, can not be called a Sikh in the real sense). *Khande Dī Pahul* made Rājputs, Khatrīs, Brahmins, Jats, Baniās, Tarkhāns, Chamārs, Sainīs, Kamboj, and Chhīmbās etc. members of the same family. After having *Khande Dī Pahul*, Jīwan Singh Ranghretā, Kirpā Singh (formerly Kirpā Rām) Dutt-Brahmin, Manī Singh Parmār-Rajput, Hazārī, Bhandārī and Darbārī Baniās, Zorāwar Singh Tarkhān, Gursā Singh Gahunīā-Sainī, Gurdittā Jat, Nānu Singh and Darbāra Singh Chhīmbās became the members of one family. It was a great revolution for the folk in the subcontinent where a so-called low caste had no right even to worship.

Khande Dī Pahul further changed the history of the martial movement in the Punjāb. The people of Punjāb, who believed that only Khatrīs and Rājputs were warriors, found that *Khande Dī Pahul* could turn a Brahmin, a Chamār, a Sainī, a Banīā and a Tarkhān into a valiant fighter. The history of the subcontinent is a proof of the miracle of *Khande Dī Pahul*. A man after taking *Khande Dī Pahul* gained such a great physical and spiritual strength that it turned a timid, a weak and a helpless person into a chivalrous, daring, sacrificing soldier. There is some Divine power in the *Khande Dī Pahul* which sociologists have not been able to explain.

Thus, the *Khande Dī Pahul* changed the history of the subcontinent. Though the spirit of sacrifice had its beginning in the martyrdom of Gurū Arjan Sāhib but after *Khande Dī Pahul*, common people of the subcontinent witnessed an altogether different history. This spirit did not exist during the period of Gurū Sāhib only, but it is alive, even centuries after, and shall always remain alive. The history of the Sikh Misl, when Sikhs struggled for about six decades in the eighteenth century, the Anglo-Sikh battles (1845-48), Ghadr movement (1914-18), Gurdwārā Reform Movement (1920-25), Nānakānā Sāhib (1921), Hasan Abdāl Railway Station (1922), Jaito (1924), Babar Akālī Movement (1921-26), Punjābī Suba Agitation (1955 and 1960-61), Dharam Yudh Morchā (1982), Khalistan Movement (1984-92), all are replete with sacrifices made by the Sikhs and all this is because of the spirit of *Khande Dī Pahul*. Gurū Sāhib taught the Sikhs the lesson to live a life of honour. A Sikh can not accept slavery; he shall always struggle for his freedom and honour. This spirit is absent among those Punjābīs who are not lucky enough to get *Khande Dī Pahul*.

The spirit of brotherhood and sharing with others is a great gift to the world by Gurū Sāhib. Before Gurū Sāhib, there might have been a concept of charity or alms, but honest earning and sharing with others, as part of a brotherhood, was unknown to the people. Gurū Sāhib turned the whole of the Sikh nation into a Commonwealth and a family where every one could share the food, the facilities and

prosperity. Gurū Sāhib told the Sikhs that they should consider their kitchen as a common *Langar* open to all and also be prepared to share their wealth with those who didn't have. *It is a tragedy that, in the modern age, most of the Sikhs have forgotten this principle and hence, virtually, they have gone astray from the path of Sikhism. It is due to this that the Sikh nation is suffering a lot. Gurū Sāhib had said "if a Sikh lives the life (of Khālsā discipline), I shall grant him all my power but when it adopts others' (Brahminic) life-style, I shall turn my back to him). The Sikhs shall continue suffering if they don't live according to Gurūs' teachings.*

The concept of *Sewā* (voluntary service) is another great contribution of Gurū Sāhib to the humanity. Before Gurū Sāhib, there might have prevailed slavery or forced labour but there was no concept of selfless service. Gurū Sāhib not only began this revolutionary tradition but also spiritualized it. A Sikh loves to perform *Sewā* with a sense of pride. Cleaning toilets, washing floors, cleaning and polishing shoes, washing dirty dishes of others are considered among the lowest jobs by the people of the world and most of the people will, if it is possible, avoid doing all this. It is amazing that Sikhs will vie each other for performing these services in a Gurdwārā. This has nurtured, among the Sikhs, a feeling of being useful but humble members of the society.

The celebration of the fairs and festivals underwent a great change under the instructions of Gurū Sāhib. Gurū Sāhib stopped the celebration of fairs and festivals as occasions of drinking, hooliganism, fighting, rivalry etc. and turned them into sports and martial competitions. Martial games, singing of heroic ballads, *Keertan* (hymn singing), *Langar* and social service became basic to a Sikh fair. These fairs became spiritual celebrations full of love and enthusiasm.

Gurū Sāhib infused the spirit of enthusiasm, hard work, early rising among his followers. A Sikh rises early in the morning; sings/recites hymns in the praise of God, begins his work and performs it honestly. The Sikhs' spirit of hard work and their enterprising nature is well known to the people of the world and it is a gift of Gurū Sāhib. Before Gurū Sāhib, the Punjāb was known as a land of fatalist people who had surrendered themselves to fate. Gurū Sāhib taught the people never to surrender and continue struggling till the achievement of goal. Besides, Gurū Sāhib told the Sikhs to accept every event as the Will of God (*Bhānā of WaheGurū*). A Sikh is not a fatalist. He must struggle but if he cannot succeed in his mission for the time being, he should accept it as the Will of God. A Sikh is the greatest optimist on this earth. This feeling is absent among the non-Sikhs of the subcontinent.

If it is found, in some degree, among some others, it has definitely been borrowed from Sikhism.

Positive thinking is unique to the Sikh culture. Gurū Sāhib told the Sikh to always remain in high spirits. Death, in Sikhism is not a matter of sorrow or a loss; it is rather completion of a journey of life. A Sikh reacts to happiness, sorrow, birth, death or marriage alike. He performs *Keertan* to observe each and every phase of life. This is how a Sikh lives in *Charhdī Kalā*. He always hopes (and struggles) for a better tomorrow.

To sum up, all the positive points of the culture of the Sikh-Punjab are a gift of Gurū Sāhib. Spirit of freedom, independence, leadership, fearlessness, positive thinking, honest earning, sharing with others, tithe (*Daswandh*), feeling of brotherhood and Commonwealth, *Langar*, *Sangat* and *Pangat* (the concept of social equality), casteless society, bravery, hard work, enterprising nature, self respect, humbleness, *Sewā*, bowing before the Will of God (*Bhānā Mannanā*), optimism and living in high spirits (*Charhdī Kalā*), to pray for the welfare the whole of the humanity (*Sarbat Dā Bhalā Mangnā*) are gifts of Gurū Sāhib. But, Gurū Sāhib has given all this to those who live the life of a Sikh. Gurū Sāhib said:

"Living a life according to Rahit (tenets given by Gurū) is loved by me and not the only physical appearance of a Sikh".

HISTORY OF THE SIKHS

Gurū Nānak Sāhib [Some writers wrongly use 'Dev' as a suffix to Gurū Nānak's name]

Gurū Nānak Sāhib founded Sikhism, as revealed to him by WaheGurū (God). Gurū Nānak Sāhib (20.10.1469 - 22.9.1539), son of Mātā Triptā and Bābā Kalyān Dās (son of Bābā Shiv Nārāyan and grandson of Bābā Rām Nārāyan Bedī), was born at village Rai-Bhoi-Dī-Talwandī (now Nānakānā Sāhib). When he was five years old he was sent to school. Here, he learnt *Sidhongiāyā* (an early script of the Punjabi language). At the age of seven, he learnt Sanskrit. At the age of thirteen, he learnt Persian. He studied a lot of literature of Persian and Sanskrit. At the age of 16, he was one of the most learned young men. In 1487, he married Sulakkhanī, who gave birth to two sons: Sri Chand and Lakhmī Dās. In November 1504, he moved to Sultānpur Lodhī and joined a job of Modī (revenue secretary) in the administration of Daulat Khān Lodhī.

In October 1507, he left Sultānpur Lodhī and began his first *Udāsī* (missionary journey) to give the people the message revealed to him by God. Between October 1507 and 1521 (with an interval of about one year during 1516-17), he travelled far and wide. He visited Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Tibet, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Assam, Bengal, Kashmir, Punjab, and several parts of India, most of the present Pakistan. He visited all the major centres of the Hindus, Muslims, Sufīs, Buddhists, Jains, Yogis etc. and held discourse with the holy men, the scholars and the common people. Wherever he went, the people bowed before his knowledge and his spiritual personality. His *Udāsīs* brought several thousand followers to his mission. He founded the town of Kartārpur in 1522 and spent the rest of his life (1522-39) there.

Gurū Nānak was a great phenomenon on this earth. To define his personality in two words, one can say that he was a **spiritual magnet**. As a magnet attracts even tiny particles of iron toward it and grips it, Gurū Nānak captivated every heart and mesmerized every human being he met, and made him/her his spiritual follower (a Sikh). Gurū Nānak won over intellectuals, teachers, saints, kings, tribal chiefs, financiers, traders, workers and hermits, and every one admired and loved him and bowed his head before his greatness. Gurū Nānak never asked anyone to join his faith but whosoever met him became a part and parcel of Gurū's spiritual world.

Gurū Nānak was the perhaps the greatest religious missionary. He travelled more than 40 thousand kilometres and wandered through hundreds of cities, towns and villages in different countries and preached his socio-spiritual mission to millions of people. He changed the way of life of the people he met.

Gurū Nānak taught every one to live an honourable life. Gurū Nānak advised people to live a truthful life (honest earning, sharing with others and remembering God). A human being should earn honestly, share his earnings and wealth with the poor, the needy and the helpless. He wanted everyone to be a positive part of society. All of us must contribute to the welfare of humanity. Besides, one must meditate upon the name of God. Meditation does not mean mere repetition of the name of God, but it means that one must have 'noble fear' of God in one's heart, all the time. He taught that one should get liberation from 'māyā' (attachment to the world) while living in this world. It is living like a lotus (flower) which grows in dirty waters but is not affected by its dirt.

Gurū Nānak told that God was *Nirankār* (formless). He does not have any colour, form or shape. He never appears on this earth in human form. He pervades Himself in His creation. We can realize Him from the vastness and greatness of His creation. We can express our amazement at His creation, which is in existence and is functioning under His orders.

Gurū Nānak said that God loves every one alike. There is no low or high in His eyes. For Him, there are no chosen or rejected/defective beings. God showers His benign grace on every one alike. He gives His blessings and love to everyone without discrimination. His justice is alike for every one. But, those who do not have quality of mercy, love, generosity, goodness and humanism and those who spread hatred remain bereft of His graceful glance and blessings. But, such people can become candidates of His mercy again, if they begin living their lives in accordance with the Divine law. Whatever is happening in the world is His will. He knows what He has to grant, to whom, when, where and how much. Having grudge against Him means rejecting His will and thus losing His grace.

Gurū Nānak said that God prevails in every being. He preached "fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man". He had organised the Sikh faith as a brotherhood. He said God is our father we are all each other's brethren. One who accepts Him as father can not discriminate, hate or be partial to the other beings. As God's light prevails in every human being, so hating any one would mean hating at least some part of God. One who practices discrimination, lacks

spiritualism and is ignorant about the concept of God and thus such persons is a hypocrite.

Gurū Nānak said that those who consider woman as inferior to man can not be considered as religious persons. How can a woman, who gives birth to kings, spiritual personalities and intellectuals, be evil or inferior? Moreover, a woman too is a creation of God. We can not condemn God's any creation as inferior or evil.

Gurū Nānak made spiritualism and service of humanity as sequel (complementary) of each other. He said religion sans humanism is lame and spiritualism without social role is dwarf. He preached religion as **social spiritualism**. Gurū Nānak gave message of "spiritualism dyed in the colour of humanism".

He rejected the idea of wandering in forests, hills and deserts in search of salvation or God, as a meaningless pursuit. He said troubling one's body (penance); performing ritualistic meditation was of no avail. One can become a spiritual being while living his life as a householder. He said that married life was not an obstacle, but was helpful, on path to liberation. Rather, Gurū Nānak asserted that a householder's life was the best path towards a spiritual journey. Every living being has some physical needs too; hence one can not (and must not) run from the reality of the world. By renouncing the world, one again returns to householders for assistance to fulfil his daily needs. Secondly escapism is running from the field. It is, in fact, a defeat. He asserted that one can achieve liberation while living as an ordinary human being (laughing and playing i.e. entertaining and fulfilling daily needs of dressing and eating).

Gurū Sāhib said that liberation is not a post-death phenomenon. One can achieve liberation in this life. Being free from lust, anger, avarice, compassion and pride is liberation. If there is any other liberation, then it is death itself which is the end of life. He said that real liberation is self realization and a state of equipoise.

He said that human body is made of five elements (air, fire, water, earth and ether). After one's death these elements re-merge with their base elements. This is the end of human existence. Rebirth is just an illusion. Brahmins preach that one is born as human being after living 84 lakh (8.4 million) lives. He rejected this theory and said that there were 8.4 million (countless) species of creatures on this earth and human being is the supreme among them (but one does not pass through each one of all the 8.4 millions). Human being is born only once and there is no transmigration of soul. One has to achieve heights in this very life. He said that there is no hell or heaven beyond this universe. When we obey God and sing His praise, we are in heaven;

when we turn our back to Him and live sinful lives we are in hell. Understanding this secret is the first stage of liberation.

He told the human beings to live simple lives. He said that man goes on adding one's desires and needs and then uses unfair means to fulfil all this. He also advocated simple and light diet, which was necessary for one's survival. He said the world is like an inn and we are just like travellers. One should realise that one has not to stay here for ever; hence one should not have attachment with this material world.

He rejected ritualism. He said that real religion is living the life of a truthful person. Truth, love, humanism, justice, simple living, service of humanity, saving oneself from sins/vices and control over one's mind/wishes/self is real meditation. Exhibition of meditation, *havans*, *yajnas* and ritualistic worship was sheer hypocrisy and were of no avail.

He said religion was not an end itself; it was a way of life to become a good human being. If one meditates upon the name of God, lives Godly ethics, helps in making the world a better place, such a man is on right path. He suggested Muslims to live real Islam, Brahmin to follow God's ways, and Sikh to bow before the Will of God as this was the real religion. Adopting such a path could make a human being a real man. This is the 'liberation in this very life'. This is eternal bliss. This is equipoise.

According to Gurū Nānak God is a source of love only. He hates never, discriminates none, and regards no body as inferior or superior. All beings are his children. He has created everyone with His own light. It depends upon our efforts as to how much can we make ourselves capable of getting His blessings.

Gurū Nānak Sāhib gave new definitions of God, salvation, religion, meditation, purpose of human life etc. He founded a complete religion and preached a perfect philosophy.

He was the first person who revealed scientific truths about the creation of universe and several other scientific questions, which were not even known to many scientists of the time. Several of the present day discoveries find mention in his verses.

Gurū Nānak was the first historian of the Punjab. His verses regarding the invasion of Bābar, Āsā Dī Vār, Sidh Gosht etc are precious history of his times. Such depiction of history is absent even from the writings of his successors.

Gurū Nānak was a great historian, scientist, political philosopher, spiritual sociologist, humanist and a psychologist. The world had never seen such a great person on this earth before or even after him.

Gurū Nānak Sāhib institutionalized the Sikh religion in his lifetime. He established *Sangats* and *Dharamsāls* in various parts of the world. Before his departure, he appointed Gurū Angad Sāhib, who was the most worthy of his Sikhs, as his successor-in-mission. He did not appoint his elder son Sri Chand, as the latter had renounced the world, as his successor-in-mission (Sikhism rejects asceticism, monasticism and the other-worldliness). When he appointed Gurū Angad Sāhib as his successor-in-mission and presented him all the *Bānī* composed and collected by him. Gurū Nānak Sāhib merged his light in Gurū Angad Sāhib's light. Though a separate physical existence it was the same light (of Gurū Nānak) in Gurū Angad.

Gurū Angad Sāhib

[Some writers wrongly use 'Dev' as a suffix to Gurū Angad's name].

Gurū Angad Sāhib (31.3.1504 - 29.3.1552), son of Mātā Rāmo (also known as Sabhiraī, Mansā Devī, Dayā Kaur) and Pherū Mall and grandson of Nārāyan Dās Trehan, was born at village Matte-Dī-Sarān, near Muktsar. Now this village is known as Nānge-Dī-Sarān (Another source mentions village Harīke as his birth place). His first name was (Bhāī) Lehnā/Lahinā. His parents were devotees of some mythical Hindu goddess. Bhāī Lehnā was married to Mātā Khīvī in January 1520 and had two sons (Dasu, in 1524 and Datu, in 1537) and two daughters (Amaro, in 1526 and Anokhī, in 1535). Once, in October 1532, on his way to pilgrimage, he stopped at Kartārpur. He paid a visit to Gurū Nānak. He was so impressed by Gurū Nānak that he renounced the worship of the Hindu goddess. He felt that the goddess, whose blessing he had been seeking for the past several years, was not even like a servant of Gurū Sāhib. He spent the next six years in the service of Gurū Nānak Sāhib.

On June 14, 1539, Gurū Nānak appointed Bhāī Lehnā as his successor-in-mission and also gave him a new name, Angad (Gurū Angad). On September 7, 1539, Gurū Angad was formally installed as the Second Nānak. Gurū Nānak merged his light with the light of Gurū Angad. After the death of Gurū Nānak, on September 22, 1539, Gurū Angad moved to Khadūr (now Khadūr Sāhib) to establish another centre for propagation of Sikh mission. He visited several places throughout the Sikh homeland and preached the mission of Gurū Nānak Sāhib. He promoted Punjabi language and Gurmūkhī script (the script of the masses, which had also been used by Gurū Nānak for writing his hymns). The usage of a common language and a script ushered cohesion among the Sikhs. He commissioned the writing of the biography of Gurū Nānak. (*Bhāī Bāle Wālī Janamsākhī*, available

nowadays is not the same that Gurū Sāhib had commissioned. The present one was prepared by Handālīs/Bidhīchandīās of Jandiālā). He continued *Langar*, the sacred-kitchen, in the tradition of Gurū Nānak. He started the tradition of *Mall Akhārā* (wrestling/playing grounds) and trained the Sikh youth. Gurū Angad Sāhib wrote 63 *Saloks* (stanzas). All his verses have been included in Gurū Granth Sāhib. During his time Khadūr Sāhib became a prominent centre of the Sikh Homeland. Gurū Angad died in 1552 at the age of 48. Before his departure he appointed Gurū Amar Dās Sāhib as his successor-in-mission.

Gurū Amar Dās Sāhib

Gurū Amar Dās (15.04.1509 - 1.9.1574), son of Bakht Kaur (also referred as Sulakkhanī and Lakhmī Devī) and Tej Bhān and grandson of Harī Dās, was born at village Bāsarke, now known as Bāsarke Gillān (district Amritsar). He was a follower of some Hindu sect and was a regular pilgrim to Haridwār. Amar Dās was married to (Mātā) Mansā Devī in 1532 and had one daughter Bhānī (in 1533) and two sons (Mohan, in 1536 and Moharī, in 1539). His niece-in-law (wife of his nephew) Amaro was the daughter of Gurū Angad. Once Amar Dās joined his niece-in-law to Khadūr Sāhib and met Gurū Angad. Amar Dās was so impressed by the personality of Gurū Angad that he decided to spend the rest of his life in the service of Gurū Sāhib. He spent the next 12 years in learning Sikh philosophy and scriptures under his guidance.

Bhāi Amar Dās was coronated as Gurū (now Gurū Amar Dās), on March 29, 1552. In 1557, Gurū Amar Dās took a vast tour of the country to propagate the mission of Gurū Nānak. During this tour, he also visited Kurukshetra. He organized Sikh mission and appointed 22 *Manjīs* (centres for propagation of mission) and appointed one devout Sikh as the in charge of each region. Besides these 22 regions, he established 52 *Pīhrās* (sub-regions). One position was given to a female named Matho; hence granting an honourable status to the women. In 1556, he got a *Baoli* (a deep well) dug, at Goindwāl, to provide drinking water to the residents of the area. He promoted Gurū Nānak's institution of *Langar* (sacred community kitchen) and made it a part of Sikhs' daily religious practice in Gurdwārās. He began holding the gatherings of Sikhs from all the parts of the sub-continent, thrice a year: on the day of *Dīwalī* as well as the first days of the *Māgh* and *Visākh* months (of the then prevalent Indian calendar, prevalent in those days). [He chose these days not because of any religious, cultural or any other significance but because it was easy to know these dates,

as no calendars or diaries were available during those days. Sikhism has nothing to do with these or any other festivals, days or dates]. Gurū Sāhib institutionalized the Sikh rites for birth, marriage and death etc. He asked the women to discard *Purdah* (veil). He also preached widow-marriage. Gurū Amar Dās composed 869 verse stanzas, including *Anand Sāhib* and all these hymns are a part of Gurū Granth Sāhib.

His crusade against the Hindu ritual of *Sati* (burning alive of wife on the pyre of her husband) saved lives of thousands of widows. It seems that Gurū Amar Dās had inspired Akbar. When Akbar issued orders banning *Sati*, Gurū Amar Dās had died several years earlier to that. Gurū Sāhib made it obligatory for the Sikhs to dine in *Langar* before joining congregation. He preached that there was no place of hierarchy of caste, colour, creed, area or sex. When Akbar, the Mogul emperor, visited Gurū Sāhib at Goindwāl Sāhib he joined the Sikhs in *Langar* before seeing the Gurū. Akbar expressed his desire to grant some royal estate for the mission but Gurū Sāhib declined the offer. Akbar issued orders exempting the Sikhs from paying pilgrimage-tax. All the Hindus had to pay toll tax while crossing Yamuna and Ganges River. The Hindus used to visit Kurukashetra and Haridwār and to reach these towns they had to cross these rivers. Thus, any one crossing these rivers was considered a pilgrim and had to pay toll-tax. Akbar accepted that the Sikhs were not Hindus hence they would be exempted from pilgrimage tax. By that time, the number of the Sikhs had increased enormously. Gurū Amar Dās had to establish new centres for the Sikhs. He asked (Gurū) Ram Dās to establish a new city (now known as Amritsar).

Gurū Rām Dās Sāhib

Gurū Rām Dās (24.9.1534 - 1.9.1581), son of Dayā Kaur and Harī Dās (and grandson of Thakar Dās and great-grandson of Gurdīāl Sodhī), was born at Lahore. He was named *Jethā* (literally: the eldest). His parents died when he was just seven years old. In 1541, his grandmother took him to village Bāsarke. Here, the child Bhāī Jethā came into contact with Gurū Amar Dās. Some times later, Gurū Amar Dās took him to Goindwāl. Bhāī Jethā made active participation in the establishment of Goindwāl. Gurū Amar Dās loved Bhāī Jethā so much that he always took Bhāī Jethā with him. In 1557, when Gurū Amar Dās went on a missionary journey, Bhāī Jethā too accompanied him. On February 16, 1554, Bhāī Jethā got married to Bībī Bhānī, the daughter of Gurū Amar Dās Sāhib. Bībī Bhānī bore him three sons: Prithi Chand (1558 - 1619), Mahādev (1560 - 1605) and (Gurū) Arjan

Sāhib (15.4.1563 - 30.5.1606). During this period, some Brahmin and Khatrīs made a complaint to Akbar that Gurū Amar Dās had been asking the people not to read *Gaetari Mantra* (a hymn sacred to the Hindus) and was preaching *GurBānī*. In 1566-67, Akbar visited Lahore. Partly because of that complaint and partly on insistence by Birbal (a Hindu minister of Akbar), Akbar sent a message to Gurū Sāhib to visit Lahore. Gurū Amar Dās sent Bhāi Jethā to Lahore. Here, Bhāi Jethā presented truth before Akbar. At this Akbar rebuked the Brahmins and the Khatrī Hindus and thanked Bhāi Jethā for visiting Lahore.

In 1564, Gurū Amar Dās asked Bhāi Jethā to establish a central town of the Sikh nation in the heart of the Punjab. Gurū Rām Dās purchased the land of Sultānwind, Tung, Gilwālī and Gumtālā villages and began digging of Santokhsar *Sarovar* (tank). Gurū Rām Dās was coronated as fourth Gurū, on September 1, 1574. In 1577, he laid the foundation of the city of Amritsar. In 1577, he started the construction of Amritsar *Sarovar* (tank). The town was, then, known as *Gurū-Dā-Chakk*. Gradually, Amritsar became a centre of the Sikh nation's religious, cultural, economic and political life. Later, Gurū Arjan named it *Chakk Rām Dās*, after Gurū Rām Dās Sāhib's name. Now it is known as Amritsar, after the name of Amrit Sarovar (literally: *pool of Amrit*). He spread the Sikh mission by appointing *Masands* (in charges of mission) to different parts of the sub-continent. It was during his time that Sri Chand (son of Gurū Nānak), the founder of the *Udāsī* sect, expressed his intention to begin active participating in activities of the Sikh mainstream.

Gurū Rām Dās wrote 638 hymns, which are a part of Gurū Granth Sāhib. He composed hymns in 30 *Rags*. His hymns include 8 *Vārs*, 246 *Padei*, 31 *Ashtpadīs* and 138 *Saloks*. He appointed Gurū Arjan Sāhib as his successor-in-mission and presented the latter with all the Sikh scriptures.

Gurū Arjan Sāhib

[Some writers wrongly use 'Dev' as a suffix to Gurū Arjan's name].

Gurū Arjan Sāhib (15.4.1663 - 30.5.1606), son of Bībī Bhānī and Gurū Rām Dās, and grandson of Harī Dās, was born at Goindwāl. He was married to Rām Dei (on June 20, 1579) and to Gangā (on June 19, 1589) and had a son (Gurū) Hargobind, from the latter. (According to a hagiography-type story, Gurū Hargobind Sāhib was born as a blessing of Bābā Buddhā).

Gurū Arjan Sāhib was coronated as the fifth Gurū, on September 1, 1581. Gurū Arjan established his second headquarters at *Gurū Dā Chakk* (Amritsar); the city founded by Gurū Rām Dās in

1577, and named it *Chakk Rām Dās*. In 1586, he completed Amritsar (*Sarovar of Amrit*). On January 3, 1588, he laid down the foundation of Darbār Sāhib, in the heart of Amritsar *Sarovar*. (In the beginning of the nineteenth century, propaganda was made by a Muslim writer that the foundation stone of Darbār Sāhib had been laid by Sāin Mīān Mīr, a Muslim missionary. Sāin Mīān Mīr was, of course, very friendly with Gurū Sāhib but Gurū Sāhib himself laid the foundation of Darbār Sāhib). In 1587, Gurū Arjan Sāhib completed the construction of Santokhsar (tank), which had been started by Gurū Rām Dās. The digging of Tarn Tāran *Sarovar* (tank) was started in 1590. He founded the city of Kartārpur (district Jullundur) in 1593. In 1597, he established the town of Gobindpur (now known as Hargobindpur) on the ruins of the village Ruhilā. Rāmsar (*Sarovar*) was completed in 1603. Though *Chakk Rām Dās* and Goindwāl Sāhib, both, were Gurū Sāhib's headquarters, he also stayed for some time at Gurū Dī Vadālī (sometimes between 1589 and 1597) and for some months at Tarn Tāran and Kartārpur too. Besides, he also took several journeys to propagate Gurū Nānak's mission to different zones. It was at Goindwāl that the Mogul emperor Akbar and his minister Abu Fazal came to see him on November 24, 1598. During this visit Akbar announced reduction of tax on the farmers on the advice of Gurū.

Gurū Arjan composed more than 2000 verses which are a part of Gurū Granth Sāhib compiled by him in 1603-04 (completed on July 31, 1604) and it was installed at Darbār Sāhib, on August 16, 1604. The Sikh tradition of *Daswandh* (tithe), though in practice since Gurū Nānak, was institutionalized by Gurū Arjan. Gurū Arjan became very much popular among the people of all the faiths. His missionary work added several followers to the Sikh fold. Because of this some Hindu feudals, Muslims officials and fanatic preachers became jealous of Gurū Sāhib. Among such persons included Sheikh Ahmed Sirhandī, Birbal (Hindu minister of Akbar), Chandū (of Kalanaur) etc. and some other Hindu as well as Muslim feudals. Birbal, once, in 1586, asked Gurū Sāhib to pay tax. When Gurū refused to pay any tax, he threatened to attack Amritsar, but before he could attack, he was killed in a battle (in February 1586). Between 1574 and 1604, Gurū Sāhib's elder brother Prithi Chand too planned several conspiracies against him, against *Gurū-Dā-Chakk* and even tried to get Gurū's son Hargobind poisoned to death. All the plans of Prithi Chand failed. After the death of Akbar, in 1605, his son Jahangir became emperor. A few months after Jahangir's crowning, his son Khusrau rebelled. During the course of his rebellion, Khusrau, on his way to Lahore, visited Goindwāl and sought Gurū's blessings. Though Khusrau's rebellion was suppressed, Jahangir took vengeance from all those who

had cooperated Khusrau. On May 23, 1606, he ordered the arrest of Gurū Arjan. On May 25, Gurū received summons. The same day, he coronated Gurū Hargobind as the Sixth Gurū and himself left Amritsar for Lahore. Gurū Arjan was arrested on May 27, 1606. Jahangir ordered the execution of the Gurū and assigned the task of execution to Murtaza Khan, the governor of Lahore. Chandu Shah (who had a grudge against Gurū Sāhib) took the assignment of carrying the execution of the Gurū. Gurū Sāhib was tortured for three days. Chandu employed Gurdittā Bhatthiārā (a gram-parcher) for tormenting Gurū. The Gurū was seated on red-hot iron plates. Burning sand was poured on his head. It continued for three days. Finally, he was chained and thrown into the river Rāvī. Gurū Sāhib embraced martyrdom on May 30, 1606. (Jahangir, in his '*Memoirs*', acknowledges that he personally ordered the execution of Gurū Arjan Sāhib). Gurdwara Dehra Sāhib at Lahore signifies memory of the martyrdom of Gurū Sāhib.

Gurū Arjan founded four major towns (Amritsar, Tarn Tāran, Kartārpur and Hargobindpur) and built several buildings. He compiled the Sikh Scripture. He toured far and wide and preached the Sikh mission and added several followers to the mission of Gurū Nānak. He accomplished several social and humanitarian missions. It is hard to believe that a single person in such a short span of his life could do all this.

Gurū Hargobind Sāhib

Gurū Hargobind Sāhib (19.6.1590 - 3.3.1644), son of Mātā Gangā and Gurū Arjan Sāhib, was born at Gurū Dī Vadālī (district Amritsar). He was married to Damodarī (on August 20, 1604), to Nānaki (on March 28, 1620) and to Mahādevī (on July 10, 1620). He had five sons: Gurdittā, Suraj Mall, Anī Rāi, Atal Rāi and (Gurū) Tegh Bahādur.

He was coronated as Sixth Gurū on May 25, 1606. He wore two sword representing *Mīrī* (temporal) and *Pīrī* (transcendental). He declared that the subject of the Supreme Sovereign couldn't be subject of an earthly ruler. He said the earthly rulers had no right to govern the minds and the bodies of the subjects of God. A man of *Mīrī* has an obligation to impart *Dharma* (Righteousness) and a man of *Pīrī* must not be a silent observer to injustice, tyranny and in-humanism. A Sikh is expected to be a "**saint-soldier**" i.e. a man of *Mīrī* as well as *Pīrī*. He revealed Akal Takht Sāhib (the Throne of God) in 1609. Here, he held his court and received the ambassadors from the other nations and sub-nations. As per the instructions of Gurū Arjan he formed, Sikh Army to fight against injustice. He laid the foundation of Lohgarh Fort in 1609. Sometimes later, a wall around the city Gurū-Dā-Chakk

(Amritsar) was also built. On December 31, 1612, he left Gurū-Dā-Chakk for Delhi, where he was arrested and sent to Gwalior Fort Prison. For about six and a half years (1613 to 1619) he remained in Gwalior Fort Prison. Sain Mian Mir and Wazir Khan (later, the Governor of Lahore) were friendly to Gurū Hargobind Sāhib. In 1618, Murtaza Khan, the Governor of Lahore, died. Wazir Khan succeeded him. Wazir Khān and Sāin Mīān Mīr impressed upon Jahangir to release Gurū Sāhib. Gurū Sāhib was released on October 26, 1619. He helped the release of 52 (according to one source 101) Hindu kings (chiefs of States) detained by Jahangir, the Mogul emperor, at Gwalior Fort Prison. Among them were the rulers of Bilāspur, Handūr also. In November 1619, he reached Goindwāl Sāhib. Here, on January 27, 1620, he held a meeting with Jahangir. From here both of them went to Kalanaur (district Gurdāspur). After this, Gurū Sāhib moved to Amritsar again. From 1620 to 1630, Gurū-Dā-Chakk (Amritsar) remained the headquarters of Gurū Sāhib. On March 18, 1631, Gurū Sāhib left Amritsar for Daraulī Bhāi (district Ferozpur). He took (*Gurū*) *Granth Sāhib* with him. He spent some months at Daraulī. Later, he sent (*Gurū*) *Granth Sāhib* to Kartārpur (district Jullundur). Sometimes later, he went again to Gurū-Dā-Chakk.

Gurū Sāhib had to face four major attacks of the Mogul army; the first (on September 27 and October 3, 1621) at Ruhilā, now Hargobindpur. It was followed by three more (on April 13, 1634, at Amritsar; on December 16-17, 1634, at Mehrāj; from April 26 to 28, 1635, at Kartārpur) and skirmishes at Phagwārā (on April 29, 1935) against the Moguls.

On May 3, 1635, he reached Keeratpur. Since then Keeratpur became another major centre of the Sikh nation. From time to time, Gurū Hargobind travelled far and wide and gave sermons to his followers in different areas. He travelled throughout the Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, Himanchal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Madhya Pradesh. During his stay at Keeratpur, several rebel Hindu rulers and the chiefs of Rajasthan and other areas sought refuge at Keeratpur. Gurū Sāhib protected all of them. He died at Keeratpur in 1644.

Gurū Har Rāi Sāhib

Gurū Har Rāi Sāhib (16.1.1630 - 6.10.1661), son of Mātā Anantī (also known as Bassī and Nihāl Kaur) and Gurdittā (and grandson of Gurū Hargobind), was born at Keeratpur Sāhib. In 1640, he was married to Sulakkhanī (also known as Kishan Kaur and Kotkalyānī). She gave birth to Ram Rai (in 1646) Rūp Kaur (in 1649) and (*Gurū*) Harkrishan (in 1652).

(Gurū) Har Rāi was coronated as the seventh Gurū on March 18, 1642. He developed the Sikh centre at Keeratpur and in the surrounding areas. Gurū Har Rāi established 360 Sikh missionary seats (each headed by a *Masand*) in various parts of the sub-continent. He consolidated the Sikhs into a united cohesive force. He taught the Sikhs the art of political administration. Gurū Har Rāi undertook several missionary journeys throughout the present Punjab, Himanchal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir etc. In 1659-60, he undertook a long missionary journey of the then Punjab and Kashmir. He visited Lahore, Jalālpur Jattān, Galotiān Khurd, Siālkot, Srinagar, Akhnur, Jammu, Ramgār, Khirarhī, Sāmbā, and Pathānkot etc. He had an army of 2200 horses and a large number of soldiers. In 1658, the war of succession broke out among the sons of Shah Jahan, the Mogul emperor. The major battle was fought between the armies of Aurangzeb and Dārā Shikoh. Dara Shikoh, after a terrible defeat, moved towards Punjab. The army of Aurangzeb chased Dārā Shikoh. Gurū Har Rāi blocked the movement of Aurangzeb's army so that Dārā Shikoh could escape. This incident angered Aurangzeb. When Aurangzeb got settled, he sent summons to Gurū Sāhib. Gurū Sāhib sent his elder son Ram Rai to Delhi. When Ram Rai collaborated with Aurangzeb, Gurū Sāhib excommunicated him (Ram Rai) and chose his younger son (Gurū) Harkrishan as his successor. He died at Keeratpur Sāhib, in 1661.

Gurū Harkrishan Sāhib

Gurū Harkrishan (20.7.1652 - 30.3.1664), the younger son of Mātā Sulakkhanī and Gurū Har Rāi, was born at Keeratpur Sāhib. He was coronated as the Eighth Gurū on October 7, 1661. Ram Rai, the elder son of Gurū Har Rāi Sāhib, who had been excommunicated by Gurū Sāhib, approached the Mogul emperor and submitted his claim to Gurūship. Ram Rai was known as a collaborator of the Mogul regime. In order to help him, the Mogul government summoned Gurū Harkrishan. Having received summons, Gurū Harkrishan left Keeratpur Sāhib for Delhi. On his way to Delhi, Gurū Sāhib visited several places and gave sermons to the Sikhs. During this tour Gurū Sāhib visited Panjokhara (district Ambala) too. Here, Pandit Lāl Chand, a scholar, in order to assess Gurū Sāhib, asked him to interpret *Bhagwad Gita* (a book of Hindu religion). Gurū Sāhib told Lāl Chand that even an illiterate person could perform such an easy job. Gurū Sāhib asked Chhajju Rām, a *Jhivar* (a water carrier), to satisfy Pandit Lāl Chand. Chhajju Rām interpreted *Bhagwad Gita* in an intelligent manner and humbled the pride of the Pandit. Pandit Lāl Chand apologized for his vanity. Later, he escorted Gurū Sāhib to

Kurukashetra. At Delhi, Pushpā Devī, the wife of Rājā Jai Sinh Amberī, too, tried to test Gurū Sāhib. Gurū Sāhib satisfied her and blessed her. Gurū Sāhib reached Delhi in the middle of March 1664. On March 21, 1664, (Gurū) Tegh Bahādur too reached Delhi from his long missionary journey of Bengal, Bihar and Assam. On March 22, (Gurū) Tegh Bahādur met Gurū Harkrishan at the residence of Mirzā Jai Sinh. On March 23, 1664 Gurū Harkrishan appointed (Gurū) Tegh Bahādur as ninth Gurū. Gurū Harkrishan met Aurangzeb on March 25, 1664. Another meeting was fixed for the next day. Gurū Sāhib, however, proclaimed that he (Gurū Sāhib) wouldn't meet Aurangzeb again. On the same night Gurū Sāhib had a swear attack of small pox. Gurū Sāhib died on March 30, 1664. Before his death, he declared that he had already appointed "the *Bābā*, who was staying at Bakālā (i.e. Gurū Tegh Bahādur)" as his successor. Gurdwara Bālā Sāhib (where he was cremated) and Gurdwara Banglā Sāhib (the residence of Rājā Mirzā Jai Sinh, where he stayed) have been built to record memory of the stay of Gurū Sāhib at Delhi. Ashes of Gurū Harkrishan were immersed in river Sutlej at Keeratpur.

Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib

Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib (18.10.1621 - 11.11.1675), son of Mātā Nānakī and Gurū Hargobind Sāhib, was born at Amritsar. Gurū Tegh Bahādur studied a lot of philosophy and Scriptures. He was married to (Mata) Gujarī, on September 14, 1632. [A son, Gobind Dās, was born to them, on December 18, 1661].

(Gurū) Tegh Bahādur spent his childhood in studying scripture and also learnt the art of warfare. He participated in the battles of Amritsar (1634) and Kartārpur (1635). Though Gurū Hargobind Sāhib (at the time of his death in 1644) had appointed Gurū Har Rāi as the seventh Gurū, (Gurū) Tegh Bahādur had already been preaching Gurū Nānak's mission. On June 10, 1656, Gurū Tegh Bahādur left Keeratpur Sāhib for a long missionary journey of Assam, Bihar and Bengal and spent several years in that area. In early 1664, he began his returned journey to the Punjab and reached Delhi on March 21, 1664. There, he met Gurū Harkrishan on March 22, 1664, at the residence of Raja Jai Sinh Mirza.

Gurū Tegh Bahādur was coronated as the ninth Gurū, on August 11, 1664. During March-April 1665, he took an extensive tour of *Mālwa* and *Bāngar* area for preaching the mission of Gurū Nānak. During this tour, he built a *Sarovar* at Talwandi Sābo (Damdama Sāhib). He decided to set up a Sikh centre at Talwandi Sābo. On April 27, 1665, Raja Dip Chand, the ruler of the Bilāspur State died. When Gurū Sāhib visited Bilāspur, Rani Champa, the widow of Raja Dip

Chand, requested Gurū Sāhib to stay near her State. She granted Gurū Sāhib the land of Laudīpur, Sahotā and Mīānpur. Instead of accepting the grant, Gurū Sāhib paid rupees five hundred for the land. On June 19, 1665, Gurū Sāhib founded the Sikh town of *Chakk Nānakī*, named after his mother Mata Nānaki (now it is known as Anandpur Sāhib), on the ruins of the village Mākhowāl. Anandpur Sāhib was important for the purpose of strategic military formation. Gurū Sāhib knew that in the future the Sikhs would have to face such-like situations. Gurū Sāhib stayed here for four months and then left for his second missionary journey of *Mālwa* and *Bāngar* area. When Gurū Sāhib was staying at village Dhamtān (district Jind), he, along with several Sikhs, was arrested by Ālam Khān Ruhelā. Gurū Sāhib and the Sikhs were taken to Delhi and were produced before Aurangzeb. Aurangzeb ordered their execution but Kanwar Rām Sinh (son of Rājā Mirzā Jai Sinh), who had close relationship with Aurangzeb, affected the release of Gurū Sāhib (on December 16, 1665). From Delhi, he went to Assam, Bihar and Bengal on his missionary journey. During this tour, Gurū Sāhib mediated a compromise between Raja Chakradhwaj (the ruler of Ahom/Assam) and Kanwar Rām Sinh, who had led the Mogul army against Raja Chakradhwaj. Gurū Sāhib travelled as remote as up to the village of Harjo. He left Assam in April-May 1670. On his way to Delhi, he was arrested at Agra, in June 1670. He was brought to Delhi but was released soon after. Gurū Sāhib stayed at the *Dharamsālā* of Bhāi Kalyānā. On June 20, 1670, Rāni Pushpā Devī visited Gurū Sāhib to make her obeisance. On her insistence Gurū Sāhib stayed at her palace for some days. From here he went to Bakālā where he spent the next one and half year. In 1672, he moved to Chakk Nānakī.

On May 25, 1675, a group of Hindus of Kashmir, led by Bhāi Kirpā Rām Dutt, visited Gurū Sāhib at Chakk Nānakī and appealed him to save them from forcible conversions by the governor of Kashmir (under orders from Aurangzeb, the Mogul emperor). Gurū Sāhib agreed to lead struggle against Aurangzeb's persecution of the non-Muslims. He knew that he should have to make sacrifice of his life, so, on July 8, 1675, he coronated (Gurū) Gobind Singh as the Tenth Gurū and left for Delhi. On his way, he was arrested at village Malikpur Rangharan (on July 12, 1675). Bhāi Diāl Dās, Bhāi Matī Dās and Bhāi Satī Dās too were with him. They were kept in Bassi Pathānān prison where they were tortured. The arrest was reported to Aurangzeb, who was at Hasan Abdal at that time. The emperor sent several emissaries to impress upon Gurū Sāhib to embrace Islam. Finally, Aurangzeb issued orders for taking him to Delhi. Escorted by heavy state guard, Gurū Sāhib reached Delhi on November 5, 1675. At

Delhi he was tortured again. Gurū Sāhib and the three Sikhs were given final chance to choose between 'Islam and death'. On refusing to renounce their faith, Gurū Sāhib and the three Sikhs were executed on November 11, 1675, at Chāndanī Chowk, Delhi (Gurdwārā Sīs Ganj has been built at this site). Gurū Sāhib's head-less body was cremated at village Raisīnā (Gurdwārā Rakāb Ganj has been built at this site), on November 12, 1675 and his head was cremated at Anandpur Sāhib (Gurdwārā Sīs Ganj has been built at this site at Anandpur Sāhib), on November 17, 1675. Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib sacrificed his life for the freedom of right to faith and worship.

Gurū Tegh Bahādur was an excellent poet too. He composed 115 verses, which have been included in Gurū Granth Sāhib.

Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib

Gurū Gobind Singh (18.12.1661 - 7.10.1708), son of Gurū Tegh Bahādur and Mātā Gujarī, was born at Patna Sāhib. He spent his childhood at Patna. In 1670, he left Patna for Bakālā. On his way to Bakala, he broke his journey at Lakhnaur (district Ambala) and stayed there, with his maternal uncle, for a few weeks in August-September 1670. He spent more than one year at (Bābā) Bakala. In March 1672, he reached Chakk Nānakī. On July 8, 1675, he was coronated as the tenth Gurū. He was married to Jīto (Jīt Kaur) on June 21, 1677, to Sundrī (Sunder Kaur) on April 3, 1684 and Sāhib Kaur on April 14, 1700. Sunder Kaur gave birth to Ajīt Singh (26.1.1687) and Jīt Kaur gave birth to Jujhār Singh (14.3.1691), Zorāwar Singh (17.11.1696) and Fateh Singh (25.2.1699). Sāhib Kaur had no child.

On April 13, 1685, Gurū Sāhib visited Nahan. At the request of Medanī Parkāsh, the ruler of Nahan, Gurū Sāhib founded the village of Paonta Sāhib. Bhāī Ram Kanwar laid down the foundation stone, on April 28, 1685. From 1685 to 1688, Gurū Sāhib stayed at Paonta Sāhib. During this period, Paonta Sāhib became a major centre of the Sikh nation. Here, several poets and intellectuals joined the court of Gurū Sāhib. During this period, Ram Rai, whom Gurū Har Rāi Sāhib had excommunicated, visited Gurū Sāhib and submitted an apology. Gurū Sāhib forgave him. On September 9, 1687, Ram Rai died (according to one source he was killed by his followers). Gurū Sāhib visited village Khurvaddhi (now Dehradun) and settled the affairs of the centre of Rām Rāi. Some followers of Ram Rai wanted to occupy that centre. Gurbakhsh Rai was their chief. He approached Fateh Shah, the chief of Garhwāl State, and sought his help. Fateh Shah agreed to attack Paonta Sāhib. Here, Gurū Sāhib had to fight a battle at Bhangānī (on September 18, 1688). Gurū Sāhib won this battle. On October 27, 1688, Gurū Sāhib left Paonta for Chakk Nānakī. On March 29, 1689

Rānī Champā, the queen-mother of the Bilāspur State, visited Gurū Sāhib at Chakk Nānakī and granted Gurū Sāhib the territory of some villages for the construction of five forts for the defence of Anandpur. Gurū Sāhib refused to accept the land unless she accepted the payments for the land. On March 29, 1689, Gurū Sāhib laid down the foundation of Anandpur Sāhib and the next day he began the construction of Anandgarh fort.

In March 1689, the Mogul rulers attacked the hill States. Rājā Bhīm Chand sought the help of Gurū Sāhib. On March 20, 1690, a battle was held at Nadaun between the Mogul army and the armies of the hill States. Gurū Sāhib himself participated in this battle. On March 28, 1692, Gurū Sāhib presided over the conference of the rulers of the hill States, held at Rivālsar. After this, he visited several hill States between Rivālsar and Jammu. On February 19, 1696, he helped the ruler of Guler when the Mogul army attacked him.

Revelation of Khalsa: In March 1698, Gurū Sāhib abrogated *Masand* system as it had become corrupt. On March 29, 1698, Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib revealed Khalsa (Some sources mentions the year 1699). Khalsa was to be a "politically and spiritually sovereign" entity, in direct line of *WaheGurū*, the Supreme Sovereign. Khalsa is the direct subject of *Akāl Purakh* (God). Hence, the sovereignty of Khalsa is both temporal and transcendental. Gurū Gobind Singh prescribed *Khandāy dī Pahul* (proper initiation ceremony) for those who wished to join Khalsa (the sovereign subjects of God) brotherhood. Since 1700, Gurū Sāhib had to fight several battles against the Moguls, the Hindu hill chiefs and their joint forces too. On August 29, 1700, the army of the hill chiefs attacked Anandpur Sāhib. The battle continued till September 1, 1700. On October 7, 1700, the hill armies attacked again. Another battle was fought on October 13 and 14, 1700. On October 14, 1700, Gurū Sāhib went to Basali and stayed there for fifteen days. Besides these battles the Sikhs had to face some small skirmishes too. Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib told the Sikhs not to hesitate to take up arms to fight against injustice. At Anandpur Sāhib, he founded the institution of 'Sikh Blue Sash' (an earlier prototype of International Red Cross), with Bhāi Ghanaiyā Singh as its leader.

On May 3, 1705, huge Mogul and hill forces besieged Anandpur Sāhib. The Sikhs fought against these armies for seven months. On December 4, 1705, Gurū Sāhib received a letter from Aurangzeb, the Mogul emperor, asking Gurū Sāhib to leave Anandpur Sāhib and meet him at village Kangar (it is possible that the hill rulers might have prepared a fake letter). On the night of December 5-6, 1705, Gurū Sāhib, along with his family and about 500 Sikhs left Anandpur Sāhib and moved towards Rupar. When Gurū Sāhib had just

crossed Sarsa rivulet, the hill armies attacked the Sikh caravan. On this day three battles were held between the Sikhs and the hill and Muslim armies. In these battles more than 400 Sikhs were killed. In the morning of December 7, Gurū Sāhib reached Chamkaur. Here too, the Mogul army attacked Gurū Sāhib. There were only 50 Sikhs (including two elder sons of Gurū Gobind Singh, *Punj Piārāy* and 45 Sikhs) when a heavy force of the Malerkotla (Muslim) army attacked the Sikhs. The Sikhs, though only 50 in number, fought the most crucial and unequal battle of the Sikh history. Two Sāhibzādās, three of the *Punj Piārāy* and 40 Sikhs embraced martyrdom in this battle. On the midnight of December 7-8, Gurū Gobind Singh, along with a five Sikhs, left Chamkaur with the help of Nabī Khān and Ghanī Khān.

On the other side, two younger sons of Gurū Sāhib, who had been escorted to Saherī village were got arrested by those with whom they had been invited to stay. After their arrest they were taken to Sirhind, where they were offered to choose between Islam and death. On refusal to renounce their faith, they were walled alive. The wall fell down in the evening. It was found they were still alive. Under new orders, they were butchered to death the following day i.e. 13th December 1705. The same day the mother of Gurū Sāhib succumbed to torture.

On December 20, Gurū Sāhib reached village Dina-Kangar. The following day he wrote *Zafarnamah* (literally: letter of victory), to Aurangzeb and sent Bhāī Dayā Singh and Bhāī Dharam Singh to deliver the same to Aurangzeb. After touring the area of *Mālwa*, Gurū Sāhib reached Talwandī Sābo on January 16, 1706 and stayed there for about nine months. Having received no information about the fate of his letter to Aurangzeb, he decided to set out for the search of the Sikhs who had been given the letter. Gurū Sāhib left Talwandī Sābo on October 30, 1706 and began his journey towards Ahmednagar. When he was on his way to Ahmednagar, Aurangzeb died (on February 20, 1707). After the death of Aurangzeb, his son Bahādur Shah tried to patch up with Gurū Sāhib. Gurū Sāhib helped Bahādur Shah in his war of succession against his brothers. After his victory, Bahādur Shah, the new emperor, held a meeting with Gurū Sāhib at Agra, on July 23, 1707. Gurū Sāhib asked Bahādur Shah to punish Sirhind Governor and the hill rulers for their atrocities. Before the emperor could finalise any course of action, he had to lead his army to quell rebellion of the Rājputs rulers of Jaipur, Jodhpur and Ajmer as well as his own brother Kām Bakhsh. He asked Gurū Sāhib too to join him. Gurū Sāhib agreed and joined the emperor on his journey towards southern lands. When emperor Bahādur Shah reached Burhānpur, he received a big sum from an agent of the Governor of Sirhind as war expenses. Now, there

was no question of taking any action against him. Soon, Gurū Sāhib smelt his tactics and left him near Nander.

At Nander Gurū Sāhib met Mādho Dās, a *Bairāgi* ascetic and brought him into the fold of Sikh brotherhood. On September 4, 1708, Gurū Sāhib initiated him into Sikh Panth. Gurū Sāhib trained him for one full month. In October, Gurū Sāhib appointed Bandā Singh as the leader of the Sikh army and assigned him the duty to expel the Moguls from the Sikh Homeland. Bandā Singh left Nander on October 5, 1708. The same night, when Gurū Sāhib was asleep, Jamshed Khān, a Pathān (who had been sent by the Governor of Sirhind, with connivance of Bahādur Shah, the Mogul emperor, to kill Gurū Sāhib) fatally attacked Gurū Sāhib with his dagger. On October 6, Gurū Sāhib, coronated Granth Sāhib as Gurū-eternal for the Sikhs. Gurū Sāhib breathed his last on October 7, 1708. His body was cremated on the night of October 7, 1708 and his ashes were immersed in the river Godavari.

Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib told the Sikhs that they had become well trained for conducting their affairs, therefore, he announced that Gurū Granth Sāhib would be the future (eternal) Gurū of the Sikhs. The Granth contains every thing that a Sikh needs to know. Since then the spiritual leadership of the Sikhs is endowed with Gurū Granth Sāhib. The temporal leadership lies with the *Sarbat Khālsā* (an assembly of all the segments of the Sikhs), under the patronage of Gurū Granth Sāhib. It does not mean separation of temporal and transcendental spheres. It means that the *Sarbat Khālsā* can take decision with regard to the Sikh nation but only in the spirit of Gurū Granth Sāhib.

Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib was a great soldier, general, planner, builder and a philosopher. He accomplished miracles in such a short span of life.

Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādur

On October 5, 1708, Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib appointed Bābā Bandā Singh as the Chief General of the Sikh army and granted him the task of securing the freedom of the Sikh Homeland from the foreign rulers. Gurū Sāhib also handed over a *Hukamnāmā* (a royal letter) to Bandā Singh, asking the Sikhs to join Bandā Singh in the struggle for freedom.

Bandā Singh reached the Sikh Homeland and began gathering help from the Sikhs. Within one year they were well prepared to begin war. His first battle was at Samana town, which he captured on November 26, 1709. The next day he placed Samana under the charge of Fateh Singh. The Sikh army also captured Sanaur, Ghuram,

Shahbad Markanda, Kapuri, Taska, Kunjpura, Sadhaura, Sahampur and Muzaffarabad. Bandā Singh appointed Governors for all these territories. His next target was Sirhind. On May 12, 1710, he had to fight a major battle to conquer the capital of the province, which finally fell to him on May 14. Hundreds of the Sikhs were killed. With the victory of Sirhind, the whole of the eastern Sikh Homeland became free. It was followed by capture of Rahon, Batala and Kalanaur. Bandā Singh was able to achieve these victories with the whole-hearted support of the Sikhs of Doaba, Mājha and other areas. The Hindus too joined Bandā Singh's army. However, the ambition of the Hindus was not the struggle for freedom. They simply aimed at plundering the captured territories (they were not patriots but were plunderers).

After establishing himself, Bandā Singh declared the Sikh rule in the liberated territory. He promulgated egalitarian system for the land. He reduced taxes and released subsidies. He appointed capable and honest Sikh-officials to manage the affairs of the State. Bandā Singh issued a coin and a seal in the name of the Gurūs. He also started a new calendar from the day of the liberation of Sirhind. Bandā Singh strictly followed the principles laid down by Gurū Sāhib i.e. only the capable and honest people should rule and it should be genuine democracy where justice, equity and good conscience should prevail.

Bandā Singh's rule was short-lived. The Mogul emperor marched towards Sirhind with a mammoth army. By the end of the year, Mogul army captured the whole of the Sikh territory. The next five years were a period of hide and seek between Sikhs and the Mogul army. Bandā Singh, with an army of a couple of thousands of Sikh soldiers, was no match to a one hundred thousand soldiers' strong army, which was perhaps the mightiest army of the world at that time. In December 1715, Bandā Singh was captured. He was taken to Delhi where he was cruelly tortured to death on June 9, 1716.

Persecution of the Sikhs

The next five years were a dark period for the Sikh nation. The Mogul emperor had issued an order of general massacre of the Sikhs, compelling them to retreat to the hills, deserts and other hideouts. This continued for about five years. After this Bābā Darbārā Singh reorganised the Sikh army. In 1726, Kapūr Singh (later *Nawāb*) too joined him. Both of them launched a guerrilla war and compelled the Mogul rulers to agree for a treaty with the Sikh nation. In March 1733 the Moguls offered Nawāb-hood (sub-governor-ship) to the Sikhs. But this agreement could not last long as most of the Sikhs were opposed to collaboration with an unjust regime

In 1734, Bābā Darbāra Singh died and Nawāb Kapūr Singh became the Chief General of the Sikh army. Nawāb Kapūr Singh was a great general, leader and organiser. Within a short period, he organised the Sikh army under capable generals and assigned them different zones. In 1739, Nādar Shāh attacked Punjāb. The Sikhs, under the command of Nawāb Kapūr Singh and other generals, made guerrilla attacks from the rear on the army of Nādir Shāh on its return and compelled him to be on defensive. But, after the departure of Nadir Shah, Zakariā Khān, the Mogul Governor of Lahore, began perpetrating unspeakable atrocities upon the Sikhs and their families. Zakariā Khān and his minister Lakhpat Rāi arrested tortured and murdered thousands of the Sikhs.

During this dark period, Nawāb Kapūr Singh, with the help of Jassā Singh Ahluwālā, Jassā Singh Rāmgarhīā, Nand Singh Sukarchakkīā, Dīp Singh (Pahuwind), Gurdīāl Singh (Dallewālā), Harī Singh (Panjwar) and others gave marvellous lead to the Sikh nation. He led the Sikh nation from obstacles, despondency, darkness, gloom, misfortune, isolation, humiliation, starvation, distress, privation and despair to victory. The struggle of the Sikh nation led them out of ashes to a new life. A long night of more than half a century finally came to an end and the Sikhs were able to liberate their country. The Sikh Misls (confederacies) succeeded in establishing the Sikh rule in the whole of the Sikh Homeland. With this, the people of the land, too, heaved a sigh of relief. The Sikh rule, established by Bandā Singh Bahādur, was again achieved after great sacrifices. It was to be a rule of the masses, a genuine democracy and a genuine welfare State.

The Sikhs Become Rulers

It was a period when a foreign power, the British, was also planning to occupy India. In the Punjab, the Sikhs were trying to liberate their country from the foreign Mogul rulers. By the end of the eighteenth century the Sikhs had conquered most of the present Pakistan, Kashmir as well as the Punjāb and most of the territory of the present Himanchal and Haryana provinces of India. The Sikhs had liberated some area of Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh too. On March 11, 1783, the Sikh blue flag furled over the Red Fort at Delhi also.

But, this was not acceptable to anti-Sikh forces. In 1790's, the feudal mafia and the Brahmins of the Hindustan were successful in establishing their relations with some of the Sikh chiefs. Soon, these anti-Sikh forces impressed upon them to claim themselves as the sovereign rulers of the territory under their rule. Soon, they (the Sikh leaders) began ignoring the Sikh Commonwealth. Within a few years,

the rule of the Sikh nation (under the supremacy of Akāl Takht Sāhib) became a conglomeration of tribal units. Very soon the army leaders began living like feudals and finally as rulers. This was the beginning of falling astray from the path of Gurūs.

Major and final blow was given by (Mahārājā) Ranjīt Singh, who, first, with the help of his mother-in-law Sadā Kaur, wrested the control of Lahore from Bhangi Misl in July 1799. It was followed by occupation of Amritsar (the Sikh Vatican City). In 1802, he declared himself as *Mahārājā* too.

Ranjīt Singh was an ambitious young man. After occupying Lahore and the Sikh capital city of Amritsar, he began capturing the territory under the care and management of the other Sikh generals. Ranjīt Singh wished to establish his own rule instead of the rule of the Sikh nation. He occupied still more territory. All his major victories had been achieved under the command of Harī Singh Nalwā, Akālī Phulā Singh and the other Sikh generals.

In a very short period, Ranjīt Singh, too, fell into the trap of the conspirators and became a puppet in the hands of anti-Sikh forces of the then Hindustan and Jammu. Soon, he began ignoring and even rejecting the Sikh savants. He granted all major positions in his court and government to the Brahmins of Hindustan and the Dogrās of Jammu. With this, the total administration and system became an establishment of anti-Sikh forces. It was *de jure* kingdom of a Sikh ruler but *de facto* the rule of the Dogrās and the Brahmins. Besides, several of the battalions of the army of Ranjīt Singh were put under the command of the European officers. Ranjīt Singh was so ignorant about the nationalities and credentials of the European generals that he had appointed 20 British, 4 American, 5 Italian, 24 French, 3 Scottish, 1 Irish, 3 Spanish, 4 Russian, 2 German, 1 Austrian, 1 Prussian, 1 Hungarian, 1 Portuguese and 4 Greek generals in his army. Several of them were in league with the British East India Company (and, later on, they betrayed).

With this establishment, Ranjīt Singh, though he posed like a Sikh, turned to traditional practices of the Brahmins. He patronised Hindu temples and ruled as per the advice of his Brahmin ministers. He regularly donated alms and charity to Brahmins and the Hindu temples. He had appointed a fanatic Hindu as his religious minister, who sanctioned a small amount of money for gold plating of the Darbār Sāhib, but spent fifty times more money for Hindu shrines. Ranjīt Singh (as a Hindu ruler is expected to do) not only gave alms and donations to the Hindu shrines, Brahmins, cows etc. but also performed all the Hindu rituals and ceremonies obligatory for a Hindu

ruler. Under the influence of his Hindu advisors, Ranjīt Singh changed even the colour of the Sikh blue flag into saffron.

Ranjīt Singh had entrusted all his major powers to his Dogrā and Brahmin ministers and he himself became a slave of alcohol and sex. He had dozens of wives and scores of concubines. Two of his wives were famous courtesans. One of them, Moran, was so beloved to him that he is said to have issued a coin in her name.

Ranjīt Singh was so ignorant about the activities of his Hindu courtiers that he could not see how they had, in fact, captured his court, 'crown', treasury and administration. They succeeded in their plan of keeping away the Sikhs from Ranjīt Singh's think-tank. Even Ranjīt Singh's sons remained ignorant about the court activities. Such a kingdom was sure to fall to destruction. If, under any circumstances, any Sikh tried to establish a close relationship with Ranjīt Singh, the Dogrās and Brahmins eliminated him. Most of the persons decorated with the title of 'Raja' by Ranjīt Singh were only Dogrās (Dhiān, Gulāb, Suchet and Hīrā Sinh).

In 1837, General Harī Singh Nalwā asked (Mahārājā) Ranjīt Singh to hand over the Sikh kingdom to *Punj Piārāy* as it had been achieved through the sacrifices of the Sikhs only; hence it belonged to the Sikh nation. Ranjīt Singh refused to 'do so and said that the kingdom belonged to his family (some days later, General Harī Singh Nalwā was eliminated from the scene). Later, the "establishment" created by Ranjīt Singh betrayed his family too. Due to these reasons, Ranjīt Singh's kingdom was lost to the British within ten years of his death.

The British Occupation of the Punjāb

The Dogrā and the Brahmin courtiers and generals as well as some of the European generals of Ranjīt Singh's army collaborated with the British forces and betrayed the family of Ranjīt Singh. On the other hand, although an average Sikh had a grudge against Ranjīt Singh (for having virtually forsaken Sikhism), still the Sikhs fought bravely and crushed the British (East Indian army) in three of the five battles of the Anglo-Sikh wars. The Sikh Generals fought bravely in the battles of Pherushahr, Sabrāon, Cheliānwālā, Rām Nagar and Gujrat. But the Dogrās and the Brahmins shamefully betrayed them even in battlefield. This treason led to annexation of the Sikh homeland by the British in 1849.

After the annexation of the Sikh Homeland by the British, all the Dogrās of the Jammu and Kashmir, the Brahmins Hindustan, which had "embraced" Sikhism (in order to win favours from Ranjīt Singh), rejoined the Hindu faith. The population of the Sikhs fell from

about eight million to 1.8 millions. Some writers began saying that the Sikhs shall become extinct. In fact (Mahārājā) Ranjīt Singh had established an empire with an establishment, which promoted a feudal class. This feudal class, though they looked like Sikhs, did never practice Sikhism. Hence, three-fourth of the Sikhs, who had adopted the Sikh faith because of their interest with the State, renounced it and rejoined the Hindu faith.

The Dogrās and Brahmins of Hindustan "sold" the Sikh homeland to the British just for a handful of gold, yet some freedom-loving Sikhs restarted their struggle against the British regime. The prominent leaders of the movement were Bhāi Mahārāj Singh, and later, Thākar Singh Sandhānwālā. Anti-Sikh forces in the Sikh Homeland betrayed them too.

The Sikhs' Re-awakening

During this period the Christians began their missionary activities in the Punjāb, for conversion of the Sikhs into their faith, thus attracting a few ignorant Sikhs into their fold. This gave birth to the Sikh awakening and reformation movement in the name of "Singh Sabhā" (in 1873). The Singh Sabhā aimed at reforming the declined state of the Sikhs. This prepared ground also for political awakening and organisation among the Sikhs.

The Singh Sabhā leadership included Gianī Dīt Singh, Prof. Gurmukh Singh, Kanwar Bikram Singh, and Bhāi Jawāhar Singh Kapūr etc. During this period the Sikh nation had to fight on another front. It was British sponsored Arya Samaj movement, which was imported to the Sikh Homeland in order to push the Sikhs to another front. The Christians and the Arya Samajists carried on plans to convert the Sikhs into Christianity and Hinduism respectively. The awakened Sikh leadership, under the banner of Singh Sabhā, thwarted the designs of the Christian missionaries and the British-sponsored Arya Samaj movement and succeed in saving the Sikh religion from disappearing.

The establishment of Khālsā College at Amritsar, in 1892, played a major role in awakening and uniting the Sikh elite. This College and the other educational institutions produced several teachers and students who became nursery for the Sikh political and religious movements. With this began a new movement in the Punjāb which gave birth to the Central Sikh League (1919) and, later, the Shiromanī Gurdwārā Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) and Shiromanī Akālī Dal (1920).

In 1914, the First World War broke out. Thousands of Sikhs soldiers were shipped to France, Belgium, Holland, Italy, Mesopotamia (Iraq) and the Far East, where they fought for the defence of England and its allied forces. Hundreds of Sikhs laid down their lives for the Allies. But, in spite of the Sikh sacrifices, the British betrayed the Sikh nation on several occasions. In 1914, the Sikhs, who tried to migrate to Canada, in a legal manner, were forced to return. When their ship reached near Calcutta, the British soldiers fired at them. This was followed by an armed struggle by the Sikh migrants' Ghadr Party. This movement could not succeed due to misguidance by its advisors like Lala Hardyal (whose credentials were in question)] as well as some other reasons. Lala had joined to fail the movement. This is evidenced by his post-1915 activities when he became an advocate of the western style of life.

The Gurdwārā Reform Movement

In 1920, the Sikhs launched a movement for reform in the Sikh shrines. The non-Sikh managers of the shrines had begun using these institutions as their inherited property. An elite section of the Sikhs brought out 'Akālī', a daily newspaper, in Punjābī, on May 21, 1920, which helped in establishing communication links among the Sikh leaders throughout the sub-continent and organised them into a well-knit relationship. This situation led to struggle for freedom of the Sikh Shrines. The British regime sided with the debauched managers of the Sikh shrines and perpetrated inhuman atrocities upon the peaceful Sikh reformers. During this struggle more than 130 Sikhs were butchered to death and several of them were burnt alive at Nānakānā Sāhib on February 20, 1921. Again, on February 21, 1924, a peaceful march to Jaito was fired at by the British forces, killing dozens and wounding hundreds of the Sikhs. More than five hundred Sikhs sacrificed their lives and several thousands of them courted arrest during this freedom movement.

The British apathy towards the Sikhs as well as their collaboration with the debauched killers gave birth to an armed movement later known as *Babar Akālī Movement*, under the leadership of Bhāi Kishan Singh Gargajj, Bhāi Karam Singh Daulatpur, Bhāi Dhannā Singh, Bhāi Dalīp Singh Dhāmīān, Babu Santā Singh, Bhāi Nand Singh Ghudiāl, Giānī Harbans Singh Sarhālā Kalān and Bhāi Ratan Singh Rakrān Bet etc.

The Gurdwārā Reform Movement (1920-25) succeeded in winning the enactment of the Gurdwārā Act and brought almost all the historical Sikh shrines, of the then Punjāb, under the control of the SGPC. The SGPC soon became a "State within a State". The SGPC

and its wing Shiromanī Akālī Dal, now, joined the struggle for freedom of the sub-continent from the British rule. Besides, this movement organised the Sikh leadership under the banner of Shiromanī Akālī Dal. Leaders like Master Mota Singh, Bābā Kharak Singh, Master Tārā Singh, Giānī Sher Singh, Sardār Bahādūr Mahitāb Singh, Jhabāl brothers joined the struggle for the freedom of the Sikh homeland from the British.

Soon, the Hindu leadership (Gandhi, Nehru etc.) managed to win over several Sikh activists and succeeded in creating anti-British feelings among them. They used the Sikhs during various agitations against the British rule. Hundreds of the Sikhs died and thousands were imprisoned during the struggle for freedom. This led to anti-Sikh feelings among British officials. On the other hand, the Muslim League and the Hindu Congress collaborated with the British regime. The Sikh leadership could not read the mind of the Congress leaders (who, later, betrayed the Sikh on several occasions).

In 1939, the Second World War broke out. The Sikhs gave whole-hearted support to Britain. Thousands of Sikh soldiers fought and sacrificed their lives for defending Britain, Belgium, France, Italy and other European nations.

The British Betrayal of the Sikhs

In 1947, the British decided to free the Indian sub-continent. Here too, the British proved ungrateful to the Sikhs. The British government divided the Sikh homeland and handed over its control to the Muslims (Pakistan) and Hindus (India). The Sikhs were compelled to accept a "Union" with India. It was a forced "Union". This was like the transfer of Norway, from Denmark to Sweden, in 1814, after the defeat of Denmark as an ally of Napoleon (Norway became free, finally, in 1905). During this period Gandhi, Nehru and the other Hindu leaders had given assurances to the Sikh leaders that "the Sikhs shall have glow of freedom in their own homeland (in the north of India). The Sikh leaders trusted the Hindu leaders and agreed for a "Union". At that time there were several million Sikhs in the West Punjāb (which formed a part of Pakistan, the Muslim Homeland). The migration of about 6 million Sikhs from the West Punjāb to the remaining part of the Sikh Homeland, took a toll of about 2 million Sikhs.

Immediately after taking power from the British, the Hindu rulers of India began humiliating the Sikhs (to break them psychologically) in each and every sphere: political, religious, education as well as in administration. On October 10, 1947, the Hindu Governor of Punjāb issued an ordinance saying, "The Sikhs are a

lawless people and a menace to the law-abiding Hindus of the province." All this gave birth to the revival of the demand of a sovereign Sikh State.

The Khalistan Movement

During this period, the major Sikh organisation, Shiromani Akālī Dal, launched a struggle for the formation of a Punjābī speaking province (*Punjābī Sūbā*). During this agitation (in 1955 and 1960) more than 70,000 Sikhs courted arrests, several dozen Sikhs were killed and thousands of them suffered heavy economic losses. Though Punjābī province was formed on November 1, 1966 but it was not in accordance with the demands of the Sikhs. As a result the Sikhs had to launch struggle for a sovereign Sikh State.

The Indian Government and fanatic Hindu organisations began promoting anti-Sikh cults like Nāmdhārīs, Nirankārīs, and Rādhāsoāmīs etc. These cults carried out a cold anti-Sikh campaign. This onslaught on Sikhism was halted when the Nirankārī cult killed 13 Sikhs, at Amritsar, on April 13, 1978. With this began an armed Sikh struggle. This movement became very strong in 1983-84.

The Sikhs' armed struggle which began after the 1978 massacre of Amritsar, achieved a lot under the able leadership of Jathedār Talwinder Singh and his associates like Bhāi Amarjīt Singh Khemkaran, Gurnām Singh, Surjeet Singh etc. Later, Bābā Jarnail Singh Bhindrawālā took over the command of the Sikh struggle for freedom. The whole of the Sikh nation joined Bābā Jarnail Singh. The Indian Government, now realised that the Sikhs won't compromise their independence.

Attack on Darbār Sāhib & Massacre of the Sikhs at Delhi etc in 1984

To awe, terrorise and break the bone of the Sikhs, Indira Gandhi calculatively ordered an armed attack on the Sikh shrines. (She wanted to punish minorities to win Hindu votes). About 300,000 Indian soldiers attacked Darbār Sāhib, Akāl Takht Sāhib and 36 other Sikh shrines, killing thousands of Sikhs in an inhuman manner. Several of the murdered Sikhs had their hands tied on their backs. During this invasion, the Indian army carried away all the precious treasures from the Sikh shrines, including libraries, archives and other invaluable things from Darbār Sāhib Amritsar and other shrines. (Even after a period of more than 22 years, the Indian government had not returned these achieves).

Indira Gandhi's attack on the Sikh shrines and the massacre of thousands of the Sikhs infuriated even the most moderate Sikhs. Thousands of the Sikh soldiers rebelled. Though the army rebellion was suppressed but the shocked Sikh youth were waiting for an opportunity to punish the killer of the Sikhs. Eventually, on October 31, 1984, Bhāi Beant Singh and Satwant Singh killed Indira Gandhi. This was followed by inhuman killings of about 25,000 Sikhs. Thousands of Sikh women were molested, Sikh children were roasted alive and the property of the Sikhs was looted and burnt by Hindu mobs. Gurdwārās were looted and burnt/demolished. These killings had the blessings of Rajiv Gandhi, the then prime minister of India. It was shameful that when these merciless, savage killings (unknown, earlier, to human history) were going on in Delhi and other areas, several international diplomats and dignitaries were sitting silent at a distance of just a few hundred metres from such scenes.

These massacres further enraged the Sikh nation. The Sikhs punished some of the killers of the Black November 1984. However, the rest (including H.K.L.Bhagat, Sajjan Kumar, and Jagdish Tytler etc) were eulogised by the Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, who appointed some of them as senior Cabinet Ministers.

By this time all the Sikh leaders were in jails. Rajiv Gandhi won made negotiations with Harchand Singh Longowāl, Gurcharan Singh Tohrā, Parkāsh Singh Bādal and some others and released them from jail. Soon, Harchand Singh Longowāl was won over by Surjit Barnala. Barnala, with the help of Prof. Atar Singh, Prithipāl Singh Kapūr, and Balwant Singh (ex minister) held secret meetings with the Congress leaders and prepared a compromise draft. This came to be known as Rajiv-Longowāl Accord, which was signed on 24th July 1985. It was a shameful insult to the Sikhs. At first Tohrā and Bādal opposed it but soon surrendered. The Sikh youth killed Longowāl on 20th August 1985 to punish him for his treason. Rajiv awarded Surjit Barnala by collaborating and manoeuvring his election as the chief minister of the Punjab.

On June 30, 1986, a group of the Sikh militants announced a Sikh 'government in exile' and all of their leaders went underground. Surjit Barnala, under direct orders from Rajiv Gandhi, sent forces into Darbār Sāhib. In fact Rajiv wanted to justify 1984 attack on Darbār Sāhib by proving that if Barnala can send police into Darbār Sāhib then Indira Gandhi was not unjustified in sending army. Though Barnala had tried to please Rajiv even by becoming a 'traitor' still Rajiv dismissed his government on fake grounds.

By 1987, the Indian government had succeeded in infiltrating its agents in the central bodies of the militants in the Punjab. In order

to make mass arrests, the intelligence tried to attract militants again to Darbār Sāhib. Though there was no major success, yet in April 1988, a small group of militants established themselves in Darbār Sāhib. On April 9, 1988, the Indian army and the Punjab police again attacked Darbār Sāhib in the name of Operation Black thunder. During this attack several Sikhs were killed.

Between 1984 and 1991, Khalistan Commando Force, Khalistan Liberation Force, Bhindrawālā Tigers Force, Babar Khālsā and others under the leadership of Jathedār Talwinder Singh, Gurbachan Singh Mānochāhal, Awtār Singh Brahmā, Manbīr Singh Chaheru, Lābh Singh, Sukhdev Singh, Gurjant Singh, Gurjīt Singh, Harjinder Singh Jindā, Sukhdev Singh and others led an armed struggle for carving out (of India) a Sikh country in the name of Khalistan. But some of them failed as leaders and soon the Indian intelligence agencies were able to infiltrate into these organisations, hence the Sikhs suffered heavy losses. The movement, which had reached its apex, in 1991, soon had an anti-climax.

Mass Execution of the Sikh Youth

The Sikh armed struggle was at its zenith in 1992. In 1992 Beant Singh became the chief minister of the Punjāb. The Sikhs had boycotted these elections; hence only 10 to 15% people cast their votes. Under orders from the Indian regime, Beant Singh began a general massacre of the Sikh youth. More than 25,000 Sikh youth were arrested and butchered, under orders from Beant Singh and K.P.S. Gill (the Police chief) of the Punjāb, during 1992-93 (It is strange that America, which calls itself the greatest anti-terrorist, granted the honour of dual citizenship to KPS Gill, the butcher-killer of thousands of innocent Sikhs). Most heinous was the kidnapping and killing of Jaswant Singh Khālā, a human rights activist, who had collected evidence about the massacre of thousands of Sikhs, who had been killed in cold blood, in fake encounters and their dead bodies were either burnt as unidentified persons or were thrown into the rivers and forests. On one hand, the Indian regime carried on gruesome massacre of the Sikh youth, and on the other hand it began propaganda of calling the Sikhs as extremists and terrorists. The Indian regime spent billions of dollars for propaganda against the Sikhs. Several international media agencies, journalists and writers were paid for carrying out this propaganda. The international media was bribed by the Indian regime in the form of commercial advertisements and awards. It was shameful that some journalists, instead of condemning unspeakable atrocities on the Sikhs, sold their consciousness to the Indian rulers. Some human rights organizations, in different parts of the world, including the

Amnesty International London and some individuals like Justice Ajit Singh Bains, Dr Gurmīt Singh Aulakh, Navkiran Singh, Ranjan Lakhapāl, and Harwinder Singh Phoolkā exposed the heinous inhuman crimes of the Indian regime. But, in spite of this, the USA, the UK and the other countries continued, not only trade with India, but also provided the Indian armed forces with arms and ammunitions, which were used for the killing of the innocent Sikhs. With the murder of Beant Singh, the chief minister of the Punjāb with a criminal mind, on August 31, 1995, the mass killing of the Sikhs was stopped for the time being.

Parkash Singh Bādal as the Chief Minister

In 1997, the Punjab Assembly elections were held. Akālī Dal (Bādal group) assured the Sikhs that all the guilty men responsible for killing innocent Sikh youth will be punished. The Sikhs gave him full support and strength. As a result, Bādal group captured power in the Punjab. With this stopped mass killings of the Sikh youth (a few killings still continued) but still the Sikh problem remained unsolved. Parkash Singh Bādal ruled the Sikh Homeland for full five years (up to 2002) but he did nothing for the Sikh nation and rather remained a secondary partner of the fanatic and fundamentalist Hindu organization, the Bhārti Jantā Party (BJP). Bādal had promised to punish the terrorist police officials but, instead, he acquiesced with their actions and granted them every possible support when ‘human rights activist’ filed criminal cases against them. The only agenda with Bādal and his colleagues was to amass wealth by every possible corrupt means. Bādal always supported the BJP which always opposed the Sikhs at every juncture.

The Bādal lost power in 2002, but, even after this, he did not adopt the Sikh issues. This disillusioned the Sikh youth and the Sikh elite. Simranjīt Singh Mann’s Akālī Dal has, several times, raised voice against injustice to the Sikhs but the ruling parties betrayed the Sikhs. This is likely to give birth to another phase of Sikh struggle for sovereignty.

POPULATION OF THE SIKHS

Punjab is the Homeland of the Sikhs. About 70% of the whole of the population of the Sikhs lives in the Punjab. However, the Sikhs have settled in almost every country of the world. The exact number of the Sikhs residing in a particular province or country is not known. The following details are from Indian government's census records (which have been doubted by several Sikh organizations and scholars):

Punjab	14,592,387
Haryana	1,170,662
Rajasthan	818,420
Uttar Pradesh	678,059
Delhi	555,602 (The Sikhs claim that it is more than 1,000,000)
Maharashtra	215,337
Uttaranchal	212,025
Jammu & Kashmir	207,154
Madhya Pradesh	150,772
Chandigarh	145,175
Jharkhand	83,358
Himanchal Pradesh	72,353
Chhatisgarh	69,621
West Bengal	66,391
Gujrat	45,587
Andhra Pradesh	30,998
Assam	22,519
Bihar	20,780
Orrisa	17,496
Karnatka	15,326
Tamil Nadu	9,545
Meghalya	3,110
Kerala	2,762
Arunanchal Pradesh	1,865
Manipur	1,653
Andaman	1,587 (several Sikhs died during Tsunami in January 2005)
Tripura	1,182
Sikkim	1,176
Nagaland	1,152
Goa	970
Mizoram	326
Daman, Diu	145

Dadra & Nagar Haveli	123
Pondicherry	108
Lakhshdiv	6
Total (India)	19,215,730

*Rest of the Globe**

USA	500,000
England	500,000
Canada	500,000
Italy	150,000
Kenya, Uganda (& rest of Africa)	55,000
Malaysia	50,000
Portugal	50,000
Australia	18,000
Singapore	15,000
Thailand	15,000
Newzealand	10,000
Germany	6,000
Hong Kong	5,000
Holland	5,000
Austaria	5,000
Norway	5,000
Belgium	3,500
Spain	3,000
Rest of the countries	50,000
Total (Diaspora)	1,600,000*
Total (World)	c. 21, 000,000 (21 million)*

Religious population on the Globe:

Christians	2,038,905,000
Muslims	1,226,403,000
Hindus	828,130,000
Chinese folk religion	389,543,000
Buddhists	364,014,000
Sikhs	21,000,000*
Jews	14,535,000
Asia=19,500,000; North America=900,000; Europe=600,000;	
Africa=60,000, Oceania=25,000.	

* Figures with star marks are estimates and not the exact figures.

The SIKHS on the GLOBE

FATHERHOOD OF GOD AND BROTHERHOOD OF MAN

Sikhism preaches 'fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man'. All beings are the children of one father i.e. God; hence same light prevails in every being. Discriminating (positively or negatively) against someone is infringement of the laws of God as it means rejecting some part of God's creation. According to Sikhism, none is superior or inferior in the court of God; and, no one is His 'chosen child/person' nor a condemned or an untouchable being. God does not have one 'son', all beings are his sons (children) and He is the only father.

PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE (neither fear anyone nor to frighten anyone)

Sikhism teaches peaceful co-existence. One should neither frighten nor fear any one (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p. 1427). Sikhism condemns monster mentality, aggression, injustice and in-humanism (p. 360). Sikhism believes that everyone should be a Khālsā (sovereign) in spiritual as well as temporal domains. Every human being should have right to faith. The ninth Gurū, Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib, sacrificed his life so that no one should be forced to give up one's faith.

It is the sacred duty of a Sikh to defend the poor, the weak and the oppressed. A Sikh must not allow injustice or tyranny prevail in any form and at any place. A Sikh should endeavour to defend the human rights of every being. A Sikh should never be a silent spectator to cruelty, injustice, tyranny, terror, inhuman activities etc.

EGALITARIANISM

Sikhism supports honest earning, sharing with other fellow beings and the concept that "the universe is a common treasure for every being". Sikhism is against the exploitation of human beings by the feudal, monopoly houses, monster and mafia sections, the underworld and all others. He promulgated this policy of egalitarianism very strictly. Only Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādur's rule was in accordance with the Sikh polity.

SPIRITUAL MANIFESTO

Scriptures of every religion contain the philosophy of that religion. However, Gurū Granth Sāhib of the Sikhs is the only scripture, which deserves to be regarded as 'the scripture of all the

scriptures' or 'the universal scripture'. In other words, Gurū Granth Sāhib is the manifesto of the spiritual planet.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

A Sikh does not seek any thing only for himself from God. A Sikh *Ardās* (prayer) is always cosmic in nature. The concluding sentence of the Sikh national prayer is: "May Your Grace grant peace and prosperity to all."

THE SIKHS' ROLE IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

The Sikhs have been fighting not only for their own freedom but they made sacrifices for the other nations also (e.g. Belgium, France, Holland, Italy and the British Empire). The Sikh soldiers fought bravely in Europe during the First and the Second World Wars. Thousands of Sikhs laid down their lives so that the England its Allies may enjoy their freedom. Several Sikhs won the precious Victoria Cross and other gallantry awards for showing unique bravery during the world wars. The archives of the European countries preserve the names of a large number of Sikhs who sacrificed their lives for the European nations. Similarly, the Sikh fought for the freedom of Africa, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Burma and the other nations too.

The *NEELĀ KAMARKASSĀ* (BLUE SASH), the Sikh red-cross

An anecdote from the times of Gurū Gobind Singh explains a unique aspect of Sikh concept of *Sewā* and humanism. During the invasion of Anandpur Sāhib by the Hindu and Mogul forces, Bhāī Ghanaīyā Singh (one source has mentioned his name as 'Ghanaīyā' only which is wrong because he had taken *Khandey-Dī-Pahul*; hence he was a Singh), the Commander of the 'Blue Sash' (the Sikh Red-Cross, used to extend medical and humanitarian help to the wounded soldiers (even if they belonged to the army of the invaders). This was the command of Gurū Sāhib that a Sikh cannot make discrimination while helping the needy and the helpless. This happened as remote as in January 1704. This was a step anticipating the institution, now known as "International Red Cross," which, as a non-aligned body, looks after the soldiers/civilians, wounded/killed during wars or riots or natural calamities. The Sikh 'Blue Sash' was not a non-aligned body but it still provided assistance and facilities to every wounded soldier, without any distinction. Humanitarian treatment to everyone is a cardinal principle of Sikhism.

UNIQUE IDENTITY OF A SIKH

MEANING OF SIKH

The word "Sikh" means "learner." It is different from the Sanskrit word *Shishya* (a general term for any disciple). A Sikh is essentially a seeker of knowledge, especially religious philosophy and spiritualism.

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE (*TURBAN, BEARD, SWORD, KARA*)

A Sikh can be recognized from amongst the crowd of hundreds and thousands. He looks distinct because of his turban, beard and moustache. According to Sikh Rahitmaryādā, an initiated Sikh has an obligation to keep *Punj Kakār* (five Articles of faith): *Kes* (uncut hair) [some sources mention *Keskī* i.e. turban in stead of *Kes*; and it seems to be more correct], *Kanghā* (specific comb), *Kachhehrā* (shorts stitched in a specific style), *Karā* (sacred wrist-ring; however, it is wrong to call it bracelet) and *Kirpān* (sword). Besides, *Dastār* (turban) is obligatory for a Sikh. An initiated Sikh must not part with any one of these Articles of faith.

DISTINCTNESS OF NAMES (*SINGH & KAUR*)

A remarkable distinction of a Sikh is the last part of his/her name. A Sikh must use "Singh" (for males) and "Kaur" (for females) as a suffix. Using family name is not an authentic Sikh practice. 'Singh' literally means 'lion' and 'Kaur' means a 'prince' (In Sikhism, a female is not a 'princess' but a 'prince'; meaning thereby that there is no distinction between a male and a female). For some time, the Hindus too have started spelling their name as SINGH instead of the earlier Hindu spellings of SINH. It leads to confusion.

THEOLOGICAL DISTINCTION

A Sikh is essentially a *monotheist*. In Sikhism, God is but one, Omnipotent, Omnipresent and Omniscient. God is the only Creator, Sustainer and Destroyer. A Sikh cannot have faith in any living or non-living prophet. According to Sikhism God never appears in human form. A Sikh does not believe in life before birth or after death. Sikhism *rejects the other-worldliness*. *Heaven and hell* exist in this world only. Sikhism rejects the theory of *incarnation* too.

Sikhism is not a religion of escapism. Sikhism is a meeting ground of social and spiritual realms; hence it can be called social-spiritualism. In Sikhism, the concept of liberation is not "the other-

worldliness" and rather liberation is to be realized in this life. 'To be a *Sachiār*' (living truthful life) is the Sikh concept of liberation. In Sikhism, pilgrimage of the so-called sacred shrines has no place. *Shabad* (Word) is the only sacred shrine and meditation upon the name of God and living truthful life is the *real pilgrimage*.

Sikhism is not a religion of fatalism. A Sikh bows before the Will of God, but is ever ready to struggle for a better tomorrow. A Sikh always lives in high spirits (*Charhdī Kalā*).

SIKH CONCEPT OF MĪRĪ-PĪRĪ

Oneness of *Mīrī* and *Pīrī* is a unique concept of the Sikhism. *Mīrī* (temporal) and *Pīrī* (transcendental) are an integral part of the being of a Sikh. *Pīrī* means that a Sikh is a spiritual being and *Mīrī* means that he is an important part of polity. A Sikh must meditate upon the name of God but he should always be prepared to struggle for justice, humanism and peace. *Mīrī-Pīrī* does not mean simple unity of temporal and transcendental or politics and religion; it is complete "one-ness" of *Mīrī* and *Pīrī*. In Sikhism, *Mīrī* and *Pīrī* (though two different concepts of philosophy) cannot be separated from each other. Sikhism is a meeting ground of *Mīrī* with *Pīrī*.

SIKH CALENDAR

In April 2003, the SGPC imposed upon the Sikhs, an anti-Sikh calendar (prepared by Pal S. Purewal), in the name of Nānakshāhī Calendar. This calendar meant imposition of Sangrānd, Massiyā and Pooranmāsī (the three Hindu auspicious days in every month) on the Sikhs. It also distorted several dates of the Sikh history. This calendar has nothing to do with Sikhism rather it is totally anti-Sikh. It is strange that the Dharam Parchār Committee and the priests of Akāl Takht Sāhib (who claim themselves as the custodians of Sikhism) 'approved' it. The Sikhs have, since long, been struggling to get rid of several Hindu customs and rituals imposed upon the Sikhs by the Hindu custodians of Gurdwārās during nineteenth century; but now, in 2003, the idiotic Sikh leadership has committed a great sin by imposing an anti-Sikh calendar upon the Sikh nation.

Qualifications of a Sikh

Any person, irrespective of caste, colour, creed, sex etc., is a Sikh, if he/she:

- *Believes in one God
- *Has faith in the teachings of the Ten Gurūs and Gurū Granth Sāhib.
- *Performs his family ceremonies in accordance with the authentic Sikh *Rahitmaryādā* (Sikh code of conduct).

*Believes in *Khande-dī-Pahul* (Sikh ceremony of initiation) and is initiated or wants to get initiated in near future.

*Does not have faith in any other religion or cult (e.g. Hinduism, Islam, Christianity; Nirankārī, Rādhāsoāmī, Namdhārī etc).

*Uses Singh (for males) and Kaur (for females) as suffix of his/her name.

Who Are NOT Sikhs?

The Minas, Dhīrmallīās, Ramrāiyas, Namdhārīs, Nirankārīs, Rādhāsoāmīs, Nurmahālīās, followers of Derā Sacha Saudā, those who perform *Havans* or worship at non-Sikh shrines (temples etc) are **NOT** Sikhs.

WHAT IS AMRIT?

Amrit (a+mr̥it) literally means beyond death. *Amrit* is that substance which frees one from death. It has also been used as synonymous with nectar and ambrosia. Meaning of *Amrit*, in Sikhism, is altogether different from the Hindu concept. According to a Hindu myth, the (so-called) gods and the (so-called) demons jointly churned the sea and created (distilled) *Amrit*. When finally *Amrit* was ready, both (gods and demons) began fighting to possess and consume it. This led to a prolonged battle. During this battle the whole of their so-called *Amrit* was spilled and none could drink it; hence none became immortal. At this, the Hindu cunning priestly class created another myth of immortality and transmigration of soul. They, now, declared that the soul would never die and it will be transmigrated to another body; meaning that one could, still, be immortal. But, on the other hand, this also implies that soul is not a part of the Supreme Soul and it will never merge with the latter.

Sikhism rejects the myth of human being's 'living forever' and even transmigration. According to Sikhism, human beings have a pre-destined span of life. Human body is made of five elements (air, water, fire, earth, ether), which rejoin their base after the death of a human being.

In Sikhism, *Amrit* seems to have more than one shade of meanings but all these have fundamental base that (meditation) of *Shabad* (the Word) i.e. Name of God is *Amrit*:

The Name of God is Amrit (nectar).

That is the base for all.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p. 1429).

*Name is the treasure of Amrit (nectar). join and drink O!
Brother.*

Remembering whom we get all happiness, and quench our thirst.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p. 318)

O! God your word is all Amrit (nectar).

By listening it, I am emancipated.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p. 103)

To achieve this Amrit, one has to churn it by repeating His name with one's tongue (mouth) repeatedly:

One's tongue should meditate upon His Name

And this churning will grant one Amrit.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p. 728)

The hour when we meditate upon His Name and ponder on His Excellences is the moment of achieving Amrit:

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p. 2)

Singing the praise of God with one's tongue is (drinking)

Amrit.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.1219)

I see only One, none else.

By the grace of Gurū I drink nectar.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p. 113)

For the treasure of water Amrit (nectar), you have come to this word,

That Amrit (nectar) is with Gurū, O! Lovable.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p. 598)

Hence, in Sikhism, *Amrit* is the Word of God. It is only God who is and will ever be existent; hence God is *Amrit*.

Amrit is also being used (though incorrectly) by some writers for the nectar taken (drunk) by a Sikh at the time of ceremony of initiation. This ceremony is in fact ***Khande Dī Pahul***. Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib himself performed the first Sikh initiation on March 29, 1698 (according to some sources 1699). Now *Khande Di Pahul* is prepared and granted by ***Punj Piāray*** (Five Chosen/beloved Ones). As *Amrit* i.e. *Shabad* (The Word) is the basis of the Sikh initiation ceremony; hence it has come to be known as *Amrit Samskar*.

***Khande-dī-Pahul* (the Sikh Initiation)**

A Sikh is confirmed as a member of the *Order of Khālsā* after he has taken *Khandey-dī-Pahul* (the Sikh initiation nectar) from *Punj Piāray* (the *Five Chosen Ones*). The *Punj Piāray* prepare *Amrit* (sacred nectar for initiation) with *Khandā* (double-edged sword). Then they inform the initiated person about the Sikh *Rahitmaryādā* (code of conduct). Any initiated Sikh (male or female), who has never been guilty of religious misconduct, can become one of the *Punj Piāray*.

Khandey-dī-Pahul is not optional. A Sikh is incorporeate without *Khandey-dī-Pahul* and can be considered as representative of the Sikhs.

Four major Prohibitions for an initiated Sikh (as per Sikh Rahitmaryādā)

[To be strictly followed by a Sikh]:

1. Must not cut/trim hair from any part of body.
2. Must not eat *Halāl* (meat slaughtered in Muslim style).
3. Must not use tobacco (or drugs) in any form.
4. Must not commit adultery.
[One, who violates any one of these four, becomes a *Patit* (apostate). He/she has to get re-initiated].

Seven prohibitions for an initiated Sikh (as per Sikh Rahitmaryādā):

1. Should not enter into brotherhood with any member of the recalcitrant groups: Minas, Dhīrmalliās, Ramrāiyas, Nirankāris or those who, having once embraced Sikhism, take to shaving, smoking, or committing infanticide.
2. Should not dine in the same dish with a person who is not initiated or is an apostate.
3. Should not dye or pick out any grey/white hair.
4. Should not receive money for a daughter's (or son's) hand in marriage.
5. Should not use any drug or intoxicant.
6. Should not perform any ceremony, which violates any of the Sikh principles.
7. Should not break any vow taken at the time of *Amrit Sanskār*.
(One who violates any of these seven prohibitions becomes a *Tankhāhiyā* and he/she is liable to disciplinary action).

DOs & DON'Ts for a Sikh

A Sikh MUST:

- * Have faith in *WaheGurū* (One God)
- * Believe in "one-ness" of Ten Gurūs
- * Live his/her life according to the teaching of Gurūs
- * Take *Khande-dī-Pahul* (initiation) as early as possible
- * Worship only God (term 'worship' is not appropriate, it should be 'meditate in the Name of God')
- * Always use *Singh* suffix as a part of the name of a male and *Kaur* with the name of a female

- * Learn reading, writing and speaking Punjābī language and Gurmukhī script
- * Acquire maximum knowledge of the Sikh history and the Sikh philosophy
- * Impart knowledge of Sikhism to his/her children
- * Teach Punjābī language and Gurmukhī script to his/her children
- * Perform family ceremonies as per authentic Sikh rites (as approved by Akāl Takht Sāhib)
- * Visit Gurdwārā (join *Sangat*) frequently
- * Earn livelihood by honest means
- * Offer *Daswandh* (tithe) of his earnings for the promotion of and for the welfare of the Sikh Panth.
- * Participate in community service
- * Believe in equality (of caste, colour, creed, sex etc.)
- * Protect the weak and the oppressed; oppose injustice
- * Participate in the welfare of the Sikh Motherland
- * Remain conscious of the perseverance of Sikh identity
- * Perform family functions as simple as possible
- * Have simple food habits (no alcohol/tobacco/drugs etc.)
- * Get up early in the morning and recite *Nitnem* (hymns)
- * Purge one's mind of five negative emotions i.e. *Kām* (lust), *Krodh* (anger), *Lobh* (avarice), *Moh* (attachment) and *Hankār* (vanity)
- * Regard another man's wife as his sister and the daughter of another as his own daughter.
- * Be loyal to one's spouse.
- * Always greet another Sikh with the salutation:
WaheGurūji Dā Khālsā, WaheGurūji Dī Fateh."

A Sikh MUST NOT:

- * Bow before any one except Gurū Granth Sāhib.
- * Pray/worship in a (Hindu) temple, mosque, church, synagogue or any other place of worship. A visit for other purpose is, however, not prohibited. However, a Sikh must respect the faith/religion of the others.
- * Worship idols, statues or pictures (even of Gurū Sāhib) etc. (There is no real picture of the Gurū Sāhib; but even if there was a real picture, it is still against Sikh ideology to worship it).
- * Believe in magic, occult power, superstitions and such like things.
- * Believe in the myth of auspicious moments, eclipses.
- * Practice infanticide or *Sati* (widow burning).
- * Observe fast e.g. *Karvā Chauth*, *Ramzān* etc. (fasting otherwise, for health reasons, is not prohibited). *Sangrānd* (first day of the Indian Bikrami calendar), *Massiyā*, *Pooranmāsī* etc. have nothing to do in Sikhism and to observe these is against Sikhism. (It is a matter of

shame for the S.G.P.C. which adopted Purewal's calendar, which asks the Sikhs to observe these days as auspicious ones).

- * Believe in wearing of the (so-called) sacred thread and similar rituals.

- * Observe *Sharādh*s (annual rituals for the dead).

- * Have socio-religious relations with Minas, Dhīrmalliās, Ramrāiyas, Namdhārīs, Nirankārīs, Rādhāsōāmīs, Nurmahaliās and the other cults or the other groups of the *Sādhūs* (they are considered impostors) etc.

- * Move in public without *Dastār* (the Sikh turban). Even while at home, one must cover one's head with a *Keskī* (a small turban).

- * Renounce the world (should lead a householder's life).

- * Use tobacco, drugs, intoxicants etc.

- * Commit adultery.

- * Observe *Purdah* (veil). (But, the '*Beauty Contests*' are NOT in consonance with Sikhism).

- * Abort a child in womb.

Five "Articles of faith", *must* for an initiated Sikh

An initiated Sikh must always have *Punj Kakār* (The five "Articles of faith." are called *Kakār* because these five begin with the Punjābī letter ਕ) on one's person and one can never part with them till one's death. These five Articles of faith are:

1. *Kes*: *Kes* (hair) is an article of faith for a Sikh. [The Sikhs use *Keskī* (small/under turban) to cover their hair. Its purpose is to protect hair]. Unshorn hair is must for a Sikh. It is unique in Sikhism and it distinguishes a Sikh from the rest of the world. A Sikh must not trim hair from any part of his body. Hair is "the seal of a Sikh's faith." Removal of this seal makes one a "*Patit*" (apostate). Such a person cannot present oneself as representative of Sikhism. A Sikh must keep his/her hair neat and clean. A Sikh must comb his/her hair twice a day. Hair must be covered with a *Dastār* (the Sikh turban). The females may cover their hair with *Dastār* or a *Dupattā* (a cloth of a size enough to cover hair properly).

2. *Kanghā* (comb): A *Kanghā* is a specific comb of the Sikhs. It is used for combing one's hair. A Sikh must keep his/her hair perfectly clean. It should always be attached to the knot of the hair. A wooden *Kanghā* is a universal practice.

3. *Kara* (wrist-ring): Every Sikh must wear a *Kara* in his right wrist. It should be made of iron or steel. (Usage of a *Kara* made of gold is not authentic practice in Sikhism). *Kara* reminds a Sikh to desist from un-Sikh like acts. [The term 'bracelet', however, is not proper; hence it should be avoided]. According to another view, this is a good defence against the attack of a weapon on one's arm.

4. *Kachhehrā* (the Sikh shorts): Every Sikh must wear a *Kachhehrā*. It is a unique type of shorts designed and stitched in a specific manner. This is a symbol of Sikhs' royalty. According to another view, it reminds a Sikh of chastity. High moral standards are a must for a Sikh.

5. *Kirpān* (the Sikh sword): Every initiated Sikh must wear a *Kirpān* on his person. *Kirpān* is usually worn in a *Gātrā* (a specific belt of cloth) hanging from the right side of shoulder to the left side of the waist. The Sikh *Kirpān* reminds a Sikh of his duty to help and defend the weak, the poor and the oppressed. *Kirpān* represents duty to struggle for justice and human rights.). *Also see a detailed Article on Kirpān.*

Twenty Attributes of a Sikh

1. A Sikh believes in one and the only God who is Omnipresent, Omnipotent, All-pervading, Eternal, Infinite; who is the Creator, Sustainer, Destroyer; who existed in the beginning, exists now and shall remain existent forever; who is not born (hence does not die) i.e. is from himself (self-created); who has no chosen subjects; who loves everyone alike; who can not be defined in words.

2. A Sikh is not afraid of any power (but God) on this earth. A Sikh neither fears nor frightens anyone. But, a Sikh always lives in the noble fear of God.

3. A Sikh has no enemy. He does not have disdain for anyone. A Sikh does not hate anybody. But, a Sikh does not forgive cruelty and inhuman-ism. It is a Sikh's duty to fight for Righteousness. But, a Sikh is not supposed to have hatred, jealousy, partiality or revengeful attitude for any one on this earth. A Sikh is ever ready to forgive wrong-doings of an innocent person. Pity and forgiveness are a must for a Sikh. If someone comes to a Sikh with a pure heart and with a desire for repentance, a Sikh must forgive him/her. However, inhuman killers, terrorists and those who have perpetrated atrocities on people must be punished and should not be forgiven.

4. A Sikh does not have negative thinking. A Sikh is always positive in his approach. A Sikh has constructive approach and does not have destructive thinking. To strengthen truth and humanism and to bring an end to injustice is obligatory for a Sikh.

5. A Sikh is always in blissful feeling. He always bows before the Will of God. A Sikh always sings hymns in the praise of God; may it be an occasion of birth, marriage or death, it may be joy or sorrow. *Keertan* (singing hymns) is a part of a Sikh's spiritual, personal as well as social life.

6. A Sikh's spiritualism and physical personality go side by side. Lethargy and laziness are vices for a Sikh and activity and endeavour are virtues for him/her. Early rising, regular shower, meditation is an essential routine of a Sikh. Light diet should be the liking of a Sikh. A Sikh likes to eat such a food, which does not lead him/her to vices. Meaning thereby, there is a special relation between a Sikh's spiritualism and his/her health.

7. A Sikh loves the concept of equality. *Langar* (sacred community kitchen), *Sangat* (holy congregation), *Pangat* (joining *Langar* as equals. In other words equality) are essential aspects of the Sikh cultural ethics. To join congregation like equals and brotherhood is first and foremost thing for a Sikh's religious culture. Joining *Sangat* in *Langar* hall, sitting in a *Pangat* and sharing sacred community food with all and sundry brings an end to ego. The Sikh *Langar* (sacred community kitchen) brings an end to inferiority complex of the poor and the lowly as well as the superiority complex of the so-called rich and feudal. Strictly speaking, the concept of low and high is alien to Sikhism. In Sikhism, colour, caste, age, status, gender is of no consideration. A Sikh has to adopt this culture not only in the *Langar*-hall but he has to keep it with him throughout his life and in all situations.

8. A Sikh always lives in *Charhdī Kalā* (the Sikh psyche of living in high spirit). A Sikh can never live in decadence, nor can he ever get demoralized. He always has the feeling that 'tomorrow will be better'. Everything that happens to him/her is the 'sweet will' of God. On February 5, 1762, about half of the Sikh population was killed by the Afghan terrorist invader Ahmed Shah Durrānī's forces but the Sikhs still proclaimed that "our alloy has melted away and we have become pure gold." Bābā Botā Singh and Bābā Garjā Singh, only two Sikhs, could declare national sovereignty. Forty Sikhs at Chamkaur as well as at Khidrāne Dī Dhāb (now Muktsar) could fight mammoth armies. An eight months long siege of Gurdās Nangal (April-December 1715) did not dishearten the Sikhs. Meaning thereby that a Sikh never surrenders, nor does he/she compromise his conviction even if he is in pain or suffering. Pain, suffering, problems, crisis make a Sikh still stronger. The spirit of *Charhdī Kalā* is, in fact, basic for a Sikh. To thank God for each and every phenomenon is must for a Sikh. A Sikh always considers His Blessing as bountiful. A Sikh attributes everything of his being to God.

9. A Sikh is a positive part of the society. A Sikh earns his livelihood by honest means. Unlike Brahmins, a Sikh does not live on alms or charity. A Sikh can never be a beggar. A Sikh always tries to give something to others and does not like to live on others' charity. A

Sikh's prosperity is a result of his endeavour and his enterprising nature.

10. Sharing one's earnings, as well as wealth, is basic to Sikh culture. A Sikh has an obligation to earn honestly, and, he must share his prosperity with others. To help the needy and the poor is the foremost duty of a Sikh. To avoid helping needy persons is alien to Sikh culture. A Sikh cannot be selfish. A Sikh does not live for himself only. Sikhism is essentially a commune religion.

11. A Sikh cannot live in stagnation. He always makes efforts to go further and further. Progress and prosperity of the Sikhs throughout different parts of the world is an example of the Sikhs' enterprising nature. Sikhs have achieved prosperity not by toddling others or by snatching from others or by usurping the rights of others. Nor is cheating, robbing or dishonesty the basis of the Sikhs' progress. All Sikh prosperity has in its background, their enterprising nature, hard labour, intelligence etc. Sikhs have achieved heights because they have always worked sincerely and honestly. Their wealth is always hard-earned. It is a part of the nature of a Sikh that he/she always looks forward, continues struggling, and, never stops on his/her way towards the achievement of his goal. It is the nature of positive thinking in a Sikh, which has made him enterprising and endeavouring. But, a Sikh's thinking is not that of a *Malik Bhāgo* (the symbol of a usurper). A Sikh may be rich but he can't be a usurper. A Sikh's prosperity is not achieved through encroachment upon others' wealth or rights. Moreover, his prosperity is for the betterment not only of his family and his brotherhood; it is for the welfare of the Sikh nation and a Sikh is ever ready to contribute it for such a cause.

12. A Sikh does not fear death. A simple thought of death frightens the whole of the world but, for a Sikh, it is the Will of God. A Sikh always bows before His Will. For a Sikh, the physical body is nothing but a structure made of five elements; and exit of spirit from body is the end to the being of a person. It is like finale to the role of a human being on this earth. Death, for a Sikh, is the step for proceeding towards the next stage/destination. It completes a person's journey in this world, as this world is just an inn for every human being and a human being is just a traveller on this earth.

13. A Sikh always keeps his word. If a Sikh promises help or defence of anyone, he/she will stand by his/her commitment even at the cost of his/her life. The Sikh history is replete with several events narrating 'Sikhs sacrificing their lives in order to save Hindu girls from foreign invaders'.

14. A Sikh is never biased, partisan or partial. For a Sikh all the human beings are the children of God; hence they should be treated alike. The history of the Sikh '*Neelā Kamarkassā*' (Blue Sash), the Sikh Red Cross, established by Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib, under the command of Bhāi Ghanaiyā Singh, explains this concept. Bhāi Ghanaiyā Singh is known in the history as one who would extend humanitarian help to the wounded soldiers of the army of the enemies of the Sikhs in a manner as he would treat his Sikh brethren. For him a wounded person is not a Sikh or an enemy but a human being; hence deserved alike treatment. A Sikh shall never be biased or partial in favour of or against any one, when he is in the role of a judge. If one wishes to learn the lesson of humanism, generosity, mercy, sympathy, love, justice etc one should go through the pages of the Sikh history and the Sikh culture.

15. A Sikh loves to feed others before eating anything himself. This writer still remembers the words of his mother: "the day when no one shares food with us seemed to be an incomplete day. The food of that day becomes tasteless." It is a fact that the greatest free food humanitarian camps of the world have always been arranged by the Sikh nation. The Sikhs are known as 'the feeding hands'. Feeding others is the greatest pleasure for a Sikh.

16. A Sikh must always contribute his *Daswandh* (tithe). It is obligatory for a Sikh to contribute a part (one-tenth) of his income and wealth for the welfare of the Sikh nation in particular and humanity in general. If a Sikh does not contribute his *Daswandh*, he is a debtor. A Sikh must repay his debt as soon as possible. *Daswandh*, for a Sikh, is not just monetary contribution. An unemployed person or a poor man, too, can contribute the *Daswandh* of his time, energy, skill and knowledge for some national cause. This too is as good as monetary contribution. Paying *Daswandh* is: "understanding one's responsibility for the nation." It is a feeling of considering oneself as an important and useful member of society.

17. *Sewā* (selfless, voluntary service), too, is an important aspect of the personality of a Sikh. Doing *Sewā* pleases a Sikh a lot. Having got a chance to do *Sewā* is a matter of honour for a Sikh. When, due to some unavoidable circumstances, a Sikh is unable to perform any type of *Sewā* for a long period, he/she feels something missing from his 'self'. While doing *Sewā*, a Sikh feels himself/herself in spiritual heights. A Sikh is always in a search of an opportunity to perform some *Sewā*. He waits for it as if some treasure is likely to be found by him.

18. For a Sikh, temporal (*Mīrī*) and transcendental (*Pīrī*) are one single phenomenon/entity. A spiritual leader cannot ignore his/her

political and social role; and a man with political power must act like a spiritual person. A saint and soldiers are inseparable in the being of a Sikh. A king must be a saint in his heart and a soldier outwardly. For a Sikh, politics must be practised in accordance with spiritual ethics. For a Sikh *Mīrī* (temporal) and *Pīrī* (transcendental) is one and this concept is not "unity" of both but it is "oneness". It is "*Mīrī-Pīrī* " and not "*Mīrī* and *Pīrī* ".

19. A Sikh always makes prayers for the welfare of the whole of the humanity. A Sikh must not beg anything for himself/herself or for his/her family. A Sikh's prayer is always national and rather universal and not personal or individual or even racial. If a Sikh makes a prayer for his/her own health, economic prosperity, personal peace of mind, progress of self or family, he/she is performing an act against Sikh fundamentals. A Sikh does not pray even for his/hers own people. It must always for the whole of humanity.

20. A Sikh is essentially a "saint". The word "saint" (*Sant*), as it is being used for cult leaders or so-called sant-Bābās, is a misnomer. They are using it to fool the Sikhs in particular and common people in general. In Sikhism, a saint is the one who meditates in the name of God. To recite, to understand and try to live one's life according to GurBānī is real meditation. To live a Truthful Life too is meditation.

A Sikh need not renounce this world to achieve liberation (self-realisation). A Sikh can achieve liberation in this life while performing his regular routine. Sikhism is a religion of practical life (pragmatism). Sikhism is not a theoretical idealism, which cannot be put into practice. Sikhism is no ritual-ism. It has, in its embrace, the welfare of the Sikh brotherhood, community, nation and whole of the world. Superman may be a character of fiction, but if it is possible to have a super human on this earth, a Sikh can surely be called such a being.

SAHIJDHĀRĪ SIKHS

Sehajdārī/Sahijdhārī (literally: the slow adaptor; also: one 'who lives in ease') term may be used for that Sikh who wishes to get initiation in near future. A *Sehajdārī* must not cut or trim his hair from any part of his/her body; should wear a turban; should perform his family rites and functions according to the Sikh *Rahitmaryādā*; and should completely adhere to the Sikh culture. A *Sehajdārī* brings up his children in Sikh style and gives them Sikh names. All the ceremonies (marriage, death and all the rest), in the family, must be performed in the proper Sikh manner. A *Sehajdārī* cannot remain so for several years. A *Sehajdārī* does not mean a non-Sikh claiming to be admirer of Sikhism. Several Hindus, who tired to become voters of the *SGPC*,

posed themselves as *Sehajdārīs*, whereas they had nothing to do with Sikhism. In 2004, the Indian government issued an ordinance excluding these fake prospective voters from the Electoral College of the SGPC. After these elections, most of these so-called *Sehajdārī* s (fake Sikhs) disappeared from the scene.

THE SIKH SCRIPTURE

GURŪ GRANTH SĀHIB

Gurū Granth Sāhib is the sacred scripture of the Sikhs. It was edited by Gurū Arjan Sāhib and was scribed by Bhāī Gurdās. The first copy was completed at Amritsar on July 31, 1604 and was installed in Darbār Sāhib on August 16, 1604. Bābā Buddhā was the first *Granthī* (one who performs reading services). This first copy of the Granth Sāhib remained preserved at Kartārpur (district Jullundur) till 1757, when it got burnt, during an attack by the Afghans on the town of Kartārpur (An old copy preserved at Kartārpur, as it is claimed by the family owning it, is not the original copy). Several copies of first volume of Granth Sāhib had already been prepared by Gurū Hargobind Sāhib and Gurū Har Rāi Sāhib. The final volume was prepared by Bhāī Manī Singh under instructions from Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib, in 1678, at Takht Damdama Sāhib (Anandpur Sāhib); hence known as *Damdāmī Bir*. In 1706, four more copies of this final volume were prepared by (Bābā) Deep Singh at Talwandi Sabo. Before its installation as Gurū-Eternal, it was known as Granth Sāhib only. It was installed as Gurū-eternal on October 6, 1708; since then it is called Gurū Granth Sāhib.

Gurū Granth Sāhib is a collection of devotional verses composed by Six Gurū Sāhib, 15 Bhagats and Sufis, 11 Bhatts, two bard poets and Bhāī Sunder. Most of them belonged to different parts of the sub-continent. The number of the compositions by different authors is as follows: Gurū Nānak Sāhib 977, Gurū Angad Sāhib 62, Gurū Amar Dās Sāhib 907, Gurū Rām Dās Sāhib 679, Gurū Arjan Sāhib 2218, Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib 116, Kabīr 467, Farid 134, Namdev 61, Ravidas 40, Satta and Balwand (3+5) 8, Sunder 6, Trilochan 4, Dhanna 3, Beni 3, Jaidev 2, Bhikhan 2, Surdas 1 (one line only), Sain 1, Pipa 1, Sadna 1, Ramanand 1, Parmanand 1, 11 Bhatts 123 verses. The following 11 Bhatts are represented in Gurū Granth Sāhib: Kalh/Kals-haar (54), Nalh (16), Mathura (14), Gayand (13), Kirat (8), Jalap (5), Balh (5), Salh (3), Bhikha (2), Haribans (2) and Bhalh (1). Some writers have wrongly attributed Gurū Nānak Sāhib's three saloks (addressed to Bhāī Mardānā) as Bhāī Mardānā's own.

Some followers of some of the Bhagat poets, represented in Gurū Granth Sāhib, call them (the Bhagats) *Gurūs* on the plea that as Gurū Granth Sāhib is Gurū; hence all composers, represented in it, too are Gurūs. If we accept their argument then the bards Satta and Balwand, Gurū Amar Dās Sāhib's grandson Sunder and the Bhatt poets too will become Gurūs. Gurū Sāhib himself has used the term Bhagat for the Bhagat poets. Term Gurū is used for the one who occupies the Gurgaddi (Gurū's seat); hence only the ten Gurūs and Gurū Granth Sāhib are to be addressed as Gurūs.

Total hymns of Gurū Granth Sāhib are 5867 (total differs with different accounts), covered in 1430 pages. The controversial Rāg Mālā begins on page 1429 and ends on page 1430. (Early handwritten volumes did not have 1430 pages. The first printed volume, which came up in 1887, had 1430 pages and it was perchance accepted as a standard edition). The languages used in the hymns are Punjābī, Sadhukari (an amalgam of different local dialects used by poets and wandering ascetics of those times), Sindhi, Apbhransh, Persian, Prakrit and Marathi etc. The verses of Gurū Granth Sāhib have been set to be sung in different *Rāgs*. With the exception of Japji by Gurū Nānak Sāhib, the Swayyas by Bhattas and a few other verses, all the hymns are set to the tune of 31 different *Rāgs*: Sri, Mājh, Gauri, Āsā, Gujarī, Devgandhārī, Bihāgrha, Wad-hans, Sorath, Dhanāsari, Jaitsri, Todi, Bairarhi, Tilang, Suhi, Bilāwal, Gaund, Rāmkali, Nat, Maligāura, Māru, Tukhārī, Kedāra, Bhāiro, Basant, Sārang, Malhār, Kānra, Kalyān, Parbhāti, Jaijawanti.

Gurū Granth Sāhib is the *Granth* of Sikh philosophy, Sikh ethics, Sikh culture, Sikh way of life etc. Gurū Granth Sāhib is world's 'biggest book/volume of love for God'. All the pages of Gurū Granth Sāhib are replete with the praise of and love for God. It is amazing that Gurū Sāhib used so many different words, terms, patterns, styles, and verses to praise God. The main theme of Gurū Granth Sāhib is: Greatness of God; how to achieve union with God; what makes an ideal person; what is the purpose of human life and other philosophic questions.

The essentials of Sikh ethics i.e. love, truth, humility, contentment, self-less service, restraint of passions, respect of all human beings, mercy for all beings, simple and truthful living have been dealt with in detail. Faith in God, brotherhood of man, meditation, purity of mind etc is the core of the essence of Gurū Granth Sāhib.

Gurū Granth Sāhib is central to everything in a Gurdwārā. The Sikhs love Gurū Granth Sāhib but do not 'worship' it. For a Sikh, the 'worship' of Gurū Granth Sāhib means: 'acting upon the teachings of Gurū Granth Sāhib'. Gurū Granth Sāhib is not like a Hindu idol nor is

it a book like Bible or Quran. Special respect is given to Gurū Granth Sāhib because it contains the Word. It manifests the spirit of the Ten Gurūs. Further, placing Gurū Granth Sāhib in air conditioned rooms in summer or under quilts in winter is against Sikh ideology as well as against common sense.

Major BĀNĪs OF GURŪ GRANTH SĀHIB

ĀRTI: The word *Ārti* is a combination of two words *Aa* (without) + *ratri* (night), According to popular Hindi diction, *Ārti* means: "that which can be offered (done) even if it is not night i.e. lighting of earthen (or any other) lamp. *Ārti* is a form of Hindu worship. The Hindus place small earthen lamps in a platter (slaver), place it before some idol or deity, and then take the platter around that idol/deity, in the mornings and in the evenings. It is, in fact, worship of the mythical Hindu 'god of fire'. Sikhism strictly prohibits such worship (of god of fire or the otherwise). Some Sikhs, who are ignorant about Sikh philosophy (or are under the impact of Hinduism), though they do not burn lamps, still sing Gurū Nānak Sāhib's hymn, now known as *Ārti*, by treating it as a formal *Ārti*. Gurū Nānak Sāhib's hymn *Ārti* is a rejection of hypocrisy exhibited by the Hindu *Ārti* ritual, and those Sikhs, who consider it (Gurū Nānak Sāhib's hymn*) as a Sikh-*Ārti*, in fact, disobey Gurū's command. Gurū Nānak Sāhib says that the real *Ārti* of God is being offered by Nature. The meditation of the Name of God and an effort to live a "truthful life" is also like performing *Ārti*. Gurū Nānak Sāhib says, "The whole of the nature is worshipping God. The sky is the platter (for *Ārti*); the sun and moon are the lamps in this plate (*Thaal*); the whole sphere of the stars are the diamonds and the pearls (for decoration of the platter); the fRāgrance of the sandalwood trees of Mallay region (known for its sweet fragrance) is the incense; the breeze is the royal *Chaur* and the whole of the vegetation is offering flowers (for the worship of God). This could be, and is, the (real) worship of God." Meaning thereby that the real worship of God can not be performed with the earthen lamps or such-like meaningless rituals. The show/exhibition of worship by lighting lamps in a platter before a deity is mere hypocrisy.

*Sky is like a slaver (platter), the sun and the moon are lamps (therein)
 The planets of stars are like studded pearls.
 The incense is of sandalwood; the fanning is by air,
 The whole vegetation is flowers (in platter for worship)
 What a wonderful *Ārti* (worshipping song with lamps).
 O Destroyer of fear, Your *Ārti*.

The unfriktioned world is the sounding bells.
 You have thousands of eyes, so no eye.
 You have thousands of forms, so no form.
 You have thousands of feet, so no feet,
 You have thousands of noses, so no nose,
 Thus, I am charmed by You (O Great God!).
 In every one the light (of God) is same.
 With that light, the light is in everyone.
 With Gurū's teaching the light manifests.
 The one that is liked by You that will be Your Ārti. (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p. 13)

ĀSA DI VĀR: *Āsa Di Vār* is a long poem by Gurū Nānak Sāhib, to be sung in the tune of the famous folk ballad written in the memory of Asraja (who had a maimed hand). It is prescribed to be sung every day in the morning in the Gurdwārās. Gurū Angad Sāhib had started the singing of this *Vār* during the time of Gurū Nānak Sāhib. *Āsa Di Vār* has been composed in *Saloks* and *Pauris* (steps/stanzas). The main theme of this poem is: God has created this world and He is watching and monitoring every phenomenon. The purpose of a man's life is to meditate on the Name of God. Gurūcan show the path of self-realization. Pride of worldly achievement is delusion; hence, it is false. Spiritual joy is the greatest treasure. This world is like a resting place. No one is going to stay here forever. So, one should not live a life, which leads one astray from the path towards union with God. Every phenomenon is under the command of God. He is the Only Master; man should love Him and meditate upon His Name. Gurūcan give this realization.

ANAND SĀHIB: *Anand Sāhib* (*Anand* literally means: joy/bliss and the word *Sāhib* means God) is a long poem of 40 *Pauris* (steps) and sung in the Raamkali Rāg. According to the *Rahitmaryādā* (Code of Conduct), its first 5 and the 40th *Pauri* are prescribed to be recited at the end of the complete reading of Gurū Granth Sāhib and before final *Ardās* (prayer). These six *Pauris* are also recited during Rahiras (evening prayer). Along with four more *Banis*, complete Anand Sāhib too, is recited during preparation of *Khande Di Pahul* (nectar for initiation). The main theme of the poem is love for God, union with God, hence attainment of bliss. It says: *Anand*, blessed by Grace of God, is attained through Gurū, who helps banishing suffering and darkness and bestows the gift of the Name and the other bounties. Meditation upon His Name purges one's desires, passions, lusts, and fear of death; and gives peace, tranquillity and bliss. Gurūis the source

of light, which brings an end to ignorance and the veil of falsehood. Gurūhelps one to free oneself from the enchantment of *Māyā* (delusion). God is beyond the reach of a human being. Even the angels and the men of spiritual heights crave for nectar of His Name. His Name eliminates ego, sin, fear, doubt, ignorance etc. Traditional rituals do not lead to self-realization; it is only Name that can lead to the path of liberation. One must first purge one's ego and surrender oneself completely to God, and only then he can be a candidate for achievement of liberation (but liberation will come with His grace). Gurū's *Shabad* (teaching) is precious treasure and it is attained through His Grace. Rituals, *Smritis* and *Sashtras* (books of knowledge) can not eliminate *Māyā*. Gurūteaches concentration or meditation on the Name of God (the Creator, the Protector and the Sustainer). His Name is the real treasure. Blessed are those eyes, which see God everywhere; blessed are those ears, which always hear His praise; blessed is the feeling of realization of His Omnipotence. With such realization all sufferings and sorrows are eliminated and one achieves the stage of Anand.

BĀRĀH MĀH: *Bārāh Māh* literally means: twelve months. *Barah Māh* is a form of poetry. In Gurū Granth Sāhib, there are two *Bārāh Māh*, one by Gurū Nānak Sāhib (in *Rāg Mājh*, at pages 1107-09) and the other by Gurū Arjan Sāhib (in *Rāg Tukhārī*, at pages 133-36). According to Sikhism, only foolish people give consideration to certain days or dates as auspicious. These hymns (*Bārāh Māh*) reject the notion of auspicious-ness of any specific moment etc. The theme of these poems is that all the months, dates, days and moments are of equal importance. One should not attach any special importance to a particular moment. A human being has an obligation to always remember God, all the time. A hymn from Gurū Arjan Sāhib's *Bārāh Māh*, depicting the moods of the month, is recited on the *Sangrānd* (the first day) of every month of the Bikrami calendar, in some Gurdwārās, managed by the ignorant Sikhs. It has no spiritual meaning and moreover, it is contrary to the teaching of the Gurūs. It is shocking that the ignorant leadership of the S.G.P.C. too approved and adopted a calendar in 2003, which promoted such (anti-Sikh) rituals.

JAP(JI) SĀHIB: *Jap* is a long poem written by Gurū Nānak Sāhib. It is also the first hymn of Gurū Granth Sāhib [(*Ji*) and *Sāhib* have been added for reverence]. Some scholars consider it as the essence or epitome of the whole of the Sikh philosophy. Most of the Sikhs remember it by heart. There are 38 *Pauris* (steps/stanzas) followed by one *Salok*. *Japji Sāhib* depicts the Sikh concept of God; union with

God as the purpose of human life; and the means of attainment of this union is by way of meditation and a truthful life.

SOHILĀ: Literally: the praise. *Sohilā* is a collection of five hymns written by three Gurū Sāhibs. First three stanzas have been composed by Gurū Nānak Sāhib, the fourth by Gurū Rām Dās Sāhib and the fifth by Gurū Arjan Sāhib. It is one of the five poems of *Nitnem*. It is also recited at the time of funeral ceremony. The main theme of the hymns is the praise of the greatness of God, whom one must always remember. *Sohilā* is sometimes wrongly called *Keertan Sohilā*. *Sohilā* as the title of the 'collection of five stanzas' does not appear in Gurū Granth Sāhib. The word *Sohilā* appears in the second line of the first hymn but it is not certain that it is the basis of the caption given to the *Bani*. The motif of the *Bani* is, however, *Sohilā* (the praise of God).

SUKHMANI SĀHIB: *Sukhmani* (literally: gem of peace) is a long poem written by Gurū Arjan Sāhib. *Sukhmani Sāhib* explains that only meditation of God can lead to self-realization. It also tells how to remember God and how to meditate. *Sukhmani* also mentions qualities/merits of a Sant (spiritual person). It, infact, point out that God is the only Sant. This is one of the most recited Sikh poems. Several organizations have been formed, in order to arrange the special sessions for recitation of this hymn, under the name and title of 'Sukhmani Sāhib Sewā Society'. But, they do not serve any purpose.

IS RĀG MĀLĀ GURBĀNĪ?

Rāg Mālā is a composition printed on pages 1429-30 of Gurū Granth Sāhib. It has been taken from Ālam Kavi's book *Mādhvana Kām Kandalā* (stanzas 63 to 72). It is not *Gurbānī*. Somehow, at some time, it crept into some early volume of Gurū Granth Sāhib, but it is still unknown as to how and when it happened. There are still available several old handwritten volumes of Gurū Granth Sāhib, which are without the *Rāg Mālā*. Some writers considered as an index of the *Rāgs* but it does not mention all the *Rāgs* used in Gurū Granth Sāhib and some of the *Rāgs* mentioned in these stanzas are not represented in Gurū Granth Sāhib. Hence, it has nothing to do with Gurū Granth Sāhib proper.

DASAM GRANTH

The (so-called) *Dasam Granth* (literally: the Book of the Tenth Master) is a collection of compositions attributed to Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib. These consists of: *Jāp Sāhib*, *Akāl Ustat*, *Swayyay* (*Sri Mukhvak*), *Bachitar Nātak*, *Chandi Chritra*, *Chandi Di*

Vār, Chaubis Awtār, Giān Parbodh, Hikayats, Khālse Di Mahimā, Pākhayan Charitar, Rudar Awtār, Shabad Hazāre, Shastar-nām Mūlā, Zufurnāmāh etc. Many scholars believe that most of these poems (except *Jāp Sāhib, Akāl Ustat, Swayyay*) had not been written by Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib but were composed by some of his court poets. The language of these compositions is Punjābī, Persian and Brij.

READING of the SCRIPTURE:

NITNEM: *Nitnem* literally means daily (code of) conduct. In Sikhism, *Nitnem* also means five *Banis* (hymns); which, according to the Sikh Rahitmaryādā, a Sikh is expected to read every day. It includes *Jappi Sāhib, Jaap Sāhib, Swayyay, Rahirās* and *Sohilā*. The first three are supposed to be read early in the morning the fourth immediately after sunset and last one before retiring to bed. Besides these five *Banis*, several Sikhs read many other hymns too; including *Āsa Di Vār, Sukhmani Sāhib, Anand Sāhib* and another set of *Swayyay* etc. as a part of their *Nitnem*.

PĀTTH: *Pāth* literally means recitation (liturgical reading). In Sikh culture, *Pāth* means recitation of *Nitnem* (daily prayer/worship). *Akhand Pāth* (non-stop recitation of Gurū Granth Sāhib), *Sehaj/Sahij Pāth* (recitation of Gurū Granth Sāhib without time limit) too are known as *Pāth*. Also see: Akhand Paath.

AKHAND PĀTTH: *Akhand Pāth* is uninterrupted recitation of *Gurū Granth Sāhib*. It is completed in approximately 48 hours. Several readers perform this recitation in a relay system. The reading goes, in a relay manner, continuously, day and night. At given time (usually two hours per turn), the next reciter picks the line of hymn from the lips of the retiring reciter. There is no fixed number of reciters. Akhand Paath is believed to have its origin in the middle of the eighteenth century. In those days, the Sikhs had to remain prepared to move from one place to another, at a very short notice; hence, they had to complete the reading of Gurū Granth Sāhib in a short time. In the second half of the twentieth century, it became a fashion to perform this ceremony. Ideologically speaking, Akhand Paath is not in consonance with the Sikh philosophy, as a Sikh must not read the Gurū Granth Sāhib simply as a ritual. A Sikh must read, understand, and try to live his life according to the teachings of Gurū Granth Sāhib.

SAMPAT PĀTTH: Sampat Pāth is Brahminic style of recitation of scriptures. In this recitation a specific line is recited after reading of

each stanza/salok. Thus, such specific line is recited for thousands of times. This is, in fact, sacrilege of GurBānī. GurBānī is not a *Mantar* (incantation), treating the specific line, which is recited repeatedly, as *Mantar*. Hence, Sampat Paatth is against Sikh ideology. Similarly, so-called *Sankat Mochan Shabads* (literally: those hymns which drive the troubles out) too are against Sikh thought. These practices have crept into Sikhism through Brahmin priests.

SAHIJ/SEHAJ PĀTTH: *Sahaj/Sehaj Pāth* means non-continuous (at ease) reading of the whole of Gurū Granth Sāhib; where as **Akhand Pāth** is undisturbed continuous reading of the whole of Gurū Granth Sāhib. *Akhand Pāth* has crept into Sikhism lately. *Akhand Pāth* or *Sehaj Pāth* is not a must for a Sikh for any occasion but a Sikh is expected to read the whole of Gurū Granth Sāhib as many times as possible. A Sikh should understand the substance presented in it and. Mere reading of Gurū Granth Sāhib has no significance if one does not want to live according to its teachings.

SIMRAN/MEDITATION:

NĀM JAPNĀ, KIRAT KARNĀ and VAND CHHAKNĀ: Mediation on the Name of God (*Nām Japna*) is fundamental tenet of Sikhism. Human life is meant for mediation on the Name of God. *Nām Japna* is not only formal reading of hymns; it means understanding the Word and living life according to it (Word). *Nām Japna* dispels darkness and leads to self-realization, and finally to union with God. Honest earning (*Kirat Karna*) and sharing with the others (*Vand Chhakna*) is equally important for a Sikh. Without honest earning and helping the poor and the needy (i.e. playing social role), mere meditation is of no use. Such a meditation is more of a hypocritical ritual.

NĀM JAPNĀ as SIMRAN: *Nām Japnā* literally means: remembering (*Simran*) the Name (*Nām*) of God. In Sikhism, remembering God does not mean mere recitation of hymns or any other type of meditation. It means always keeping His sacred/noble fear in our mind. It includes purgation of ego, truthful living (honest earning, sharing with others, helping the needy, defending human rights).

SIMRAN: Literally, *Simran* means to remember. In Sikhism, *Simran* means to remember the name of God. A Sikh must always have God in his mind. It is ever presence of God in heart. God is always inside us, near us, in front of us; and, He dwells in our mind and soul; hence he is a part of our being. In Sikhism, *Simran* does not mean ordinary recitation of His Name, but it means that while doing any (and in fact

every) activity, a Sikh must always have the thought of God in his mind. It stops mind from astraying to evil path. Truthful-living, doing activities of social welfare and humanism are also a part of *Simran* of God. In Sikhism, *Simran* is not a ritual.

GURŪ

In Sikhism, the term *Gurū* has been used for God, the Ten Gurūs and Gurū Granth Sāhib. Literally, Gurū means the Enlightener (one who dispels darkness). This term can't be used for any human being. Sikhism defines Gurū in one-ness with God. *Gurū* is God and God is *Gurū*. Gurū, in Sikhism, is the guide towards the path of liberation (self-realization). Gurū cleanses the mind of the seeker of Truth by helping one purge one's ego. Gurū gives knowledge about the mystery of the Creator, His Creation, and purpose of a human being's existence. Gurū gives realization of Word of God. Without Gurū one can't find way towards union with God.

In Sikhism, Word is Gurū. The grant of the status of 'Gurū' to Gurū Granth Sāhib was the confirmation of the Sikh concept that Word is Gurū. Gurū is also used for the Ten Gurūs. They are called Gurū because God revealed His Word through them. All the Ten Gurūs were one entity, one spirit, but ten separate bodies. When one Gurū coronated his successor he merged his light into the light of his successor. The Sikhs respect the Ten Gurūs but worship *Shabad* (the Word) only. (*Worship, in Sikhism, means love and not any ritualistic functions*). Gurū Sāhibs are not considered as *Awtār* (incarnation of God or descent of God on earth), but they were human beings blessed by God to give His message to the humanity. Sikhism rejects the theory of "descent" of God, on earth, in human (or any other) form. In Sikhism, there is no concept of a person being *Awtār*, Son or Prophet of God. Gurū Sāhibs themselves did not allow to be called as any one of these. Hence, respect and reverence for Gurū Sāhibs should not lead to their worship. Even worship of the photos of Gurū Sāhibs is against Sikh philosophy. [These imaginary photos of some models, said to be those of Gurū Sāhib, ought not to be kept in the homes and Gurdwārās, but some ignorant Sikhs don't obey Gurū's command].

The third usage of the term Gurū is made for Gurū Granth Sāhib. Gurū Granth Sāhib is the Gurū-eternal of the Sikhs; in fact, it is Gurū of the whole of the world. It is Gurū; because it contains the Word (hence it is 'the Word'). Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib granted Gurū Granth Sāhib the status of Gurū-eternal on October 6, 1708. Gurū Sāhib stated that the *Sarbat Khālsā* (all the initiated Sikhs) should be considered *Gurū-Panth* to make Gurmatās for the national issues of the Sikh nation (but not on basic concepts of Sikhism). Here, *Gurū-Panth*

means the "*Panth* of Gurū Sāhib" and not *Panth* as Gurū. See: Gurū Granth Sāhib, pp. 49, 53, 55, 58, 149, 262, 308, 387, 435, 441-42, 463, 466, 597, 635, 650, 722, 763, 802, 878, 942-43, 951, 966, 982, 1332 etc. For detailed study: *The Sikh Culture* by Dr Harjinder Singh Dilgeer (published by Sikh University Press, in 2002).

GURBĀNĪ: Literally "the *Bānī* (Word) of Gurū Sāhibs." In other words, the hymns composed by Gurū Sāhib are their *Bānī*, hence *Gurbānī*. *Gurbānī* is also called *Dhur Dī Bānī* i.e. revelation. The term Bhagat Bānī is also used for the verses of non-Gurū poets of Gurū Granth Sāhib.

SHABAD: Literally: word. In the context of Gurū Granth Sāhib, *Shabad* (*Gurbānī* is revelation, hence the Word of God) is a general term used for all the Sikh hymns.

SHABAD GURŪ (Shabad i.e. WORD as Gurū)

Literally: Shabad Gurū means that the Word is the Gurū. On October 6, 1708, Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib stopped the chain of Gurūs in human form and asked the Sikhs to seek all instructions from Gurū Granth Sāhib (which contained the entire message revealed to Gurū Sāhib by God) i.e. *Shabad*. As *Shabad* is revelation, it is man's direct contact with God.

In Sikhism, *Shabad* as Gurū did not begin from October 6, 1708. Even Gurū Nānak Sāhib had proclaimed that *Shabad* was his (Gurū Nānak Sāhib's) Gurū (Gurū Granth Sāhib, pp. 635, 943). Gurū Rām Dās Sāhib further explained that *Shabad* (*Bānī*) is Gurū and Gurū (his sayings) is *Shabad* (Gurū Granth Sāhib, pp. 982, 1309).

For a Sikh only *Shabad* (word) is everything. Living one's life according to *Shabad* is obligatory for a Sikh. Ritualism, worship, mere reading of hymns is of no avail.

SANT & LIVING Gurūs

The term *Sant* has been derived from the Sanskrit word *Shānt* meaning 'peaceful'. *Sant* is a Hindu concept. There has also been a *Sant Samparda* among the Hindu missionaries. This school emphasized monotheism and devotion of God but not through *Awltārs*, the so-called divine incarnations. Christianity too has an institution of sainthood. Nowadays, several phoney religious chiefs call themselves (or are addressed as) *SANT/BĀBĀ* but none of them is *Shānt* ('peaceful') or spiritual. They seem more of Mafia/cult/gang leaders than being spiritual. These parasites are, strictly speaking, more dangerous to the institution of religion than even atheists/agnostics. It is a tragedy of the

Sikh nation that there are more so-called saints than even missionaries and illiterate and ignorant people respect them (the so-called saints) more than Gurū Sāhibs and/or Gurū Granth Sāhib. But, those missionaries, who live and preach the philosophy of Gurū Granth Sāhib and bring people in the refuge of Gurū Granth Sāhib, are real saintly persons (and they don't allow others to address them 'Sant').

GURDWARĀ

The term "Gurdwārā" is a combination of two words: Gurū and "dwārā" (literally meaning door but here it denotes the abode). Hence, Gurdwārā is the "abode of Gurū." In Sikhism, Gurdwārā is the hub of the Sikh mosaic. A Sikh is supposed to join congregation in the Gurdwārā as frequently as possible. Gurdwārā is not an ordinary place of worship. It is a centre of spiritual, social and educational activities.

Nowadays, a Gurdwārā, usually, has four major sections: (1) The main congregation hall, (2) A *Langar* hall and a kitchen, (3) A *Sarān* (a boarding and lodging place for the Sikhs visiting the Gurdwārā from distant places), and, (4) An office and a library. In most of the Gurdwārās (particularly in foreign countries), a school for teaching of Punjābī language and Gurmukhi script is usually a part of Gurdwārā. A Gurdwārā is not a "*Sikh temple*". It is wrong to call it a *Sikh temple* because a temple is a place where an idol is worshipped and idol-worship is forbidden in Sikhism. Similarly, it is wrong to call it *Sikh church* or *Sikh mosque* etc. Similarly, *Darbār Sāhib Amritsar* is not *Golden Temple*.

Since the time of Gurū Nānak Sāhib, where there were even a couple of Sikhs, they used to gather almost every day. Such gatherings were held in the houses of the Sikhs. With the increase in the number of the Sikhs, *Dharmśālās* ((literally: abode of religion) were established by the Sikhs. The first formal Sikh *Dharmśālā* was set up by Gurū Nānak Sāhib at Kartārpur (Pakistan). It was followed by Khadūr Sāhib, Goindwāl Sāhib, Gurū Dā Chakk (Amritsar), Tarn Tāran, Kartārpur (Jalandhar district), Keeratpur/Kiratpur Sāhib, Chakk Nānakī, Anandpur Sāhib and Paontā Sāhib etc. Towards the end of the nineteenth century the Sikhs shrines began to be known as Gurdwārās.

Most of the historical Gurdwārās were built during the rule of the Sikhs *Misls* (1765 to 1799). Before that time, there were only a few Gurdwārās, which had been built by Gurū Sāhib themselves or were built during their time. After the *Misls'* period, most of the Gurdwārās had been taken-over by the *Udāsīs* and the *Nirmalā Mahants*. The Sikhs had to launch a struggle for the freedom of these Gurdwārās. Hundreds of the Sikhs laid down their lives and thousands were arrested during this Gurdwārā Reform Movement (1920-25). Even

now, most of the Gurdwārās are not being managed in *Panthik* (authentic Sikh) manner. The present election system is not in accordance with the Sikh ideology. Most of the members are elected because of family relationship, tribal or caste reasons and even for money, alcohol or other incentives. The life-style of most of the members of the S.G.P.C. and other managements is in complete contradiction to the Sikh ideology. Like *Mahants* of pre-1920 period, most of the managements of the Gurdwārās consider themselves as the owners of the property of the Gurdwārās.

Now, Gurdwārās have been established in each and every village, town and city of the Punjāb. Even in the other parts of the world, wherever the Sikhs live, they have set up Gurdwārās.

The central and the pivotal object in a Gurdwārā is Gurū Granth Sāhib (the Scripture). Gurū Granth Sāhib is wrapped in fine *rumalās* (clothes). There must be a *Chānanī* (canopy) over Gurū Granth Sāhib. A *Chaur* (it is wrong to call it fly-whisker) must be available for waving it over Gurū Granth Sāhib. Both, the *Chānanī* and *Chaur* are symbols of royalty and their presence is not functional. When Gurū Granth Sāhib is brought inside the congregation hall, all those present there stand up with folded hands. The burning of earthen lamps with *Ghee/Ghio* (with a view of holy-ness of lamps), the ringing of bells and clapping etc. in the presence of Gurū Granth Sāhib, are acts against the Sikh ideology. The use of lamps, for necessary light, in case of power breakdowns, is, however, permitted]. A *Nagārā* (large drum) should be kept in a Gurdwārā and should be sounded at appropriate times.

Nishān Sāhib

On the top of the building and/or in the compound of a Gurdwārā a *Nishān Sāhib* (the Sikh national flag) is fixed. Nowadays, colour of most of the flags, used by the Sikhs is *Kesarī* (saffron) and the colour of the cloth for wrapping the flagpole is usually light blue. At the time of Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib, the colour of the flag was blue. Saffron/yellow colour had been introduced by the *Udāsī* managers of Gurdwārās, during Mahārājā Ranjīt Singh's times. There is no fixed length of the flag but it is usually taller than the building of the Gurdwārā. An insignia (*Khandā*) is surmounted on the top of the flag. This *Khandā* represents the concept of the one-ness of *Mīrī* (temporal) and *Pīrī* (transcendental) in the Sikh ideology.

Usually there are four parts of the complex of a Gurdwārā: the main hall for worship, *Langar* (kitchen), *Sarān* (hostel i.e. residential area) and the school (for teaching of Punjābī language, Gurmukhī script as well as history and philosophy of the Sikh religion). All the

major or big Gurdwārās have all these facilities but, in small Gurdwārās, one or more of these facilities may not be available.

Services at Gurdwārā

Generally, a Gurdwārā remains open to every visitor throughout the day. The services begin before sunrise with the opening of Gurū Granth Sāhib and making an *Ardās* (prayer). After this, *Hukam* (order from Gurū Granth Sāhib) is read from Gurū Granth Sāhib. It is followed by *Āsā Dī Vār* etc. For the rest of the day *Keertan* (singing of hymns) is performed. In a Gurdwārā, only hymns from Gurū Granth Sāhib can be sung. In some Gurdwārās, there are noon and after-noon sessions too. In these sessions, exegesis of Gurū Granth Sāhib and/or the Sikh history is narrated and explained. In the first quarter of night Gurū Granth Sāhib is settled after *Rahirās*, *Keertan*, *Ardās* and *Sohilā* (unless continuous recitation of Gurū Granth Sāhib or Keertan is going on). Men and women both can perform service(s) of Gurū Granth Sāhib.

No pictures of any sort can be hung on the walls in the main congregation hall of a Gurdwārā. In the library, corridors, *Langar*-hall, office etc. the pictures of the Gurdwārās and the Sikh martyrs can be hung. As there is no real picture of Gurū Sāhib, their imaginary paintings of the Gurdwārās should not be hung in the Gurdwārā complex. It is against the Sikh ideology to bow before pictures (or statues). The Sikhs should not bow even before the monumental platforms erected in the memory of Gurū Sāhib or the Sikh martyrs.

How to attend Gurdwārā

Before entering the inner premises of a Gurdwārā every one has to take off one's shoes (if it is possible feet should be washed). Those who are not wearing *Dastār* (turban), they should cover their heads with some cloth. After washing one's hands, one goes directly to the main hall and bows before Gurū Granth Sāhib, makes obeisance (offering of money, however, is not obligatory, one can make obeisance even without offering any money) and then joins the *Sangat* (congregation).

Protocol of a Gurdwārā

Any one, Sikh or non-Sikh, may visit a Gurdwārā, attend congregation and dine in *Langar* but proper protocol has to be maintained. One must take off shoes, cover one's head, must not bring tobacco or its products, drugs, alcohol or other intoxicants etc. with him/her (one should not have taken drugs or alcohol at the time of the visit to Gurdwārā).

Un-Sikh ceremonies (e.g. cutting of hair, animal sacrifice, widow burning, fasting, *Rakhrī*, *Lohrī* etc.) cannot be observed in a Gurdwārā. Festivals belonging to other religions cannot be celebrated in a Gurdwārā.

In case of Akāl Takht Sāhib, only Pahuliā/*Amritdhārī* (initiated Sikhs) can enter the innermost part of the Takht Sāhib.

PRIEST IN SIKHISM

There is no priestly class in Sikhism. Any Sikh, male or female, can perform all the services in a Gurdwārā. Similarly, there are no so-called missionaries (as a class) in Sikhism. Partly due to busy life or for convenience sake and partly because of lack of religious information with a common Sikh, some persons are being appointed as *Bhāī* (literally: brother) or *Granthī* (one who can read Gurū Granth Sāhib, can interpret it and can sing hymns), but they have no special status like the Christian clergy or the Muslim *Mullah* or the Hindu *Pujārī*. Similarly, there is no class of *SANT* as well. In the twentieth century, several such people have emerged who call themselves (or love to be called) *Sant* but it is an unSikh-like designation. In the Sikh Scriptures, term *Sant* has been used only for God. This *Sant*-dom is an intrusion from Hinduism and it has harmed the Sikhs a lot.

THE SIKH INSTITUTIONS

GURŪ PANTH

According to the Rahitmaryādā, approved by the SGPC, all the *Amritdhārī* (initiated) Sikhs, acting together, with the sense of Gurū in them (under the patronage of Gurū Granth Sāhib), constitute *Gurū Panth* (Panth, with Gurū present in them). It does not mean that the Sikhs are Gurūs (or constitute as Gurū); they are the *Panth* of Gurū (Gurū's Panth).

SANGAT/GUR SANGAT

Literally, *Sangat* means congregation. In Sikh context, *Sangat* means spiritual/religious congregation. Wherever there are more than one Sikh family or more than two Sikhs, they form a *Sangat*. When they act in a representative capacity with the sense of Gurū Sāhib in them, they constitute a *Gur Sangat* (*sangat of Gurū*). It also means a *Sangat* where Gurū's teachings are contemplated upon.

AKĀL TAKHT SĀHIB

In Sikh religion, Akāl Takht Sāhib has a unique place. "Akāl Takht" is a combination of two words: *Akāl* (God) and *Takht* (Throne); hence Akāl Takht means: the "Throne of God" or the "Immortal throne". *Sāhib* is used as a mark of respect for Gurū Sāhib and the Sikh institutions. Akāl Takht Sāhib represents the Sikh institution of *Mīrī* (temporal)-*Pīrī* (transcendental). The Sikh concept of *Mīrī-Pīrī* is "oneness" of the two. Both, *Mīrī* and *Pīrī* don't stand apart from one another but they resonate in each other. Meaning thereby that a man of *Mīrī* is obliged to impart *Dharma* (Righteousness) and a man of *Pīrī* must not be a silent observer to tyranny, injustice and inhumanism. He has to follow the path of Gurū Sāhib to usher justice. The Sikh concept of *Mīrī-Pīrī* is the saviour of humanity, justice, righteousness and spirituality.

Gurū Hargobind Sāhib used to hold court on a raised platform. Later, he laid down the foundation stone of the building of Akāl Takht Sāhib, in 1609. The rest of the structure was completed by Sikh savants Bābā Buddhā and Bhāi Gurdās.

It is here that Gurū Hargobind Sāhib used to receive ambassadors, emissaries, diplomats and other dignitaries. In the evenings this was a place for singing of heroic ballads by the "*dhādīs*" (ballad singers), in order to infuse the spirit of "*Chardī Kalā*" (the Sikh concept of high spirits) among the Sikhs.

After the departure of Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib, whenever any important issue arose the Sikh nation held a meeting of the *Sarbat Khālsā* (the Sikh Commonwealth) at Akāl Takht Sāhib. *Sarbat Khālsā* does not mean a big gathering of the thousands of the Sikhs. It is a meeting of the representatives of all the sections of the Sikhs who are loyal to Akāl Takht Sāhib. This "representative house of the Sikh nation" resolves a *Gurmatā* (the Sikh consensus) with regard to a particular issue. The convener of the *Sarbat Khālsā* gathering or the caretaker of the building of Akāl Takht Sāhib issues this *Gurmatā* to the Sikh nation (it may be called a *Hukamnāmā*).

The so-called Jathedār of Akāl Takht Sāhib: On October 12, 1920, the priests performing the routine duties at Akāl Takht Sāhib left the throne unattended. At this, the Sikhs present there, selected a *Jathā* (band) of 25 Sikhs to take care of Akāl Takht Sāhib. *Jathedār* Tejā Singh Bhucher was appointed the *Jathedār* (leader) of this *Jathā*. Since then, by mistake or due to ignorance, the term *Jathedār* has come to be used for Akāl Takht Sāhib.

The designation of "*Jathedār*" of Akāl Takht Sāhib has become so popular among a large number of Sikhs that this is being

considered like Pope-ship and dictatorship or kingship. In the Sikh philosophy and throughout the history of the Sikh nation, there is no mention of a designation such as "*Jathedār* of Akāl Takht Sāhib". As evidenced by the Sikh history, the decisions, with regard to the Sikh national issues, had been taken by the *Sarbat Khālsā* (the Sikh Commonwealth) and the *Gurmatās* (resolutions) of the *Sarbat Khālsā* were released as *Hukamnāmās* by the caretaker of Akāl Takht Sāhib. The caretaker (not the so-called Jathedār, who is a priest-employee of the S.G.P.C.) of Akāl Takht Sāhib cannot issue any orders by himself according to his whim. (It is strange that the Sikh intelligentsia has exhibited impotency by acquiescing with the mutilation of the institution of Akāl Takht Sāhib. On the other hand, the anti-Sikh forces, under the command of the *Anti-Sikhism School* (led by W.H.McLeod, Pishaurā Sinh, Gurinder Mann, Harjot Oberoi etc), too, have collaborated to make attempts at degrading the status of Akāl Takht Sāhib).

HOW MANY TAKHTS (Are these 5)?

The SGPC has accepted five Sikh Takhts. It is mockery of the concept of Takht and especially Akāl Takht Sāhib. There can not be more than one Takht of any nation. In fact, when Gurū Hargobind Sāhib moved from Amritsar to Keeratpur Sāhib, he performed the functions of Akāl Takht from his court at Keeratpur and called it a Takht (now Gurdwārā Kot Takht Sāhib). When Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib went to Patna, that city was the seat of Akāl Takht Sāhib. The same was the case of Bakālā, Chakk Nānakī, Paontā Sāhib and Anandpur Sāhib, Talwandī Sābo and Nander. It is wrong to say that the rest four (so-called) Takhts are meant for preaching Sikhism in those areas or these are meant for deciding local disputes. The reality is that there is only one Takht of the Sikhs and that is Akāl Takht Sāhib. Considering more than one Takht is ignorance. For details consult the book: *Sikh Twarikh 'ch Akāl Takht Sāhib Dā Role* by Dr Harjinder Singh Dilgeer, fifth edition, published in 2005).

SARBAT KHĀLSĀ

Literally, *Sarbat Khālsā* means the Sikh nation as a whole. In the context of the Sikh polity, *Sarbat Khālsā* is an assembly of the representatives of all the Sikh organizations loyal to Akāl Takht Sāhib. This institution has its foundation in the grant of the leadership of the Sikh nation to the *Panth Khālsā* by Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib, in 1708. After the departure of Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib, the Sikh leadership of the time devised this institution to make national decisions collectively regarding various issues of the time. There have been several *Sarbat*

Khālsā meetings in the eighteenth century. After 1805, (Mahārājā) Ranjīt Singh stopped holding *Sarbat Khālsā* meetings because he did not want any force to dictate him in running his political affairs.

Sarbat Khālsā does not mean a huge gathering of the Sikhs as some Sikhs had claimed the same about the gathering of January 26, 1986 and after. In other words, the *Sarbat Khālsā* is the *Parliament* (and not a congregation/gathering) of the Sikh nation.

GURMATĀ

Gurmatā is a decision (consensus) made in the light of Gurū's *Mat* (wisdom/teachings). All the decisions affecting the Sikh nation, reached through a consensus, in the presence of Gurū Granth Sāhib, are called *Gurmatā*. During the eighteenth century, the Sikhs held several *Sarbat Khālsā* (the Sikh Commonwealth) gatherings and passed *Gurmatās* with regard to the military and political planning and the other issues affecting the Sikh nation. If an issue is concerned with the whole of the Sikh nation, the representatives of all the organizations of the Sikhs, which owe their loyalty to Akāl Takht Sāhib, must be represented in such a meeting. With Gurū Granth Sāhib amidst them, the Sikh representatives begin the meeting with a vow that from that moment, and during the whole of the proceedings of *Sarbat Khālsā*, while reaching consensus on any issue, affecting the Sikh nation, they should not consider themselves associated with (or representatives of) any group or organization. A *Gurmatā* can be made about the Sikh national issues or the issues regarding clarifications and/or support of the issues pertaining to the fundamental principles of Sikhism. A *Gurmatā* can't pronounce verdict on Sikh philosophy, not can it change any postulates of the Sikh ideology. A *Gurmatā*, after the *Sarbat Khālsā* has passed it, is released as a *Hukamnāmā*, to the Sikh nation, from Akāl Takht Sāhib. The caretaker of Akāl Takht Sāhib (or any five Sikhs in the name of *Punjab Piārāy*) can't issue a *Hukamnāmā* of his/their own. The decisions with regard to the issues not relating to the whole of the nation are called *Matā* (resolution).

HUKAMNĀMĀ

Hukamnāmā literally means: "Royal Order." *Hukamnāmās* are the letters written by Gurū Sāhib to a Sikh (or Sikhs). The Sikhs respected these letters so much that they used to preserve them as relics. A simple look at such letters (*Hukamnāmās*) is considered as an honour and those who received these letters felt themselves somewhat 'special'. A few of these letters are still in existence (some of them are fake too). (Most of these have been published in the form of books). Besides the *Hukamnāmās* written by Gurū Sāhib, some letter written by

Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib's wife and Bābā Bandā Singh are also available.

Since 1979, the caretakers of Akāl Takht Sāhib have issued several controversial so-called Hukamnāmās, which have seriously harmed this institution in particular and the Sikh Panth in general. For a detail of such so-called Hukamnāmās, consult: *Sikh Twarīkh 'Ch Akāl Takht Sāhib dā Role*.

SEWĀ, LANGAR, SANGAT, PANGAT

SEWĀ

Sewā (service) is a cardinal principle of Sikhism. *Sewā* too is a unique institution of Sikhism. In Sikhism, "*Sewā*" is not ordinary unpaid service. It is voluntary, selfless and humble, without motive, without hope for reward or compensation. *Sewā* can be performed in any form: through money, body, mind etc. *Sewā* can be done by cooking food or by washing dishes in *Langar* (the sacred Sikh kitchen); by sweeping and cleaning floors in Gurdwārā; by helping the poor and the needy in the street; by imparting knowledge; by participating in national struggle; by doing any humanitarian activity and so on. It is a part of a Sikh's being to do some *Sewā* as a daily routine. *Sewā* in a Gurdwārā is generally believed to be more sacramental but it is not so. All *Sewā* has equal value.

Sewā teaches a Sikh to be humble, tolerant, and generous. It brings an end to ego. It gives a Sikh the feeling of being a useful part of humanity. But, on the other hand, if a Sikh performs *Sewā* just for the show or for hypocrisy, one's *Sewā* is not accepted by *WaheGurū*(God) and such a person becomes guilty of the sin (like an impostor). A Sikh, while doing *Sewā*, cannot distinguish between one and another.

LANGAR (the sacred Sikh kitchen)

Langar, in Sikhism, has pivotal place. Gurū Nānak Sāhib started this institution during his stay at Kartārpur. (It was here that Sikhism was well known as an institution). Like *Sewā*, *Langar* too is a unique institution of Sikhism. It is an extension of the institution of *Vand Chhakanā* (sharing with others), *Sewā*, *Sangat* (social cohesion) and social equality. In *Langar*, one learns the practice of the lesson of love for community life and learns to eliminate every type of social distinction. (It, however, does not mean that one has to discard distinction only inside the *Langar* hall; rather one has to adopt it as a principle of one's life). Any one and every one can take meals and perform service in *Langar*, in any Gurdwārā (but one has to obey protocol). *Langar*, though it is free for every one, is not "free kitchen."

It is *sacred kitchen blessed by WaheGurū*. Every visitor to a Gurdwārā is expected to dine in *Langar* (usually before joining the congregation). As far as preparation of food in the *Langar* is concerned, a Sikh should make endeavour to prepare food better than in one's own house. Distribution of *Langar* is alike for every one and any distinction, if made, obliterates its very concept.

Sangat and Pangat

Joining *Sangat* is a must for a Sikh because Gurū manifests himself in the *Sangat*. A Sikh should be attentively present in congregation for possible longest duration of time. One must join *Langar* in the *Langar*-hall to share sacred food. *Langar* is served in *Pangat* (literally row) in the *Langar*-hall. *Pangat* does not simply mean sitting in a row on ground; it means sitting equally at par with each other without any type of distinction (there may be chairs but then every one should get a chair as it is already in practice in so many Gurdwaras). No special meals, seats or sections (in *langar*-hall or any other part of Gurdwārā) can be reserved for any one, whosoever high he/she may be. The concept of *Pangat* (row) is to bring an end to hierarchy of caste, creed, colour, sex, status and all the other differences. Joining *Sangat* and *Pangat* is a very important part of a Sikh's being.

SIKH THEOLOGY

GOD

Sikhism is monotheistic religion. In Sikhism, God is (but) One, His Name is truth. He is the only Creator (and Sustainer and Destroyer of all the creation), is Fear-free, is without enmity, is Timeless, is self-Created and can be realized through Grace of Gurū. In Sikhism, God is Infinite, Omnipotent and Omnipresent. God, in Sikhism, is *Nirankār* (formless). In eastern tradition, *Nirgun* (beyond attributes) and *Sargun* (with attributes) are two forms of God, but according to GurBānī He is beyond both, yet vibrating and operating in every particle of His creation. One can realise and not meet/see Him.

In Sikhism, God never descends on earth in any form, and, He manifests Himself in Nature. Gurū Sāhibs have used several names for God: *Nirankār* (formless), *SatGurū* (true Gurū), *Gurū*, *Prabhu* (Lord), *Thākur* (Master), *Sach* (Truth), *Salāh* (Adorable), *Shāh* (King), *Sāhib* (Master), *Swāmī* (Master), *Sāin* (Master), *Patshāh* (Emperor), *Rām* (Who manifests everywhere*), *Gopāl* (One who nourishes earth), *Govind* (Master of earth), *Niranjān* (without blemish), *Allah*, *Khudā* etc. The most popular term used by the Sikhs is *WaheGurū*. Gurū

Sāhibs address God in the terms of attributes too: *Akāl Purakh*, *Kartā*, *Dātār*, *Dayāl*, *Karīm*, *Kartā*, *Kirpāl*, and *Qādir* etc.

* it is not Hindu mythical god Rāma

KARTĀ PURAKH

Literally: the Creating Person. It is one of the attributes (and Names) of God. According to Sikhism, only He is the Creator and He has created everything out of Himself. The *Samkhya* School of philosophy believes that creation is a result of copulation of *Purush* and *Prakriti*. Sikhism believes that accepting the existence of *Prakriti*, independent of God, would negate the absolute power of God. According to Sikhism, God revealed first Himself and then he created Nature (not from any matter, but out of himself). Further, God has created every thing with one command and not in stages. According to the Sikh philosophy, He is the first Cause and the only Cause of every phenomenon.

He himself has created and He Himself has realized.

Then separating earth from sky, He spreads sky as canopy (on earth).

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.1279)

AKĀL PURAKH

Literally: "A person (*Purush/Purash*) beyond Time (*Akāl*) i.e. God." The term *Purakh* is from '*Purush*' in *Samkhya* philosophy, which stands for the higher person, which copulates with *Prakriti* (Nature) for *creation*. In the Sikh terminology, God has been called *Akāl Purakh* and *Kartā Purakh* also. He is the Cause of every phenomena of every cause. 'He' is *Purakh* but it does not denote His gender:

The wise and the beauteous True Form (God),

Is neither male, nor female, nor bird. (Gurū Granth Sāhib p. 1010)

He is father, mother, brother and he is everything: (p. 103)

(O God!) You are my father, you are my mother,

You are my relations, you are my brother.

You are my protector at all places.

O lovable ! Then whom to fear and worry

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p. 103)

You are my Master, I pray before You.

The life and body are Your gift.

You are my mother and father,

I am your child.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p. 268).

WĀHEGURŪ

Another term for Akāl Purukh is *Akāl Moorat*; literally eternal (*Akāl*) being (*Moorat*). The most popular Sikh term, however, is *WāheGurū*. *WaheGurū* is a conjunction of two words: *Wāhed* (The only One) and *Gurū* (the Enlightener). As Sikhism believes in *wahedat* (monotheism), it believes in Oneness of God. According to another interpretation, *WāheGurū* is a conjunction of *Wāh* and *Gurū*. "*Wāh*" is an expression of wonder and amazement, and, *Gurū* means Enlightener/God, hence *WāheGurū* may also mean: 'the Wonderful God/Enlightener'. It is the most popular Sikh address for God.

In Sikh philosophy, God has been defined as The Only One entity, the (only) Truth, the only Creator, one beyond fear and enmity, Timeless, beyond birth and death, Self-Existent.

O lovable, Master! You (God) are in the beginning, in middle and in the end,

None else is seen.

You are beyond Gunas (attributes); you are in all Gunas,

You are the giver of pleasures.

You are detached; you are busy in enjoying all lovable.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.102)

In Your grace are lots of pleasures.

None knows your end.

Thus, You are the highest of the high.

The whole material is sustained by You.

Whatever is done by You; it is binding on us.

Your strength and dynamism is known only by You.

Nānak says, "I, the servant am ever sacrificing myself for You."

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.268)

According to Sikhism, He is Self-Existent; He is from and by Himself:

He Himself has created and He Himself stands as pillar.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.968)

He himself has created and He Himself has realized.

Then separating earth from sky, He spreads sky as canopy (on earth).

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.1279)

He is omnipotent and Omnipresent; He is the Creator, the Sustainer, and the Destroyer. God cannot be fully defined or explained in words. It can be realized (through Grace of **Gurū**).

NIRGUN

Literally: Beyond *Gun* (attributes). According to eastern philosophy, *Nirgun* (without/beyond attributes) is also known as the Higher *Braham* or *Pārbraham*. He is Unborn, Eternal, Infinite and Self-

Existent. He is indeterminate and incomprehensible. He is non-phenomenal, non-spatial, non-temporal, non-causal and impersonal, and devoid of all qualities attributed to senses.

God, in Sikhism, is both with attributes and without attributes. His attributes manifest themselves in His creation (i.e. *Sargun*) but He is beyond attributes (i.e. *Nirgun*) because He is beyond comprehension by human mind:

"He has thousand eyes, so none.

He has thousand forms, so none.

He has thousand feet, so none..." (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p. 13).

SARGUN

Literally: with attributes. In Sikh literature God has been presented as *Nirgun* (beyond attributes) and *Sargun* (with attributes) both. According to Sikhism, God is *Sargun* when He manifests Himself in His Creation. (*Sargun* does not mean manifesting/appearing in the form of a human being).

CREATION (THEORY OF)

According to Sikhism, God created this universe out of himself. God first created Himself (Meaning: He was ever-existent) and then He created the universe. He created everything with one word and not in stages and at no specific time. None can know the date, day, time, hour, moment, season etc. when the creation took place:

The whole expansion is created out of one Word

From this (Word) are lacs of streams (of creation).

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.3)

Yogi does not know the date and day.

None else knows the season and the month

Only He, the Creator, knows when He created the universe.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.4)

Here are lacs of nether worlds, lands, skies,

After hazardous research Vedas declare it one,

*(Four) Katebs (sacred books of Islam) declare the number of
created species eighteen thousand*

But in essence they are of one stock.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.5)

*Therein are a number of clouds (Ind), moons, suns and a
number of spheres and countries*

*Therein are a number of those who have attained perfection,
enlightenment, mastery and divine forms.*

*Therein are a number of gods, demons, ascetics and a number
of oceans, the source of jewels.*

*Therein are a number of sources of life, forms of speech,
number of rulers, the kings.*
(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.7)

*The air is from the true,
And the air gives water,
With water the three words are created.
In all bodies, the light (of God) is merging.*
(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.19)

*Nūnak says, "Master has created his creation in many ways
and in many forms."*
(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.275)

*Many times expansion expanded
But one God is always there.*
(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.276)

*The creation is from God;
He is all spreading; all that I see is God.*
(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.782)

*For thirty-six ages there was darkness; this he himself
counted.
Then he himself created the whole world and he himself taught
wisdom.*
(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.949)

He Himself has created and He Himself stands as pillar.
(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.968)

*For many ages was prevailing darkness;
Therein Infinite sat in trance.*
(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.1026)

*For billions of years, there was complete darkness.
Neither there was earth, nor sky;
Only His Order prevailed.*
(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.1035)

To sum up, there was nothing but God only for millions and billions of years. First God revealed Himself and then He created universe out of Himself. He created this universe with one command only and not in stages. No one knows the date, time or moment of the creation of this universe. God had destroyed and re-created this universe for unlimited number of times.

HEAVEN & HELL

According to the Sikh philosophy, there is no heaven or hell beyond this world. Life of goodness (absorption on the Name of God) is heaven and an evil life (living in ego and away from the Supreme Love) is hell; and, all this exists on this-earth and in this very life. In



Nanakana Sahib, Pakistan
(the birthplace of Gurú Nanak Sahib, founder of Sikhism)



Darbar Sahib, Amritsar (wrongly called Golden Temple)



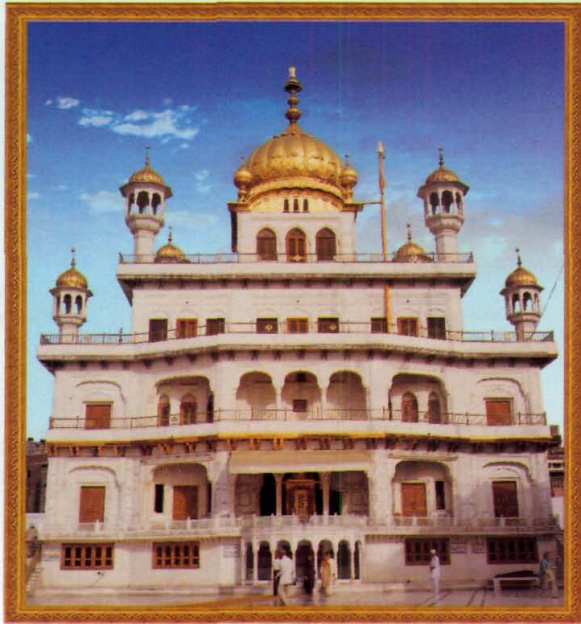


Sis Ganj Sahib, Delhi
(where Gurú Tegh Bahadur Sahib was martyred), on 11.11.1675



Rakab Ganj, Delhi (where head-less body of
Gurú Tegh Bahadur Sahib was cremated)





Akal Takht Sahib, Amritsar.



Kesgarh Sahib, Anandpur Sahib (where Khalsa was revealed)





Bhai Mati Das was sawed alive for not renouncing his faith, on 11.11.1675



Bhai Dial Das was boiled in a cauldron for not renouncing his faith, on 11.11. 1675.



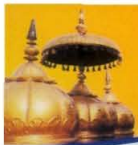


Bhai Mani Singh was cut limb by limb for not renouncing his faith, on 24.6.1734

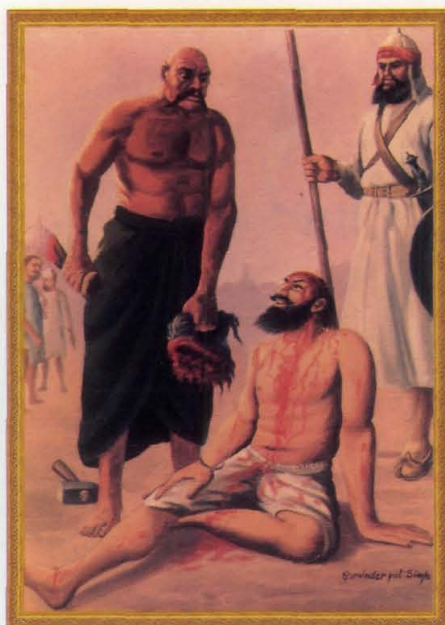


Martyrdom of Bota Singh and Garja Singh (27.7.1739).





Bhai Subeg Singh and Shahbaz Singh tortured to death at toothed-wheel
10.3.1746



Bhai Taru Singh was martyred for not renouncing
his faith. 1.7.1745



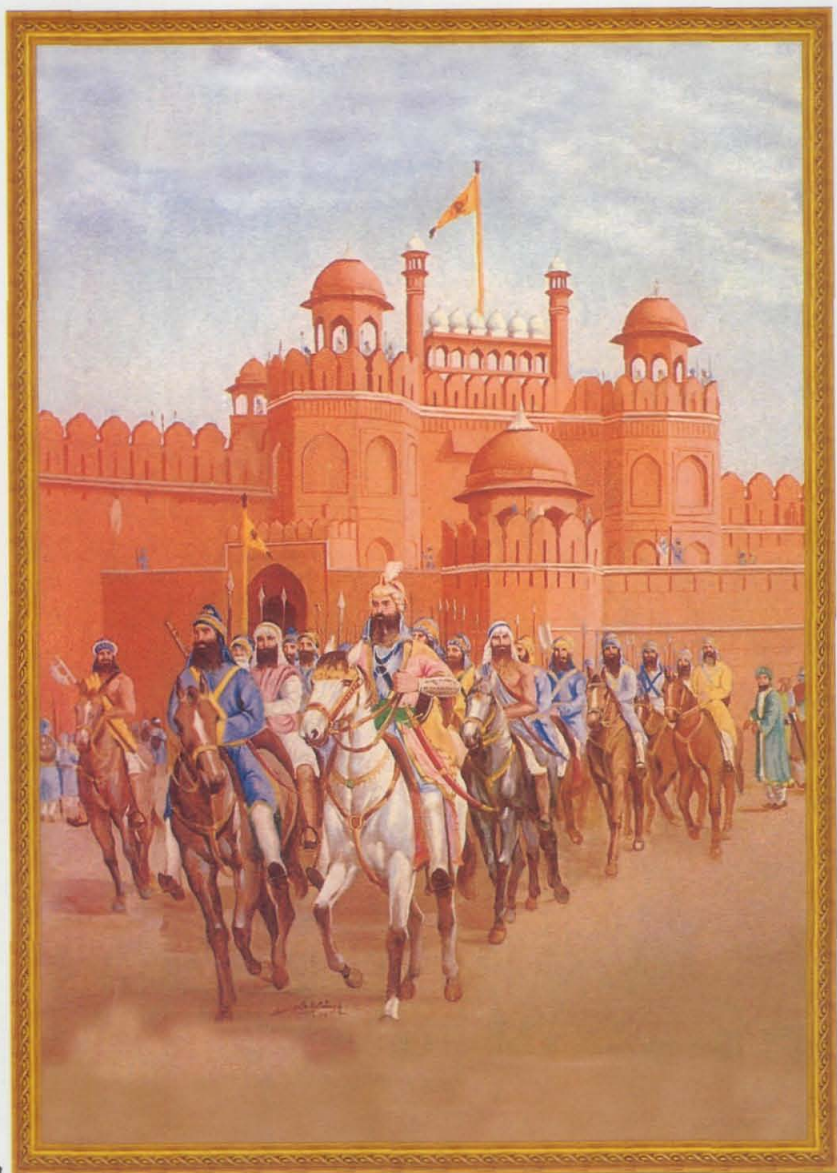


Prices were paid for killing the Sikhs by the Mogul regime in 1710, 1734, 1740-1745...



Sikh women and children were tortured to death by the Mogul regime during 1734-1753





The Sikhs hoisted their flag on the Red Fort at Delhi (11.3.1783)





Masacre of Sikh at Nanakana Sahib, 20 .2.1921.



Beating of Sikhs at Gurú-Da-Bagh September, 1922.





Saka Punja Sahib 30.10.1922.



Masacre of Sikhs at Jaito, 21.02.1924.





Baba Banda Singh Bahadur



Nawab Kapur Singh



Jassa Singh Ahluwalia



Jassa Singh Ramgarhia



General Hari Singh Nalwa



Akali Phula Singh





Jathedar Talwinder Singh Babar



Baba Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale



Bhai Amrik Singh



General Subeg Singh



Bhai Beant Singh



Bhai Satwant Singh



GurBānī, the terms heaven (*Swarg/Baikunṭh/Bahishat/Jannat*) and hell (*Narak/Jahannum*) have been used at several places because it was popular vocabulary, familiar to the people of the day. These references are contextual, relative and metaphoric and not conceptual. Sikhism does not believe in re-birth, hence this birth is not because of **Karma** (past deeds), rather it is **Karam** (Graceful Blessing) of *WaheGurū*(*karamī āvai kapprā, nadrī mokh duār*. Here, *Karam* is Persian term meaning Grace like *Nadar* i.e. Blessing) and not the Karma of Sanskrit:

*One who claims that he knows the unknown, unseen,
He lives in (fools) paradise, in mere talk.
None knows where the paradise is,
But every one says that he knows.
Kabīr says: whom to tell this?
The paradise is in the congregation of saints.*

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.325)

*Let us not desire for (so-called) paradise, and not fear from
living in (so-called) hell,
Whatever has to happen, it will happen, build no hope in
mind.*

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.337)

*The salvation and paradise are in the congregation of saints.
The men of God are blessed with the abode of God (in their
heart).*

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.682)

Heaven is the place where men of God abide.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.742)

The paradise is where Your (God's) praise is sung.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.749)

The paradise is where Your name is recited.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.890)

Many of heavens are not comparable with (His Name).

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.1078)

*Every one wants to go to heaven
Knowing not where heaven is.
Some people do not know even their self;
Yet they talk of heaven.
Till your mind hopes for heaven
You can't have place at His feet.
Kabīr says: What to say now?
The heaven is in the congregation of saints (men of God).*

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.1161)

REBIRTH

Punar-Janam (re-birth), pre-existence of soul, transmigration, metempsychosis and re-incarnation are not Sikh beliefs. According to modern theosophists, these beliefs were prevalent among the Jews, the Hindus, the Christians and the Muslims, in one or another form. The Muslim faith in the resurrection of the dead from graves also seems to have its basis in the concept of rebirth. In the Sikh literature, there are references to ***Chaurāsī Lakh Joon*** (countless species of creation) and *Āvāgavan* (cycle of life and death). But these references are metaphoric and not conceptual. Sikhism does not believe that one is born in human form after living the lives of 8.4 million creatures of different types of different species. Sikhism believes that from amongst the *Chaurāsī Lakh Joon* (millions of creatures of different species), the human life is better equipped than all the other species. Similarly, reference to *Āvāgavan* denotes the fear (created by the Hindus) of life and death and not actual "cycle of birth and re-birth". According to the Sikh philosophy, meditation and truthful living leads to the elimination of the fear of re-birth. Sikhism does not believe in re-birth but it suggests means to get rid of the fear of re-birth created (by the other faiths). Sikhism rejects ***heaven and hell***, existence of the other world, ***liberation*** after death and hence re-birth, re-incarnation, transmigration and metempsychosis. See: Gurū Granth Sāhib, pp. 275, 449, 742, 749, 1078, 1103 etc.

JĪVAN MUKTĪ

Jīvan Mukṭī literally means: liberation from the cycle of life and death. In Sikhism, the concept of liberation is unique and is altogether different from all the other religions. In Sikhism, one achieves *Jīvan Mukṭī* during one's lifetime and not after death. Absorption in His Name, purgation of one's ego, living truthful life, are preconditions to become a candidate for *Jīvan Mukṭī* (self-realization). One can achieve *Jīvan Mukṭī*, however, only by Grace of God:

Those who contemplate upon (God's) Name,

Do succeed in their endeavour,

Nānak says, "Their faces are radiant (they are liberated),

And many more are liberated with them".

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.8)

*Those who serve the true Gurū, are the great men of the
world,*

They get liberated and liberate their whole family.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.161)

Without virtuous deeds none can be liberated.

The gift of liberation is by remembering Name.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.201)

If one eats the non-eatable, then his doubts are finished.

He is liberated while living, since he gets Name to stay in his mind.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.412)

Laughing, playing, dressing, eating; the salvation is all through.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.522)

With the Word of Gurū, the doors of the treasure of liberation are found..

With the grace of Gurū is liberation; thus care for the true Name.

True Gurū is boat and the Word gets across.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.1009)

The liberated while living, is one who earns the Word of Gurū. He ever lives merged in God.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.1058)

The liberated while living, gets the Word to hear that

Real happiness is in truthful living.

Devoid of true Gurū none can get liberation; he comes, goes and leaves dying.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.1343).

A Sikh who is absorbed in love with God rejects even Mukti:

An enlightened person even gives up (even the thought of) liberation.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p. 1078)

I do not wish kingship, do not wish Mukti

I need just the love of His feet

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p. 534)

HAUMAI

Literally: self (*hau*) + me (*mai*) i.e. myself and me. The term *Haumai* has its roots in the Sanskrit word *Aham*, i.e. 'I' and 'I'. *Haumai* is the belief in the supremacy of 'self' i.e. ego. According to Sikhism, it is *Haumai*, which stands as an obstacle between God and Man. But, this *Haumai* too is the creation of God. When a human being understands the delusion of ego, the breach/distance between him and Him disappears. **Shabad** (the Word) can make us understand the delusion created by *Haumai*. When one chooses to live by obeying His **Hukam** (Will/Order), *Haumai* is purged. Meaning thereby *Haumai* is veil (of falsehood); it is a breach created by listening to emotions and not God.

As *Haumai* is the major obstacle in the path of liberation (self-realization), Gurū Sāhibs call it *Diragh Rog* (chronic disease). Gurū Sāhibs have diagnosed this disease (ego) and have also suggested its cure: *Dārū Bhī Is Mahi* (cure of *Haumai* is inherent in it, i.e. purgation of *Haumai* by meditating on His Name) [Gurū Granth Sāhib, p. 466]. To overcome *Haumai* one should absorb oneself in loving devotion of God and should seek the company of *Sādh Sangat* (those who are devotees of God). Still the final apothecary is the Grace of God. It is His Grace that eradicates ego.

In Sikh literature *Haumai* has been used as an ethical phenomenon also. In that case it means ego:

*The ego, the love (worldly) are charming,
All are robbed by vanity.
Those who forget the Name (of God),
And are busy in other deeds.
They are in duality, dead by burning,
The fire of lust is still in them.*

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.19)

*Even when having Purakh (God) in home (heart),
He has not realized; such people are robbed by ego and pride.*

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.34)

*All created is the network of Māyā;
It is load of ego, greed, doubt and fear.*

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.292)

The world is straying in ego, in evil wisdom, in evil deeds, in poison.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.312)

*If my Master puts on, then one can be in (devotion),
The Word creates awareness to kill ego.*

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.415)

*If one realizes (and purge oneself of) ego, then he can reach
Him.*

Devoid of knowledge he talks (irrelevantly) and suffers fits (of delusion).

Ego is serious disease but the cure is in itself.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.466)

Ego has enmity with Name; both do not stay at one place.

*Nānak says: Meeting Gurū ego is gone. Then Truth comes to
stay in my mind.*

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.560)

*Ego is serious disease;
Such a patient acts in others' love.*

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.589)

*If one serves true Gurū, that person realizes;
 If he kills ego, he can find His door.*
 (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.842)

*Nānak says: One knows the mystery of Word if he is blessed
 to know.
 Burning ego, he can merge (in God).*
 (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.941)

*Worldliness is the product of poisonous mixing of ego in it;
 But if one lives inward, that poison will go.*
 (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.1009)

*Bound in bandages, take birth and die.
 Thus ego is the noose of Māyā around neck.*
 (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.1041)

Without Word, who has ever killed ego?
 (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.1046)

*Truth and discipline are at the doors of Gurū.
 Ego, anger are removed by Word.*
 (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.1057)

*Those who realize Order, they get to unite.
 Thus, Word burns the ego.*
 (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.1258)

*The mind is charmed by poison of ego; thus it is like carrying
 heavy load of snake.
 By putting the curing Word in mouth, one kills the poison of
 ego.
 O my mind! The love of ego gives lot of suffering.*
 (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.1260)

*Meeting True Gurū, one becomes pure.
 The poison of ego leaves him crying.*
 (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.1415)

GRACE

A Sikh's prime-most duty is to have faith in His Grace. It is one of the fundamental principles of Sikhism. In Sikhism, God is always Generous and Graceful to each and every being. To keep grudge against God, in one's mind, is a sin. Joy and sorrow must be treated alike and should be accepted as gifts from Graceful God. In order to seek His Grace, one must meditate on His Name, attend the company of the enlightened people (*Sādh Sangat*) and live truthful life; but, still, it is His own Will to grant Graceful Bliss to the human beings. See: Gurū Granth Sāhib, pp. 5, 7, 8, 10, 44, 49, 323, 749, 837, 1020, 1190 etc.

HUKAM

Hukam (literally: order) means the Command of God. *Hukam* is also universal order given by God. A Sikh must always be ready to carry out the Command of God. He/she must always bow before the Will of God. In Sikhism, everything and every phenomenon occur under His Order.

Gurū Nānak Sāhib, in Japjī Sāhib, while answering the question: "How to become *Sachiār* (truthful person)?" says that one can become *Sachiār* "by living according to His Will and Order." *Hukam* is writ on every phenomenon. The creation, life, birth, joy, sorrow, pain, pleasure are all under His Order. When one understands His Order, one does not suffer from the delusion created by ego. In Sikh philosophy, self-realization/liberation, too, can be achieved as per His Will. One can strive, by living life according to His *Hukam* but, still, it is His *Hukam*, which grants us even realization for understanding His *Hukam*. Living life according to His *Hukam* does not entitle one to liberation, but it is fulfilment of one's requirements to become a candidate for His Grace.

Hukam, in the Sikh culture, is used in another meaning too. It also means a hymn read from Gurū Granth Sāhib, at random, in order to find the Command of God, on a particular occasion. Reading of Gurū Granth Sāhib at random, to seek instructions, before beginning any job by a Sikh is also called *Hukam*. Another term for reading hymns for such a purpose is *Vāk Lainā* (to seek a sentence i.e. instruction, from scriptures):

*Everyone is within the fold of Order,
None is outside (His) Order.
Nānak says, "If one realizes the Order,
He will not fall prey to ego".*

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.1)

*Those who started enjoying His Will
They got the doubts forsaken from within.*

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.72)

*Your Order is true, this Gurmukh knows,
By wisdom of Gurū, he shuns ego and thus realizes the truth.*

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.144)

*There is no place other than You (God),
Whatever happens is only Your will.*

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.151)

*Tell what a person can do
Whatever He likes he gets one to do.*

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.277)

This mind has no form, no design,

It is from Order, will realizing be in Order.
 (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.330)

*If reflecting-over Order is accepted,
 Then one can get into the home of Master.*
 (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.471)

*O dear! None can realize Order without Gurū.
 True ones depend upon the power of True.*
 (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.636)

Obey the Order of Gurū and sing the true Word.
 (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.962)

*One comes in Order, dies in Order.
 The seen world is created in Order.
 Obeying Order one wears the robe of honour in His Court;
 He unites with True and merges.*
 (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.1037)

*The whole world is created in Order.
 Those who obey Order, get happiness,
 Order rules over the king of kings.*
 (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.1055)

One who realizes Order is said to be servant (of God).
 (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.1076)

*Nānak says: Those who obey the Order of True;
 They get the true honour (from Him).*
 (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.1089)

It is the Order (of God) that (all) dealings be in order.
 (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.1128)

*Whosoever obeys Order
 That person is accepted (in His Court).*
 (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.1175)

*He writes the fate of every one,
 And uses no pen, no inkpot.*
 (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.1280)

*He creates in Order, destroys in Order.
 It happens lacs of times in one moment.*
 (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.1289)

KARAM (Persian)

Karam is a Persian word, which means Grace of God. Gurū Sāhibs have frequently used the word *Karam* in their writings. According to the Sikh philosophy, each and every blessing is the Grace of God. Birth, life (and death), liberation, joy (and sorrow), comfort (and pain), all are His Grace. A Sikh has an obligation to have complete

faith in His Grace, as He is ever Graceful to the whole of the humanity and not to some selected or chosen people or categories.

KARM/KARMA (Sanskrit)

Karm/Karma means actions. According to the Hindu Law of Karma, one reaps what one has sown (in his previous life). In Sikhism, *Karma* philosophy, unlike Hindu philosophy, does not mean that the human birth is a result of the actions done in the previous life. According to the Sikh philosophy, one gets reward/punishment for one's *Karmas* (actions) in this very life. In Sikhism, hymns which seem to refer to the past life, are meant at clarity of the popular belief; hence relative and metaphoric and not conceptual. According to the Sikh philosophy, human life is a result of God's *Karam* (Grace). Similarly, in Sikhism, liberation too depends upon His Grace. Meditation, purgation of ego and truthful living, by themselves, do not entitle one to achieve liberation, as liberation too is His Graceful Blessing. (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p. 5) Good *Karmas* may lead to a better, pious life, which is an obligatory qualification for consideration for candidature in His Court for liberation.

ĀTMĀ

Ātmā (self) is the element (part, fraction) of *Paramātmā* (Supreme Soul) in human being. Hence *Ātmā* and *Paramātmā* are the same substance. In other words, both are substantially same but qualitatively different. After one's death, *Ātmā* rejoins the *Paramātmā*. According to the Sikh philosophy, God resides in *Ātmā*. Through *Ātmā*, man communicates with God. In other words, *Ātmā* is the transcendental self. The Sikh connotation of *Ātmā* is different from "soul" (term used in general sense), which means spirit e.g. as 'soul' in the proverb: "a man with dead soul." The meaning of *Ātmā* is different in different schools of philosophy. It is a substance (*Nyāya-Visheshaka*); an object of inference (*Samkhya*); an object of intuition or the Impersonate Absolute or *Brahm* (*Upanishadas*) or pure consciousness (*Vedānta*) etc. In the Sikh Scriptures, there are references, which seem to resemble some of the meanings of this term in different schools of philosophy but all these references are contextual or relative and not conceptual (hence coincidental).

MĀYĀ

Some scholars have defined *Māyā* as illusion. According to Vedānt, everything other than God is *Māyā* (illusion), non-existent, false. It is revealed through three *gunas* [*rajas* (energy), *tamas* (greed), and *satva* (truth)]. Sikhism believes that everything that God has

created is true, and eternal; more so because He lives in it. Of course, what is man-made is false and is for a limited period; hence it is *Māyā*. *Māyā* is used for money/wealth also. Mention of *Māyā*, in Sikh scriptures, does not refer to this world/universe rather it refers to delusion which keeps a man away from Truth (God). This world, and every thing of this world, is real (not unreal) but it is ephemeral. This ephemeral aspect is called *Māyā* in Sikhism. The way to overcome *Māyā* is to live truthful life, overcome one's ego and remember God. When God makes a Graceful Glance, a man is born. Life is His Blessing. But, as one grows up, one forgets the Creator and becomes increasingly attached to pleasure, greed, materialism and egotism which are unreal. It is the beginning of the spell of *Māyā*. Such a person gradually becomes a *Manmukh*. His Grace can turn a *Manmukh* into a *Gurmukh*, who is free from the effects of *Māyā*:

*In multiple colours, types and species,
This Māyā (universe) He created.*

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.6)

*The emancipated are in the wisdom of Gurū,
And in love for God,*

They live detached at His feet. (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.42)

The love for greed is off,

By wisdom of Gurū, they merge in ease

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.67)

The Word of Gurū showed Him in my heart,

The Word burnt the greed for wealth.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.120)

Who is big, the 'bigness' is of Māyā.

(In fact) big is one who is intuned with God.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.188)

The whole world is fettered by the love of wealth.

The foolish Manmukhs are burning with ego.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.394)

The Māyā of three Gunas, is the source (of dirt),

In ego one forgets Name.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.647)

We gather wealth, collect money but they trouble in the end.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.648)

*The lust of even great emperors and the landlords is not
quenched.*

Intoxicated in the love for wealth, they are ever indulging.

Their eyes cannot see anything (else).

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.672)

*Of what use is the prestige of wealth, which takes no time in vanishing.
 Being in sleep they don't realize that this (Māyā) is a dream
 And indulge in this (Māyā) unwillingly.
 The idiot is robbed by great greed
 And thus he stands and leaves, just when we are watching him.
 (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.740)*

*The love for family is false; but the idiot Manmukh is indulging in (it).
 (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.787)*

*As is the fire in womb, same is wealth outside.
 The wealth and fire are all along the same.
 The Creator has created this game.
 (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.921)*

*The foolish, the ignorant run after wealth,
 The mind is encaged by wealth; thus the Name of God is forgotten.
 Day and night, man loses faith for money.
 Blinded by the intoxicating wealth man does not remember anything else.
 (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.1427)*

THE SIKH WAY OF LIFE

The Sikh culture and religion are complementary. Daily physical routine of a Sikh is caring for one's body, mind and spirit.

A Sikh's routine begins with early rising. A Sikh should leave his bed at wee hours. It does not mean that a Sikh should get up at 2 or 3 A.M., have shower, meditate upon His Name (and again go to bed). Early rising is not a mechanical clock activity. The concept of early rising means that one should not be lazy. One should remain in bed till one is free from fatigue or slumber:

*He who calls himself a Sikh of the great true Gurū(SatGurū)
 Should rise early and meditate upon His Name
 He should make efforts, early in the morning
 Take shower, have ablution in the tank of Word (Amritsar)
 By repeating the name of God under Gurū's instructions.
 (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p. 305-06)*

*O Bābā ! the pleasure of other sleep is pernicious
 By which sleep the body suffers and evil thoughts over ride the soul.
 (Gurū Granth Sāhib, p. 17)*

A Sikh must be careful about his diet. He should avoid such a diet, which creates unnecessary energy or arouses erotic feelings. One must not eat because of its taste or pleasure. It does not mean that any particular food is prohibited for a Sikh. [He, however, must not eat *Halāl* (meat)]. A Sikh should avoid a diet, which leads him to sinful actions:

*All eating and drinking (water) are pure
God has given substance to every one.*

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p. 472).

But:

*O Bābā ! ruinous is the happiness of eating such food
By eating which the body suffers and evil thoughts over ride
the soul.*

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p. 16)

*Who break the worldly bonds, live on paltry (less than
required) corn and water.*

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p. 467)

Every religion teaches that a man eats for one's survival and does not live for eating. In spite of understanding this principle, most of the people choose to eat tasty, delicious, spicy, crispy, piquant, hard, flavoury, saucy, peppery, high-seasoned, savoury, vigour-giving food. Much of this type of food gives unnecessary energy, which leads to diseases, as well as erotic or aggressive feelings. Sikhism advises simple diet for a Sikh. Gurū Sāhibs don't call simple food as a foolproof safety from diseases and carnal appetite but it certainly helps in checking the excessive trend of lust.

In Sikh ethics, there are references to the dress that is best suitable for a Sikh:

*O Bābā ! the happiness of such raiment is ruinous
By wearing which body suffers
and wickedness takes possession of the soul.*

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p. 16).

A Sikh should avoid a dress, which exposes private (sex arousing, erotic) parts one's body and thus arouses carnal feelings in the wearer or those who watch her/him. Though a Sikh has an obligation to wear a *Kachhehrā* (Sikh shorts) and turban and there is no restriction on wearing any other dress yet there are references in Sikh literature with regard to a suggested dress code. If a dress provokes others to tease a female then it is un-Sikh like for that female. If wearing a dress arouses carnal urge in a man, it is unethical for the wearer.

Now a question arises whether Sikh females don't have a right to look nice and pretty? In Sikhism, piercing nose, ear or any other part of body for wearing ornaments is forbidden. But there is no prohibition or restriction on wearing ornaments without piercing a part of body.

Sikhism, however, makes it clear that a woman may wear good clothes, ornaments or flowers (bracelets etc.) in order to please her spouse. Sikhism does not allow exhibition of female body for any purpose (hence, beauty contests are against Sikh fundamentals). Even Islam and Hinduism don't allow beauty contests. According to Sikhism (and Hinduism and Islam) a prostitute decorates her body for others (customers) whereas a wife decorates or beautifies herself to attract and please her husband. Dressing pattern of a prostitute is different from that of a housewife. There are several references in *GurBānī* referring a woman's attempt to look pretty and attractive to invite her husband to appreciate and love her. Sikhism does not negate a husband-wife relationship including sexual attraction and pleasure.

In 'modern' society, moral values are at its lowest ebb. Prostitution, extramarital relations, adultery, carnal pleasure etc. have reached its apex. Men are dissatisfied with their wives and women enjoy having affairs with other men. Besides, exhibition/exposure of body has become a fashion and a craze, especially among women. Moral values are of no importance to such people. This phenomenon has reached such a stage that this type of women don't like to remain well-dressed or presentable in the presence of their husbands when they are at home; but like to look fascinating, sexy, beautiful damsel and even erotic in the presence of other men. Sikhism forbids such sinful exhibition of a female body. A Sikh female, however, has not to live under veil nor is she supposed to look shabby in public. She must wear such a dress that is presentable but does not invite a man to tease her or consider her as a sex toy or erotic model.

Not only women but men also should be careful about their lives. A Sikh male should not wear such a dress, which arouses erotic sensation in him or on the onlookers. Earlier, Sikh men and women used to visit Gurdwārās in simple, usually white or light-shaded, dresses. But nowadays several people visit Gurdwārās in gaudy and fashionable dresses as if they were part of a fashion parade.

People with lower intelligent quotient (I.Q.) or unstable mind become slaves of fashion very soon but intelligent people can distinguish between nice and nonsense. *In fact, all the present-day exposure of female body is an after-effect of 'women liberation movement', which began with noble ambition of breaking the shackles of females' slavery, but, unaware of the hidden agenda of men, they (women) fell prey to man's wish to gaze at their naked bodies. The males have fooled females in the name of beauty contests, fashion and glamour world and nude-art. Male world has changed the females into sex toys and strangely, women have not been able to read in between the lines and have accepted another kind of slavery.*

THE SIKHS & ENTERTAINMENT

Should Sikhs have some sort of entertainment too? If yes, what should be the "entertainment" of a Sikh? Is there any prohibition whether a Sikh can't play, dance, sing or laugh? Sikhism does not prohibit any sensible hobby, entertainment, pleasure or enjoyment. Gurū Sāhib has said, "One can achieve liberation while laughing, playing, wearing, and eating."

Dancing and leaping are mind's pleasures

Nānak, those who have God's fear in their mind have real joy.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p. 465)

While laughing, playing, dressing, eating

One gets emancipated/self-realising.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p. 522).

We must understand that Gurū Sāhib has put wearing and eating secondary and inferior to laughing and playing. We wear our clothes to cover our body but laughing and playing (i.e. entertainment) is done for pleasure or for relaxation of mind. A Sikh, thus, is not prohibited to have sensible entertainment but it does not mean that one should defile one's mind by watching erotic movies, listening or watching vulgar songs, plays, dances and such other things and activities. In Sikhism, music has not been rejected but even music has its protocol. Thought of God is primary and music (but light) is an aid to concentration. For example, when we enjoy *Keertan* (singing of hymns) our main love should be the thought presented in the *Shabads* and not the sounds of an instrument or the *Rāgas*. Classical singing has its value but it should be secondary and not primary. Today, CDs and cassettes on one hand, and expensive musicians on the other hand, have changed the purpose of singing of hymns. *Keertan* is meant to immerse oneself, through music of Word, into God, but, nowadays one is lost into voluptuous intoxication through music only and the "Word" is missing from it. It can be classified as mere entertainment sans spiritualism hence ear pollution.

CARDINAL PRINCIPLES OF SIKHISM

Sikhism is a commune religion. It is a dynamic way of life. Cardinal principles of Sikhism present this aspect of Sikhism in succinct form. Some cardinal principles are as follows:

KIRAT KARNA (Honest income)

The first and the foremost commitment of a Sikh to his faith is honest income/earning. A Sikh cannot earn his living by cheating, stealing, begging, smuggling, corruption or any other dishonest or unlawful means or by trading in un-Sikh like business (sale of drugs, tobacco products, halāl meat etc.).

VAND CHHAKNA (Sharing with the others)

Along with honest earning, it is obligatory for a Sikh to share his earnings and the other belongings with the others. Every Sikh is expected to spend his/her *Daswandh* for the welfare of the Sikh *Panth* (the Sikh nation), for the propagation of the Sikh religion, for the welfare of humanity through the Sikh institutions.

A Sikh should live simple life. He should earn honestly and share his fortune with the others:

He, who eats what he earns honestly

And from his earnings shares something (with others)

He alone, O Nānak ! knows the true way of life.

(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p. 1245).

NĀM JAPNĀ (Reciting hymns in the praise of WaheGurū/God)

In Sikhism, *Nām Simran* (remembering *WaheGurū*) is obligatory. Besides reciting *Nitnem*, a Sikh must always remember God all the times. In Sikhism, *Nām Simran* does not mean mere recitation of hymns or simply the Name of God. A Sikh must understand the substance of the hymns and try to practice the thought presented therein. Truthful living is a part of *Nām Simran*. Before beginning one's daily routine, before eating, before retiring to bed, a Sikh must meditate upon the Name of God and thank Him for blessing the human beings with His bounties. Besides, during the whole day, while performing one's routine job(s), a Sikh should keep in his mind the Name of God. A Sikh should always remember that God is observing each and every action.

DEFEND HUMAN RIGHTS

It is sacred duty of a Sikh to defend the poor, the weak and the oppressed. A Sikh must not allow injustice or tyranny prevail in any form or at any place. A Sikh should endeavour to defend the human rights of every being. A Sikh should never be a silent spectator to cruelty, injustice, tyranny, terror, inhuman activities etc.

PRAY FOR THE WHOLE WORLD

A Sikh does not seek any thing for himself (or even for the Sikh nation) from God. A Sikh *Ardās* (prayer) is always cosmic in nature. The last part of the Sikh national prayer is: "May Your Grace grant prosperity to the whole of the humanity."

BHĀNĀ MANNANĀ (Accept His Will)

A Sikh is not a fatalist but he does not grudge against occurrence of any disturbing event. For a Sikh joy and sorrow are like two dresses, to be changed frequently. A Sikh has to strive for betterment, but, in case a positive change is not possible at a particular moment, one must accept every situation with a smile.

ALL THE BLESSING IS HIS GRACE

A Sikh must always thank God for all He has blessed human beings with. A Sikh must believe in His Grace and that He grants us every thing as it pleases Him. He takes care of every human being alike. One cannot get any thing in this universe without His Grace. A Sikh must have complete faith in Him.

CHARHDĪ KALĀ

A Sikh always lives in *Charhdī Kalā* (Sikh psyche of living in high spirits). A Sikh must always see the bright side of the life, a better tomorrow. But all this can be achieved through *Nām Simran*, which gives a Sikh *Charhdī Kalā* because only meditating upon His *Name* is the "*Charhdī Kalā*."

When Sikhs meet each other and ask about the well being of one another, their usual answer to the question "how are you?" is "here, it is *Charhdī Kalā* " ("I am in high spirits"). This answer is not confined to a particular section only; it is a part of Sikh culture and the Sikhs' national tradition.

The Sikhs have received this spirit of living in high spirits from their founder Gurū Nānak Sāhib; hence it is their national heredity. Right from Gurū Nānak Sāhib up to the present period, the story of the Sikh *Charhdī Kalā* is a continuous saga of remarkable reality. A non-Sikh may, sometimes, hesitate to believe some of these historical facts because their (non-Sikhs') history does not have such records.

The Sikh *Charhdī Kalā* is a feeling of spirit which prepares one not to be affected by negative thinking, weakness, disheartened feeling, helplessness, wretchedness, despondency, sadness, anxiety, pain, suffering, inferiority complex etc.

It is this *Charhdī Kalā* that has given the Sikh nation power, strength, capacity, capability and positive thinking. For a Sikh, one single Sikh is equal to one hundred twenty-five thousand persons. It does not mean that one Sikh is physically equal to 125000 persons but it is a term, the concept, which gives a Sikh the feeling of spiritual power of not fearing any one but God. It means that even if there are hundreds of thousands of enemies, a Sikh shall not feel disheartened; he should not surrender his principles and his *Dharma* (Righteousness). It is this *Charhdī Kalā* that gave the Sikhs their unique language of high spirits (which is known as *Khālsā/Nihang Bole*). For a Sikh, black grams are almonds, onion is silver, death is beginning of a new journey, urinating is chasing a panther, a cart is a ship and money is just the skin of a fruit. The Sikhs don't hold condolence sessions for their martyrs; they celebrate *Shahīdī Jorh Melā* (fairs to commemorate martyrdom). For a Sikh, even death is not a matter of sorrow; it is end of one journey and the beginning of a new stage, i.e. to be one with God. How could 'union with God' be a matter of sadness or sorrow?

The Sikh national *Charhdī Kalā* is ever existent. Centuries do not affect this Sikhs' spirit for sacrifice and struggle. The Sikh *Charhdī Kalā* was not a history of Gurū Period or of the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries; it is a constant and forever current. How can such a nation be defeated by any situation, circumstances or power?

These basic virtues, if achieved, make a genuine Sikh. Sikhism is Truthful living. If one lives as per the teachings of Gurū Sāhib then it is Truthful life, otherwise wearing of five *K's* (Articles of Sikh faith), reciting hymns, visit to a Gurdwārā will be condemned as mere ritual (Brahminism).

THE SIKH FESTIVALS

Festivity, in itself, in literal sense of the meaning, has no place in Sikhism. A Sikh must rise above these momentary emotions of mind. A Sikh's real bliss or festivity is his moment of meditation. However, the Sikhs observe the days of the birth/martyrdom of Gurū Sāhib and some other Sikh national days in the Gurdwārās. On the days of the important events, the Sikhs congregate in the Gurdwārās, recite *Keertan* (sing hymns) and make prayers. Orators narrate history relating to the event. In some big cities, processions are taken out in the streets. The Sikhs, in large numbers, march through the streets chanting hymns. The most notable days observed by the Sikhs worldwide are: Gurū Nānak Sāhib's birthday (October 20, 1469), Gurū Arjan Sāhib's martyrdom day (May 30, 1606), Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib's

birthday (December 18, 1661), Khālsā Revelation day (March 29, 1698/1699), *Ghallughārā* day (June 4, 1984), Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib's martyrdom day (November 11, 1675) and a few more. (*The dates of the Gurpurabs, in this paragraph, are based on latest research*).

These events are observed as religious and spiritual. *Dīwālī*, *Visākhī*, *Lohrī*, *Rakhrī* (Rakhī), *Holī* are not Sikh festivals and these should not be celebrated, in any form, by a Sikh. Some ignorant/phony Sikhs have tried to find excuses to celebrate some of these un-Sikh like festivals like Dīwālī and Visākhī:

One who believes in (purity of) date and day is a fool, is an idiot.
(Gurū Granth Sāhib, p.842)

UNSIKH FESTIVALS

RAKHRHĪ

Rakhrhī/Rakhī is a Hindu religious ceremony. On this day, each year, the Hindu females tie a thread or some decorated wristlet/bracelet around the wrists of their brothers; and the brothers, in return, promises to protect them at the time of crisis (Some intellectuals humorously call it: "one year's contract, made by Hindu brothers, for defending their sisters"). This ceremony is in contradiction with the Sikh philosophy as a Sikh is bound always to protect not only his own sister but also the women folk in general. To tie a thread of along with a *Karā* (improperly called the Sikh bracelet) on the wrist is like an attempt to insult the *Karā*; hence a Sikh must never tie *Rakhrī*.

LOHRĪ

Lohrī is a religious festival of the Hindus. It is not a cultural or seasonal festival. The Hindus observe it on the day sun enters Capricorn on the eve of *Sangrānd* of *Māgh* month (usually January 12-13). It symbolizes worship of the mythical Hindu god of fire (*Agnī Devtā*). It has nothing to do with Sikhism, hence not a Sikh festival though some ignorant Sikhs do observe it due to lack of knowledge about or commitment to Sikhism.

DĪWALĪ

Dīwālī is a Hindu festival falling on *Katak Vadī* 30 (in October/November). On this day, the Hindus worship the mythical goddess of wealth. *Dīwālī* or the mythical goddess of wealth has nothing to do with Sikhism. During the eighteenth century, the Sikhs used to congregate at Darbār Sāhib Amritsar or elsewhere twice a year. They chose the days of *Dīwālī* and *Visākhī* for convenience sake. During those days, the Sikhs had to depend upon the current *Bikramī*

calendar, the only one that was available to the people in those days. Similarly, the lighting of lamps at Amritsar on the plea that on that day (the Dīwalī day) Gurū Hargobind Sāhib reached Amritsar after release from Gwalior Fort prison does not make it a Sikh festival. (*Moreover, Gurū Hargobind Sāhib, after his release from Gwalior Fort prison in October 1619, reached Amritsar on December 28, 1620, and, even if the Sikhs, lighted lamps in Darbār Sāhib on that day, it was, at least not the Hindu-Dīwalī day*). The celebration of Dīwalī, at Amritsar, began at the time when the management of the Gurdwārās came in the hands of the Udāsī *Mahants*. Though the Gurdwaras came under the control of the Sikhs during 1920-25 struggle, but the new management (SGPC) continued celebrating Dīwalī. Later, ignorant Sikh leadership began playing fireworks too. Besides being an anti-Sikh observance, it is sheer wastage of offerings of the devotees on one hand and pollution hazard on the other hand.

HOLĪ

Holī too is a festival of the Hindus. It is observed on *Phaggaṇ Sudī* 15 (early March) to commemorate the death of a mythical Hindu evil spirit named Holikā. On this day, the Hindus throw colorants or spray coloured water on each other. Nowadays, it has become more of hooliganism than religion. Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib, in order to wean the people away from this silly custom, organized wrestling and sword-wielding competitions, mock-battles and practising art of warfare manoeuvre etc. at Anandpur Sāhib. Gurū Sāhib named it *Holā* (in fact, *Hallā*, literally: attack) *Mahallā* (literally: place), in other words: 'attack and the place for attack'. Now, it has become an annual ritual to hold a normal festival on the day, next to *Holī*, at Anandpur Sāhib. The date or the day itself, however, has no religious sanctity for the Sikhs. It is strange that some Sikhs have adopted it in the form of a Sikhized-Holī festival. On this day, some foolish Sikhs throw/spray even colorants/liquid dye on the others; completely in contradiction to the Sikh ideology.

SANGRĀND

The term *Sangrānd* has its roots in the word *Sankrānti*, which literally means: the moment when sun passes from one sign of zodiac into another. The first day of each month of the Bikramī calendar is decided through this manner. *Sangrānd* has no importance in Sikhism; it might be auspicious for some Hindus. Some phoney Sikhs hold special gathering in Gurdwārās on the day of *Sangrānd*, apparently in contradiction to the Sikh philosophy. It is strange that the Sikh intelligentsia has not shown courage to ask the Sikhs to stop mutilation

of the Sikh ideology. It is rather shocking that the Dharam Parchār Committee of the Shiromanī Gurdwārā Parbandhak Committee (S.G.P.C.) passed, released and enforced an anti-Sikh calendar in 2003, which not only asked the Sikhs to observe anti-Sikh days of Sangrānd, Massiyā and Pooranmāsī but also it (SGPC) itself did celebrate the same in the Gurdwārās under its management.

POORANMĀSĪ

Literally: the night of the full moon. According to Sikhism there is no auspicious day or hour; hence *Pooranmāsī*, *Massiyā*, *Sangrānd* etc. are of no importance for a Sikh. The Sikhs celebrate the birthday of Gurū Nānak Sāhib on the *Pooranmāsī* of *Kattak* month of the Bikramī calendar (which fell on 20th October in 1469).

MASSIYĀ

Massiyā means the day of moonless night. Some Hindus treat it as one of the auspicious (and some people consider it inauspicious) days. The Sikh philosophy rejects the notion of auspiciousness or inauspiciousness of any particular, day, hour or moment. A few phoney/ignorant Sikhs bathe in some specific *Sarovars* (tanks of Gurdwārās which had been built for bathing of the visitors) especially on this day. This is in complete disregard of the injunctions of Gurū Sāhib.

THE SIKH CEREMONIES

Child Birth

There is no recognised formal Sikh ceremony related to the birth of a child. However, there is a tradition that the Sikhs make "*Ardās*" (prayer) after the birth of a child in order to thank *WaheGurū* (God) for having blessed them with a child. The parents of the child try to bring the child to a Gurdwārā as early as possible (depending upon the health, weather the other circumstances). There is, however, no limit of time.

Naming of a Child

The first proper ceremony, the family of a newborn takes opportunity of, is the naming of the child. The parents of the child visit a Gurdwārā, offer *Kurāh Parshād* (blessed food) and make *Ardās*. Then the *Granthī* (or any one else) reads "*Hukam*" (hymn at random) from Gurū Granth Sāhib. The name of the child is selected such as to begin with a letter selected from the first word of the *Hukam*. Sikhs may select a name for the child beforehand and then make a prayer

before Gurū Granth Sāhib to seek blessing/approval of WaheGurū. Suffix "Singh" (for males) and "Kaur" (for females) is a must for a Sikh.

The Sikh Marriage

In Sikhism, marriage is a sacred institution. A Sikh is expected to live the life of a householder. Except for unavoidable circumstances, a Sikh must not remain celibate. Sikhism does not deny the existence of a sexual being in a man, but, in Sikhism, marriage is not performed for gratification of sexual desire or for enjoyment of carnal pleasure. For a Sikh, a marriage is must in order to check him/her from committing sexual sins. Similarly, the purpose of marriage is not mere creation and upbringing of children.

In Sikhism marriage is sacramental. It is a socio-spiritual union of two souls to play their social and spiritual role in this universe. A Sikh and his/her marriage partner, while living in this world as average social beings, have to meditate to achieve liberation (self-realization).

A Sikh, while living the life of a householder, must escape from attachment to worldliness. A Sikh must perform his duty as a husband/wife and as a father/mother. But, for him his/her spouse and children are not his/her "everything"; he/she has a duty to his/her brotherhood, to the society and to the God, who has created him/her.

DATING

Dating literally means: making an engagement or appointment to see someone. Nowadays, it is more known as a get together with a person of opposite sex. Dating a person of opposite sex has, now, become a common affair among the western people, especially the youth. Earlier, it meant meeting, talking, sharing eatables, playing games and understanding each other's nature but, lately, drinking and sexual play has become almost an integral part of dating. In Sikhism, there is no taboo of meeting a person of opposite sex for understanding or even for enjoying just the company. However, sexual play, with a person who is not a spouse, is forbidden in Sikhism.

LOVE

Love is an intense feeling of deep affection, fondness or attachment or great liking for a person or a thing. It may also include sexual passion. From cupid point of view, it means a romantic or sexual relationship between two persons (usually of opposite sex). According to Sikhism, love is the basis of a human being. Though, Sikhism does not prohibit love between parents and children, brothers and sisters,

husband and wife, relatives and friends but the most profound is human being's love for God. According to Sikhism, sexual love between the persons, not married to each other, is a sin.

ARRANGEMENT OF A SIKH MARRIAGE

When children grow up and enter adolescent period, the parents should begin giving them necessary knowledge about sex and marriage. It should be a sort of preparation for marriage. The children should be given information about sex, philosophy of marriage, religious implications of marriage, cultural traditions, family customs etc. If we have already educated the children about their future and their marriage, there won't be any problems before or after the marriage.

It is a common belief that the Sikh marriages are "arranged". It is simply incorrect. In Sikh culture, the parents, the relatives and the other friends help the Sikh boys and the girls find their marriage (life) partner. There is no forced marriage in Sikhism. In the case of the boys, he is given facilities to choose his would-be wife. Similarly, a Sikh girl gets facilities to select her life-partner. The young boys and girls, being less informed about the lives of their would-be life-partners and their in-laws, are, usually unable to analyse the pros and cons of choosing a partner. The youth, usually, does not have information about the personality of the partner (most of the so-called courtship marriages are a result of infatuation but not understanding), family background etc. The parents or the other relatives provide such necessary, important and useful facts. The boy gets acquaintances of several girls and the girls are told about several Sikh boys. They can select from amongst them the one who would come up to their expectations. After the first approval the boy and the girl meet each other. If both agree to become life-partners, the betrothal ceremony is performed. The boys and the girls are also free to tell their parents or guardians about some person already known to them and the parents evaluate his nature, personality, career, family and the other credentials. This makes the job of the youth very easy; hence lesser possibility of going wrong. So, in Sikhism, there are no forced marriages. In most of the cases where the youngsters had taken their own steps the results were disastrous.

There is another difference between the so-called "love marriage" and the Sikh marriage. In the case of the western society, the youth first love for some time and even for years. These "couples" celebrate and enjoy their marriage much before the performance of marriage rites. Due to this, they find no much charm in marriage; hence it leads to divorce within a short period. On the other hand, the

Sikh marriage is the beginning of love. This tie of love, usually, goes on being tighter and tighter.

In Sikhism, there is no command restricting polygamy but with the exception of a few cases, the Sikhs practice monogamy. The exceptions have been made in the case a sterility or some chronic disease of a spouse or some other circumstances. Even such cases are not many and can be counted on fingertips.

THE SIKH MARRIAGE RITES

Anand Kāraj is the Sikh marriage ceremony. The exact date of its origin is not known but references are available mentioning that the marriage of the children of Gurū Sāhib had been performed by way of this ceremony. Gurū Sāhib had made it obligatory for a Sikh not to marry except through *Anand Kāraj* ceremony. During Gurū Sāhib's days, making prayer for blessing the couple was the completion of the ceremony of *Anand Karaj* (*Lāvān*, circumambulation around Gurū Granth Sāhib began in the second half of the nineteenth century).

A Sikh marriage ceremony is usually conducted in a Gurdwārā. The marriage ceremony is performed with *Gurū Granth Sāhib* amidst in the hall or the room where the ceremony is to be performed. First *Keertan* is performed. By this time the bridegroom and bride take join and take their seats in front of *Gurū Granth Sāhib*, the bride on the left side of the bridegroom (place of the bride on the left side of the bridegroom has no significance in Sikhism; if the girl sits on the right side, it would not make any difference). The couple is expected to wear simple dress.

The *Anand Karaj* begins with an *Ardās*. It is customary that only the couple and their parents stand up for *Ardās* while the others keep sitting. It is possible that it might have been started in order to introduce the couple and families. After the *Ardās*, the *Granthī* or a religious professor or a prominent person gives a brief explaining the concept and the significance of the Sikh marriage and the obligations of the partners to each other.

In Sikh marriage system, the couple circumambulates Gurū Granth Sāhib four times in clock-wise direction while *Lāvān* [*Lāvān* literally means circling], the hymns from Gurū Granth Sāhib (at pp. 773-74), are read and sung and the ceremony is complete after an *Ardās* (the Sikh prayer). Some Sikhs don't perform nuptial rounds around Gurū Granth Sāhib because they believe that this is copy of the *Sapatpadī* (the Hindu marriage ceremony). They profess that simple recitation of four hymns from Gurū Granth Sāhib followed by an *Ardās*, or even a simple *Ardās* completes the ceremony. After this *Karāh Parshād* (the Sikh sacred food) is distributed to every one and,

now, the couple retires to the bride's house or to some room of the building where the marriage is being performed. Here, the relatives and the friends give presents to the couple.

In a few cases the relatives and the friends garland the couple and present them presents in the congregation hall. It is an un-Sikh like practice. To maintain the honour of *Gurū Granth Sāhib*, such acts should be performed in a separate place.

The hymns of *Lāvān* describe union of man with God. The four *Lāvāns* are the four stages of this union. The first is the stage of understanding the necessity of union; the second stage is living in His noble fear and devotion; the third stage is surrender of one's ego and immersion of oneself in Him and it is followed by the (the fourth) stage of union. It indicates that the bride and the bridegroom have to become one soul in two bodies and then they have to strive for union with God. Hence; the Sikh marriage is more sacred than marriages in the other religions. According to Sikhism, the time of marriage and the marriage partner are pre-destined. (See: *Gurū Granth Sāhib*, pp. 700, 778).

According to the *Anand* marriage ceremony, both the partners should be Sikh (otherwise this marriage is invalid). An Act "Anand Marriage Act" was passed, on October 22, 1909, to bring Anand marriage under legislation. It does not mean that the Sikh marriage ceremony has its origin from this date. Bhāi Daya Singh, in his *Rahināmā* (code of conduct), has mentioned the Sikh wedding rites.

DIVORCE

Divorce means legal dissolution of a marriage. In Sikhism, there is no place for divorce. A Sikh *Anand Karaj* is sacramental and it cannot be annulled by a decree of any court. Nowadays, laws in different countries grant the right to divorce to every resident and there is a spate of legal divorces under matrimonial laws, but it is utterly in contradiction with the Sikh faith. In Sikhism, husband and wife are: "one spirit (light) in two bodies." Their union is pre-ordained by God and hence is a sacred bond. Hence; divorce is disobedience of the Order of God and is a sin and it leads to sufferings. The Sikh marriage hymns teach that the husband and wife have to live as dedicated partners like saints who are dedicated to God. This dedication is equally for the husband and the wife both. Both should always be prepared to sacrifice for each other. They should endeavour to purge themselves of ego and finally one's own self. Each one should feel oneself incomplete without the other. One should always have noble fear that the other partner may not feel neglected even for a moment. This noble fear should not be considered as even fear in the formal

sense, it is rather commitment; and it is an understanding, it is attachment, it is sacrifice and, of course it is love in its fullness.

ABORTION & FAMILY PLANNING

Abortion too is against Sikh ideology. Sikhism promotes family planning through self-control but killing of a child in womb is against the Sikh ethics. Killing a child in mother's womb is disobeying the Command of God. Abortion is, usually, resorted to avoid the birth of a daughter. According to the Sikh *Rahitmaryādā* (code of conduct) one who kills one's daughter is excommunicated from Sikh nation. To use condom, spiral or other means of avoiding conception are not in violation of Sikh ideology.

DEATH

An anecdote from the life of Gurū Nānak Sāhib explains the Sikh concept of death. Once, Gurū Sāhib asked his musician companion Bhāī Mardānā to go and buy truth for one paisa (penny) and falsehood for another paisa. Bhāī Mardānā bought *Death* as Truth and *Life* as Falsehood. My purpose is not to relate the whole story. The summing up of the story was: "Death is a truth (certainty) and life is falsehood (ephemeral)".

Sikhism does not consider life as useless or meaningless; however, it is transitory. According to Sikhism life is a journey towards union with God. The process or the period during which we are trying to be one with God can not be meaningless, it may be ephemeral. The purpose of the life of a Sikh is to meditate on His Name:

*This human body (life) has been given to you
This is your chance to have union with God
Other activities are of no avail to you
So, join the company of godly people and contemplate the
Name of God
Make efforts for crossing the terrible world ocean
In the love for worldly affairs,
the human life is passing away in vain. (p. 378)
O mortal ! you have come to this world to benefit yourself
With what useless activities are you engaged ?
The entire night (life) is coming to an end (p. 43)*

A Sikh considers death as the greatest reality (certainty) of the world. One may not be certain about anything else but one thing is one hundred percent definite that the days of a human being's stay in this ephemeral world are limited. One, who is born, is sure to die, sooner or later.

But, as it is "the reality", one should always be prepared to accept it. One should not be afraid of it, though it is a truth that an average man fears death:

The people in the world like not death and (try to) conceal themselves from it,

Lest death's courier should catch and take him away. (p. 447)

But those who know this as reality don't fear it. When something is sure to happen and no one can stop it, then it should be accepted with a smile:

Only then one should worry if a thing, not expected, comes to happen

This (death) is the way of the world

O Nānak, none is ever stable (surviving) in this world. (p. 1429)

Kabīr says, death, of which the whole world is terrified

Is pleasing to me.

It is in death alone that one is blessed with the Perfect Supreme Bliss. (p. 1365)

The moment of our departure from this world is predestined. We are born under the 'order of God' and we shall leave this world as per His Will:

O Nānak, the mortals come when they are sent (by God)

(they) depart when called back. (p. 1239)

This is granted that he who is born shall die. (p.375).

Who so ever is created, him death destroys. (p.227)

The recorded time of marriage can't be postponed

Explain (O man) this to your soul. (p. 1377)

No one knows how long one is going to live. One thing is definite that every day the span of life decreases by one day; with every breath we loose one moment of our life:

By day and night the span of life goes on decreasing. (p. 13)

The day dawns, then it sinks

The age diminishes but man understands not.

The mouse (of Time) is daily gnawing down the rope of life. (p. 41)

In Sikhism, death is not a matter of sorrow. It is the *Bhānā of WaheGurū* (Will of God). According to the Sikh terminology, death means *final accomplishment*. It means one has completed one's stay in this world (Sikhism, however, does not believe in any 'other' world). A Sikh has a fixed duration of stay in this world. Hence, accomplishment of this role can not be a matter of sorrow. This is an extension of the Sikh concept of *Charhdī Kalā* (living in high spirits). A man may live

for a hundred years or fifty years or ten years or even just for one day. In Sikhism, completion of one's stay in this world is not measured according to the length of one's stay. It is evaluated according to one's role in the world. One can accomplish his role in a short period; the others might not be able to perform it within several decades.

After physical death, according to Sikhism, there is no 'other' world. The next stage after death is that of oneness with God. The soul of a person leaves one's body and becomes a part of the Supreme Soul (God). Union with God must be a matter of joy (and not sorrow). Gurū Sāhibs have forbidden Sikhs to lament the death of a beloved one (the following is the command given by Gurū Amar Dās before his death to the Sikhs):

Let no one weep for me after I am gone.

That is not at all pleasing to me. (p. 923).

&

O Father, the mortals bewail for the sake of worldly objects

All bewailing is vain.

All weeping is vain

The world is forgetful of God and weeps for wealth. (p. 579)

According to Sikh way of life, the body of a dead person is usually cremated (however, there is no restriction about disposing off the dead body in any other manner). Human body is made of five elements. After one's death, these elements again become a part of the world of elements and the soul becomes a part of the Supreme Soul:

The body is dust, the wind speaks therein

Consider O wise man! Who is it that is dead. (p. 152)

The breath merges in the air

In fire, the fire mingles

The dust becomes one with dust

What supports the bewailer (he himself has not to stay forever here. (p. 885)

O clever and wise men! Know that the body is made up of five elements.

Be you sure, says Nānak, you shall blend with Him from whom you have sprung. (p. 1426)

As water gets blended with water

So does the light blend with the Supreme Light. (p. 278)

A Sikh must bow before the Will of God. There is no doubt that we cannot forget the memories of our deceased beloved friends and relatives.

DEATH RITES

After the death of a Sikh, his body is usually cremated (washing the dead body has nothing to do with Sikh philosophy). *Keertan* (singing hymns) follows it. Singing hymns in His (God's) praise or about the concept of death is a reminder, to all those who are present, at such an occasion, asking them to remember that everyone has to die after all. Hence, we must live a Truthful life. When everyone has to die, why should one not live it in a proper discipline and in an atmosphere of love and meditation? Those who live Truthful life, or die for a noble cause, are accepted in the court of God:

Fruitful is the dying of the brave persons (who die for a good cause),

Whose death is approved by God. (p. 579).

EUTHANASIA

Euthanasia means bringing about a gentle and easy death in the case of an incurable and painful disease. According to Sikhism, it is only God who has authority over life and death. A human being must not take one's own or another's life as it is like challenging God's authority. But, scholars believe that as far as an incurable and painful disease is concerned, there should be no taboo. (*On the other hand, some scholars believe that no disease is incurable*). It is true that pleasure and pain (including the pain of incurable and torturing disease) is in God's Will; however, one must have a right to bring an end to such suffering by euthanasia. Similarly, if one co-operates in giving relief to a person from such a painful life, he/she is not a sinner.

SUICIDE

Suicide is taking life of oneself. Sikhism does not allow killing oneself in any situations. However (as some scholars believe), when one is suffering from some incurable disease and wants to get out of it for relief as well as for relieving other's from observing his (patient's) grief, should not be considered as suicide.

HAIR, BEARD & MOUSTACHE

Kes (uncut hair) is one of the most conspicuous aspects of a Sikh's being. A Sikh can be recognized from amongst hundreds and thousands because of his/her hair and turban. In Sikhism, *Kes* (hair) invariably means 'unshorn hair'. Hair is 'seal' of Sikhism. In Sikh religion hair, beard, moustache are obligatory for a Sikh. Gurū Sāhib has clearly said that if a Sikh cuts his/her hair, he/she ceases to be a Sikh. There cannot be a "clean shaven" Sikh. A Sikh is a Sikh and

without hair he/she ceases to be so. A Sikh must not cut hair from any part of his body in any situation. There is no concession or exemption on this issue. It is final and obligatory. Similarly, before one wishes to rejoin Sikh faith, he has to keep unshorn hair and get initiation. One of the commands given at the time of Sikh initiation is 'not to have any social relations with those (Sikhs) who cut their hair (*Sir-gumm*)'.

It is one of the five articles of the Sikh faith. A Sikh shall opt for death when he has to make a choice between "life and hair." There are several instances in history when such a situation arose and the Sikhs refused to compromise hair for life. In 1745, Bhāi Tarū Singh was offered to choose between cutting of hair and chopping of his skull and he opted for the latter. There is an episode from the life of the Patīālā rulers Ālā Singh and Amar Singh of Patīālā also, who had to pay a heavy price for saving their hair.

A Sikh, in his daily prayer, at least twice a day, seeks from God, the power to live throughout his life with uncut hair. Though, these days, a very large number of persons who were born as Sikhs have cut their hair and it is a shame that still they express their claim to Sikhism. They are hypocrite liars, as they have no right to call themselves Sikh. When a Sikh gets initiation, the *Punj Piāray* (who perform the ceremony of initiation) command in unequivocal words the four prohibitions to be strictly followed and cutting hair is one of these four. Disobeying this commandment makes a Sikh (in fact former Sikh) an apostate and he/she has to get re-initiation before considering/claiming/declaring himself/herself a Sikh.

Hair, for a Sikh, does not mean hair on head only. It includes beard and moustache too. Those, who choose to cut their hair or trim their beards or moustaches, can't claim themselves to be Sikhs. A fine-looking Sikh is one who keeps untied (flowing) beard. Such a figure is known as *Darshanī Dārḥā* (respectable beard).

Beard and moustache have been a part and parcel of a Sikh's being since Gurū Nānak Sāhib. In 1695 (a couple of years before revelation of Khālsā), Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib declared unshorn hair as obligatory for a Sikhs. It is an inseparable part of a Sikh's being. A Sikh is identified specially because of his beard and turban.

After 1947, some Sikhs began trimming their beards and moustaches. Up to 1960s, there were a very small percentage of such persons who shaved off their heads, beards or moustaches. By 1978, the number of such persons rose very high. The Indian government began encouraging, promoting, helping and patronising those who cut their hair, beards and moustaches. Majority of the Hindu officers gave jobs and promotions to those who had insulted their hair. It resulted

into disappearance of beards, moustaches and hair of a large number of Sikhs.

In foreign countries several Sikhs, partly due to racial insults, renounced hair and beards. In fact, it was their weakness as well as their weak commitment to Sikh faith, which made them cut their hair. By 1978, situation was so alarming that on some occasions it was almost impossible to find even five Sikhs with hair and beards. However, the killings of 13 Sikhs, at Amritsar, on April 13, 1978 by the Delhi-based Nirankārīs, and, particularly the attack by the Indian army on Darbār Sāhib (4.6.1984) brought a major change in the Sikh psyche and thousands of Sikhs in foreign countries and hundreds of thousands of Sikhs in the Sikh homeland, not only stopped cutting their hair but also got initiation.

A Sikh must not dye his/her hair, beard or moustache. This act is liable to religious punishment. Similarly, a Sikh must not pluck white/grey hair from any part of his body. It is a misconceived notion that dying hair can conceal one's age. Nor it is true that a black-haired or dark-brown haired person is (or looks) stronger or younger. Those who dye their grey hair are, in fact, mentally weak persons who don't want to accept that they have become 'senior' in age. Strictly speaking, one who dyes one's hair in order to conceal age loses his/her credibility as he can try to deceive others in any other situation, under any other garb, in any other manner, with another excuse.

A European writer, when asked 'what is the best figure of a man?' answered, "The best appearance of a nice-looking man on this earth is that of a Sikh with untrimmed beard." He further said, "The worst appearance of a person is a Sikh who has insulted his beard."

A look at the histories of different religions shows a remarkable factor common to all the religions. The founders of all the religions of the world kept unshorn hair. Moses, Christ, Mohammed, Buddhā all of them kept unshorn hair. All the great philosophers, scientists and intellectuals keep (even now) unshorn hair. Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Newton, Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, Walt Whitman, Kali Dās, Tagore, Acharya Rajneesh, all kept unshorn hair.

DASTĀR (The Turban)

The very existence of turban reminds one of Sikhism. Turban is an integral part of a Sikh's dress. It is obligatory for a Sikh. Although initiation of the Sikhs dates back to March 29 1698/1699, the turban for a Sikh is as old as the religion itself. Right from Gurū Nānak Sāhib (1469-1539), the founder of the Sikh religion, the turban has been an inseparable part of the being of a Sikh.

In several countries, the Sikhs had to fight several times to retain their right to wear turbans. The first such battle was fought in England in 1980s. It was the famous "Mandla case". In Norway too, the Sikhs had to fight for their right to get a passport with a photograph in a turban. Later, the Sikhs had to struggle to be allowed to drive taxicabs while wearing a turban. In Sweden, the Sikhs had to fight hard for their right to wear a turban while serving in local railways. In Canada, the Sikhs had to launch an agitation to get permission to wear turban in police forces and armed forces. India has never helped the Sikhs in their adoptive lands, at any time, for preservation of any religious right of the Sikhs. On the contrary, examples abound where the Hindus have actively lobbied against the Sikhs' religious rights, particularly in Canada, the USA and the United Kingdom.

Turban, for a Sikh, is not an optional piece of clothing or a simple head-gear but it is an essential and integral part of the Sikhs' religious belief and their way of life. Turban is not a cultural symbol; it is an Article of faith. (For a detailed Article, read "*The Sikh Culture*" by Dr Harjinder Singh Dilgeer).

KIRPĀN (The Sikh Sword)

The sword has a special place in the history of various religions, cultures and nations. For a Sikh, "*Kirpān*" is an Article of faith. For an initiated Sikh, wearing of a *Kirpān* is obligatory. An initiated Sikh, not wearing a *Kirpān*, would commit breach of his faith.

Although its form has undergone several changes, sword has been a part of the history of the world since pre-historic periods. References pertaining to sword can be found in the history of the Jews, the Christians, the Muslims, the Sikhs, the Japanese, and other national and religious groups. Matthew has quoted Jesus Christ as saying, "I have come not to bring peace but sword." Mohammed considered the sword to be sacred to Islam. Mythical Hindu goddess Durga is shown carrying several weapons (in its several hands) but a raised sword in her right hand, is the most striking feature of her pictures.

The Sikh *Kirpān*, however, is different from the sword of Christianity, Islam or Hinduism. Christ's sword is an alternative for peace; Prophet Mohammed advocated the use of sword for achieving political and religious objectives and Durga's (the Hindu) sword is a weapon to kill her enemies. In all these cases, the sword is used as a weapon, for offensive action. On the other hand, The Sikh *Kirpān* is essentially a weapon of defence.

Kirpān was granted the status of "Article of faith" on March 29, 1698 (according to some sources March 29, 1699) by Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib at Anandpur Sāhib. However, it does not mean that

Kirpān was not sacred to the Sikhs before 1698. The Sixth Gurū, Gurū Hargobind Sāhib, wore two *Kirpāns*, one representing the temporal and the other transcendental domain. While he asked his followers to wear *Kirpāns*, he issued strict directions forbidding the use of *Kirpān* for an offensive purpose. Maubad Zulafqar Ardastani (formerly believed as Muhsan Fani), who wrote in the seventeenth century acknowledged the Sikh position with regard to *Kirpān* and confirmed in his book *Dabistan-e-Mazahib*, that Gurū Sāhib never used a *Kirpān* in anger.

Once, a Hindu teacher, Samrath Rām Dās (guide of the Maratha ruler Shivaji) came to meet Gurū Hargobind Sāhib and wanted to know the reason why Gurū Sāhib had chosen to wear *Kirpān*. Gurū Sāhib told him that the Sikh *Kirpān* was required for the protection of the weak, the poor, the downtrodden and the oppressed by the tyrant and the cruel aggressors.

For a Sikh, *Kirpān* is an essential Article of faith. A replica cannot be used because *Kirpān* is not a symbol. *Kirpān* reminds a Sikh of one's duty to do the right action; to defend the poor, the weak and the oppressed; to always remain prepared for the call of the nation, the society and the humanity. The Sikh *Kirpān* stands for justice, honour, righteousness and readiness for duty and sacrifice. (For a detailed Article on *Kirpān*, read the book "*The Sikh Culture*").

RITUALISM

IDOL WORSHIP

Idolatry is worship of idols of gods/deity. Sikhism strictly prohibits worship of idols in any form. A Sikh must have devotion for the One and the only one God and His Word (contained in Gurū Granth Sāhib). Sikhs don't worship even the volume of Gurū Granth Sāhib (but respect and love the Word in it). A Sikh can't worship even the pictures of Gurū Sāhib or Sikh personalities. The Sikhs do show respect to and love for their Gurū Sāhib, the martyrs and the leaders, but don't worship them:

Strange, you love one stone;

And place your foot on one, second one. (p.525)

The Master is in home (body) but not finding Him

One (the idolater) wears stone around neck. (p.738)

Those who call a stone God/god;

Their service (meditation) goes in vain.

One who runs to the feet of a stone (idol); his labour goes waste.

A stone neither speaks nor gives any thing.

Thus all actions are waste and one's service is fruitless.
(p.1160)

Making obeisance to Gurū Granth Sāhib is not idol worship. But, if one does not want to or has no intention to obey the *Hukam* (command) of Gurū Granth Sāhib then bowing before it may be considered as idol worship.

PHOTOS OF GURŪ SĀHIB

There is no original photo of any Gurū Sāhib; however, some paintings of Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib, mostly from eighteenth century, are available. The modern paintings, including the paintings of Gurū Nānak Sāhib, commissioned by Bābā Nand Singh of Kalerān, as well as by painter Sobhā Singh are photos of some models; hence these are not the 'pictures' of Gurū Sāhib. Same is the position of the paintings of the rest of Gurū Sāhib. These are either imaginary or the photos of some models. It is blasphemy to consider them the photos of Gurū Sāhib.

Making obeisance to these paintings is an act of blasphemy because bowing before a photo is idol worship, hence forbidden in Sikhism.

NON-SIKH RITUALS/PRACTICES

The following are some of the non-Sikh practices:

- * Celebrating non-Sikh festivals like Rakhrī, Holī, Dussehrā, Dīwalī, Sangrānd, Massiyā, Pooranmāsī, Panchmī, Karvā Chauth, Sarādh, Kanjaks, Barsī (death anniversary).

- * Considering some months/dates/days/hours/moments as auspicious/inauspicious (*mahurat/lagan* etc).

- * Bowing before any idol or a person (even a *so-called* saint).

- * Considering some places, rivers, waters, sarovars etc as sacred. (Gurū Sāhib excavated/constructed sarovars to solve the problem of water. They are historical but not 'holy').

- * Placing water or food (except *Karhāh Parshād*), in the presence of Gurū Granth Sāhib, for making it blessed.

- * Putting *Kesar* (saffron) or any other mark on forehead or any other part of body or clothes.

- * Wearing any *so-called* sacred thread, including *Maulī* (it is Hinduism).

- * Placing coconut before Gurū Granth Sāhib.

- * Burning a Jot/Jyotī (flame) near Gurū Granth Sāhib except for light purposes.

THE SIKH ETHICS

VICE & FIVE VICES

Vice means evil or grossly immoral conduct from which one should free oneself. There are five major vices: *Kām* (lust), *Karodh* (wrath/anger), *Lobh* (greed/avarice), *Moh* (attachment), *Hankār* (pride, ego). One must get rid of these five vices in order to get liberation (self-realization). These vices are obstacles in the process of union with the God. Meditation and truthful living can overcome these vices:

The riches, the youth, the avarice, the greed, the ego,

All have robbed the world.

I am killed by intoxication, worldly love, so is with the world. (.p.61)

The robbers have robbed all the people; they come and go,

The lust that the body contains; can be quenched by Word only.

(p.147)

SIN

Sin is an act against religious or moral law or Divine Law. It is committed with an intention i.e. consciously and not done in innocence. In Sikhism, the concept of 'sin', as such, does not exist, but some negative behaviour and vices may be considered as acts of the nature of a sin. These include atheism, the five vices: *Kām*, *Karodh*, *Lobh*, *Moh*, *Hankār* (lust, avarice, anger, attachment, ego), hurting the feelings of the others, laziness (lethargic mentality), ungratefulness, encroachment upon the rights of the others, monster mentality etc.

HAVING NO FAITH IN GOD

Having no faith in the God is the greatest 'sin' in Sikhism. Denying His existence, doubting His potency, turning one's back towards Him, challenging Him in any manner is a sin. A Sikh has an obligation to meditate upon His Name:

One who does not meditate upon His Name should better die of shame. (p. 1149)

LAZINESS

Lethargy is an unSikh-like behaviour. A Sikh must get up early in the morning and meditate upon His Name:

He who calls himself a Sikh of the great true Gurū(SatGurū)

Should rise early and meditate upon His Name

He should make efforts, early in the morning

Take shower and have bath in the Amritsar (tank of Word) repeating the Name of the Almighty under Gurū's instructions.

(p. 305-06)

HURTING FEELINGS OF OTHERS

Hurting feelings of others is also a sin for a Sikh. To hurt anyone's feelings, using abusive language, inflicting physical or mental pain on any one, is a sin:

Nānak, by speaking stupid (ill), the soul and body become dry(non-sacred)

Such a person is called most evil of the evil and evil is his reputation.

The sour-tongued person is discarded in the court of God and evil one's face is spat upon. (p. 473)

Don't utter even a single harsh word, true Master abides among all.

Don't break any one's heart as all are invaluable jewels. (p. 1384).

ENCROACHING UPON OTHERS' RIGHTS

Encroachment upon others' rights too is a sin:

Nānak, (encroaching upon) another one's right is swine for him (for Muslim) and cow for him (Hindu). (p. 141)

UNGRATEFUL-NESS

Ungratefulness has also been reckoned among major sins.

The perverse person is untrue to his salt (is ungrateful);

(He) does not feel indebted for the good done to him. (p. 143)

To quote Bhāi Gurdās:

Ungrateful persons are the greatest burden on this earth.

They are worst of the worst. (Bhāi Gurdās, Vār 35, stanza 98).

MONSTER MENTALITY

Rebuking, suppressing and intimidating the weak, poor, helpless people, too, is also a sin in Sikhism:

One who caresses beard while dealing with poor.

Will be burnt in the fear of hell. (p. 199)

The concept of sin involves two main points: 1. this is an activity that is done in contravention of the laws of nature, code of conduct, humanism etc. 2. this action should have been done intentionally. An act committed without knowledge or intention is not a sin. If one knows that his/her act was or could be against humanism, laws of God then it is definitely a sin. Revolt against 'noble fear' of God is the background of each and every sin. A person committing a sin usually considers himself as a better judge of good and bad. In other

words, he wishes to formulate his own code of conduct. To save him from committing sin, a Sikh must live truthful life.

KURAHIT

Kurahit literally means: one, which should not have been lived (observed) i.e. an act that is prohibited. It is an act that a Sikh is expected to abstain from doing. There are four *Bajar* (strong, major) *Kurahits*: 1. to cut or trim hair. 2. to eat *Halāl* (meat). 3. to use or touch tobacco in any form. 4. to commit adultery. Doing a *Bajar Kurahit* makes a Sikh *Patit* (apostate). One, who commits any one of these four, has to get re-initiation as per *Rahitmaryādā*. Besides these four *Bajar Kurahits*, there are some other *Kurahits* too. These include: 1. to have relationship of any kind with *Mīnās*, *Masands*, and *Dhirmallās*, *Ramrāīs* or those who, having once embraced Sikhism, take to shaving, smoking or committing infanticide. 2. to dine with a non-initiated/apostate. 3. to dye or pick out grey hair. 4. to receive money in return of one's daughter's hand in marriage. 5. to use drugs or intoxicants. 6. to perform any such ceremony that violates any of the Sikh fundamentals. 7. to break vows taken at the time of *Khande Dī Pahul* (the Sikh initiation). Committing any one of these seven (*Kurahits*) leads a Sikh to *Tankhāh*.

TANKHĀH

Tankhāh literally means: salary and *Tankhāhī* is a person who gets *Tankhāh*. In Sikhism, term *Tankhāh* has been used for (so-called) religious punishment for a *Tankhāh* is one who is guilty of breach of religious discipline. In Sikh jurisprudence, it is called *Tankhāh* because a Sikh has to accept it with the spirit and joy of accepting it as salary. It is wrong to call it "punishment". *Tankhāh* is granted to (imposed upon) that Sikh who has voluntarily confessed his guilt or who has been widely considered guilty of breach of *Rahitmaryādā* or for some act committed against the interests of the Sikh nation. Such a person must personally appear and submit himself as a humble Sikh before the *Sangat* (if his act was personal or minor) or at Akāl Takht Sāhib (if the offence was national). He should own his guilt and have a feeling of repentance. He should not approach Akāl Takht Sāhib or *Sangat* in a diplomatic manner. He should declare his will (take a vow) to accept the verdict. If the action of the person appearing at Akāl Takht Sāhib is serious, grievous in nature, then the caretaker of Akāl Takht Sāhib should present the case before the *Sarbat Khālsā*. The *Sarbat Khālsā* shall determine the guilt and finalize *Tankhāh*. When the verdict is pronounced and after he has obeyed (fulfilled) the same, he should have no grudge, or feeling of resentment

or humiliation, nor should the Sangat treat him as inferior (or even 'a former sinner'). *Tankhāh* can be granted in many ways i.e. (a) performing some service in *Langar* (b) washing of dishes (c) cleaning of floor in a Gurdwārā (d) cleaning of the shoes of the *Sangat* (e) Recitation of some hymns in addition to *Nitnem*.

VIRTUE

Virtue means quality of moral excellence, goodness, uprightness etc. A Sikh has a duty to overcome the five vices (*Kām, Krodh, Lobh, Moh, Hankār*), as well as to meditate upon His name and live truthful life. Some Sikh virtues are: contentment, patience, temperance, forgiveness, humbleness, justice, chastity, purity of mind and body, love for every one, helping others, honest earning, sharing with others, meditating upon the name of God and speaking always truth etc. See: Gurū Granth Sāhib, pp. 4, 766, 812, 1384 etc.

ARDĀS (THE SIKH PRAYER)

Most of the Sikhs make an *Ardās* at least twice a day. The Sikhs have been prescribed a universal (national) *Ardās*, which was prepared by a representative committee of the Sikh intellectuals and organisations in 1930s.

This *Ardās* is, in fact, a summary of its history and philosophy; it is a promise to act upon its commitment for the religion, the community; it is prayer before God to grant the nation the capacity to carry out its duties. A conceptual translation of this *Ardās* as follows:

Having remembered WaheGurū, remember Gurū Nānak Sāhib, Gurū Angad Sāhib, Gurū Amar Dās Sāhib, Gurū Rām Dās Sāhib, Gurū Arjan Sāhib, Gurū Hargobind Sāhib, Gurū Har Rāi Sāhib, Gurū Harkrishan Sāhib, Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib and Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib, turn your thoughts to Gurū Granth Sāhib, the spiritual embodiment of the ten Gurūs; and chant WaheGurū! WaheGurū!! WaheGurū!!!

Think of the noble deeds of the *Punj Piārāy* (the Five chosen ones), the four *Sāhibzāday* [(the martyr) sons of Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib], forty *Muktāy* (the liberated one's, who became martyrs in the battle of Chamkaur Sāhib. In Muktsar too 40 Sikhs embraced martyrdom), the martyrs, the faithful followers, the steadfasts, the penitents, (the Sikhs) who meditated upon His Name, shared their earnings with the others, fed the humanity, fought for Righteousness,

overlooked for the shortcomings (of their innocent companions); and chant WaheGurū! WaheGurū!! WaheGurū!!!

Think of the spiritual deeds and the sacrifices of all those who laid down their lives (for the Sikh national struggle), were cut (to death) limb by limb, had their scalps chopped off, were broken on the toothed-wheel, were sawn, were flayed alive, were boiled to death in cauldron; who never abandoned their faith and lived their lives as "true Sikhs with unshorn hair", sacrificed their lives for the sanctity of the Gurdwārās; sacrificed their lives (and are still struggling) for defending the Sikh nation; and chant WaheGurū! WaheGurū!! WaheGurū!!!

Think of all the Khālsā Throne and all the Gurdwārās; and chant WaheGurū! WaheGurū! WaheGurū!!!

It is the prayer of the whole of the Sikh nation: may all the Sikhs be blessed with the love for Your Name, and in return for that, there may be peace and prosperity. May Your Protection and Grace prevail throughout the habitation of the Khālsā. May victory attend our prosperity and *Kirpān* (defence). May your gracious blessing remain with us forever. May the Khālsā always triumph. May God's sword always bless us. May Khālsā be ever blessed with "all decision making powers"; chant WaheGurū! WaheGurū!! WaheGurū!!!

Bestow upon Thy Sikhs the spirit of Sikhism, the gift of practicing the Sikh way of life, the gift of Divine Knowledge, the gift of faith, the gift of confidence in Thee, and above all the gift of Thy Name and the gift of a dip at the holy nectar of *Amritsar* (Amritsar, here, does not mean the sacred pool of Darbār Sāhib. It means the sacred ocean of His Name, the Word). May the Sikh concerts, banners, inns exist for ever; may justice prevail for ever; chant "WaheGurū, WaheGurū, WaheGurū."

May the Sikhs be humble with high thinking and God be the cherisher of their wisdom; O God! The ever Protector of the Panth, grant Khālsājī the unrestricted approach, control and pilgrimage of all the Sikh shrines (entry to which has been restricted).

O the Honour of the humble, the Support for the helpless, the Shelter for the shelter-less, we humbly pray to Thy Honour, on completion of * (**Here the name of the hymn, which has been read before the Ardās, is recited*), to forgive our errors and omissions (committed by us during the reading of the hymns). O God! Bless all the martyrs and all the Khālsā warriors and grant *Chardī Kalā* (high spirits) through Your *Nām* (meditation), to the Sikh nation.

May we come across those noble persons whose company inspires us to remember Your Name, (Nānak says) "through thy Grace, the world may prosper by remembering Thine Name and blessing may dawn upon the whole of humanity."

"WaheGurūjī's Khālsā, WaheGurūjī's Fateh"
(Khālsā belongs to God, victory, also, is only His.).

Some References in the *Ardās*:

Punj Piarey (literally : the Five Beloved/ Chosen Ones) : -

In *Ardās*, the Sikhs remember the *Punj Piarey* who had offered their lives at the call of Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib on March 29, 1698/1699, when he demanded five heads. These five were: Bhāi Dayā Singh, Bhāi Mohkam Singh, Bhāi Sāhib Singh, Bhāi Dharm Singh and Bhāi Himmat Singh. They had been living at Anandpur Sāhib for several years and were among the most tested confidants of Gurū Sāhib. Among these five, Bhāi Mohkam Singh, Bhāi Sāhib Singh and Bhāi Himmat Singh embraced martyrdom at Chamkaur on December 7, 1705 and Bhāi Dayā Singh and Bhāi Dharm Singh died at Nander sometimes in 1708.

Chār Sāhibzādey (four sons of Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib):

Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib had four sons: Ajit Singh (26.1.1687 – 7.12.1705), Jujhār Singh (14.3.1691 – 7.12.1705), Zorāwar Singh (17.11.1696 – 13.12.1705) and Fateh Singh (27.1.1698 – 13.12.1705). The first two embraced martyrdom in the battle of Chamkaur on December 7, 1705 and the younger two embraced martyrdom at Sirhind, on December 13, 1705.

Chālīh Muktey (the forty liberated Ones) :

In *Ardāst* he reference to *Chalih Muktey* seems to be to the forty who embraced martyrdom at Chamkaur on December 7-8, 1705. Another band of forty Sikhs embraced martyrdom at Khirdāne-Dī-Dhāb (present Muktsar) on December 29, 1705. They too are known as *Chalih Muktey*.

The Sikh way of greeting:

WaheGurūjī kī/dā Khālsā ! WaheGurūjī kī/dī Fateh!!

[Meaning Khālsā belongs (is loyal) to God. Victory also is only His].

The Sikh National Anthem:

Degh-o-teg-fateh-o-nusrat bedirang
Yafat az Nānak - Gurū Gobind Singh.
Rāj karegā Khālsā, āki rahe nā koay
Khuār hoay sabh milaingay
Bachay sharan jo hoay.

(Meaning: Through the hospitality and sword to the unending victory granted by Gurū Sāhib, Gurū Nānak Sāhib to Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib.

Khālsā shall rule and there shall remain no enmity. Finally, all shall join and earn the protection of the kingdom of the Supreme Sovereign.)

Some terms which are offending for the Sikhs:

(1) Sikh Gurdwārā is not a "temple". Darbār Sāhib is not "the Golden Temple." (2) Gurū Granth Sāhib is not a "Book" nor is it "the Sikh Bible." (3) The Sikh initiation ceremony "*Amrit Sanskār*" is not *Sikh baptism*. (4) The five *Kakārs* are not "symbols". These are the "Articles of faith." (5) It is not proper to use "Sri" as a title for a Sikh. Sri is the name of mythical Hindu goddess of wealth. Among Hindus, nowadays, "Sri" is used as a title for all the male-folk. This term is being used, by some ignorant Sikhs, for Gurū Sāhib and some Sikh institutions, under the influence of the Hindu supremacy. The Sikhs use *Sirdār* (in Punjābī) and *Sardār* (in Urdū), instead of *Srī/Shrī* or Mr.

Some important Books of Sikh Studies

Name of the book

History (English)

Anandpur Sāhib
Banda the Brave
Book of the Ten Masters
Canadian Sikhs
Dabistan-e-Mazahib
(original in Persian)
Essays in Honour of Dr. Ganda Singh
Gurū Nānak and Origin of Sikh Faith
Gurū Tegh Bahādur
Heritage of the Sikhs
High Roads of Sikh History
History of the Sikhs
History of the Sikhs
History of the Sikh Students' Federation
Indian Mutiny of 1857
Siege of the Punjāb
Siege of the Sikhs
Sikh Chronology
(The) Sikhs' Struggle for Sovereignty

Name of the author

Harjinder Singh Dilgeer
Sohan Singh
Puran Singh
Kesar Singh Novelist
Maubad Zulafqar Ardastani
(earlier known as Musan Fani)
Harbans Singh
Harbans Singh
Trilochan Singh
Harbans Singh
Teja Singh
Hari Ram Gupta
J.D.Cunningham
Jasbir Singh Sarna
Ganda Singh
Iqbal Singh
Ajit Singh Bains
Harjinder Singh Dilgeer
Harjinder Singh Dilgeer

(The) Sikh Religion
(A) Short History of the Sikhs
Umdat-tut-Twarikh

M.A.Macauliffe
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Sohan Lal Suri

History (Punjābī)

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Amar Nama
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Baaz Nama (History of Sikh St. Fed.)
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Gurbilas Patshāhī 10
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Gur Sobha
GurūDe Sher
GurūKian Sakhian
Itihasak Khoj
Jammu Kashmir Di Sikh Twarikh
Keeratpur Sāhib
Khalistan Di Twarikh
Mahima Parkash
Malwa Itihas
Mata Gujri, Char Sāhibzade, Chalih Muktey
Parchian
Prachin Panth Parkash
Punjāb Dian Lehar
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Partap Singh
Narain Singh (editor)
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Karam Singh Historian
Harjinder Singh Dilgeer
Kesar Singh Chhibber
Jasbir Singh Sarna
Jagjit Singh
Unknown author
(attributed to Sohan Kavi)
Koer Singh
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Sainapati
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Harjinder Singh Dilgeer
Sarup Das Bhalla
Wisakha Singh
Harjinder Singh Dilgeer
Sewā Das
Ratan Singh Bhangu
Nahar Singh
Ganda Singh
Kapūr Singh
Atar Singh
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Harjinder Singh Dilgeer
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Harjinder Singh Dilgeer
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(attributed to) Bhāī Manī Singh
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Philosophy & Religion (English)

Aspects of Gurū Nānak 's Philosophy
Dictionary of Sikh Philosophy
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Ethics of the Sikhs
Growth of Responsibility in Sikhism
Philosophy of Sikhism
Prasharprashana
Sikh Ideology

Wazir Singh
Harjinder Singh Dilgeer
Teja Singh
Avtar Singh
Teja Singh
Sher Singh
Kapūr Singh
Daljeet Singh

Philosophy & Religion (Punjābī)

Dharam De Naan Te
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Gurmat Nirmai
Gurmat Nirmai Kosh
Gurmat Parbhakar
Gurmat Sudhakar
Ham Hindu Nahin
Katha Kirtan Ki Hai
Mera Te Sadhu Daya Nand Da Sanbaad
Naqli Sikh Parbodh
Prem SumaRāg Granth
Rehitnamay
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Lal Singh
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Harjinder Singh Dilgeer
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Jang Namah

Kulbir Singh Kaura
Qazi Nur Mohammed

Kion Kito Visaah
 Prachin Panth Parkash
 Sikh Twareekh 'ch Akāl Takht da Role

Narain Singh
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History of the Sikh Culture
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 Who Are The Sikhs?
(Also in French, Norwegian & Spanish)

Duncan Greenlees
 Gurmukh Singh
 Harjinder Singh Dilgeer
 Jasbir Singh Sarna
 Human Rights Organisations
 Harjinder Singh Dilgeer

References (Punjabī)

39 Varan
 Gur Shabad Ratan Parkash
 Khasht Rāg Kin Gaei
 Mahan Kosh
 Malwa Itihas
 Mundaavani
 Sikh Philosophy Di Dictionary
 Sikh Qaun Han?

Bhāi Gurdās
 Akālī Kaur Singh
 Mohinder Singh Josh
 Kahan Singh Nabha
 Visakha Singh
 Gurdit Singh
 Harjinder Singh Dilgeer
 Harjinder Singh Dilgeer

Translation Gurū Granth Sāhib

Shabdarath (Punjabi)
 Gurū Granth Sāhib (English translation)

Sāhib Singh
 Darshan Singh

If one wishes to read just a few books, the following may be useful:

Gurū History:

Gur Sobha (Sainapati)
 Gurū Kian Sakhian (Sawrup Singh Kaushish)
 Gur Itihas (Prof. Sāhib Singh)
 Janam Sakhi Parampara (Dr Kirpal Singh)

Post-Gurū History:

Shaheed Bilas (Sewā Singh)
 Bandā Singh Bahādur, Sada Kaur, Itihasak Khoj (Karam Singh
 Historian)
 Annexation of Punjab and Mahārājā Dalip Singh (Evan Bell) *
 Kukian Di Vithia, Sikh Itihas Bare, Sikh Itihas Vall, Ahmed Shah
 Durrānī (Dr Ganda Singh)

General History:

History of the Sikhs (J.D.Cunningham) *
 The Sikh Religion (M.A.Macauliffe) *
 Heritage of the Sikhs (Prof. Harbans Singh) *
 Sikh Twarikh (1469-2006), in 3 volumes (Dr Harjinder Singh Dilgeer)

Twentieth Century History:

Shiromani Akali Dal (Dr Harjinder Singh Dilgeer)

Punjab Da Batwara (Dr Kirpal Singh)

Punjab: A Fatal Miscalculation (Patwant Singh and Harji Malik) *

1984 (Surjeet Singh Chhadauri)

Sikh Theology/Culture

Ham Hindu Nahin (Kahan Singh Nabha)

Philosophy of Sikhism (Dr. Sher Singh) *

Sikh Dharam Darshan (Sardul Singh Kaveeshar)

Sikh Twarikh 'Ch Akal Takht Sāhib Da Role (Dr. Harjinder Singh Dilgeer)

Sikh Culture (Dr. Harjinder Singh Dilgeer) *

Gurū Granth Sāhib

Punjabi translation by Prof. Sāhib Singh

English translation by Dr Darshan Singh *

Reference

Mahan Kosh (Kahan Singh Nabha)

Sikh Reference Book (Dr Harjinder Singh Dilgeer) *

Dictionary of Sikh Philosophy (Dr Harjinder Singh Dilgeer) *

Encyclopedia of Sikhism (Prof Harbans Singh, editor) *

[Books with * are in English].

THE SIKH ORGANISATIONS

Shiromanī Akālī Dal

Shiromanī Akālī Dal is a major political organisation of the Sikhs. Akālī Dal was formed on December 14, 1920 at Akāl Takht Sāhib. On that day it was named as 'Gurdwārā Sewak Dal'. On January 23, 1921 it was named 'Akālī Dal' and Sarmukh Singh Jhabāl was selected its first *Jathedār* (President). The manifesto of the Akālī Dal (in 1921-22) was "to assist Shiromanī Gurdwārā Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) in taking control of the Gurdwārās from the corrupt managers". On March 29, 1922, the Akālī Dal was renamed "Shiromanī Akālī Dal". From 1921 to 1925, the main function of the Akālī Dal was to organise volunteers for participation in the movement for reform in the Gurdwārās. Besides, the Dal helped the SGPC in collecting funds for its activities. It also helped the families of the Sikhs martyrs as well as those who had been gaoled during the Gurdwārā reform movement.

Although the Central Sikh League was formed in 1919 and had been functioning as an organised group but its effective role was almost nil. In 1925 Gurdwārā Act was passed and the jailed Akālī leaders were released in 1926. After their release, the Akālī leaders organised themselves into a cohesive force. Soon Akālī Dal became a

political organisation. Within a very short period, the Dal took place of the Central Sikh League as the representative political organisation of the Sikhs. Though the Central Sikh League continued its formal identity, but, it had become just a paper organisation and Shiromanī Akālī Dal had emerged as the most prominent political-cum-religious organisation of the Sikhs.

Master Tārā Singh became the chief of Shiromanī Akālī Dal in early 1930s. He remained its godfather unto 1962. During this period several Akālī leaders (c.g. Bābā Kharak Singh, Giānī Sher Singh, and S.B.Mehtāb Singh etc) rebelled against the leadership of Master Tārā Singh and formed separate organisations but the Sikh masses generally ignored them. It was only in 1962 that Fateh Singh of Gangānagar wrested leadership from Master Tārā Singh with the help of the Punjāb government, the Congress Party, the Communists and the Hindu communal parties and by spreading caste-hatred against Master Tārā Singh. Master Tārā Singh breathed his last on November 22, 1967 and Fateh Singh died in 1972 but anti-Sikh slogan of caste-hatred (Jat and non-Jat) adversely affected the Sikh nation and is still a menace to the Panth.

Between 1930 and 1947, the Akālī Dal struggled for special rights of the Sikhs. After 1940, it spearheaded an anti-Pakistan movement. In 1946, it launched agitation for sovereign Sikh State but could not achieve its goal.

After 1947, a very large number of workers of the Akālī Dal switched their loyalties over to the Congress Party simply to share power. The Dal had to launch a struggle for perseverance of the identity and entity of the Sikh nation. To achieve a part of its goal the Dal launched two agitations (in 1955 and 1960) for the formation of a Punjābī-speaking state. During these agitations about 70,000 Sikhs courted arrests, dozens were killed and about a million Sikhs suffered in one or another manner. Punjābī speaking province was formed on November 1, 1966. But, this was not the Punjābī Sūbā that Akālī Dal had struggled for. Hence, it was like a stillborn child. As a result, the Akālī Dal decided to start a struggle for a sovereign Sikh State. From 1980 to 1992 the supporters of Khalistan (sovereign Sikh State) movement launched an armed struggle but the infiltration of spies, Mafia-mentality of some of the leaders of the movement and mass killing of the leaders of the movement (as well as innocent Sikh youth) by the Indian forces brought an end to the armed struggle. By this time the Akālī Dal had been split into several groups. One faction of Akālī Dal (Mann group) supported an independent sovereign Sikh State; another group (Tohrā group) supported autonomy for the Sikhs and the third group (Bādal faction) believed just in getting political

power by any means. Bādal group has nothing to do with any one of the Sikhs issues.

The Akālī Dal has ruled the Punjāb province several times (1967 to 1971, 1977 to 1980, 1985-86, 1997 to 2002). After Master Tārā Singh' death, the Akālī leaders were never committed to any Panthik cause. They were interested in securing power only. Hence, most of the sincere Akālī workers isolated themselves away from the leaders. All this made an adverse affect on the organisation in particular and the Sikhs in general. In 1997, the Sikhs had given a thumping majority to the Akālī Dal, but the Akālī government, under the leadership of Mr. Bādal, harmed the Sikhs and the Sikh institutions and demoralised the workers in particular and the common Sikhs in general. In 2002, Bādal lost power, but, in July 2003, Tohrā rejoined him. This unity too gave a jolt to the Sikh elite, which considered Tohrā as spokesman of the Sikh ethoes. But, Tohrā's unity with Bādal was a stumbling block for the Panth. Tohrā died in 2004. The present state is likely to revive the struggle for a sovereign Sikh State. [For details see: *Shiromanī Akālī Dal* by Dr Harjinder Singh Dilgeer, second edition 2000, in *Punjābī and Sikh Twaikh 'Ch Akāl Takht Sāhib Dā Role*, fifth edition 2005.

Shiromanī Gurdwārā Parbandhak Committee (SGPC)

Shiromanī Gurdwārā Parbandhak Committee (S.G.P.C.) is a body, elected through adult franchise, for the management of the historical Sikh shrines, listed in the Schedule of the Gurdwārā Act-1925. This Act covers several Gurdwārās of the Punjāb, Haryana, Himanchal and Chandigarh. (Earlier it also managed several other Gurdwārās, which were left in the west Punjāb, after the carving of Pakistan in 1947. Now Pakistan Government controls the Gurdwārās through AUQAF. In 2001, Pakistan formed a "Pakistan Sikh Gurdwārā Management Committee" with a Muslim president, to manage these shrines. In October 2004, a Sikh replaced the Muslim president.

The elections to the S.G.P.C. are to be held after every five years; though since 1965, the elections were held only thrice in 39 years (in 1979, 1996 and 2004). Shiromanī Akālī Dal has always won the elections with a majority of more than 90 % seats (except in 2004 when the Panthik Morchā secured 42% of the polled votes) and secured 35 of the 170 seats. In 1955 and 1960, the Indian government, through its yes-men, contested elections to the SGPC and tried to capture it, but could not succeed. The S.G.P.C. has a budget of about 250 crores a year. It is like a "State within a State." Some writers have wrongly tried to define the S.G.P.C. as the "Parliament of the Sikhs." Conceptually speaking, the system of the election of the S.G.P.C. is not in

consonance with the Sikh ideology; hence most of the members elected to it are not only ignorant about Sikhism but have also an un-Sikh like style of life and they use this religious organisation for their personal political agenda.

The S.G.P.C., besides managing hundreds of Gurdwārās, also runs more than 60 schools and colleges but almost none of these institutions is serving the Sikh agenda because all the presidents of the S.G.P.C. (since Gurcharan Singh Tohrā) have been giving teaching jobs mostly to Communists, non-Sikhs and non-believing Sikh-looking persons who do not have any interest in Sikhism. Most of the staff of these institutions indulges in anti-Sikh activities; and it has severely harmed the Sikh mission. Similarly, in the name of Sikh missionary activities major funds of this institution are being embezzled or wasted otherwise. Another stigma on this institution is that it had been turned into a political unit and Gurcharan Singh Tohrā had been in presidency for more than 25 years thus bringing establishments' stagnation in the system. Now, under the command of Parkash Singh Bādal, the S.G.P.C. has become more political than religious as its leaders use it for fulfilment of their political interests.

The Indian regime has passed a law that the Ministry of Finance must clear all the donations by the Sikhs, particularly by the Sikhs who live abroad, to the S.G.P.C.

THE SIKH ROLLS

Famous Sikh Writers:

Theology: Bhāi Gurdās, Bhāi Nand Lāl, Prof. Gurmukh Singh, Gīānī Dīt Singh, Bhāi Kāhan Singh Nabha, Dr. Sher Singh, Bhāi Jodh Singh, Prof. Sāhib Singh, Bhāi Randhir Singh, Principal Tejā Singh, Gīānī Lāl Singh (senior), Sirdār Kapūr Singh, Dr. Tāran Singh, Sirdar Daljeet Singh, Dr. Darshan Singh, Dr. Harjinder Singh Dilgeer etc.

History: Saināpati, Koer Singh, Sukkhā Singh, Kesar Singh Chhibber, Swarup Singh Kaushish, Sewā Singh, Ratan Singh Bhangu, Santokh Singh, Gīānī Gīan Singh, Bābā Prem Singh Hotī, Karam Singh Historian, Gīānī Garjā Singh, Dr. Gandā Singh, Prof. Harbans Singh, Prof. Kirpāl Singh, Dr. Harjinder Singh Dilgeer, Dr. Gurmīt Singh Sirsa, Gurratan Pāl Singh, Sohan Singh Josh, Gīānī Tarlok Singh, Dr. Gurbachan Singh Nayyar, Dr. Madanjit Kaur, Principal Pritam Singh, Jagjit Singh, Gīānī Kesar Singh etc.

Poetry: Bhāi Gurdās, Bhāi Nand Lāl, Gīānī Kartār Singh Kalāswalīā, Bhāi Vīr Singh, Prof. Pūran Singh, Hīrā Singh Dard, Tejā Singh Sābar,

Vidhātā Singh Tīr, Piārā Singh Nirshal, Rām Nārayan Singh Dardī, Pritam Singh Safūr, Dr. Sādhū Singh Hamdard, Sohan Singh Seetal.

Fiction: Bhāī Vīr Singh, Master Tārā Singh, Lāl Singh Kamlā Akālī, Nānak Singh, Sujān Singh, Gīānī Kesar Singh, Karam Singh Zakhmī, Gīānī Bhajan Singh, Gīānī Tarlok Singh, Dr. Dalīp Kaur Tiwana, Mrs. Ajīt Kaur etc.

Others: Akālī Kaur Singh, Dr. Harnām Singh Shān, Dr Surinder Singh Kohlī, Dr. Dīwān Singh, Piārā Singh Padam, Manohar Singh Mārco.

ANTI-SIKH WRITERS AND PROPAGANDISTS

Bute Shah, Earnest Trump, Shardha Ram Phillauri, W. H. McLeod (New Zealand) [known to be the ring-leader of the Anti-Sikhism School], J. S. Grewal, Sujit Hans, Harjot Oberoi, Pishaura Singh, Amrita Imroz (formerly Amrita Pritam), Gurinder Maan, Ian Mulgrew (Canada), Rudy Thomsen (Denmark) etc. Khushwant Singh, Piara Singh Bhogal, Mohinder Singh (Delhi), S.S.Dhanoa, Amarjit Grewal, I. J. Singh (New York), Jaswant Singh Kanwal etc. too have collaborated this group in one or another way. In fact, with the exception of Dr. Noel Q. King, most of the non-Sikh writers, while writing about the Sikhs, have collaborated with the "Anti-Sikhism School" in one or another manner. Nikky Guninder has also been accepted by this group since she married an American Christian after divorcing her Sikh husband.

There is another conspiracy of propaganda against Sikh religion: in the name of Sikh studies Chairs have been established in the universities at Toronto, Vancouver, Michigan, New York etc. and the leaders of Anti-Sikhism School have been appointed there, apparently with the intention of production and promotion of blasphemous and malicious writings against Sikhism. There seems to be an international anti-Sikhism movement. Some famous publication houses including Oxford University Press, the Penguins and Cambridge University Press seem to be ever ready to publish each and every book produced by "Anti-Sikhism School", in spite of the fact that these works have no commercial or academic value.

Entries about Sikhism, in Encyclopaedia Britannica and several other encyclopaedias, which have been written by the persons mentioned above, or on the basis of their works, are mischievous; most of their material is inaccurate, distorted and concocted. All this is a part of some international conspiracy against the Sikhs.

Famous Sikh Martyrs: Seventeenth century: Bhāi Nānū, Bhāi Dhurha, Bhāi Mathurā Bhatt, Bhāi Kīrat Bhatt, Bhāi Singhā Purohit, Bhāi Jethā, Bhāi Prāg Das, Bhāi Ballū Parmār, Bhāi Sukhiā Māndan, Bhāi Dīāl Dās, Bhāi Matī Dās, Bhāi Satī Dās etc. Eighteenth century: Bhāi Jīwan Singh (Bhāi Jaitā), Bhāi Udey Singh, Bhāi Bachitar Singh, Bhāi Kīrpā Singh Dutt, Bhāi Ālam Singh, Bhāi Mān Singh, Bhāi Mahān Singh, Bhāi Rāi Singh, Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādur, Bhāi Bāz Singh Bangesharī, Bhāi Tārā Singh of Wān, Bhāi Manī Singh, Bābā Botā Singh, Bābā Garjā Singh, Bhāi Tārū Singh, Bhāi Subeg Singh, Bhāi Shahbāz Singh, Bābā Dīp Singh, *Jathedār* Gurbakhsh Singh; Nineteenth century: Akālī Phūlā Singh, General Harī Singh Nalwā, Sirdar Shām Singh Atāriwālā, Bābā Bīr Singh, Bhāi Mahārāj Singh; Twentieth century:- Bhāi Mewā Singh Lopoke, Bhāi Hazārā Singh Allādinpur, Hukam Singh Wajāukot, Bhāi Lachhman Singh Dhārowālī, Bhāi Dalīp Singh, Bhāi Partāp Singh, Bhāi Karam Singh, Bhāi Dhannā Singh Babar, Bhāi Karam Singh Daulatpur, Bhāi Kishan Singh Gargajj, Bhāi Ratan Singh Rakhrān Bet, Bhāi Sewā Singh Thikrīwālā, Bhāi Harbans Singh Sarhālā Kalān, Babu Lābh Singh, Kaka Inderjeet Singh, Bhāi Nand Singh, *Jathedār* Darshan Singh Pherūman, Bhāi Faujā Singh, Bhāi Surinder Singh Sodhi, Bābā Jarnail Singh Bhindrānwale, General Subeg Singh, Bhāi Amrīk Singh, Bhāi Beant Singh, Bhāi Satwant Singh, Bhāi Kehar Singh, Bhāi Sukhdev Singh Sakhirā, General Lābh Singh (Bhāi Sukhdev Singh), General Awtār Singh Brahmā, General Gurjant Singh, Bhāi Anokh Singh, Bhāi Gurjīt Singh, *Jathedār* Talwinder Singh Babar, Bābā Gurbachan Singh Mānochāhal, Bhāi Harjinder Singh Jindā, Bhāi Sukhdev Singh Sukkhā, Bhāi Sukhdev Singh Babar, Bibi Upkār Kaur, Jaswant Singh Khālā, Ranjan Lakhanpāl Advocate's son, Bhāi Dilāwar Singh etc.

Sikhism is a religion persecuted against by several terrorists and fundamentalists. In the past four centuries about one million Sikhs have been killed (it does not include 2 million Sikhs killed in 1947).

Famous Sikh Generals: Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādur, Bhāi Fateh Singh, Bhāi Bāz Singh, Bābā Darbārā Singh, (Nawāb) Kapūr Singh, Bābā Dīp Singh, Bābā Gurbakhsh Singh, Bhāi Jassā Singh Ahluwālī, Bhāi Jassā Singh Ramgarhīā, Bābā Baghel Singh, Akālī Phūlā Singh, General Harī Singh Nalwā, Bhāi Shām Singh Attariwālā, Bhāi Mahārāj Singh.

Famous Sikh Leaders (20th century): Bhāi Tejā Singh Samundari, Master Tārā Singh, Bhāi Sewā Singh Thikrīwālā, Bābā Kharak Singh, *Jathedār* Kartar Singh Jhabbar, Master Motā Singh, Gīānī Sher Singh,

S.B. Mahtab Singh, Bhāi Randhīr Singh, Bābā Wisākhā Singh Dadchar.

Leadership of post-1978 period: Bhāi Faujā Singh, Jathedār Talwinder Singh Babar, Bābā Jarnail Singh Bhindrānwale, General Subeg Singh, Bhāi Amrik Singh, Bābā Gurbachan Singh Manochāhal, General Lābh Singh, Bhāi Anokh Singh, Bhāi Gurjit Singh, Dr. Gurnām Singh Buttar, Bhāi Gurjant Singh, General Awatār Singh Brahmā, Bhāi Sukhdev Singh Babar.

Diplomats and Human Rights Activists: Sirdar Jaswant Singh Khalra, Justice Ajit Singh Bains, Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, Harwinder Singh Phoolka, Navkiran Singh, Inderjit Singh Jaijee, Dr. Awatar Singh Sekhon.

Other famous Sikh personalities: Justice Teja Singh, Bhag Singh Vakil, Harnam Singh Jhalla Advocate, Sir Soba Singh, Malik Hardit Singh, Harchand Singh Jeji, Inderjit Singh (The Bank of Punjab), Dr. Gurinder Singh Grewal (USA), Sirdar Surjeet Singh Chhadauri Belgium etc.

Famous Sikh Sports persons: **Wrestling:** Kikkar Singh, Dara Singh, Sukhwant Singh, Kartar Singh etc. **Athletics:** Gurnam Singh (Indonesia), Milkha Singh, Makhan Singh, Tirlok Singh, Hakam Singh, Joginder Singh, Ajmer Singh, Gurbachan Singh, Jagdev Singh, Harnek Singh, Mohinder Singh Gill, Labh Singh, Zora Singh, Bahādur Singh, Ratan Singh, Kamaljit Kaur Sandhu, Manjit Kaur Walia etc. **Weight Lifting:** Gian Singh Cheema. **Hockey:** Surjit Singh (Malaysia), Soma Singh (England), Balbir Singh, Ajitpal Singh, GurSewāk Singh, Udham Singh, Prithipal Singh, Balbir Singh (second), ChaRanjīt Singh, Harcharan Singh, Gurbakhsh Singh, Harbinder Singh, Jagjit Singh, Surjit Singh, Harmik Singh, Ajinder Singh etc. **Shot Put:** Joginder Singh, Ishar Singh, Jagraj Singh, Parduman Singh, Bahadar Singh etc. **Football:** Jarnail Singh, Inder Singh etc. **Cricket:** Bishan Singh Bedi, Maninder Singh, Harcharn Singh, Monty Panesar (England) etc. **Volley ball:** Gurbakhsh Singh, Niripjit Singh, Ranvir Singh etc. **Badminton:** Jasbir Kaur, Kanwal Thakur Singh etc. **Long Jump:** Labh Singh etc. **Basket Ball:** Gurdial Singh, Sarbjit Singh, Manmohan Singh etc. **Discus Throw:** Balkar Singh etc. **Hammer Throw:** Nirmal Singh etc. **Shooting:** Randhir Singh etc. **Kabaddi:** Swarn Singh etc. **Golf:** Ashok Singh Malik Vikramjit Singh etc. **Cycling:** Amar Singh etc. **Table Tennis:** Manjit Singh Dua, Manjot Singh etc. **Lawn Tennis:** Jasjit Singh etc. **Mountaineering:** M.S.Kohli, H.P.S.Ahluwālīā, Hukam Singh, Prem

Singh, Mohan Singh etc. [Note: A very large number of the sportspersons used to trim their beards. So it is not proper to consider them as representatives of the Sikhs].

Famous Sikh women: Mata Tripta, Bebe Nānaki, Mata Khiwi, Mata Bhani, Mata Nānaki, Bibi Veero, Bibi Rup Kaur, Mata Gujarī, Mata Sāhib Kaur, Mata Sunder Kaur, Bibi Bhag Kaur (Mai Bhago), Mai Fatto, Bibi Rajinder Kaur, Rani Sāhib Kaur, Rani Sada Kaur, Bibi Sharanagat Kaur, Rani Jindan, Mai Kishan Kaur, Dr. Rajinder Kaur.

Sympathisers of the Sikh nation: Rai Bular, Subedar Wazir Khan (Chiniot), Pir Budhu Shah, Saif Khan, Nihang Khan, Dīwān Todar Mall (of Sirhind), Dīwān Kaura Mall, M.A.Macauliffe, Landen Sarasfield, Major Short, Jai Parkash Narayan, Acharya Kirplani, Seth Ram Nath, K. G. Jodh, Justice Tarkunde, Rajni Kothari, Bajrang Bali, Ranjan Lakhanpal etc.; in Pakistan: Zia-ul-Haq, Ch. Zahur Ilahi; in England: Terry Dicks etc.; in Canada: David Kilgour etc.; in the USA: Dan Burton, Ben Blaz, Wally Herger etc.

Killers of the Sikhs:

Ajmer Chand Bilāspur (1700-1705), Wazir Khan Sirhind (1700-1710), Aurangzeb (1675-1695), Bahādur Shah (1708-1712), Mohammed Amin Khan (1710-1726), Farukh Siyaar (1713-19), Abdus Samid Khan (1710-26), Zakaria Khan (1710-45), Lakhpat Rai (1730-47), Yahia Khan (1745-47), Mir Muin alias Mir Mannu (1745-53), Ahmed Shah Durrānī (1748-64), Taimur Khan (1757-64), Jahan Khan (1748-6), Adina Begh (1756-58), General Dyer (13.4.1919), Mahant Narain Dass (20.2.1921), Beatty (GurūDa Bagh, August-September 1922), Johnston (1924-25, Jaito), Jawahar Lal Nehru (1960), Partap Singh Kairon (1960), Indira Gandhi (1980-84), Rajiv Gandhi (1984-88), Jagdish Tytler (1984), H.K.L. Bhagat (1984), Arjan Das (1984), Lalit Makan (1984), Sajjan Kumar (1984), Surjit Barnala (1985-86), Captain Kanwaljit Singh (1985-86), Julio Reibero (1985-88), Gobind Das (1985-88), K.P.Gill (1988-95), Beant Singh (1992-95), Ajit Singh Sandhu (1988-95), Sawarn Ghotna (1988-95), Sumedh Saini (1988-95), Izhar Aalam (1988-95).

BIOGRAPHIES OF SOME PROMINENT SIKHS

MARDĀNĀ, BHĀĪ: Bhāi Mardānā (1459 - November 1534), son of Bhāi Badrā and Mai Lakkho, was born in the village of Rāi-Bhoi-Dī-Talwandī (now Nānakānā Sāhib). He belonged to a Muslim *Mirasi* family known for their art of music. Bhāi Mardānā was a great

musician of his times. He was an expert of *Rabab* (rebec), an instrument of music. He spent most of his life in the company of Gurū Nānak Sāhib, who loved him very much. Bhāi Mardānā joined Gurū Nānak Sāhib in latter's spiritual journeys throughout South East Asia. He died at Kartārpur in 1534. Gurū Nānak Sāhib performed the cremation of Bhāi Mardānā with his own hands. Bhāi Mardānā is the first person in the Sikh history to be given the title of *Bhāi*. Three verses were written by Gurū Nānak Sāhib as attributed to Bhāi Mardānā. Bhāi Mardānā was not only a great musician but also a great spiritual person as well. Some biased writers have tried to present his personality in caricature, which is a great injustice to such a great personality.

BUDDHĀ, BĀBĀ: Bābā Buddhā (6.10.1506 - 17.11.1631), son of Bhāi Sughā Randhāwā, was born at village Katthū Nangal (district Amritsar). His first name was Būrhā. In 1518, he met Gurū Nānak and became a part of the 'Sikh family'. When Gurū Nānak returned home after his fourth missionary journey, Bābā Buddhā joined him at Kartārpur and stayed for most of his time, there, till 1539. After the death of Gurū Nānak, he left Kartārpur for Katthū Nangal, where he spent rest of his life. At the time of Gurū Amar Dās, he participated and supervised the digging of *Bāoli* at Goindwāl. Later, at the time of Gurū Rām Dās, he supervised the excavation of Amritsar *Sarovar*. On August 16, 1604, Gurū Arjan Sāhib appointed him the first *Granthi* of Darbār Sāhib. He was also the teacher of Gurū Hargobind. In June 1609, Gurū Hargobind laid down the foundation stone of Akāl Takht Sāhib and Bābā Buddhā and Bhāi Gurdās completed the rest of the structure. It was Bābā Buddhā who performed Ardās at the coronation ceremonies of the second to the sixth Gurūs. Bābā Buddhā had met the first seven and the ninth Gurū Sāhib. (Seventh Gurū was about one year old at the time of his death). Bābā Buddhā had four sons: Bhāi Sudhārī, Bhāi Bhikhārī, Bhāi Sehmū and Bhāi Bhānā (1536 - 1644). Bhāi Rām Kanwar (later, Gurbakhsh Singh), the great-great-grandson of Bhāi Bhānā, was the first to take *Khande Di Pahul*. Bābā Buddhā's descendants still live in and around village Katthū Nangal. He died at Ramdās, formerly known as Jhandā Ramdās (district Amritsar). Gurū Hargobind himself performed his cremation. *Gurdwārā Tap Asthān Bābā Buddhā* (at the place of his residence) and *Gurdwārā Samadhān* (at the site of his cremation) preserve the memory of Bābā Buddhā.

GURDĀS, BHĀI:- Bhāi Gurdās (1551 - 25.8.1636), son of Bhāi Ishar Das (? -1563) and grandson of Vishnu Das Bhalla, was born at Goindwāl. He was a nephew of Gurū Amar Dās. When he was just 12

years old his parents died. His uncle Gurū Amar Dās looked him after. In 1579, he began living at Goindwāl. Bhāi Gurdās remained a bachelor throughout his life. He was fond of reading literature, so he studied a large number of books on religion, mythology and philosophy. He was a learned scholar of history and philosophy. When Pirthī Chand started unlawfully collecting tithe and the other contributions from the Sikhs and *Langar* had to face a crisis like situation, Bhāi Gurdās, with the help of Bābā Buddhā and others, did remarkable work to educate the Sikhs about Pirthī Chand's designs. Bhāi Gurdās also made active contribution to the establishment of the town of Amritsar. Gurū Arjan sent Bhāi Gurdās, to carry out missionary activities, to various towns of the sub-continent including Kāshī (Varanasi), Agra etc. He was amanuensis of (Guru) Granth Sāhib. Under the instructions of Gurū Hargobind, he, along with Bābā Buddhā, completed the construction of the pedestal of the building of Akāl Takht Sāhib (Throne of God) in 1609. When Gurū Hargobind Sāhib was imprisoned in Gwalior Fort Prison, Bhāi Gurdās was assigned the duty to take care of Akāl Takht. Like Bābā Buddhā, Bhāi Gurdās was also a member of Gurū Sāhib's household. He joined the marriage parties of Bābā Gurditta, Bābā Suraj Mall and Gurū Tegh Bahādur (the three sons of Gurū Hargobind Sāhib). Bhāi Gurdās was a great poet. He wrote 39 *Vars* (ballads in heroic meter), running into several stanzas. He also wrote 556 *Kabit* (another meter of poetry) also. Bhāi Gurdās's poetry is considered as hermeneutic explanation of the Sikh scriptures. Bhāi Gurdās was the master of depiction of culture. His knowledge of history and mythology was superb. He died at Goindwāl in 1636.

DĪĀL DĀS, SHAHEED: Bhāi Dīāl Dās was the son of Bhāi Mai Das Parmar and was an elder brother of Bhāi Manī Singh. He was one of the close confidants of Gurū Tegh Bahādur. Between 1656 and 1664, he had escorted Gurū Sāhib, during latter's missionary journey of present day Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Bengal, Assam and the other areas of the zone. In various *Hukamnāmās* written by Gurū Tegh Bahādur, there are references to Bhāi, asking the Sikhs to seek his guidance on conceptual and national issues. He was along side Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib, when the latter was arrested from village Dhamtan in October 1665 and remained in prison for 2 months. After his release, he again escorted Gurū Sāhib to the east. He was again with Gurū Sāhib when the latter was arrested at Agra in 1670. He accompanied Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib when the latter left Anandpur Sāhib on July 8, 1675. He was along side Gurū Sāhib, when the latter was again arrested, on July 12, 1675, at village Malikpur Ranghran. He was kept in Bassi Pathanan prison for 3 months where he was tortured while in prison. After four

months, he was taken to Delhi. He was offered to choose between Islam and death. On refusing to give up his faith, he was boiled to death, in a heated cauldron, on November 11, 1675, in front of the present site of *Gurdwārā Sīs Ganj*, at Chandani Chowk, Delhi.

MATĪ DĀS SHAHEED: Bhāi Matī Dās, son of Bhāi Hīrā Mall Chhibber, grandson of Bhāi Dawārkā Dās and great-grandson of Bhāi Parāg Dās (Parāgā), was born at village Kariāla (district Jhelum, Pakistan). He was a close confidant of Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib. He was present at Bakāla at the time of the installation of Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib as Ninth Gurū, on August 11, 1664. In 1664-65, he was appointed *Dīwān* (minister) by Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib. In October 1665, he was arrested along with Gurū Tegh Bahādur, at village Dhamtan (district Jind, Haryana). After this he accompanied Gurū Sāhib on a long tour of Bihar, Bengal and Assam. He remained alongside Gurū Sāhib during the whole of the journey. He was along side Gurū Sāhib when the latter was arrested at Agra in 1670. On July 8, 1675, he accompanied Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib from Anandpur Sāhib to Delhi. On July 12, 1675, he was with Gurū Sāhib at the time of his arrest, at village Malikpur Rangharan. He was detained and tortured in Bassi Pathanan Jail for more than three months. Later, he was taken to Delhi. On November 11, 1675, he was brought in front of the police station, Chandani Chowk, Delhi (the present site of *Gurdwārā Sīs Ganj*) and was sawed alive, before the eyes of Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib. At the same time, his brother Bhāi Satī Dās was wrapped in cotton and burnt alive.

NAND LĀL, BHĀĪ : Bhāi Nand Lāl (1633 - 1715), son of Bhāi Chhajjū Rām, was born at Ghazni (Afghanistan). His father was a senior officer in the regime of Ghazni. Bhāi Nand Lāl learnt a lot of literature of Persian and Arabic. He was a good poet of Persian language. After the death of his father in 1652, he moved to Multan. In 1682, he decided to move to Delhi. On his way to Delhi, he visited Anandpur Sāhib (on March 29, 1682) and presented his book *Bandagī Nāmāh* (literally: song of meditation) to Gurū Gobind Singh. Gurū Sāhib commended this work by calling it *Zindagī Nāmāh* (song of life). In 1683, he got the job of teaching Prince Muazzam (later Bahādur Shah), son of the Mogul emperor Aurangzeb. In 1697, he returned to Anandpur Sāhib and stayed with Gurū Sāhib till 1705. It is believed that he played role in creating amity between Gurū Gobind Singh and Bahādur Shah, during the war for the Delhi throne, in 1707. Later, Bhāi Nand Lāl returned to Multan and died there. Bhāi Nand Lāl was a poet of superb qualities. Among his writings *Rahitnāmā* and *Tankhāhnāmā*.

are of utmost importance as these works explain the Sikh ethics and the Sikh code of conduct. He wrote several verses under the title of *Dīwān-i-Goyā* composed in appreciation of God and Gurū Gobind Singh. Some writers believe that Bhāi Nand Lāl must have got initiation but there is no evidence of this assertion.

MANĪ SINGH, BHĀI: Bhāi Manī Singh (10.3.1644 - 24.6.1734), son of Bhāi Mai Das and grandson of Shaheed Bhāi Ballū, was born at village Alipur (district Muzzafargarh, Pakistan). His first name was Manī Rām. Manī Rām visited Keeratpur Sāhib in 1657, at the age of 13. In 1658-59, he was married to Sīto Bāi (after initiation Basant Kaur), daughter of Bhāi Lakkhī Rāi Yādav, a *Wanjārā* (trader), of village Raisina, near Delhi (present site of Gurdwara Rakāb Ganj and Rashtarpati Bhawan). Bhāi Manī Ram visited Gurū Tegh Bahādur, at Anandpur Sāhib, in 1672 and became an integral part of Gurū family. In 1678, he was given the honour of being the scribe of the final version of Gurū Granth Sāhib. This volume of Gurū Granth Sāhib is known as *Damdame Wālī Bīr* because it was prepared at Damdamā Sāhib (Anandpur Sāhib). On October 6, 1708, this volume was given the status of Gurū-Eternal by Gurū Gobind Singh. Bhāi Manī Singh accompanied Gurū Gobind Singh to Paonta Sāhib in 1685. In 1687, he visited Khurvaddhi (now Dehradun), as representative of Gurū Gobind Singh and helped Punjāb Kaur, the widow of Ram Rai, against the *Masands*, who had been trying to occupy her *Derā*. Bhāi Manī Rām participated in the battles of Bhangānī (September 18, 1688) and Nadaun (March 19, 1690). On March 29, 1691, Bhāi Manī Rām was appointed *Dīwān* (Minister for court affairs) by Gurū Gobind Singh. In 1694, he, along with Punjāb Kaur, widow of Rām Rāi, and *Dīwān* (household affairs) Dharam Chand Chhibber, escorted Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib to Khurvaddhi (Dehradun), Kankhal and Haridwār. Gurū Gobind Singh initiated him on the first day of the initiation of Khālsā. He was re-named Bhāi Manī Singh. In April 1698, he was appointed *Granthī* and caretaker of the shrines of Amritsar. Bhāi Manī Singh reached Amritsar on May 2, 1698 and restarted Sikh *Rahitmaryādā* at Darbār Sāhib. Bhāi Manī Singh used to travel between Amritsar and Anandpur Sāhib very frequently. In August 1700, Bhāi Manī Singh was present at Anandpur Sāhib. He participated in the battle of Lohgarh (September 1, 1700). He was seriously wounded in this battle. When Gurū Gobind Singh left Anandpur Sāhib, on the night of December 5-6, 1705, he was probably at Amritsar. He visited Gurū Sāhib at Talwandī Sābo, in the early days of 1706. On October 30, 1706, when Gurū Sāhib left Talwandī Sābo, he escorted Gurū Sāhib. After some days, Gurū Sāhib asked Bhāi Manī Singh to return to Amritsar and look

after the shrines there. In April 1709, Har Sahai, the chief of Patti, attacked Darbār Sāhib. Under his leadership, the Sikhs defeated the invaders. The 1710s were dark days for the Sikh nation. During this period he left Amritsar and spent a couple of years in exile. In 1723, he mediated a dispute between the so-called *Tat Khālsā* and so-called *Bandai Khālsā* factions, who wanted to control the shrines at Amritsar. Again, there was hide and seek between the Sikhs and the Mogul Governor. In 1733, after the confiscation of the *Jagīr*, when the Sikhs had been living in exile in forests and hills etc. and it was not safe for them to visit Darbār Sāhib, Amritsar, Bhāi Manī Singh contacted the regime for permission to hold gathering at Amritsar, from October 20 to 26, 1733. The permission was granted for a payment of a specific amount. Now, the regime spread the rumour of mass arrests and killings of the Sikhs. This resulted into thin gathering; hence there was a small collection of the money. Bhāi Manī Singh could not make payment of the agreed amount. He was, however, granted another chance in April. The Moguls repeated the October story again, hence small number of visitors and lesser collection of money. As a result, he was arrested and taken to Lahore. He was offered to choose between "Islam and Death." He refused to bargain his faith. He was tortured to death by cutting limb by limb. Along with him, his brother Bhāi Jagat Singh and his two sons Bhāi Chitar Singh and Bhāi Gurbakhsh Singh too were martyred. According to Sohan Lāl Sūrī (*Umdatut Twarikh*) he was killed for proselytizing activities. Bhāi Manī Singh belonged to a family of numerous martyrs. His grandfather Bhāi Ballū was killed while fighting against the Mogul army at Amritsar, on April 13, 1634. Bhāi Ballū's brother Bhāi Nānū had embraced martyrdom in the battle of Ruhila (Hargobindpur) on October 3, 1621 (He was the first martyr from this family). Bhāi Manī Singh's uncles Bhāi Natthiā and Bhāi Mādho embraced martyrdom in the battle of Kartārpur (April 28, 1635) and Bhāi Suhela embraced martyrdom in the battle of Phagwara (April 29, 1635). Bhāi Manī Singh's another uncle Bhāi Dīāl Dās (Diala Ji) was boiled to death in a cauldron of water, on November 11, 1675, at Chandani Chowk, Delhi. Bhāi Manī Singh had ten brothers. One of them Amar Chand died at an early age. Rest of his them embraced martyrdom: [dates of martyrdom in parenthesis] Bhāi Hatthi Chand (18.9.1688), Bhāi Sohan Chand (19.3.1691), Bhāi Lehnā (20.2.1696), Bhāi Dān Singh (7.12.1705), Bhāi Rāi Singh (29.12.1705), Bhāi Mān Singh (April 2, 1707), Bhāi Jethā Singh (10.10.1711), Bhāi Rup Singh (10.10.1711). Bhāi Manī Singh had ten sons (dates of martyrdom in parenthesis): Udey Singh (6.12.1705), Ajab Singh (7.12.1705), Ajaib Singh (7.12.1705), Anik Singh (7.12.1705), Bachitar Singh (8.12.1705), Balram Singh, Bhagwān Singh, Chitar Singh (24.6.1734),

Desā Singh, Gurbakhsh Singh (24.6.1734). Bhāi Manī Singh's wife Basant Kaur (nee Seeto Bai) was also tortured to death by Mir Mannu, in Lahore, in 1734. Thus, this family sacrificed more than 50 lives for the Sikh nation. Bhāi Manī Singh was also a great scholar of Sikh studies. He is said to have written two books: *Giān Ratanāwalī* and *Sikhān Dī Bhagatmālā* (commentary of Bhāi Gurdās's 1st and 11th *Vār*), though scholars don't accept him as author of these books. They believe that some other person had written these books on the basis of lectures given by Bhāi Manī Singh.

BANDĀ SINGH BAHĀDUR: Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādur (16.10.1670 - 9.6.1716), son of Bābā Rāmdev, a Rājput, was born at Rajauri (Kashmir) and was named Lachhman Dās. He was very fond of fighting and hunting. One day he killed a she-deer which happened to be pregnant. When he dressed the deer, he found two unborn deer babies in her womb. This grotesque scene terrified him and he became an ascetic. After joining a *Bairāgi* sect, he was named Mādho Dās Bairāgi. The *Bairāgi* ascetics could not satisfy him and he left him to wander in so-called holy towns in different parts of the sub-continent. Later, he joined the *Derā* of Bābā Lunīā. In 1692, he moved to the south and established his headquarters at Nander. In July 1694, he paid a visit to Haridwar and Kankhal. Here, he met Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib for the first time. In 1708, when Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib visited Nander, he joined the Sikh faith. He got initiation on September 4, 1708. He was named Bandā Singh. Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib assigned him the command of the Sikh army. On October 5, 1707, he set out for Punjāb for freedom of the Sikh Homeland. Gurū Sāhib issued *Hukamnāmās* to the Sikhs, to join Bandā Singh's army. On his way, he came to know about the death of Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib. This did not dishearten him and he continued his march. In the Sikh Homeland, he was joined by the most prominent Sikhs of the time, including Bhāi Fateh Singh (a descendant of Bhāi Bhagtū), Bhāi Dharam Singh and Bhāi Karam Singh (sons of Bhāi Rūpā), Bhāi Ālī Singh and Bhāi Mālī Singh the two brothers (from Sirhind) and several others. His first action was to capture Samānā, on November 26, 1709. The next to fall were Ghurhām, Tthaskā, Shāhbād and Mustafābād. It was followed by capture and destruction of Kapūrī. Usmān Khān the chief of Sadhaurā was the next to be punished. Usmān Khān had tortured Pīr Buddhū Shāh and several Sikhs to death. Sirhind was captured after a fierce battle of two days (at Chappar Chirī on May 12 and at Sirhind on May 14, 1710). Wazīr Khān, the Governor of Sirhind was killed in the battle and his minister Suchchā Nand was captured and executed. Bābā Bandā Singh established his capital at Lohgarh.

After a few months, he seized Sahāranpur (on the other side of the river Yamuna). In November, Bahādur Shah, the Mogul emperor, personally led a mammoth army of about one hundred thousand soldiers against him. Bandā Singh decided not to waste his men and energy against such a mighty force and he fled Lohgarh, on November 30, 1710.

In June 1711, he came back to the plains of the Punjāb. The Mogul emperor stationed himself at Lahore from August to February 1712, but Bandā Singh could not be subjugated. A despondent Bahādur Shah died on February 28, 1712. Bābā Bandā Singh re-occupied Sadhaura and Lohgarh. He appointed Sikh administrators for the territories won by him. He issued a new calendar and a Sikh royal seal. Bābā Bandā Singh abolished feudal system and introduced egalitarian rule. Though this could not last long but he could establish a rule strictly according to the Sikh polity. When Farrukh Siyār settled as emperor of Delhi, he too took strict measures against Bābā Bandā Singh's army. In April 1715, Bābā Bandā Singh, along with some of his companions, was besieged by a huge Mogul army, in a mansion at Gurdās Nangal (district Gurdāspur). Bābā Bandā Singh refused to surrender. The siege continued for several months. When their stocks of food and ammunition were exhausted, the Sikh soldiers became very weak. On December 6, 1715, the Mogul army finally broke into the mansion and captured Bābā Bandā Singh, along with a few hundred soldiers. They were brought to Delhi and were kept in jail for a few months. Bābā Bandā Singh was offered to choose between Islam and death. On refusal to embrace Islam, he was sentenced to death. On June 9, 1716, at the time of his execution, his son Ajay Singh was cut into pieces before his eyes. The heart of Ajay Singh was thrust into Bābā Bandā Singh's mouth. After this, his hands and feet were chopped off and his eyes were pulled out. After such mental and physical torture, he was butchered to death. This was the most gruesome murder in the history of humanity. It, however, did not awe the Sikh nation. Bābā Bandā Singh was the first person to establish genuine Sikh rule. Bābā Bandā Singh had two sons: Bhāī Ranjīt Singh and Bhāī Ajay Singh. Ajay Singh (1712-1716) was killed along with Bābā Bandā Singh at Delhi but Ranjīt Singh survived. Ranjīt Singh's existence was kept secret due to fear of his execution at the hands of the Moguls. Ranjīt Singh had two sons: Jujhār Singh and Zorāwar Singh. Jujhār Singh died in 1822-23, leaving behind two sons Fateh Singh and Suchet Singh. Zorāwar Singh (second son of Ranjīt Singh) had one son Arjan Singh. Arjan Singh had a son Kharak Singh, Kharak Singh's son Dayā Singh, who died without an heir.

DĪP SINGH, BĀBĀ- Bābā Dīp Singh (1682 - 11.11.1757), son of Bhāi Bhagatā, was born at village Pahuwind (district Amritsar). He got initiation from Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib and studied the Sikh scriptures from Bhāi Manī Singh at Anandpur Sāhib. In 1706, when Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib reached Talwandī Sābo, he visited Gurū Sāhib and became a part of Gurū's court. He participated in the battles of Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādur but, later, returned to Talwandī Sābo. In 1726, he made four copies of Gurū Granth Sāhib, from the volume (prepared by Bhāi Manī Singh under the supervision of Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib, in 1678). In 1732, he led his Jathā, to help Ālā Singh, when latter had been besieged in Barnala. On March 29, 1733, he attended *Sarbat Khālsā* gathering at Akāl Takht Sāhib. It was on this day that the Mogul governor had sent an offer of a *Jagīr* (Governorship of a sub-division) to the Sikhs. On this occasion the whole Sikh army was divided into two groups: *Buddhā Dal* (the veterans over forty years of age) and *Turunā Dal* (the younger ones). He was given the command of one *Jathā* of the *Buddhā Dal*. On March 29, 1748, when the Sikh army was divided into 11 *Misls*, his *Jathā* was accepted a *Misl* (Dīp Singh's *Misl*, later, came to be known as *Misl Shaheedān*). Bābā Dīp Singh spent most of his time at Talwandī Sābo. During this period, Mir Muin, Governor of Lahore, perpetrated unspeakable atrocities on the Sikhs. Mir Muin (also known as Mīr Mannū) died in 1753. His wife succeeded him. In December 1756, Ahmed Shah Durrānī attacked the Sikh Homeland again. He returned to Afghanistan in April 1757, leaving his son Taimūr as the Governor of Lahore and Jahān Khān, as his deputy. In May 1757, Durrānī's army General Jahān Khān led a huge army to Amritsar. He demolished the Sikh fortress Rām Raunī and filled up Amritsar *Sarovar* with debris. When the news of sacrilege of the shrines reached 75 years old, Bābā Dīp Singh, set out with his *Jathā* for Amritsar. On his way to Amritsar, several thousand Sikhs joined him. He fought his major battle on the ruins of erstwhile Rām Raunī. Another battle was fought in Gurū Dā Bāgh, in the Darbār Sahib complex, on November 11, 1757. In this battle, Bābā Dīp Singh embraced martyrdom near Rāmsar *Sarovar*. Later, a legend of Bābā Dīp Singh's fighting with his severed head in his left hand became popular. It was in fact, a development of the Punjābī proverb "fight with one's head on one's palm" which means, "to fight bravely, with spiritual strength, till victory or death." Bābā Dīp Singh was a great general and not a mere scribe, nor he was a scholar or a head of some educational or research school. But, during 1980s, Bhindrān-Mehtā Jathā started calling him as the chief of so-called Damdamī Taksāl. Interestingly, no such Taksāl existed till 1970.

KAPŪR SINGH, NAWĀB: Nawāb Kapūr Singh (1697-7.10.1753), son of Bhāi Dalīp Singh, was born at village Kaleke (district Sheikhpura, Pakistan). When he grew young he captured the village Faizalapur (later, he named this village as Singhpur); hence he came to be known as Kapūr Singh Faizalapurīa (Singhpuriā). In 1721, he got initiation from the *Punj Piārāy*, under the leadership of Bhāi Manī Singh. After the martyrdom of Bhāi Tārā Singh of Dal-Wān, in 1723, he joined the *Jathā* of Dīwān Darbārā Singh, the leader of the Sikh army. Soon, he became deputy leader of the Sikh army. When *Jagīr* was offered to the Sikh nation, by Zakaria Khan, the Governor of the Mogul Punjāb, on March 29, 1733, he was granted the title of Nawāb. Nawāb-hood included the *Jagīr* of the divisions of Dipālpur. Kanganwāl (district Montgomery, now Sahiwal, Pakistan) and Jhabāl (district Amritsar). Sirdar Kapūr Singh was also presented a robe of honour. It included a sword, a turban, a shawl, a jewelled *Kalgi* (plume), two *Karās* (bangles), a necklace, a brocade garment etc. But, Nawāb Kapūr Singh never wore these things. In 1733, the Sikh army was split into two sections: *Buddhā Dal* (the veterans) and *Tarunā Dal* (the younger-ones). Nawāb Kapūr Singh was the over-all leader. Bhāi Jassā Singh Ahluwālīā was the leader of the *Tarunā Dal*. Nawāb Kapūr Singh's Misl was known as Misl Faizalāpurīā/Singhpuriā. When Dīwān Darbārā Singh died in 1734, Nawāb Kapūr Singh was chosen as the leader of the Sikh army. Sirdar Kapūr Singh gave remarkable lead to the Sikh nation. He was a great general, an intelligent organiser, a brave warrior and a marvellous leader. He died in 1753. He had no son, so after his death his nephew Bhāi Khushāl Singh became the leader of the Misl Faizalāpurīā/Singhpuriā.

BOTĀ SINGH & GARJĀ SINGH: Bābā Botā Singh Sandhū was a resident of village Bharana (district Amritsar). One day, he, along with his companion Bhāi Garjā Singh, visited Amritsar. In 1739, a visit to Amritsar, during day light, meant death at the hands of the Mogul soldiers, hence the Sikhs used to visit Darbār Sāhib in darkness. One day, both these Sikhs, after visiting Darbār Sāhib, were hiding themselves in some bushes outside the village of Nurdin, near Tarn Tāran. Some passer-by saw them and told his co-traveller that there were two Sikhs in the bushes. His companion replied that that was impossible, as the Mogul government had exterminated the Sikh nation. These remarks hurt the Sikhs. They decided to assert their existence. They put an improvised barrier near village Serai Nurdin, on the road leading to Lahore and started collecting octroi on the goods passing through that road. None dare check them. At this, Botā Singh wrote a letter to the Governor of Lahore informing him that he (Botā

Singh) had taken the charge of collection of octroi tax in that zone (this was, in a way, assertion of sovereignty). When Zakaria Khān received the message, he sent a large contingent of army, led by Jalāl Dīn, to arrest Bābā Botā Singh and Bhāi Garjā Singh. Both the Sikhs embraced martyrdom after killing several soldiers of the Mogul army. According to some sources Bhāi Garjā Singh was wounded and arrested. Some times later, he was executed at Lahore.

HAQIQAT RAI/SINGH: Bhāi Haqiqat Singh (October 1724 - 30.1.1742), son of Bībī Gauran and Bhāi Bāgh Mall and grandson of Bhāi Nand Lāl Purī (a dedicated Sikh of the time of Gurū Har Rāi Sāhib), was born at Sialkot (Pakistan). When he was just a small boy, he was married to Bībī Durgo Kaur (daughter of Bhāi Kishan Chand Uppal of Batala). Bhāi Budh Singh of Batala taught him the basic principles of Sikh philosophy. One day, some of his Muslim class-fellows used abusive language for some (mythological) Hindu goddess. He asked them, "If some one says any thing in the same tune against Bībī Fatima, the daughter of Hazrat Mohammed Sāhib, how should you feel?" This was enough to infuriate his Muslim class-fellows. They made complaint to Amir Beg, the ruler of Sialkot. Amir Beg arrested Haqiqat Singh. He was produced before Zakaria Khan, the Governor of Lahore. Zakaria Khan asked him to choose between "death and Islam." Haqiqat Singh refused to give up his faith. Zakaria Khan ordered his execution. He was killed along with his maternal uncle Arjan Singh Wadhāwan.

SUKKHĀ SINGH MARI KAMBO & MAHTĀB SINGH MĪRĀN KOT: Bhāi Sukkhā Singh, a carpenter of village Mari Kambo, was a great soldier of the Sikh army. He, along with Bhāi Mahtāb Singh, of village Mirān Kot, was assigned the duty to punish the debauched Massā Ranghar, who had occupied Darbār Sāhib and was using it for profane activities. Both of them reached Amritsar on August 11, 1740, chopped off the head of Massā Ranghar and presented it before the Sikh congregation at Bikaner. Bhāi Mahtāb Singh was arrested and executed in July 1745. Bhāi Sukkhā Singh died in a battle against the army of Ahmed Shah Durrānī, near Lahore in 1753.

JASSĀ SINGH AHLUWĀLĪĀ: General Jassā Singh Ahluwālī (3.5.1718 - 10.10.1783), son of Bhāi Badar Singh and grandson of Bhāi Gopāl Singh, was born at village Ahlu, near Lahore. When he was just five years old, his father died. Mata Sunder Kaur, the wife of Gurū Gobind Singh, brought him up. He spent his childhood at Delhi. He was well versed in Punjābī, Persian and Hindi languages. He was also a

trained soldier. At the age of 11, he knew three languages as well as the art of sword-wielding. In 1729, Kapūr Singh (later Nawāb) took Bhāī Jassā Singh with him. When he left Delhi, Mata Sunder Kaur gave him a sword, a shield, a bow and a quiver full of arrows, a robe etc. as her token of love. Sirdar Jassā Singh remained side by side of Nawāb Kapūr Singh. He participated in almost every activity in which Nawāb Kapūr Singh was involved. In January 1748, when Ahmed Shah Durrānī attacked the Punjāb, his *Jathā* chased and harassed Ahmed Shah twice. On March 29, 1748, all the *Jathās* of the Sikhs were divided into 11 *Misls*; his *Juthā* was proclaimed as *Ahluwālīā Misl*. Besides, he was given the command of *Tarunā Dal*, the youth section of the Dal Khālsā's (the Sikh army). Nawāb Kapūr Singh died on October 7, 1753. On April 10, 1754, he was selected as the *Jathedār* (chief) of the Dal Khālsā. During 1748-1783, Jassā Singh gave a marvellous lead to the Sikh nation. He captured Amritsar (1748), Jullundur (1753), Lahore (1761), Amritsar (for the second time in 1764) Kapurthala (1774) and Delhi (along with Bābā Baghel Singh, Jassā Singh Ramgarhiā and others) in 1783. He hoisted the blue Sikh flag on the Red Fort at Delhi on March 11, 1783. He fought bravely against the army of Ahmed Shah Durrānī several times. In March 1761, he rescued thousands of the young Hindu girls, who were being taken as captives by Ahmed Shah. The Hindus honoured him by giving him the title *Bandī Chhorh* (the freedom-giver). In September 1761, when the Sikh army occupied Lahore, Jassā Singh was proclaimed *Sultan-ul-Qaum* (the emperor of the nation). He fought bravely against Durrānī's army during the second holocaust (February 5, 1762). He suffered 22 wounds in this holocaust. Sirdar Jassā Singh was a great general, a brave fighter and a great leader. Since the martyrdom of Bandā Singh Bahādur and Nawāb Kapūr Singh, he was the greatest general of the Sikhs. After the death of Bhāī Jassā Singh (till Master Tārā Singh) no Sikh leader could become the leader of the Sikh nation as a whole. Kapurthala was the capital of this *Misl*.

JASSĀ SINGH RAMGARHIĀ: General Jassā Singh (5.5.1723 - 20.4.1803), son of Gīānī Bhagwān Singh and grandson of Bhāī Hardās Singh, was born at village Ichhogil (district Lahore). At the age of 16, he participated in a battle against the army of Nadir Shah. In this battle his father (Gīānī Bhagwān Singh) was killed. Zakariā Khān, the Governor of Punjāb, in recognition of the services of the family in the battle against Nadir Shah, granted the family the proprietorship of five villages i.e. Vallah, Verka, Sultanwind, Tung and Chib. Jassā Singh and his four brothers (Jai Singh, Khushāl Singh, Mālī Singh and Tārā Singh) divided the estate among themselves. Jassā Singh got village

Vallah. In 1745, he was one of the major participants in the construction of the fortress *Rām Raunī* (built in the name of Gurū Rām Dās Sāhib, the founder of the city). In 1747, his *Jathā* was given the charge of the fortress of Rām Raunī (later known as *Rāmgarh*). Because of this, the term *Ramgarhīā* became a part of his name and his *Jathā* came to be known as *Ramgarhīā Jathā*. On March 29, 1748, the Sikh army was divided into 11 *Misls*. Bhāi Jassā Singh was appointed the leader of one *Misl*, known as Ramgarhīā Misl, (named after the fortress Rām Raunī, of which Bhāi Jassā Singh was the caretaker). Later, he joined as a mercenary with Adīnā Beg, the Governor of Jullundur. In 1752, he rebuilt Rāmgarh fort. In 1758, he occupied a large area in the districts of Amritsar and Gurdāspur. In 1770, he attacked the hill States, including Kangra, and plundered their royal treasures. He built a fort at Talwara (district Hoshiarpur) where 4000 soldiers could stay. Later, the infighting among the Sikh *Misls* compelled him to leave the central Punjāb. Now, he occupied Hissar. He was one of the Generals who captured Delhi on March 11, 1783. He also participated in building Gurdwārās Sīs Ganj and Rakāb Ganj. In 1784, he returned to the Punjāb and re-occupied his territory. Sirdar Jassā Singh ruled over the area of Batala, Kalanaur, Hargobindpur, Qadian, Shahpur Kandi, Ghuman (Gurdāspur) and Maliwal, Urmur Tanda, Sarinh, Gangowal, Miani, Ruhela (Hargobindpr), Sharif Ganj (Hoshiarpur) and some villages of Amritsar too. The rulers of Chamba, Kangra, Mandi and Nurpur used to pay him tribute, which amounted to about two hundred thousand rupees. His son Bhāi Jodh Singh was not up to the mark. In 1808, he accepted the supremacy of Ranjīt Singh.

BAGHEL SINGH: Baghel Singh Dhalīwāl (? - 1802) was a resident of village Jhabal (district Amritsar). He was one of the senior leaders of the Karorsinghīā Misl. He succeeded Bhāi Karorā Singh as the chief of *Misl* Karorsinghīā, in 1765. In 1763, he had an army of 12000 soldiers. He had captured the area of Jullundur Doāb. Haryana (district Hoshiarpur) was his headquarters. In January 1764, he occupied the area up to Karnal and made Chhalaudi as his headquarters. In February 1764, he crossed river Yamuna and captured Saharanpur. After this, he overran the territory of Najīb-ud-Daulā Ruhela. In April 1775, he, along with Bhāi Rāi Singh Bhangī and Bhāi Tārā Singh Ghaibā, captured the territory of Zābitā Khān. Zābitā Khān accepted his (Bābā Baghel Singh's) subordination and both of them joined hands and looted the area around Delhi. In March 1776, he defeated Mogul army at Muzaffarnagar. In 1779, he entered an alliance with the Mogul army, Sirdar Bhangā Singh (Thanesar) and Sirdar Rai Singh Buria, and put siege to Patiala. Raja Amar Singh, the ruler of Patiala, offered a

compromise. Bābā Baghel Singh initiated Amar Singh and forgave him. On March 11, 1783, Bābā Baghel Singh, along with Bhāi Jassā Singh Ahluwālā, entered the Red Fort at Delhi, occupied Dīwān-i-Ām of Shah Ālam and hoisted the Sikh blue-flag. Shah Ālam offered the Sikhs 37.5 % of the octroi duty in the capital. At that time he had the command of 30 thousand soldiers, who were camping in a ground, later known as Baghel Singh Tees Hazārī (now only Tees Hazārī). Later, he sent 26 thousand soldiers back to the Punjāb and himself stayed near the present site of the Sabzi Mandi, along with 4000 soldiers. In the next six months, he raised shrines at the places associated with the visits of Gurū Nānak Sāhib, Gurū Harkrishan Sāhib, Gurū Tegh Bahādūr Sāhib and Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib. He built Sīs Ganj, Rakāb Ganj, Banglā Sāhib, Bālā Sāhib, Majnu Tillā, Motī Bāgh, and Telivārā Gurdwārās. During his lifetime, he initiated several Sikhs, including Amar Singh and Sāhib Singh, the rulers of Patiala. He died at Haryana (Hoshiarpur) in 1802.

THE SIKH HOMELAND

The Punjāb is the Homeland of the Sikhs. The land between the rivers Chanab and Yamuna is known as the Sikh Homeland. The first place associated with the Sikhs is Nānakānā Sāhib (Pakistan), the birthplace of Gurū Nānak. Some cities were founded by Gurū Sāhib themselves e.g. Kartārpur (Pakistan), Amritsar, Tarn Tāran, Kartārpur (Jullundur), Keeratpur Sāhib, Chakk Nānakī, Paonta Sāhib, Anandpur Sāhib. Besides these cities, some other places too are associated with the memory of Gurū Sāhib. These include: Sultānpur Lodhī, Khadūr Sāhib, Goindwāl Sāhib, Bābā Bakālā, Patna Sāhib, Delhi, Chamkaur Sāhib, Fatehgarh Sāhib, Damdamā Sāhib (Talwandī Sābo), Muktsar, Hazūr Sāhib (Nander) etc. Delhi, Patna Sāhib and Nander too have important place in Sikh history though these are not a part of the Sikh Homeland.

The Sikh shrines are important to the Sikhs because Gurū Sāhib had visited or lived at those places but the Sikhs don't worship their shrines. (The Sikhs worship only God). The Sikhs visit their historical shrines not for pilgrimage but for refreshing the memory of the history and the events associated with those shrines.

AMRITSAR: Amritsar city is one of the prominent cities of the Sikh nation. Under instructions from Gurū Amar Dās Sāhib, Gurū Rām Dās Sāhib founded this city in 1564, on the land bought by him from the owners of the village Tung and began digging Santokhsar *Sarovar*. But under instructions from Gurū Amar Dās Sāhib, he had to return to

Goindwāl; hence the project could not be accomplished. After the death of Gurū Amar Dās Sāhib (1.9.1574), Gurū Rām Dās became fourth Gurū. Within a short time, Gurū Rām Dās moved to this town and built his residence here (at the site of Gurdwārā Gurū De Mahal).

At that time, this village was known as *Gurū-Dā-Chakk*. (Later, it came to be known as *Chakk Rām Dās*). Gurū Rām Dās Sāhib began excavation of the *Amritsar Sarovar* (tank) in 1577. It was ready by 1581. Gurū Arjun Sāhib renovated this tank in 1586. [Since 19th century, this city is known as Amritsar (after the name of the *Sarovar*)]. Gurū Arjan Sāhib had laid the foundation of the Darbār Sāhib on January 3, 1588. (Later, it was propagated by Bute Shah, a mischievous Muslim writer that the foundation stone of Darbār Sāhib was laid down by Sāin Mīān Mīr. Although Sāin Mīān Mīr was very friendly with Gurū Sāhib but the foundation of Darbār Sāhib was laid down by Gurū Sāhib himself). By this time Santokhsar Sarovar too was ready. In 1590, Gurū Arjan Sāhib moved to village Wadālī (now known as Gurū dī Wadālī) where Gurū Hargobind Sāhib was born on June 19, 1590. By 1601, the Darbār Sāhib was fully ready. In 1604, the first copy of Gurū Granth Sāhib, the Sikh scripture, was prepared in this city and was displayed at Darbār Sāhib on August 16, 1604.

It is here that Akāl Takht Sāhib (Throne of God) was revealed by Gurū Hargobind Sāhib in 1609. Here Gurū Hargobind Sāhib wore two swords of Mīrī and Pīrī (temporal and transcendental authority). *The buildings of Akāl Takht Sāhib and Darbar Sahib were twice demolished by Afghan armies (in 1757 and 1762) and were very badly damaged by the Indian army (in June 1984). The Indian government repaired the buildings during July-September 1984. The Sikhs began demolishing the government-repaired building, on January 26, 1986. The present structure has been constructed by Bhindrān-Mehta Jathā.*

On April 13, 1634, the Mogul army attacked Gurū Hargobind Sāhib. From 1635 to 1698, Amritsar remained under the control of the Mīnā family (descendants of Pirthī Chand). During this period, on November 23, 1664, Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib visited the town. In April 1698, Bhāi Manī Singh was appointed as the caretaker of the town of Amritsar.

The Mogul chief of Patti tried to occupy Amritsar several times. One such attempt was made in April 1709. The Sikhs, under the command of Bhāi Manī Singh and Bhāi Tārā Singh of Dall-Wān, repelled this attack. When Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādur occupied several areas in the Punjāb, Bhāi Manī Singh chose to leave Amritsar in order to avoid the Mogul attacks. On December 30, 1711, the Mogul emperor, Bahādur Shah, granted Ajit Singh Pālīt the charge of Amritsar in order to use him against Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādur. After

the death of Bahādur Shah, Ajīt Singh Pālīt returned to Delhi. In 1721, Bhāī Manī Singh returned to Amritsar and re-started regular worship.

On March 29, 1733, a major gathering of the Sikhs was held here in front of Akāl Takht Sāhib. In this gathering, the Sikh leaders discussed the Mogul offer of *Nawāb*-hood. In April 1734, Bhāī Manī Singh, along with his family and other Sikhs, was arrested from here and was martyred at Lahore on June 24, 1734.

In 1740, Massā Ranghar, a debauched official, desecrated Darbār Sāhib. Bhāī Sukkhā Singh and Bhāī Mahitāb Singh punished him on August 11, 1740. In April-May 1757 Afghan army demolished Darbār Sāhib and Akāl Takht Sāhib. Bābā Dip Singh led a big Jathā (band) of Sikhs against the Afghan. A major battle was fought on November 11, 1757. Bābā Dip Singh and all his companions embraced martyrdom. In 1758, the Amritsar tank was re-cleaned and the shrines were rebuilt. Again, in 1762, Afghan army demolished the Darbār Sāhib complex. On December 1, 1764, the Afghan army made another attack. 30 Sikhs, led by Jathedār Gurbakhsh Singh, fought against mammoth Afghan army and embraced martyrdom. In 1765, the Sikhs finally began re-construction of the shrines. The central part of the Darbār Sāhib was ready by 1776. The Bhangi Misl, which ruled the area of Amritsar and around it, decorated and gold-plated some parts of Darbār Sāhib. In 1802, Ranjīt Singh occupied Amritsar. Around 1830, he gold-plated the remaining parts of the inner section of the Darbār Sāhib (as a result as some ignorant people began unjustly calling it Golden Temple).

In 1846, the British established themselves in Lahore Darbār, with a Resident in the Court; and, Amritsar became a place of frequent visits by the British. In order to keep sanctity of the city, H. M. Lawrence, the British Resident, issued an order, dated March 24, 1847, asking the English people to follow the Sikh protocol while visiting the Sikh centres. In 1858, a Municipal Committee was set up here. In 1862, train services between Lahore and Amritsar were started. Khālsā College, the first Sikh college was established here in 1892. [*Later. in 1969 Gurū Nānak University was also founded here*].

In 1913, the city was electrified. In September 1915, the British declared Amritsar a "Holy City". (After August 15, 1947, this order was secretly annulled by the Indian regime). On April 13, 1919, General Dyer opened fire on a gathering, at Jallianwālā Bāgh, near Darbār Sāhib and killed 379 people and wounded another 1200. The Shiromanī Gurdwārā Parbandhak Committee (S.G.P.C.) and the Shiromanī Akālī Dal were founded here in 1920.

Most of the agitations have been launched by the Sikhs after making prayers at Akāl Takht Sāhib e.g. Gurdwārā Reform Movement

(1920-25), Punjābī Sūbā Movement (1955 and 1960), fast unto death by Darshan Singh Pherumān (1969), Dharam Yudh Morchā (1982-84). On April 13, 1978, a Nirankārī-called cult killed Bhāi Fauja Singh and 12 more Sikhs and with this began a new era in the Punjāb. This led to a prolonged agitation in the Punjāb. The Indian army, with the help of tanks, helicopters and all the other war machinery, invaded Darbār Sāhib complex on June 4, 1984 and killed several thousand innocent Sikh men, women and children in cold blood. Those killed included Bābā Jarnail Singh Bhindrānwālā, General Subeg Singh and Bhāi Amrīk Singh etc. For a very long period, the shrine remained occupied by the Indian army. It was attacked by Surjeet Barnala government on April 30, 1986 and Rajiv Gandhi's government on May 9, 1988. Several Sikhs were killed in the later invasion also.

The famous Sikh shrines at Amritsar include: Five Sarovars (tanks): *Amritsar* (1574), *Santokhsar* (1564, 88), *Rāmsar* (1601-03), *Kaulsar* (1627), *Bibeksar* (1628); and, Gurdwārās: *Bābā Atal* (1770), *Shaheed Ganj Bābā Dip Singh* (1803, partly in 1823), *Shaheed Ganj Bābā Gurbakhsh Singh, Gurū De Mahal* (It was the residence of Gurū Rām Dās Sāhib, Gurū Arjan Sāhib, Gurū Hargobind Sāhib and Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib. Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib was born here), *Darshani Deodi* (near Gurū Bazaar, associated with the memory of Gurū Arjan Sāhib), *Thara Sāhib* (on the bank of Amritsar Sarovar; associated with the memory of Gurū Rām Dās Sāhib and Gurū Arjan Sāhib), *Gurdwārā Thara Sāhib* (in memory of the visit of Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib), *Damdāmā Sāhib* (in memory of the visit of Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib, in 1664), *Pippalī Sāhib* (associated with the memory of Gurū Arjan Sāhib and Gurū Hargobind Sāhib), *Gurdwārā Tahlī Sāhib* (it is on the bank of Santokhsar tank; Gurū Rām Dās Sāhib used to rest under a *Tahlī*, i.e. shisham {*Tahlī*} tree, believed to be the same still exists), *Chaurasī Atārī* (associated with memory of Gurū Hargobind Sāhib), *Gurdwārā Lohgarh Qilā* (earlier it was a fort built by Gurū Hargobind Sāhib between the period 1609-12) etc. Besides, 68 *Bungās* had been constructed in the town from time to time.

The Central Sikh Museum and the Sikh Reference Library have also been established here. On June 6-7, 1984, the Indian army burnt the records of the offices of the Akālī Dal and the S.G.P.C. It also army carried away the Sikh Reference Library, which consisted of thousands of the precious volumes of Sikh literature as well as several hundred rare documents from the time of Gurū Sāhibs. These documents and artefacts have not been returned at least up to 2006.

Amritsar is a big town with a population of above one million. It is a major trade centre. The offices of the Sikhs' representative

organizations i.e. Akālī Dal, the S.G.P.C., the Sikh Students' Federation, the Chief Khālsā Dīwān have also been set up at Amritsar.

ANANDPUR SĀHIB: Anandpur Sāhib is a small Sikh City, about 45 km from Ropar. It is surrounded by Shivalik hills on one side and river Sutlej on the other side. In 1665, Gurū Tegh Bahādur founded a village, which was named Chakk Nānakī (now a part of *greater* Anandpur Sāhib). The new village included some of the land of the villages of Sahotā, Mīānpur and Laudīpur. Gurū Sāhib purchased the land from Rānī Champā (of Bilāspur) for a payment of five hundred rupees. The foundation of the town was laid by Bhāi Gurdittā (a descendant of Bābā Buddhā), at the site of village Sahotā, on June 19, 1665. Gurū Sāhib named it *Chakk Nānakī* after his mother Mata Nānakī (wife of Gurū Hargobind). Gurū Tegh Bahādur stayed here for a few weeks only and then left for his long missionary journey (1666-1670) of the present states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Bengal, Assam etc. From 1670 to 1672, Gurū Tegh Bahādur stayed at Bakālā. In March 1672, Gurū Tegh Bahādur finally moved to *Chakk Nānakī* and stayed there up to 1675. Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib, the tenth Gurū, stayed here from 1672 to 1685. [He founded the town of Paonta Sāhib in 1685 and stayed there up to October 1688]. On March 30, 1689, he laid the foundation of Anandpur Sāhib at the site of Kesgarh Sāhib (now the area of Chakk-Nānaki, Anandpur Sāhib, Sahotā, Mīānpur, Laudipur, Mataur, Thappal etc. is known as *Greater* Anandpur Sāhib). Here, Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib revealed Khālsā on March 29, 1698 (according to some sources 1699). Kesgarh Sāhib and five forts (Tārāgarh, Anandgarh, Lohgarh, Holgarh/Agamgarh and Fatehgarh) were built here by Gurū Sāhib.

The hill rulers and the Moguls had attacked Anandpur Sāhib several times. On August 19, 1695, Dilāwar Khān, the Governor of Lahore, sent an army under the command of his son Rustam Khān. On August 29, 1700, Ajmer Chand, the ruler of Bilāspur State and his associates attacked Anandpur Sāhib. The battle continued for four days. On September 1, 1700, Kesarī Chand, a hill ruler was killed; the hill army fled the battlefield. On October 4, 1700, following the request of the hill rulers, Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib left Anandpur Sāhib for Nirmohgarh. Ajmer Chand's army attacked Gurū Sāhib, at Nirmohgarh, on October 8. Here, four battles took place between October 8 and 14. On October 14, Rājā Salāhī Chand, the ruler of Basālī, escorted Gurū Sāhib to his State. On October 30, 1700, Gurū Sāhib returned to Anandpur Sāhib. On February 24, 1702, a *Holā Mahallā* procession was taken from Anandgarh to Holgarh. On January 16, 1704, Ajmer Chand's army attacked Anandpur Sāhib

again. It was on this occasion that Gurū Sāhib began the tradition of *Farrā* (the Sikh flag in the *Dastār*, the Sikh turban). On May 3, 1705, huge armies of the hill rulers and the Governor of Sirhind, put a siege to Anandpur Sāhib. The siege continued for 7 months. On December 4, Gurū Sāhib received a letter from Aurangzeb. After this, Gurū Sāhib decided to leave Anandpur Sāhib. On the night of December 5 and 6, 1705, Gurū Sāhib and the Sikhs left the town.

On March 5, 1748, an important gathering of the Sikh Commonwealth was held here. In March 1753, Adīnā Beg (the Governor of Jullundur) attacked the Sikhs who had gone there to hold their annual gathering. In 1812, Mahan Chand, the ruler of Bilāspur, attacked Anandpur Sāhib. The Sikhs, under the command of Sodhi Surjan Singh, gave a crushing defeat to Mahan Chand. In the third decade of the nineteenth century, the town had become the second major centre of the Sikhs. For some time, Akālī Phulā Singh also made it his headquarters in 1824.

After 1947, the town witnessed several Akālī conferences and other gatherings. As a part of Punjābī Sūbā agitation, it was here that the Sikhs started Direct Action for erasing the Hindi sign-boards in the Punjāb, in 1966 and raised the first flag of Khalistan in 1981. The famous Anandpur Sāhib Resolution was passed here on October 16-17, 1973. On June 4, 1984, it was attacked and occupied by the Indian army. On March 26, 1986 police firing ordered by Surjeet Barnala, the then chief minister of Punjāb, killed several Sikhs. Every year, in February-March, a fair *Holā Mahallā* is observed in the town.

Kesgarh Sāhib, which was *Throne-seat* (it was the seat of Akāl Takht Sāhib and not a separate throne) of Gurū Gobind Singh, is situated in the heart of the town. Several relics belonging to Gurū Sāhib have been preserved here. The *Khandā* (double-edged sword) with which the Sikhs were initiated for the first time on March 29, 1698/1699 has also been preserved here. Besides *Takht Kesgarh Sāhib*, there are several Gurdwārās in this city: 1. *Akāl Bungā* (Here, Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib held his first court as Tenth Gurū). 2. *Sis Ganj* (Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib's head was cremated here on November 17, 1675). 3. *Gurū De Mahal* (It was the residence of Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib and Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib. Three sons of Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib were born here). 4. *Manjī Sāhib-I* (Here, Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib used to hold his court). 5. *Manjī Sāhib-II* (Here, Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib used to hold his court. Here, the sons of Gurū Gobind Singh used to learn martial arts. This is also known as *Damālgarh* because the tradition of *Dumālā* (*Farrā*) was started at this site on January 16, 1704). 6. *Damdamā Sāhib* (Here, Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib held his court. It was his 'Takht'. Here, he used to

receive special guests and diplomats. Here, in 1678, Bhāi Manī Singh prepared the final copy of Gurū Granth Sāhib, hence it is known as *Damdame Wālī Bīr*. 7. *Thara Sāhib* (It was here that the *Pandits* of Kashmir, led by Bhāi Kirpā Rām Dutt, visited Gurū Tegh Bahādūr Sāhib on May 25, 1675 and requested Gurū Sāhib to save them from the tyranny of Aurangzeb and his Kashmir governor). 8. *Bhorā Sāhib* (Gurū Tegh Bahādūr Sāhib used to meditate here). 9. *Gurdwārā Qila Anandgarh Sāhib* (About 800 meters from Kesgarh Sāhib. There is a *Baoli*, which has 135 steps. It was built by Jassā Singh Ahluwālīā). 10. *Gurdwārā Qila Fatehgarh Sāhib* (It has been built at the site of Fatehgarh fortress). 11. *Gurdwārā Qila Holgarh Sāhib* (It was the site of Holgarh fortress. It is about 1.2 km southwest of Kesgarh Sāhib. Here Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib began the tradition of *Holā Mahallā* to teach the Sikhs the art of manoeuvre in battle. Fake battles were arranged to train the Sikh soldiers). 12. *Gurdwārā Qila Lohgarh Sāhib* (It was the site of fortress Lohgarh. It is about 800 metres from Kesgarh Sāhib. Here, Bhāi Bachitar Singh and Bhāi Udey Singh wounded the drunkard elephant sent by the hill chiefs to break open the gate of the fortress), on September 1, 1700. 13. *Gurdwārā Mātā Jī Kaur*, at Agampur village, about 2 km from Kesgarh Sāhib. Mātā Jī Kaur (wife of Gurū Gobind Singh) was cremated at this site. 14. *Gurdwārā Tīr Garh*, about 5 km from the heart of the city, at the site of the Tīrgarh Fortress.

CHAMKAUR SĀHIB: Chamkaur Sāhib is a small town in Ropar district. After the exodus of the Sikhs from Anandpur Sāhib, on the night of December 5 and 6, 1705, Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib, his two sons (Ajīt Singh and Jujhār Singh) and a small group of forty-five Sikhs reached here in the morning of December 7. They stayed at the fortress (mansion) owned by Bhāi Budhi Chand Rawat. By the evening a huge Mogul army reached there and put siege to the fortress. The Sikhs had to fight one of the most crucial battles of the Sikh history. Forty Sikhs, three of the *Punj Piārāy* (Bhāi Mohkam Singh, Bhāi Sāhib Singh and Bhāi Himmat Singh), along with Sāhibzādā Ajīt Singh and Jhujhār Singh (two elder sons of Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib), embraced martyrdom here. Several Gurdwārās have been built in the town in the memory of these martyrs. *Gurdwārā Qatal Garh*, [also known as *Shaheed Ganj*] is the main shrine of Chamkaur Sāhib. Besides this main shrine, there are five more Gurdwārās at Chamkaur Sāhib: 1. *Garhi Sāhib* (built at the site of the fortress). 2. *Tārhi Sāhib* (*Tarhi* literally means a "clap"). According to a tradition, here, on a mound, Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib made final announcement before leaving by saying "here goes the *Pīr* of the Sikhs" as he did not want to

leave without making an announcement) [this story seems to be a concocted one, and an after-thought]; 3. *Damdama Sāhib*, built in memory of the visit of Gurū Gobind Singh (He had visited this place during one of his early visits, on his way to Kurukashetra; 4. *Gurdwārā Ranjīt Garh* (Here Gurū Gobind Singh spent some time on his way from Kurukashetra to Anandpur Sāhib); 5. *Gurdwārā Shaheed Ganj Bhāi Jīwan Singh* (Bhāi Jaitā had embraced martyrdom on the bank of rivulet Sirsā but some of his admirors have built his *Shaheed Ganj* here.).

DELHI: Delhi was founded in the year 734 by Tomar Rājput rulers and has been the capital of various rulers of the Indian sub-continent. This has been the capital of the Chohāns, the Sultāns, the Lodhīs and the Moguls. In 1803, the British partly occupied it. In 1857, they finally annexed it. On December 12, 1911, the British emperor George V declared Delhi as the capital of the British India. He also laid down the foundation of New Delhi between the area of Pahār Ganj and Safdar Ganj, on December 15, 1911. In 1929, the construction of the Viceregal Lodge was completed. Today, about one million Sikhs live in Delhi. In 1921, the number was only 2669, in 1971 it was 291123, in 1981 it was 393921 and in 1991 it was 455657.

THE SIKHS & DELHI: The ninth Gurū, Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib, and three Sikhs (Bhāi Dīāl Dās, Bhāi Matī Dās, and Bhāi Satī Dās) were martyred here, at Chandani Chowk, on November 11, 1675. In March and June 1716, Bandā Singh Bahādur and his more than 746 companions were martyred here (at Chandni Chowk and Mehrauli). The Sikhs, under the leadership of Jathedār Jassā Singh Ahluwālī, Bābā Baghel Singh, Sirdar Rai Singh Bhangi, and Sirdar Gurdit Singh Ladwa etc. occupied Delhi and hoisted Khālsā Blue flag on the Red Fort on March 11, 1783. The Moguls were compelled to sign a treaty with Bābā Baghel Singh for 37.5% share of the octroi tax of Delhi. A place named *Tees Hazārī* reminds of Baghel Singh and his 'Tees Hazār' (30000) army. Baghel Singh had built the first Gurdwārās of the city during 1783-1788. (Later, renovation was undertaken and additions were made). On January 14, 1914, the British regime demolished the outer wall of the Gurdwārā Rakāb Ganj. An agitation by the Sikhs, however, compelled the regime to rebuild the wall. In 1930, Gurdwārā Sis Ganj was a scene of firing by the police (some processionists, who had entered the Gurdwārā, during a procession, were fired at by the police). On June 12, 1960, the Indian regime put siege to Gurdwārā Sis Ganj to stop a Sikh procession. On this day, several Sikhs were brutally beaten. Some of them, later, died. In 1978 too, the Janta party regime repeated the same. In 1994, the Congress-

controlled D.D.A. authorities demolished a part of the campus of Gurdwārā Majnu Tilla.

During 'Black November 1984', several killer gangs, led by the leaders of the Congress Party, butchered thousands of innocent Sikhs to death in savage manner. Rajiv Gandhi, the then prime minister, justified these killings by saying that "when a big tree falls, the earth trembles." It is shameful that a large number of international leaders were present in Delhi at short distances from the scenes of these gruesome killings, but not a single international leader dared say even a single word of sympathy, for the innocent Sikhs.

There are several Gurdwārās in Delhi and New Delhi: (1) *Gurdwārā Majnu Tilla* situated on the right bank of the river Yamuna, opposite Timarpur Colony (has been built in memory of the visit of Gurū Nānak Sāhib); (2) *Gurdwārā Nānak Piao*, situated on the Grand Trunk Road, outside Old Subzī Mandi (built in memory of the visit of Gurū Nānak); (3) *Gurdwārā Banglā Sāhib* (it was the residence of Mirzā Jai Sinh. Gurū Harkrishan stayed here in March 1664 and Gurū Tegh Bahādūr visited this place thrice, in 1664, 1665 and 1670); (4) *Gurdwārā Bala Sāhib*, situated on the Ring Road, on the other side of the Mahārānī Bāgh Colony (Gurū Harkrishan, Mata Sāhib Kaur and Mata Sunder Kaur were cremated here); (5) *Gurdwārā Sis Ganj*, situated at Chandani Chowk, near the Red Fort (Gurū Tegh Bahādūr, Bhāī Dīāl Dās, Bhāī Matī Dās and Bhāī Satī Dās were martyred here on November 11, 1675; and more than 740 Sikhs were martyred here in March 1716); (6) *Gurdwārā Rakāb Ganj*, situated near Parliament House (it was the residence of Bhāī Lakkhī Rāi Yadav Wanjārā; the body of Gurū Tegh Bahādūr was cremated here); (7) *Gurdwārā Motī Bāgh*, situated on the Ring Road between Dhaula Kuan and Shanti Path (has been built in memory of the visit of Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib in 1707).; (8) *Gurdwārā Damdamā Sāhib*, situated on the bank of river Yamuna, near the tomb of Hamayun (has been built in memory of the visit of Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib); (9) *Gurdwārā Mata Sunder Kaur*, situated behind J.P.Nayak Hospital adjoining Ghalib Urdu Academy, near Turkman Gate. [Mata Sunder Kaur and Mata Sāhib Kaur stayed here for several years]. Besides, there are several Gurdwārās built by local Sikhs. Some of these have very fine buildings. *Gurdwārā Bandā Singh Bahādūr* has been built near Kutub Minar, overlooking *Dargah* of Khwājā Bakhtiār Kākī (in Mehrauli). It was here that the great Sikh General Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādūr and several Sikhs were martyred on June 9, 1716.

FATEHGARH SĀHIB: This is a Gurdwārā and a village, about 5 km from Sirhind, named after the Gurdwārā built in the memory of the

martyrdom of Mata Gujarī, the mother and the two younger sons of Gurū Gobind Singh, Sāhibzādā Zorāwar Singh and Sāhibzādā Fateh Singh. It was here that the two Sāhibzādās were bricked alive on December 12, 1705. After its completion, the wall fell down. The next day, the two Sāhibzādās were butchered to death the following day. Mata Gujarī was also tortured to death on December 13, 1705. Diwān Todar Mall Kapūr cremated their dead bodies. A Sikh, named Bhāi Jodh Singh, a resident of a nearby village, took the ashes of the three to his village, put them in a pitcher and buried the same. *Gurdwārā Fatehgarh Sāhib* has been built to preserve memory of martyrdom of the Sāhibzādās. Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādur had built the first memorial on the ruins of the old fort of Sirhind in 1710. He named it Fatehgarh. The present building of the Gurdwārā had been built in 1765 and renovated in 1813, 1944 and 1955. The central place of this Gurdwārā is the basement, known as *Bhora Sāhib*, believed to be the exact site where the two Sāhibzādās were bricked alive.

The major shrines of Fatehgarh Sāhib are: (1) *Gurdwārā Burj Mata Gujarī*: It is close to the main shrine. Mata Gujarī and the two Sāhibzādās were detained here. It is called *Thandā Burj* because at this site there was a tower of the erstwhile fort of Sirhind and cold winds from all the sides made it unbearable to stand there in winters. Here, Mata Gujarī was tortured to death on December 13, 1705. (2) *Gurdwārā Bibāngarh*: Here, the bodies of Mata Gujarī and the two younger Sāhibzādās were kept for the night prior to their cremation. (3) *Gurdwārā Jyotī Sarūp*: It is about one and a half km from the main Gurdwārā. It was here that Mata Gujarī and the two Sāhibzādās were cremated. (4) *Shaheed Ganj-I* (When Bābā Bandā Singh captured Sirhind, on May 14, 1710, bodies of thousands of Sikhs, who had embraced martyrdom in the battles, were cremated here). (5) *Shaheed Ganj-II*. When Mogul emperor ordered general execution of the Sikh, awards were announced for affecting the arrest/killing of the Sikhs. As a follow up, thousands of Sikhs were killed. Once, 40 cartloads of the heads of the dead Sikhs were being carried, from Lahore to Delhi, to be presented before the emperor. The Sikhs attacked the party and captured the heads of the Sikhs and cremated them at this site. (6) *Shaheed Ganj Jathedār Sukkhā Singh*: It was here, Bhāi Sukkhā Singh, a martyr of the battle of Sirhind (fought in November 1710) and his companions were cremated. (7). *Shaheed Ganj Bhāi Mallā Singh*: It is about half a km from the main shrine. Bhāi Mallā Singh, a martyr of the battle of Sirhind (fought on January 14, 1764) and other Sikh martyrs were cremated here. (8) *Gurdwārā Tharā Sāhib Patsāhī Chhewīn*: It has been built to preserve memory of the visit of Gurū Hargobind Sāhib. (Mahārājā) Karam Singh, the ruler of Patiala, re-

named Sirhind as Fatehgarh. However, Sirhind remained more in use. Now, Fatehgarh Sāhib is a district of the Punjāb.

GOINDWĀL SĀHIB: - It is an old town on the banks of river Beas, near Khadūr Sāhib, about 25 km from Tarn Tāran and about 50 km from Amritsar. The town was a ferry and a major junction on Sultānpur-Lahore road. Gurū Amar Dās Sāhib, Gurū Rām Dās Sāhib and Gurū Arjan Sāhib stayed here for several years. Gurū Hargobind Sāhib and Gurū Har Rāi Sāhib also visited this village. Gurū Arjan Sāhib was born in this town. During those days, there was acute shortage of drinking water in the village. To overcome the shortage of water a *Baoli* (deep well) was built by Gurū Amar Dās Sāhib in 1556.

The main shrines of this town are: (1) *Baoli Sāhib* (built on the *Baoli*, dug by Gurū Amar Dās in 1556). One has to descend 84 stairs to reach water of this *Baoli*. (By the end of 1800 the number of the steps was less than 80). These 84 stairs were covered with marble in 1906. The dome of this Gurdwārā is gold-plated. (2) *Kuh Gurū Rām Dās Sāhib*: (This well had been built by Gurū Rām Dās Sāhib. Bhāi Gurdās, the scribe of the first volume of Gurū Granth Sāhib, breathed his last at this site). (3) *Chaubārā Sāhib* (It was the residence of Gurū Amar Dās Sāhib and Gurū Rām Dās. Gurū Amar Dās used to hold his court here. Gurū Arjan was born here. (a separate Gurdwārā *Janam Asthān Gurū Arjan Sāhib* has also been built here. Gurū Rām Dās breathed his last here. A palanquin, believed to be from the time of Gurū Arjan, has been preserved here.). (4) *Guriāi Asthān* (where Gurū Rām Dās was crowned as the fourth Gurū) (5) *Joti Jot Asthān Patshāhi Tijī* (a separate *Manjī Sāhib*, adjacent to *Guriāi Asthān* has been built at the site where Gurū Amar Dās breathed his last). (6) *Thara Sāhib Gurū Amar Dās Sāhib* (Here Gurū Amar Dās used to sit to supervise the digging of the *Baoli*). (7) *Killi Sāhib* (According to a hagiographic story, Gurū Amar Dās used to hold a *Killi* (a peg), for support, while 'meditatin'. A peg, now covered with silver plate, has been fixed in one of the walls of *Chaubārā Sāhib*. This seems to be an after thought as there is no concept of such a meditation in Sikhism and this anti-Sikh structure was built by ignorant/phoney managers of the shrine). Besides, there are memorials of *Bābā Anand* (son of Bābā Moharī and grandson of Gurū Amar Dās) and *Bābā Mohan* (son of Gurū Amar Dās). Another Gurdwārā *Damdāmā Sāhib*, about 3 km from the village, has been built to preserve memory of the visit of Gurū Amar Dās. According to a story, Gurū Sāhib used to rest here while fetching water for Gurū Angad from river Beas. This story seems to be an after thought as the river Beas flows more than 10 km from Khadūr and it is not possible to believe that there was no well at

or near Khadūr at that time. This town was visited by Akbar (the Mogul emperor), on November 24, 1598 (once earlier too).

HAZŪR SĀHIB: - This is a Gurdwārā, also known as Takht, at village Nander, situated on the bank of river Godāwarī (in Maharashtra state). It is about 235 km from Aurangabad and about 278 km from Hyderabad. Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib spent his last days in this town. It is here that Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādūr was initiated into the Sikh faith. *Hazūr Sāhib, Gurdwārā Sachkhand Sāhib* is the main shrine. The central place is called *Angūtthā Sāhib*. Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib was cremated here (Sikhism forbids memorials at the site of cremation). Besides the main shrine, there are several Gurdwārās in this area: *Gurdwārā Sangat Sāhib*: (Here, Gurū Sāhib used to hold congregation), *Gurdwārā Naginā Ghāt*, *Gurdwārā Hīrā Ghāt* (It is on the bank of the river Godāwarī. According to a hagiographic story, here, Gurū Gobind Singh threw the diamond presented by Bahādūr Shah, the Mogul emperor, into the river. *Gurdwārā Shikār Ghāt* (where Gurū Sāhib used to hunt for wild animals; earlier there was a dense forest), *Gurdwārā Gobind Bāgh* (where Gurū Sāhib used to rest under the tress), *Gurdwārā Māl Tekrī* (where Gurū Sāhib used to hold martial games; once, her, he paid salaries to the soldiers), *Gurdwārā Banda Ghāt* (Here Gurū Sāhib initiated Bābā Bandā Singh as a member of Sikh brotherhood), *Gurdwārā Mata Sāhib Kaur*, *Gurdwārā Langar Sāhib* etc. Besides, there are two more Gurdwārās which have been built in the memory of prominent Sikhs of the time of Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib: (1) in memory of Bhāi Dayā Singh and Bhāi Dharam Singh (two of the *Punj Piārāy*) who died there sometimes in or after 1708 and (2) in memory of Mai Bhāg Kaur (Mai Bhāgo).

KARTĀRPUR (Jullundur): Kartārpur is a town, about 15 km from Jullundur, founded by Gurū Arjan Sāhib. Gurū Sāhib laid the foundation of this town on November 24, 1594. Gurū Arjan Sāhib and Gurū Hargobind Sāhib stayed in this town for a few years. The marriage ceremony of Bābā Sūraj Mall and Gurū Tegh Bahādūr Sāhib (the sons of Gurū Hargobind Sāhib) was performed in this town. In 1635, the Mogul army attacked Kartārpur. After this battle (April 26-28, 1635), Gurū Hargobind Sāhib moved to Keeratpur Sāhib. Later, Dhīr Mall, son of Bābā Gurdittā and grandson of Gurū Hargobind Sāhib, chose to continue staying at Kartārpur. Dhīr Mall too moved to Keeratpur for a short period and again. In 1662, he returned to Bakālā but the property of Kartārpur remained under his control. Dhīr Mall died in Ranthambhor Fort prison in 1677 and his son Rām Chand was executed at Delhi in 1678. After this, Dhīr Mall's second son Bhār

Mall left Bakālā and moved to Kartārpur. Since then, his successors have remained in the control of the property of Kartārpur. The first volume of *Gurū Granth Sāhib* (in the handwriting of Bhāī Gurdās) remained here from 1631 to 1662. In 1662, Dhīr Mall took it to Bakālā. Bhār Mall again brought it with him from Bakālā in 1678. Now, a copy of *Gurū Granth Sāhib* has been preserved here and it is shown to visitors on the first day of every month of Bikramī calendar. But, this volume is not the original one as that had been burnt when the town was badly ravaged and burnt by Nasir Alī, the chief of Jullundur, in 1757.

There are several Gurdwārās in the town: 1. *Thamm Sāhib* (Here, Gurū Arjan Sāhib fixed a pole of *Tahli* tree to lay the foundation of the town; hence the name Thamm Sāhib. Nasir Ali destroyed and burnt the first shrine in 1757. Mahārājā Ranjīt Singh built the present building). 2. *Gangsar Sāhib* (Here Gurū Arjan Sāhib got a well dug in 1599. The Sikhs believe that the water of this well is more sacred than river Gangā (holy to Hindus); hence the name of the Gurdwārā). 3. *Shish Mahal* (It was the residence of Gurū Arjan Sāhib and Gurū Hargobind Sāhib). Several relics belonging to Gurū Arjan Sāhib, Gurū Hargobind Sāhib, Gurū Har Rāi Sāhib and Bābā Gurdittā have been preserved here. 4. *Damdāmā Sāhib* (It is associated with memory of Gurū Hargobind Sāhib. Gurū Sāhib rested here for a short while in the battle of April 26-28, 1635. Here, Gurū Sāhib used to hold congregations). 5. Another Gurdwārā, about 3 km from the heart of the town, named *Damdāmā Sāhib Patshāhī Satwin*, also known as *Tahli Sāhib*, is associated with memory of the visit of Gurū Har Rāi Sāhib. Gurū Har Rāi Sāhib visited this place on his way from Keeratpur Sāhib to Goindwāl in 1658. 6. *Wiāh Asthān Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib* (Here, the marriage of Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib and Mata Gujarī was solemnized). 7. *Gurdwārā Chubachchā Sāhib Patshāhī Chhewīn* (It was built in memory of Gurū Hargobind Sāhib). 8. *Gurdwārā Ber Sāhib* (It is associated with memory of Bābā Gurdittā and Bhāī Gurdās). Besides the memorial of Mata Kaulān is also still in existence.

KARTĀRPUR (Pakistan) & DERA BĀBĀ NĀNAK: Kartārpur (Pakistan) is about 60 km from Amritsar and about 36 km from Batala. Gurū Nānak Sāhib founded the village in 1522. Bhāī Dunī Chand Karorīā (also known as Bhāī Karorī Mall) made liberal contributions for the establishment of this village. Gurū Nānak spent last years of his life (1522 - 1539) here. Gurū Angad was coronated as Second Gurū in this village. Most of this village was eroded by floods in the river Rāvī several times. At one time it was feared that the river would wash the

whole historical village of Gurū Nānak Sāhib away. The Sikhs, at a cost of about one hundred and fifty thousand rupees, built a dam of cement and stones in 1926. The then ruler of Patiala contributed major share of this money. The main shrine in the village is *Dehrā Sāhib*.

On the other side of the river Rāvī (at a distance of about four km) there is another town **Derā Bābā Nānak**. A few years after the death of Gurū Nānak Sāhib, a flood in the river Rāvī washed away the *Samādh* (erecting of *Samādh* is in contradiction with the Sikh ideology) of Gurū Nānak Sāhib. At this Sri Chand (son of Gurū Nānak Sāhib), established himself in village Pakkhole, on the other side of the river Rāvī, and raised a mound in the outskirts of the village. It came to be known as *Dehrā* (literally: memorial raised at the site of cremation) of Gurū Nānak Sāhib. Later, a shrine was built there and after some decades, it became a separate village and came to be known as Derā Bābā Nānak. Now it has become a town. In Derā Bābā Nānak there is another major Gurdwārā named *Chola Sāhib*. The descendants of Lakhmī Dās, the younger son of Gurū Nānak Sāhib, have preserved a cloak, claimed to have been presented to Gurū Nānak Sāhib, by some Muslim admirer, during his tour of Mecca/Baghdad (but it does not seem to be so much old). Derā Bābā Nānak is about 55 km from Amritsar. Before 1947, there was rail service between Derā Bābā Nānak and Sialkot (Pakistan).

KEERATPUR SĀHIB: This is a town, on the banks of river Sutlej, about 35 km from Ropar. The foundation stone of this town was laid on April 23, 1624, by Sri Chand, son of Gurū Nānak Sāhib, on the land purchased by Gurū Hargobind Sāhib from Raja Kalyān Chand, the ruler of Bilāspur. Sri Chand died here on December 30, 1624. On May 3, 1635, Gurū Hargobind Sāhib moved here from Kartārpur and established it as his headquarters for the rest of his life. This town was the headquarters of the Sikh nation between 1635 and 1664. Gurū Hargobind Sāhib and Gurū Har Rāi Sāhib breathed their last in this town. Here, Gurū Har Rāi Sāhib and Gurū Harkrishan Sāhib was coronated as the seventh Gurū as the eighth Gurū respectively.

There are several historical Sikh shrines in the town: (1) *Gurdwārā Charan Kanwal Sāhib* (Built in the memory of the visit of Gurū Nānak Sāhib. Gurū Sāhib visited this place during his missionary journey. Here, he met Sāin Buddhān Shāh who served Gurū Sāhib with goat milk). (2) *Gurdwārā Shish Mahal* (It was the residence of Gurū Hargobind and Gurū Har Rāi. Gurū Har Rāi and Gurū Harkrishan were born here). (3) *Gurdwārā Takht Kot Sāhib* (It was a fort built by Gurū Har Rāi. Due to this fort, this town was also known as 'Kot Gurū Har Rāi Sāhib'. Gurū Hargobind, Gurū Har Rāi and Gurū

Harkrishan used to perform the functions of Akāl Takht Sāhib from this place. Here, Gurū Har Rāi and Gurū Harkrishan were coronated as seventh and eighth Gurū respectively). (4) *Gurdwārā Damdamā Sāhib* (Gurū Har Rāi used to hold congregation at this site). (5) *Gurdwārā Patāl Purī* (It has been built on the bank of river Sutlej. Gurū Hargobind and Gurū Har Rāi were cremated here. {Some naïve Sikhs have adopted the tradition to immerse the ashes of their relatives here. It is strictly against Sikh ideology. A Sikh is expected to immerse the ashes of the dead in the nearest flowing water.}). (6) *Gurdwārā Bābān Garh* (Here, Bhāi Jaitā carrying the severed head of Gurū Tegh Bahādur, rested here on his way to Anandpur Sāhib, on November 15, 1675). (7) *Gurdwārā Harimandir Sāhib Patshāhī Chhewīn* (Here, Gurū Hargobind Sāhib used to sit in meditation. Earlier, there used to be a garden. According to a tradition, it was here that once [Gurū] Har Rāi Sāhib, who was wearing a large-sized *Kurtā* [literally: apparel], accidentally caused a flower to have broken from its branch. When [Gurū] Har Rāi became emotional, Gurū Hargobind Sāhib advised him to always be very careful). There were several herbal trees in this garden. (8) *Gurdwārā Chubachchā Sāhib* (It was here that Gurū Hargobind Sāhib and Gurū Har Rāi Sāhib used to keep fodder for their horses. They had 2200 horses. He had two big stables for these horses; the othe one in Charnauli village). (9) *Gurdwārā Manjī Sāhib* (It was the residence of Bībī Rūp Kaur, the daughter of Gurū Har Rāi Sāhib. She was married to Bhāi Khem Karan of Pasrur on November 4, 1662 but she stayed at Pasrur only for three days and then returned to Keeratpur. She spent the rest of her life at Kot Kalyanpur and Keeratpur Sāhib. Some relics belonging to her have been preserved in this Gurdwārā: a *Seli-topī* [a cap] belonging to Sri Chand; a hand-written *Pothī* which contains some hymns from Gurū Granth Sāhib as well as some didactic anecdotes [both these items had been gifted to Bībī Rūp Kaur by her grandmother on the eve of her marriage]; a hand-fan and an embroidered handkerchief). (10) *Gurdwārā Dehrā Sāhib Bābā Gurdittā* (It was here that Bābā Gurdittā breathed his last. Later, some writers concocted a story about performance of miracles by Gurdittā. Sikhism rejects such practices; hence, such stories must have been concocted by some vested interests). (11) *Gurdwārā Tīr Sāhib* (Here Gurū Hargobind used to hold competition in Martial arts. Once, Gurū Sāhib shot an arrow from this spot. The arrow landed near the river Sutlej [*Gurdwārā Patālpurī* has been built at the site]). (12) *Baolī Sāhib*. (13) *Gurū Da Khuh*. (14) There is an *Udāsī* shrine also. *Sant Niwās Udāsī Āshram* has been built by the *Udāsīs*. According to the *Udāsīs*, Sri Chand had stayed there. Gurū Tegh Bahādur and Gurū Gobind Singh had visited this town several times, on their way from/to

Anandpur Sāhib. Gurū Nānak had visited this place much before the establishment of the town.

KHADŪR SĀHIB: This is a village (about 3 km from Goindwāl, about 25 km from Tarn Tāran and about 50 km from Amritsar) where Gurū Angad spent 13 years (1539-52). Gurū Angad Sāhib was born at village Matte-Dī-Sarān (now known as Nānge-Dī-Sarān, about 12 km from Muktsar) but his parents had moved to Khadūr, probably in 1519-20. Gurū Amar Dās was coronated as the Third Gurū in this village. Gurū Amar Dās too spent about 12 years (1540 to 1552) here. According to a tradition Gurū Nānak had also visited this village and had met Bhāi Jodhā. According to this source it was Bhāi Jodhā who had first informed Bhāi Lehnā about Gurū Nānak.

There are three Gurdwārās at Khadūr Sāhib: (1) *Gurdwārā Tapiānā Sāhib* (built in memory of the visit of Gurū Nānak Sāhib). (2) *Gurdwārā Tap Asthān Gurū Angad Sāhib* (Built in the memory of Gurū Angad) (3) *Gurdwārā Darbār Sāhib Angitthā Sāhib* (Here, the body of Gurū Angad was cremated). (4) *Khaddī Sāhib* (Built in memory of Gurū Amar Dās. It was a weaver's handloom. According to a tradition, it was here that Gurū Amar Dās, while carrying water for bath of Gurū Angad, stumbled against a *Killī*, literally: a peg.) (5) *Gurdwārā Tharhā Sāhib Gurū Amar Dās Sāhib* (Here Gurū Amar Dās used to address congregations) (6) *Gurdwārā Mal Akhārā* (Here Gurū Angad used to hold wrestling competitions and the other sports. According to a tradition, here, Gurū Sāhib used to teach Gurmukhi script to the children. It seems that Gurū Sāhib used this place as a school and a playing ground.). (7) *Gurdwārā Mai Bhiraī/Bharaī* (built in memory of Mai Bhiraī, sister of Gurū Angad. In 1539, Gurū Angad Sāhib had spent some months with his sister. When Gurū Nānak breathed his last, the Sikhs, led by Bābā Buddhā, came here, to request Gurū Angad to take the charge of Gurū-ship). (8) *Bībī Amaro Jī Dā Khuh* (Adjacent to *Killī Sāhib*. It is believed that Bībī Amaro, daughter of Gurū Angad used to fetch water from this well).

MUKTSAR: Muktsar is a town, about 45 km from Faridkot and about 28 km from Jallalabad. Earlier it was known as Khidrānā village, and a pond nearby, was known as *Khidrāne-Dī-Dhāb*. (*Dhāb* literally means a big pond where water is preserved). Here, on December 29, 1705, 40 Sikhs fought an unequal battle against a huge Mogul army. The Sikhs fought bravely and killed hundreds of the soldiers of the Mogul army. Only Mai Bhāgo (Mai Bhāg Kaur) survived. Gurū Gobind Singh, who arrived at the scene soon after the battle, was an eyewitness to the chivalry of the Sikh soldiers. The place was named

Muktsar (tank/pool of the 40 Liberated ones), in memory of the martyrdom of the Sikhs. There are several Gurdwārās at Muktsar: *Darbār Sāhib* (the main Gurdwārā, inside the town), *Tibbī Sāhib* (where Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib rested for some time), *Tambu Sāhib* (where the Sikhs stalled their tents), *Shaheed Ganj* (where Gurū Sāhib cremated the Sikhs) etc. The forty martyrs included: Bhāī Rai Singh (brother of Bhāī Manī Singh), Bhāī Mahān Singh and Bhāī Sītāl Singh (sons of Bhāī Rāi Singh), Bhāī Sunder Singh of Jhalliān Wālā, Bhāī Nidhān Singh Waraich (husband of Mai Bhāg Kaur), Bhāī Bhāg Singh and Bhāī Dilbāgh Singh, both the younger brothers of Mai Bhāg Kaur (Mai Bhago), Bhāī Gharbārā Singh, Bhāī Gandā Singh etc.

NĀNAKĀNĀ SĀHIB: Nānakānā Sāhib is a historical town in district Sheikhpura (Pakistan). Earlier, it was known as Rai Bhoi Dī Talwandī, after the name of its founder Rai Bhoi (the father of Rai Bulār). Gurū Nānak Sāhib (1469 - 1539), the founder of the Sikh religion, was born here on October 20, 1469. Gurū Nānak Sāhib spent about 35 years of his life in this village. There are several Gurdwārās in the town: *Gurdwārā Janam Asthān* (the birthplace of Gurū Nānak), *Gurdwārā Bal Lila* (Gurū Sāhib used to play here), *Gurdwārā Puti Sāhib* (It was the site of the school where Gurū Sāhib used to study), *Gurdwārā Kiārā Sāhib* (It was the site of Gurū Sāhib's fields), *Gurdwārā Tambu Sāhib* (It was a cluster of bushes and trees at the time of Gurū Sāhib) etc. Gurū Arjan and Gurū Hargobind also visited this town. A Gurdwārā had been built to preserve memory of the visit of both the Gurū Sāhibs. The main shrine of the town is *Gurdwārā Janam Asthān*. On February 20, 1921, Narain Dās, an *Udāsī* manager of the *Gurdwārā Janam Asthān*, killed more than 130 Sikhs in the shrine and then burnt the dead and the wounded. [The 'justice-loving' British judge gave him life imprisonment (he was released after 10 years), whereas just one murder fetches death sentence]. Most of the town (about 500 acres) is the property of *Gurdwārā Janam Asthān*. Since 1947, Pakistan government is managing the shrines and the maintenance is not good. Presently, more than 95% of the residents of the town are Muslim refugees from the east Punjāb. The Sikhs have been trying to get it declared a Sikh Holy Land on the lines of the Christian Vatican city but have not succeeded so far. Several thousand Sikhs make pilgrimage to this town every year.

PAONTA SĀHIB: Paonta Sāhib is a town, on the banks of river Yamuna (in Himanchal Pradesh), about 65 km from Yamunanagar, about 42 km from Nahan and about 50 km from Dehradun, founded by Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib. The foundation stone of the town was laid

by Bhāi Ram Kanwar (later Gurbakhsh Singh), fifth in direct line of Bābā Buddhā, on April 29, 1685. Here, Gurū Sāhib had built a fort. Gurū Sāhib stayed here for 3 years and six months. During this period, Paonta Sāhib became a major centre of writers. Gurū Sāhib had more than fifty-two renowned poets and artists in his court. Raja Medanī Parkāsh (the ruler of the State of Nahan) visited Gurū Sāhib at Paonta Sāhib several times. Ram Rai, son of Gurū Har Rāi, who had been excommunicated from Sikh faith, too visited Gurū Sāhib here on May 11, 1685 and apologized for collaborating with Aurangzeb. On September 18, 1688, Fateh Shah, the ruler of Garhwāl attacked, Gurū Sāhib. A battle was fought at village Bhangānī, about 19 km from Paontā Sāhib. In this battle, Bhāi Sango Shāh and Bhāi Jit Mall (sons of Bībī Vīro, the daughter of Gurū Hargobind Sāhib), Bhāi Ūdiā (son of Bhāi Khemā Chandaniā), Bhāi Hatthī Chand (brother of Bhāi Manī Singh) and a few others embraced martyrdom. On October 28, 1688, Gurū Sāhib left Paontā for Anandpur Sāhib. There are three main Sikh shrines in this town: main shrine Darbār Sāhib, Dastār Sāhib, and Kavī Darbār Asthān. At Bhangānī too there are three shrines: Bhangānī Sāhib, Tīgarh and Shergarh (on way to Bhangānī).

PATNA SĀHIB: Patna Sāhib is the capital of Bihar. The old town was known as PatlipuTārā (right bank of the river). Another ancient town was known as Hājīpur (left bank of the river). PatlipuTārā is more than 2500 years old. Present town of Patna is only 400 years old. Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib was born here on December 18, 1661 and he spent first 8 years of his life in this city. Gurū Nānak Sāhib and Gurū Tegh Bahādur also visited the city. There are several Gurdwārās in the city: 1. *Harimandir Sāhib* (Gurū Gobind Singh was born here. The present structure had been built in the first half of nineteenth century. Some Articles of the time of Gurū Sāhib have been preserved here). Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib used to hold his court here; hence, it was his 'throne'. 2. *Gurdwārā Gurū Dā Bāgh* (built in memory of the visit of Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib. A local Qāzī gifted this orchard to Gurū Sāhib). 3. *Gurdwārā Gobind Ghāt* (Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib used to play here). 4. *Gurdwārā Barī Sangat* (It was the residence of Bhāi Jit Mall, a financier. When Gurū Tegh Bahādur visited the city for the first time, he stayed at the residence of Bhāi Jit Mall). Gurū Nānak also visited this town during his first missionary journey. *Gurdwārā Gai Ghāt* (on the side of Hājīpur) has been built to preserve his memory.

SULTĀNPUR: Sultānpur is an ancient town (in the present district of Kapurthala), about 25 km from Kapurthala and about 45 km from

Jullundur. According to a tradition, this city was founded by Sultan Khan Lodhī (a general of Sultan Mehmood of Ghazni), on the ruins of erstwhile Sarbnam city. According to another tradition Sultan Khan (son of Wali Mohammed Khān, the Governor of Punjāb), founded this city in 1332. For the next three centuries, this town remained the headquarters of the chief of the sub-province of Jalandhar-Doāb. Gurū Nānak Sāhib, the founder of Sikhism, spent 3 years (September 1504 – 20.8.1507) in this city. Gurū Arjan Sāhib too visited this city. In 1739, Nadir Shah invaded, plundered and destroyed the town. Sirdar Jassā Singh Ahluwālī occupied it in November 1753.

There are several Gurdwārās in the city: 1. *Gurdwārā Ber Sāhib* (Here, Gurū Nānak Sāhib used to have bath every day. A *Ber* tree, believed to be from the time of Gurū Sāhib, still exist; hence the name of the Gurdwārā). 2. *Gurdwārā Hatt Sāhib* (Here, Gurū Sāhib worked as chief of the royal store). 3. *Gurdwārā Sant Ghāt* (Here, Gurū Nānak Sāhib took off his ordinary dress and began his *Udāsī* (missionary journey). 4. *Gurdwārā Kottharhī Sāhib* (Here, Gurū Sāhib gave the charge of his job). 5. *Gurdwārā Gurū Dā Bāgh* (It was the residence of Bebe Nānakī and Gurū Nānak Sāhib); *Dharamsālā Gurū Arjan Sāhib* (Gurū Arjan Sāhib stopped here on his way to village Dallā where he performed the marriage of Gurū Hargobind Sāhib) etc.

TALWANDĪ SĀBO: This is a town also known as Damdamā Sāhib, about 8 km from railway station Rāmā and about 28 km from Bathindā, visited by Gurū Har Rāi, Gurū Tegh Bahādur (in 1670's) and Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib (in 1706). Here, Gurū Har Rāi spent 11 days, Gurū Tegh Bahādur stayed here for one month and Gurū Gobind Singh spent more than nine months. According to a tradition Gurū Nānak also visited this village. Gurū Tegh Bahādur visited Talwandī Sābo in March 1665. He laid the foundation of the *Sarovar* and built a shrine for the local Sikhs. Gurū Gobind Singh reached Talwandī Sābo, on January 16, 1706. Bhāi Dallā, chief of the village served Gurū Gobind Singh with dedication. Gurū Sāhib left Talwandī Sābo on October 30, 1706. Here, Gurū Sāhib initiated several persons into Sikh faith including Abhey Singh (great-grandson of Pirthī Chand *Mina*) and the two leaders of the Patiala dynasty (Tilok Singh and Ram Singh). This area was not good for agriculture purposes due to shortage of water. Today, it is one of most fertile areas of the world.

The main shrine of the town is *Damdamā Sāhib* (here Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib used to hold congregations). [On November 18, 1966, the S.G.P.C. "declared" it as a "Throne" of the Sikhs]. Here, Bābā Dip Singh made a few copies of Gurū Granth Sāhib from the original (and final) volume, which had been prepared by Bhāi Manī

Singh at *Damdāmā Sāhib*, Anandpur Sāhib in 1678. A volume preserved here is wrongly claimed to be one of the copies prepared by Bābā Dip Singh. The other shrines in this town are: 1. *Gurdwārā Nānaksar* (built in memory of the visit of Gurū Nānak. Earlier it was only a *Sarovar*). 2. *Manjī Sāhib Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib Patsāhī Nauwīn* (Gurū Tegh Bahādur used to hold congregation at this site). 3. *Gurdwārā Manjī Sāhib Patsāhī Nauwīn Ate Daswīn* (built in memory of the visit of the ninth Gurū and tenth Gurū). 4. *Gurūsar Sarovar* (A tank got excavated by Gurū Tegh Bahādur in March 1665 and completed under the supervision of Gurū Gobind Singh). 5. *Gurdwārā Niwās Asthān Damdāmā Sāhib Patsāhī Daswīn* (Gurū Gobind Singh stayed here in 1706). 6. *Gurdwārā Mata Sunder Kaur Jī and Mata Sāhib Kaur Jī* (Here, the wives of Gurū Gobind Singh stayed during their visit to the village in 1706. This place was the residence of Bhāī Dallā). 7. *Gurdwārā Jandsar* (Here, Gurū Sāhib tied his horse with a *Jand* tree; hence the name of the Gurdwārā. The *Jand* tree, believed to be same with which Gurū Sāhib tied his horse, still exists). 8. *Gurdwārā Tibbī Sāhib* (on this mound Gurū Gobind Singh taught the Sikhs the art of manoeuvre in mock battles. A tank *Mahalsar* has also been built near the Gurdwārā). 9. *Gurdwārā Likhansar* (Here, Gurū Gobind Singh used to teach Scripture).

TARN TĀRAN: This is a town, about 25 km from Amritsar, founded by Gurū Arjan Sāhib. In 1590, only the *Sarovar* and a Gurdwārā had been built. The city was established in 1596. (Special brick-kilns were set up to bake bricks for the tank. Amir-ud-Din, son of Nur-ud-Din, a Mogul chief of the nearby area, took away the bricks forcibly and built two houses at village Nurudin. In 1766, the Sikhs demolished the buildings of Amir-ud-Din, recovered the bricks and brought them back). The main Gurdwārā is in the midst of the city. It had been built by Gurū Arjan Sāhib, in memory of Gurū Rām Dās. Unlike Darbār Sāhib Amritsar, this Gurdwārā has not been built in the middle of the *Sarovar* but rather on one side (of the *Sarovar*). The tank at Tarn Tāran (490'X500') is almost double in size than the *Sarovar* at Amritsar. Here, Gurū Arjan had established a centre for the lepers. In 1921, this Gurdwārā was in the possession of Udāsī *Mahants*. When the Sikh leaders visited Tarn Tāran to discuss the transfer of the shrine to the S.G.P.C., the hired men of the *Mahants* attacked the Sikhs and wounded several of them. Later, two of the injured, Bhāī Hazārā Singh of Alādinpur and Bhāī Hukam Singh of Wajāukot, succumbed to injuries. Tarn Tāran had also been visited by Gurū Hargobind Sāhib and Gurū Tegh Bahādur (in 1664). Both Gurū Sāhibs held congregations in the main shrine. Gurū Arjan Sāhib got a well built in

the outskirts of the town. It is known as *Gurū Dā Khuh*. There is another well in the name of (Mata) Bhānī (the mother of Gurū Arjan Sāhib).

THE SIKH CHRONOLOGY

Some Important Dates of the Sikh History

20.10.1469	Birth of Gurū Nānak Sāhib.
31.3.1504	Birth of Garaged Sāhib.
6.10.1506	Birth of Bābā Buddhā.
September 1504	Gurū Nānak Sāhib moved to Sultānpur Lodhī
20.8.1507	Gurū Nānak Sāhib began his first <i>Udasi</i> (missionary journey).
15.04.1509	Birth of Gurū Amar Dās Sāhib.
1515	Gurū Nānak Sāhib returned from first <i>Udasi</i> .
1517	Gurū Nānak Sāhib began second <i>Udasi</i>
1519	Gurū Nānak Sāhib began third <i>Udasi</i> and visited Mecca, Baghdad, Tehran etc.
1522	Gurū Nānak Sāhib founded the town of Kartārpur.
28.1.1530	Gurū Nānak Sāhib visited Achal Watala (near Batala) and had a debate with Yogis.
October 1532	Bhāī Lehnā (later Garaged Sāhib) visited Gurū Nānak Sāhib.
24.9.1534	Birth of Gurū Rām Dās Sāhib.
14.6.1539	Gurū Nānak Sāhib appointed Garaged Sāhib as his successor-in-mission.
7.9.1539	Death of Gurū Nānak Sāhib.
22.9.1539	Death of Mata Sulakkhanī (wife of Gurū Nānak Sāhib).
Oct.-Nov. 1540	Gurū Amar Dās Sāhib visited Khadūr Sāhib and joined Sikh faith.
29.3.1552	Death of Gurū Angad Sāhib. Gurū Amar Dās Sāhib coronated as Third Gurū. Gurū Amar Dās moved to Goindwāl.
1555-56	Gurū Amar Dās Sāhib began digging a <i>Baoli</i> at Goindwāl Sāhib.
15.4.1563	Birth of Gurū Arjan Sāhib.
1564	Bhāī Jetha (later Gurū Rām Dās) founded the city of <i>Gurū Dā Chakk</i> (now Amritsar) and started digging of <i>Sarovar</i> Santokhsar in the outskirts of the erstwhile village Tung.
1.9.1574	Death of Gurū Amar Dās Sāhib. Gurū Rām Dās Sāhib moved to Gurū Da Chakk.

1577	Construction of Amritsar <i>Sarovar</i> began.
1.9.1581	Death of Gurū Rām Dās Sāhib. Gurū Arjan Sāhib installed as Fifth Gurū.
3.1.1588	Foundation stone of the Darbār Sāhib laid down by Gurū Arjan Sāhib.
26.1.1589	Santokhsar <i>Sarovar</i> finally completed.
13.4.1590	Gurū Arjan Sāhib started digging of Tarn Tāran <i>Sarovar</i> .
19.6.1590	Birth of Gurū Hargobind Sāhib at Vadali Gurū Di (near Chheharta).
24.11.1594	Gurū Arjan Sāhib laid the foundation of Kartārpur (Jullundur).
24.11.1598	Akbar and Abu Fazal visited Gurū Arjan Sāhib at Goindwāl Sāhib.
1601	Construction of the building of Darbār Sāhib (Amritsar) completed.
31.7.1604	Compilation of Granth Sāhib (the Sikh Scripture) accomplished.
16.8.1604	Installation of Granth Sāhib a Darbār Sāhib.
20.8.1604	Marriage of (Gurū) Hargobind Sāhib with Damodari at village Dalla (near Sultānpur).
May 1606	Chandu, of Kalanaur, approached the new Mogul emperor Jahangir and made false complaint against Gurū Arjan Sāhib.
23.5.1606	Jahangir ordered arrest of Gurū Arjan Sāhib.
25.5.1606	Gurū Hargobind Sāhib installed as Sixth Gurū.
26.5.1606	Arrest of Gurū Arjan Sāhib. Gurū Sāhib imprisoned and tortured for three days.
30.5.1606	Martyrdom of Gurū Arjan Sāhib.
4.6.1606	Gurū Hargobind Sāhib moved to Darauli Kalan. (Stayed there for 18 months).
25.9.1606	Father Zerome Xavier wrote a letter mentioning martyrdom of Gurū Arjan Sāhib.
December 1607	Gurū Hargobind Sāhib returned to Goindwāl.
July 1609	Gurū Hargobind Sāhib revealed Akāl Takht Sāhib.
July 1609	Gurū Hargobind Sāhib wore two swords of <i>Mīrī</i> (temporal sovereignty) and <i>Pīrī</i> (transcendental). Thus, revealed the Sikh concept of one-ness of <i>Mīrī</i> and <i>Pīrī</i> .
1609	Gurū Sāhib laid the foundation of Lohgarh fort.
Middle of 1612	Construction of Lohgarh Fort completed.
29.12.1612	Jahangir's emissary visits Gurū Da Chakk and delivered summons to Gurū Hargobind Sāhib.

31.12.1612	Gurū Hargobind Sāhib left Amritsar for Delhi.
January 1613	Gurū Hargobind Sāhib arrested at Delhi and imprisonment in Gwalior Fort.
26.10.1619	Release of Gurū Hargobind Sāhib and 52 Hindu rulers from Gwalior.
27.1.1620	First meeting between Gurū Hargobind Sāhib and Jahangir (at Goindwāl).
8.2.1620	Second meeting between Gurū Hargobind Sāhib and Jahangir at Kalanaur (district Gurdāspur). Jahangir ordered Lahore Governor to hand over Chandu to the Sikhs to give him punishment for his crimes.
28.3.1620	Marriage of Gurū Hargobind Sāhib and Nānaki.
10.7.1620	Marriage of Gurū Hargobind Sāhib and Mahadevi.
28.12.1620	Gurū Hargobind Sāhib visited Amritsar. Earthen lamps lighted at Darbār Sāhib.
18.10.1621	Birth of Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib.
27.9&3.10.1621	Battle of Ruhila (now Hargobindpur). Bhagwan Das Gherar and his son Ratan Chand, and Chandu's son Karam Chand, killed in the battle. Bhāi Mandan, Bhāi Bihari, Bhāi Dhura, Bhāi Nanu, Bhāi Mathura Bhatt, Bhāi Parag Das Chhibber embraced martyrdom.
5.9.1623	Birth of Bābā Suraj Mall (son of Gurū Hargobind Sāhib).
24.10.1623	Birth of Bābā Atal Rai (son of Gurū Hargobind Sāhib).
6.2.1626	Birth of Bābā Ani Rai (son of Gurū Hargobind Sāhib).
11.7.1626	Birth of Bibi Viro.
16.1.1630	Birth of Gurū Har Rāi Sāhib.
18.3.1631	Gurū Hargobind Sāhib left Amritsar for Darauli.
July 1631	Gurū Hargobind Sāhib left Darauli for Kartārpur (district Jalandhar).
17.11.1631	Death of Bābā Buddhā.
13.4.1634	Battle of Amritsar. Bhāi Ballū Parmar (grandfather of Bhāi Manī Singh), Bhāi Kirat Bhatt, Bhāi Singha Purohit embraced martyrdom.
16.12.1634	Battle of Mehraj. Martyrdom of Bhāi Jetha, Bhāi Sukhia Mandan Rathore etc. The battle continued for a couple of days.
26-28.4.1635	Battle of Kartārpur (Jalandhar). Martyrdom of Bhāi Fatta, Bhāi Amia, Bhāi Kishana, Bhāi Natthia, Bhāi Madho etc.

- 29.4.1635 Gurū Sāhib left Kartārpur for Keeratpur Sāhib. Battle of Phagwara. Martyrdom of Bhāī Dasa, Bhāī Suhela, Bhāī Jaggu etc.
- 3.5.1635 Gurū Hargobind Sāhib reached Keeratpur Sāhib.
- 25.8.1636 Death of Bhāī Gurdās. Gurū Hargobind Sāhib visited Goindwāl.
- 3.3.1644 Death of Gurū Hargobind Sāhib.
- 17.7.1652 Birth of Gurū Harkrishan Sāhib.
- 29.3.1661 Gurū Har Rāi Sāhib received Aurangzeb's summons.
- April 1661 Ram Rai (son of Gurū Har Rāi Sāhib) appeared in the court of Aurangzeb.
- 6.10.1661 Death of Gurū Har Rāi Sāhib. Gurū Harkrishan Sāhib installed as Eighth Gurū.
- 18.12.1661 Birth of Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib at Patna.
- 23.1.1664 Gurū Harkrishan Sāhib received Aurangzeb's summons and left for Delhi.
- 21.3.1664 Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib visited Delhi and met Gurū Harkrishan Sāhib.
- 25.3.1664 Meeting between Gurū Harkrishan Sāhib and Aurangzeb.
- 30.3.1664 Death of Gurū Harkrishan Sāhib at Delhi.
- 11.8.1664 Formal installation of Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib as Ninth Gurū, at (Bābā) Bakālā.
- 19.6.1665 Foundation stone of Anandpur Sāhib laid by Bābā Gurditta Randhawa (a descendant of Bābā Buddhā). Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib spent the next four months at Anandpur Sāhib.
- 8.11.1665 Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib, along with Bhāī Matī Dās, Bhāī Satī Dās, Bhāī Daggo, Bhāī Jetha, Bhāī Dīāl Dās (both, brothers of Bhāī Manī Singh), Bhāī Gurdās (son of Bhāī Kirat Barhtia), Bhāī Sangat (Bhāī Pheru), who had been arrested, in October 1665, at village Dhamtan (district Jind, Haryana) were produced before Aurangzeb at Delhi.
- 16.12.1665 Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib and the Sikhs released.
- 1665-70 Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib toured Bihar, Bengal, Assam etc.
- 28.8.1670 Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib reached Lakhnaur from Patna.
- 28.3.1672 Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib visited Chakk Nānakī (Anandpur Sāhib) for the first time.
- 25.5.1675 Delegation of the Brahmins from Kashmir, escorted by Bhāī Kirpa Ram Dutt, visited Chakk Nānakī and

- requested Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib to help them to stop forcible conversion of the Hindus by Aurangzeb.
- 8.7.1675 Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib installed as Tenth Gurū.
- 10.7.1675 Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib left Chakk Nānakī for Delhi.
- 12.7.1675 Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib and three Sikhs arrested at Malikpur Ranghran (near Ropar).
- July-Oct. 1675 Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib tortured in prison at Bassi Pathanan. Later, he was taken to Delhi in a big iron cage.
- 5.11.1675 Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib reached Delhi.
- 11.11.1675 Martyrdom of Bhāī Matī Dās, Bhāī Dīāl Dās and Bhāī Satī Dās.
- 11.11.1675 Torture and martyrdom of Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib, Bhāī Dīāl Dās, Matī Dās, Satī Dās and Satī Dās.
- 12.11.1675 Cremation of the body of Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib by Bhāī Lakkhi Rai Yadav (Wanjara), at his residence (now Gurdwārā Rakab Ganj), at village Raisina, Delhi.
- 17.11.1675 Cremation of the head of Gurū Tegh Bahādur Sāhib at Chakk Nānakī.
- 5.3.1680 Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib ordered beating of *Ranjūt Nagara* (drum) obligatory [as a symbol of sovereignty]. Chakk Nānakī became major centre of the Sikh nation. Guru Sāhib sent a Hukamnama to the Sikhs asking them to bring good horses, weapons and books instead of money as offerings.
- 3.3.1683 Gurū Sāhib began the tradition of *Hola Mahalla* at Chakk Nānakī.
- 28.3.1685 Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib visited Nahan.
- 28.4.1685 Bhāī Ram Kanwar (a descendant of Bābā Buddhā) laid down the foundation stone of the town of Paonta Sāhib.
- 26.1.1687 Birth of Sāhibzādā Ajit Singh.
- 18.9.1688 Battle of Bhangani. Martyrdom of Bhāī Sango Shah and Bhāī Jit Mall (sons of Bibi Viro, daughter of Gurū Hargobind Sāhib), Bhāī Udia (son of Bhāī Khema Chandania) and Bhāī Hatthi Das (brother of Bhāī Manī Singh).
- 27.10.1688 Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib left Paonta for Chakk Nānakī.
- 16.11.1688 Gurū Sāhib reached Chakk Nānakī.
- 30.3.1689 Gurū Sāhib laid the foundation of Anandpur Sāhib.

- 31.3.1689 Gurū Sāhib began construction of five forts around Anandpur Sāhib.
- 19.3.1690 Battle of Nadaun. Martyrdom of Bhāi Sohan Chand (brother of Bhāi Manī Singh), Bhāi Mul Chand son of Bhāi Rāghupati Rai of Khemkaran etc.
- 14.3.1691 Birth of Sāhibzādā Jujhar Singh.
- 28.3.1692 Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib visited Rawalsar on invitation of the hill rulers and presided over their parliament.
- 20.11.1693 Aurangzeb ordered extermination of the Sikhs.
- 29.3.1695 Gurū Sāhib made it obligatory for every Sikh to keep uncut hair and wear a *Kara* (literally: iron wrist-ring) in the right hand.
- 19.8.1695 Rustam Khan son of Dilawar Khan (Governor of Punjāb) attacked Anandpur Sāhib.
- 20.2.1696 Battle of Guler. Bhāi Lehnu (brother of Bhāi Manī Singh), Bhāi Sangat Rai and Bhāi Hanumant (sons of Bhāi Jagata) and others embraced martyrdom.
- 13.7.1696 Prince Muazzam (later, Bahādur Shah), visited Anandpur Sāhib (on orders from Aurangzeb) to the Punjāb, to settle affairs in the zone. He held a meeting with Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib.
- 17.11.1696 Birth of Sāhibzādā Zorawar Singh.
- March 1698 Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib disbanded the *Masand* institution.
- 29.3.1698 Gurū Gobind Singh revealed Khālsā at Anandpur Sāhib. Started *Khandey Di Pahul*.
- 3.5.1698 Bhāi Manī Singh resumed charge of Darbār Sāhib Amritsar.
- 25.2.1699 Birth of Sāhibzādā Fateh Singh.
- 29.3.1699 Mammoth congregation of the Khālsā at Anandpur Sāhib. Initiation of thousands of Sikhs.
- 23.5.1699 Sāhibzādā Ajit Singh led Sikh army to punish Ranghars of Nuh.
- 23.6.1700 Balia Chand and Aalam Chand Katoch attacked Gurū Sāhib when the later had gone on a hunting tour.
- 26.6.1700 Painda Khan and Dina Begh attacked Anandpur Sāhib.
- 29.8.1700 Sikhs, led by Bhāi Udey Singh and Sāhibzādā Ajit Singh, repulsed an attack of the army of the hill chiefs and the Mogul army at Tārāgarh fort. Bhāi Ishar Singh (son of Bhāi Kewal), Bhāi Kalyan Singh

- (son of Bhāi Dīāl Dās), Bhāi Sangat Singh (Bhāi Pheru) etc. embraced martyrdom.
- 30.8.1700 Battle of Fatehgarh Fort (Anandpur Sāhib). Bhāi Bhagwan Singh (son of Bhāi Manī Singh), Bhāi Jawahar Singh (son of Bhāi Lakkhi Rai Wanjara), Bhāi Nand Singh (son of Bhāi Aalam Singh) etc. embraced martyrdom.
- 31.8.1700 Battle of Agamgarh. Bhāi Bagh Singh (nephew of Bhāi Manī Singh), Bhāi Gharbara Singh (son of Bhāi Nanu Singh Dilwali) embraced martyrdom.
- 1.9.1700 Bhāi Bachitar Singh and his brother Bhāi Udey Singh (sons of Bhāi Manī Singh) turned back a drunkard elephant sent by the Hindu hill chiefs to attack the Sikh fort, Lohgarh, Anandpur Sāhib. Bhāi Udey Singh chopped off the head of Raja Kesri Chand who has vowed to kill Gurū Sāhib.
- 7.10.1700 Battle of Nirmohgarh and martyrdom of *Dīwān* Sāhib Singh (brother of Bhāi Matī Dās), Bhāi Surat Singh (son of Bhāi Kewal), Bhāi Deva Singh (son of Bhāi Tegha), Bhāi Sarup Singh and Bhāi Anup Singh (both grandsons of Bhāi Duni Chand Dhaliwal) etc.
- 13-14.10.1700 Rustam Ali Khan and Nasir Ali Khan led army against Gurū Sāhib. Fierce battle fought at Nirmohgarh. Bhāi Ram Singh KashMīrī, Bhāi Himmat Singh (son of Bhāi Jita Singh) Bhāi Mohar Singh (son of Bhāi Dhuma) embraced martyrdom. Rustam Khan and Nasir Ali Khan too got killed.
- 14.10.1700 Raja Salahi Chand of Basali escorted Gurū Gobind Singh to Basali.
- 19.10.1700 Death of Bhāi Jiwan Singh (son of Bhāi Prem Chand Parmar) at Kalmot.
- 15.3.1701 Sāhibzādā Ajit Singh punished Ranghar and Gujjar residents of Bajraur.
- 13.1.1703 Gurū Gobind Singh attacked by Sayyed Beg and Alif Khan, on instigation by the hill chiefs.
- 7.3.1703 Bhāi Udey Singh and Sāhibzādā Ajit Singh led 100 Sikh soldiers to restore the wife of Dewki Das (a Brahmin) which had been forcibly taken away by Jabar Jang Khan, the chief of Bassi Kalan (near Hoshiarpur).
- 16.1.1704 Ajmer Chand of Bilāspur attacked Anandpur Sāhib. Beginning of *Farra* tradition.

- 17.11.1704 Marriage of Sāhibzādā Ajit Singh with Tārā Bai (Tārā Kaur) of Burhanpur.
- 1.3.1705 Mata Sunder Kaur, Mata Sāhib Kaur and Tārā Kaur left Anandpur Sāhib for Delhi.
- 13.3.1705 Ajmer Chand attacked Anandpur Sāhib again.
- 3.5.1705 Siege of Anandpur Sāhib by the armies of the hill chiefs and the Moguls.
- 5-6.12.1705 Exodus of the Sikhs from Anandpur Sāhib.
- 6.12.1705 Battle of Shahi Tibbi. Bhāi Udey Singh, along with 50 Sikhs, embraced martyrdom.
- 6.12.1705 Battle on the bank of rivulet Sarsa. Bibi Bhikkhan, Bhāi Jiwan Singh and 100 others fought bravely against the huge Mogul army and embraced martyrdom.
- 6.12.1705 Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib reached residence of Bhāi Nihang Khan at Kotla Nihang.
- 6.12.1705 Battle of Malikpur Rangharan. Bhāi Bachitar Singh and the other Sikhs fought bravely against the Mogul army. All the Sikhs embraced martyrdom. Bhāi Bachitar Singh was grievously wounded. Sometimes later, Sāhibzādā Ajit Singh reached there and carried him to Kotla Nihang.
- 7.12.1705 Gurū Sāhib reached Chamkaur.
- 7-8.12.1705 Battle of Chamkaur and martyrdom of Sāhibzādā Ajit Singh and Jujhar Singh, three of the *Punj Piārāy* and forty Sikhs. At midnight Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib left Chamkaur for Machhiwara.
- 8.12.1705 Bhāi Bachitar Singh died at Kotla Nihang.
- 8.12.1705 Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib reached Machhiwara.
- 8.12.1705 Arrest of Mata Gujarī, Sāhibzādās Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh, at village Saherhi.
- 9.12.1705 Birth of Hatthi Singh (son of Sāhibzādā Ajit Singh) at Agra.
- 11.12.1705 Cremation of the martyrs of the battle of Chamkaur.
- 11.12.1705 Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib, dressed as *Uchch Da Pir*, left Machhiwara for Dina-Kangar.
- 12.12.1705 Sāhibzādās Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh bricked alive and later butchered to death next day, at Sirhind (now Fatehgarh Sāhib). Mata Gujarī tortured to death in prison.
- 20.12.1705 Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib reached Dina-Kangar.
- 21.12.1705 Gurū Sāhib wrote *Zafarnamah*.
- 29.12.1705 Battle of Muktsar. Martyrdom of 40 Sikhs.

16.1.1706	Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib reached Talwandi Sabo.
29.3.1706	A huge gathering of the Sikhs at Tawandi Sabo. Hundreds of Sikhs got initiation.
30.10.1706	Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib left Talwandi Sabo.
8.6.1707	Battle of Jajau (near Agra) between the armies of Bahādur Shah and Tārā Azam.
24.7.1707	Meeting between Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib and Bahādur Shah at Agra.
July 1708	Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib reached Nander and visited Dera of Madho Das Bairāgi.
4.9.1708	Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib initiated Madho Das Bairāgi and named him Banda Singh.
5.10.1708	Bābā Bandā Singh left for the Sikh Homeland. Pathan Jamshed Khan attacked Gurū Sāhib with dagger.
6.10.1708	Gurū Granth Sāhib installed as Gurū-Eternal.
7.10.1708	Death of Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib. Cremation performed in the evening.
17.10.1708	Bhog of <i>Path</i> of Gurū Granth Sāhib and last prayers for Gurū Gobind Singh Sāhib.

POST-GURŪ SĀHIB PERIOD

26.9.1709	Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādur captured Samana. 5,000 Mogul soldiers killed. The first victory for the freedom of the Sikh Homeland.
5.12.1709	Bābā Bandā Singh captured Sadhaura.
12.5.1710	Battle of Chappar Chiri.
14.5.1710	The Sikhs captured Sarhind (now Sirhind) under the command of Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādur.
27.5.1710	Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādur held a big congregation at Sirhind and proclaimed egalitarian rule.
June-July 1710	Bandā Singh overran Saharanpur, Nanauta etc.
16.11.1710	The Moguls recaptured Sirhind. The Sikhs moved towards Lohgarh Fort.
29.11.1710	Mammoth Mogul army attacked the Sikh fort of Lohgarh.
30.11.1710	Bābā Bandā Singh escaped from Lohgarh.
30.11.1710	Bahādur Shah, the Delhi emperor, issued orders for the annihilation of the Sikh nation.
29.5.1711	Mogul emperor ordered charging of <i>Jazyah</i> at double rate from the Sikhs.
June 1711	Bābā Bandā Singh returned to the Sikh Homeland again.

August 1711	Bahādur Shah reached Lahore to suppress Bandā Singh Bahādur.
28.2.1712	Bahādur Shah died. Bandā Singh returned to the Punjāb.
April 1715	The Mogul army put siege to the mansion (at Gurdās Nangal) occupied by Bābā Bandā Singh and a few thousands Sikhs. Seven month long skirmishes began.
7.12.1715	Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādur and his companions arrested and taken to Lahore. Later, these Sikhs were taken to Delhi via Sirhind.
5.3.1716	Killing of 734 Sikh prisoners began at Chandni Chowk, Delhi.
9.6.1716	Bābā Bandā Singh Bahādur's son butchered to death, his heart pulled out and thrust into Bābā Bandā Singh's mouth. Bābā Bandā Singh cut limb by limb. Several other Sikhs too killed the same day.
9.6.1726	Martyrdom of Bhāi Tārā Singh of Dal-Wan (Amritsar).
June 1726	(Nawāb) Kapūr Singh joined the <i>Jathā</i> (battalion) of Dīwān Darbāra Singh.
29.3. 1733	Sikhs' right to sovereignty recognized. Sikhs get <i>Jagir</i> (autonomous Governor-ship).
September 1733	Zakaria Khan confiscated the <i>Jagir</i> .
25.10.1733	Bhāi Manī Singh convened a Sikh gathering on the Hindu-Dīwālī day.
April 1734	Arrest of Bhāi Manī Singh and several others.
24.6.1734	Martyrdom of Bhāi Manī Singh, Bhāi Jagat Singh (brother of Bhāi Manī Singh), Bhāi Chitar Singh and Bhāi Gurbakhsh Singh (sons of Bhāi Manī Singh), Bhāi Aalam Singh (son of Bhāi Daria), Gulzar Singh (son of Bhāi Aalam Singh) at Nakhas Chowk, Lahore.
11.8.1740	Sirdar Sukkhā Singh of Mari Kambo and Sirdar Mahtab Singh of Miran Kot punished Massa Ranghar, the debauched.
27.6.1745	Bhāi Taru Singh's skull chopped off for refusing to embrace Islam.
1.7.1745	Zakaria Khan died.
1.7.1745	Bhāi Taru Singh breathed his last. Martyrdom of Sirdar Mahtab Singh of Miran Kot.
13.10.1745	Khālsā army divided into 25 groups.

10.3.1746	Bhāi Subeg Singh and Bhāi Shahbaz Singh executed on wheel.
10.3.1746	Massacre of more than one thousand Sikhs ordered by Lakhpat Rai.
May 1, 1746	Lakhpat Rai killed about 10,000 Sikhs near Kahnuwan (15 km from Gurdāspur). This is known as <i>Chhota Ghallughara</i> (small carnage).
30.3.1747	Foundation of the Sikh fort <i>Rām Raunī</i> (Amritsar) laid by the Sikhs.
29.3.1748	<i>Dal Khālsā</i> , the whole of the Khālsā army, divided into 11 <i>Misls</i> .
10.4.1754	<i>Sarbat Khālsā</i> gathering confirmed Jassā Singh Ahluwālīā as <i>Jathedār</i> of Dal Khālsā.
June 1755	The Sikh army attacked Narnaul, Karnal and Jaipur.
April 1756	The Sikh army attacked outskirts of Lahore.
11.11.1757	Martyrdom of Bābā Dip Singh and thousands of Sikhs at Amritsar.
8.4.1758	The Sikhs, the Marathas and Adina Beg's army captured Lahore. Taimur (son of Durrānī) and General Jahān Khān escaped.
April 1758	Reconstruction of the Sikh shrines at Amritsar began.
30.10.1758	Sarbat Khālsā resolved that the chiefs of the <i>Misls</i> will be the in-charges (administrators) of the area under their <i>Rākhī</i> (protectorate).
April 1761	The Sikhs freed thousand of the Hindu girls from Durrānī's army near Goindwāl Sāhib.
November 1761	The Sikhs captured Lahore again. General Jassā Singh Ahluwālīā declared emperor.
5.2.1762	Second major holocaust of the Sikhs. 25 to 30 thousand Sikhs killed. It is known as <i>Waddā Ghallūghārā</i> (Great Carnage).
11.4.1762	Ahmed Shah demolished the buildings of Akāl Takht Sāhib and Darbār Sāhib.
17.10.1762	The Sikhs defeated Ahmed Shah Durrānī.
12.12.1762	Ahmed Shah left Sikh Homeland after humiliating defeat at the hands of the Sikhs. Kabuli Mall appointed as the Governor of Punjāb. The Sikhs became <i>de facto</i> rulers of their homeland.
10.4.1763	A Brahmin appeared at Akāl Takht Sāhib and asked the Sikhs' help to get his wife restored from Usman Khān, the chief of Kasur, who had forcibly taken her to his fort at Kasur. The Sikh army ransacked Kasur,

- killed Usmān Khān and freed and restored the wife of the Brahmin.
- 20.2.1764 The Sikhs crossed Yamuna, killed Najib-ud-Daula Rohila, Ahmed Shah's Regent, and occupied Saharanpur.
- 16.5.1764 The Sikhs attacked Lahore. Durrānī's Regent offered the Sikh the right to collect custom duty on all the goods coming from Multan side. The Sikhs rejected Durrānī's offer.
- 1.12.1764 Jathedār Gurbakhsh Singh and 30 Sikhs embraced martyrdom defending Darbār Sāhib.
- 17.4.1765 The Sikhs occupied Lahore, bringing almost an end to the Afghan rule.
- 18.1.1774 The Sikh army, under the command of Bābā Baghel Singh, entered Delhi.
- 11.3.1783 The Sikh army hoisted Sikh Blue flag at the Red Fort Delhi under the command of Sirdar Jassā Singh Ahluwālīā, Bābā Baghel Singh and Sirdar Jassā Singh Ramgarhiā etc.

RANJĪT SINGH ERA

- 7.7.1799 Ranjīt Singh wrested control of Lahore from Bhangī *Misl*.
- 11.4.1801 Ranjīt Singh got himself declared *Mahārājā* of the Punjāb.
- 1802 Ranjīt Singh married Moran, a courtesan.
- 1.1.1806 First Anglo-Sikh treaty between the East India Company on one hand and (Mahārājā) Ranjīt Singh and Fateh Singh Ahluwālīā on the other hand.
- November 1808 (Mahārājā) Ranjīt Singh and Patiala ruler Sāhib Singh met at Lakhnaur (district Ambala) and made a treaty of friendship.
- 15.2.1809 The British established a cantonment at Ludhiana.
- 25.4.1809 Treaty of Amritsar signed by the British and Ranjīt Singh.
- 3.5.1809 The British offered "Protectorate" to the Cis-Sutlej Sikh States.
- 11.4.1837 Sirdar Harī Singh Nalwa asked (Mahārājā) Ranjīt Singh to hand over the kingdom to the Sikh nation to the command of *Punj Piārāy*. Ranjīt Singh refused. Dogrās planned elimination of Nalwa.
- 30.4.1837 General Hari Singh Nalwā killed at Jamraud.

27.6.1839	Death of (Mahārājā) Ranjīt Singh. Kharag Singh became Mahārājā.
10.10.1839	Kharag Singh's son Naunihāl Singh assumed charge of the Lahore kingdom.
4.11.1840	(Mahārājā) Kharag Singh died of slow poisoning by Dogrās.
5.11.1840	(Mahārājā) Naunihāl Singh murdered by Dogrās.
2.12.1840	Chand Kaur (widow of Kharag Singh) became Maharani (queen).
18.1.1841	Sher Singh installed as Mahārājā.
11.6.1842	Rānī Chand Kaur beaten to death by her maid servants, under instructions from Dhiān Sinh Dogrā.
15.9.1843	Mahārājā Sher Singh, Kanwar Partāp Singh and Dogrā Dhiān Sinh killed by Ajīt Singh and Lehnā Singh Sandhānwālīās.
18.9.1843	Dalīp Singh proclaimed Mahārājā.
7.5.1844	Atar Singh Sandhānwālīā stabbed General Gulāb Singh to death in the <i>Dera</i> of Bābā Bir Singh at Naurangabad. Gulāb Singh's attendants killed Ajit Singh Sandhānwālīā. Hira Sinh Dogrā ordered army to attack <i>Dera</i> . The army killed Bābā Bīr Singh killed while performing <i>Path</i> of Gurū Granth Sāhib. Prince Kashmīrā Singh and several others also died.
Nov. 1845	Brahmin (Lāl Sinh, Tejā Sinh etc) and Dogrā (Gulāb Sinh) officials of Ranjīt Singh's government contacted the British and planned a war between the Sikhs and the British which would lead to defeat of the Sikhs and occupation of the Punjab by the British.
18.12.1845	Battle of Mudkī
21.12.1845	Battle of Firozshah. Treason of Lal Sinh and Tej Sinh. Ranjodh Singh Majithīā and Ajīt Singh Lādwā attacked Harry Smith at Baddowāl (Ludhiana) and captured the British positions.
10.2.1846	Battle at Sabhrāon. Treason of Lāl Sinh, Tej Sinh and Gulāb Sinh Dogrā. Martyrdom of Sirdār Shām Singh Atārīwālā.
9.3.1846	Anglo-Sikh treaty signed.
11.3.1846	Kashmir "sold" to Gulāb Sinh Dogrā. Gulāb Sinh "purchased" it with the money earlier stolen from the treasury of the Lahore Darbār in 1841.
16.12.1846	Treaty of Bharowāl. The British recognized Gulāb Sinh as the <i>Mahārājā</i> of Jammu & Kashmir. Henry

	Lawrence appointed as British Resident at Lahore.
	Tej Singh became the prime minister.
5.10.1848	Lord Dalhousie declared war against the Sikh nation.
9.11.1848	General Gough crossed the river Sutlej.
22.11.1848	Battle of Rāmnaḡar.
13.1.1849	Battle of Chelianwālā. 132 officers and 2446 soldiers of the British army killed.
21.2.1849	Battle of Gujrāt.
14.3.1849	Sher Singh and Chatar Singh Atārīwālās surrendered.
29.3.1849	Annexation of the Sikh Homeland by the British decided.
5.4.1849	Annexation of the Sikh Homeland completed.
38-29.12.1849	Bhāī Nihāl Singh (Bhāī Mahārāj Singh) arrested and taken to Singapore via Calcutta.

THE BRITISH PERIOD

8.3.1853	Dalīp Singh baptized Christian.
5.7.1856	Bhāī Nihāl Singh (Bhāī Mahārāj Singh) died in Singapore jail.
1.10.1873	Formation of the Singh Sabhā at Amritsar.
5.3.1892	Khālsā College Amritsar established.
30.10.1902	Chief Khālsā Dīwān formed. Bhāī Arjan Singh Bāgarīān elected first president.
22.10.1909	Anand Marriage Act (Act No. VII of 1909) became law.
March 1913	Ghadr Party formed in the United States.
14.1.1914	Outer wall of <i>Gurdwārā Rakāb Ganj</i> (Delhi) demolished by the British.
11.1.1915	Bhāī Mewā Singh hanged in Vancouver jail.
13.4.1919	Massacre at Jallianwālā Bāgh, Amritsar.
8.12.1919	Central Sikh League formed at Lahore.
21.5.1920	Daily Punjābī newspaper <i>Akālī</i> launched from Lahore.
12.10.1920	The priests of Akāl Takht Sāhib abandoned the shrine. The Sikhs took charge of the building of the Takht. A 25-member committee, under the leadership of Jathedār Tejā Singh Bhuchchar, formed.
15.11.1920	<i>Sarbat Khālsā</i> formed Shiromanī Gurdwārā Parbandhak Committee (S.G.P.C.).
14.12.1920	Meeting held for the formation of Gurdwārā Sudhār Dal (later named Akālī Dal).
23.1.1921	Gurdwārā Sudhār Dal named Akālī Dal. Sarmukh Singh Jhabāl became the first president.

25.1.1921	At Tarn Tāran, the <i>Mahants</i> attacked the Sikh leaders who had gone there to have a dialogue. Several Sikhs were injured in the attack. Among them, Bhāi Hazārā Singh and Bhāi Hukam Singh were injured grievously.
27.1.1921	Bhāi Hazārā Singh of Alādinpur (Amritsar) succumbed to injuries. He became the first martyr of the Gurdwārā Reform Movement.
4.2.1921	Death of Bhāi Hukam Singh of Wajāukot (Gurdāspur), who had been injured at Tarn Tāran on January 25, 1921.
20.2.1921	More than 130 Sikhs killed at Gurdwārā Nānakānā Sāhib by <i>Mahant</i> Narain Dās (Narainu) and his hired men. The martyrs included Bhāi Lachhman Singh Dharowālī, Bhāi Dalīp Singh, and Bhāi Waryām Singh etc. After the carnage the <i>Mahant</i> ordered burning of the bodies of the dead and the injured.
19.10.1921	The S.G.P.C. decided to take over keys of the treasury of Darbār Sāhib from Sunder Singh Ramgarhā.
7.11.1921	The British authorities seized the keys of the treasury of Darbār Sāhib from the S.G.P.C.
November 1921	<i>Chakrawartī Jathā</i> (later named Babar Akālī Dal) formed by Bhāi Kishan Singh Gargaji.
19.1.1922	Keys' Agitation won by the Sikhs. The government handed over the keys to the Sikhs.
8.8.1922	<i>Gurū-Dā-Bāgh</i> agitation began.
25.8.1922	Merciless beating of the peaceful Sikh demonstrators, under the command of a police official Beaty, began at <i>Gurū-Dā-Bāgh</i> (continued till 13.9.1922).
18.11.1922	<i>Gurū-Dā-Bāgh</i> agitation won by the Sikhs.
21.2.1924	Shaheedī Jathā fired at by the armed forces at Jaito. About 100 killed and 200 injured.
9.7.1925	Gurdwārā Bill passed as an Act.
21.7.1925	Ban on <i>Akhand Pāth</i> at Jaito withdrawn.
17.7.1926	Tejā Singh Samundarī died in jail. Master Tārā Singh selected as leader of Akālī Party.

MASTER TĀRĀ SINGH ERA

10.8. 1928	Moti Lal Nehru Report released.
19.8.1928	All Parties Sikh Conference rejected Nehru Report.
29.12.1928	S. B. Mahitāb Singh, addressing the All Parties Convention, told the leaders: "In case the Sikhs are

- ignored, the future of India shall have to be decided by sword."
- 28-30.12.1929 Congress session at Lahore boycotted by the Sikhs. Moti Lal Nehru and Gandhi approached leaders and promised not to further betray the Sikhs. The Congress accepted the rights of the Sikhs as the third nation. Nehru Report died unsung. Congress passed resolution: *The Congress assures the Sikhs, the Muslims and other minorities that no solution there of (of communal questions) in any future Constitution will be acceptable to the Congress that does not give full satisfaction to the parties concerned.*
- 20.3.1931 The Sikhs presented a charter of 17 demands for the Round Table Conference.
- 16.8.1932 **Communal Award** announced. The Award did not recognize special rights of the Sikhs.
- 29.7.1932 The Sikh *Council of Action* decided to form *Akālī Shaheedī Fauj* to fight against Communal Award.
- 15.7.1934 Delegation of Khālsā Darbār met Gandhi at Lahore. Gandhi again assured the Sikhs that the Congress shall not accept any Constitution that did not satisfy the Sikhs.
- 23.3.1940 Muslim League passed resolution for formation of Pakistan.
- April 1940 Dr. Vir Singh Bhattī of Ludhiana proposed *Khalistan*, comprising the area from Yamuna to Jamraud, as a buffer Sikh state between Pakistan and Hindustan.
- 16.8.1940 Gandhi, in a letter to Master Tārā Singh, condemned Sikhs' religious sword. He asked the Sikhs to choose between sword and the Congress Party.
- 27 & 31.3.1942 The Sikhs presented a memorandum to Cripps Mission and demanded partition of Punjāb.
- 7.6.1943 The Akālī Dal supported Azād Punjāb scheme.
- 16.7.1944 Rajgopal Acharya proposed a "Formula" (later known as Rajaji Formula) for solution of communal problem. It offered the Muslims almost political sovereignty. Under this scheme, 17 districts of the British Punjāb would have become a part of Pakistan and 12 would have gone to India.
- 24.7.1944 Akālī Dal condemned "Rajaji Formula".
- 5.8.1944 Jinnah said, "The Sikhs are a separate nation and after the transfer of power the Muslim League shall give generous treatment to the Sikhs."

5.9.1944	Master Tārā Singh demanded sovereign Sikh State.
15.7.1945	Master Tārā Singh demanded Sikh State by presenting the analogy of Israel: "If Israel can be created for 10% Jews then why not a country for the Sikhs whose homeland is the Punjāb.
4.4.1946	Master Tārā Singh and Mohammed Ali Jinnah met at the residence of Sirdar Teja Singh Malik and discussed possibility of a Sikh-Muslim union.
5.4.1946	Master Tārā Singh, Gīānī Kartār Singh, Baldev Singh, Harnām Singh Advocate met Cabinet Mission and presented the Sikh view.
16.5.1946	British "Cabinet Mission" released its report. Pakistan conceded.
9-10.6.1946	All parties Sikh Conference rejected Cabinet Mission proposals. The Sikhs decided to form of "Council of Action" to stop Pakistan.
22.6.1946	Sikhs decided to boycott Interim Government.
23.6.1946	Lord Atlee, the British P.M. refused to bother for the Sikhs.
6.7.1946	Jawahar Lal Nehru declared that if the Sikhs accepted union with Hindu India, the Sikhs will have special status within the "Union".
14.8.1947	Muslims given independent homeland, Pakistan.
15.8.1947	India became free. The Sikh Homeland handed over to India against the wishes of the Sikh nation. It was repetition of transfer of Norway to Sweden in 1814.
17.8.1947	Radcliff Award decided the boundary between Pakistan and the Sikh Homeland. Exodus of about 2 million Sikhs from West Punjab to East Punjab.

AFTER 1947

10.10.1947	The Hindu Governor of the Sikh-Punjāb issued a circular calling the Sikhs: "lawless people."
23.1.1948	Dr. B.R.Ambedkar suggested the Sikhs to begin struggle for a Punjābī speaking state.
5.5.1948	The Indian regime disbanded the Sikh States and formed a province within India under the name of "Patiala and East Punjāb States Union" (PEPSU).
2.8.1948	Master Tārā Singh demanded creation of Punjābī Subā on linguistic basis.
15.11.1948	Master Tārā Singh warned that the Hindus wanted to absorb the Sikhs into their fold.

15.11.1948	32 of the 33 Sikh legislatures submitted a charter of 13 Sikh demands to the Constituent Assembly. The only non-signatory was Partāp Singh Kairon.
19.2.1949	Master Tārā Singh arrested on "sedition" charges at railway station Narela. He was going to Delhi to attend a religious Conference to be held the following day.
26.5.1949	Constituent Assembly abolished the reservation of seat for religious minorities (Sikhs).
29.10.1949	Arthur Moore (in <i>Thought Weekly</i>) said that the Hindus were repeating the same treatment with the Sikhs that had been done to the Muslims before 1940.
26.11.1949	The Sikhs rejected the new Constitution of India. The Akālī members refused to sign it.
26.2.1950	Akālī Conference at Ludhiana passed resolution for Punjābī speaking state.
16.12.1950	A Sikh Convention held at Amritsar demanded formation of Punjābī Subā.
15.8.1951	The Times of India reported that the Sikhs were opposed to the Hindu-Congress because each and every demand of the Sikhs was opposed by the Congress.
1-2.9.1951	<i>Gurmat Mahān Samāgam</i> , held at Patiala, attended by 400,000 Sikhs, condemned the Indian onslaught on the identity and entity of the Sikhs.
February 1953	'All Parties Sikh Conference' condemned discrimination against the Sikhs in public jobs sector.
30.9.1953	The Akālī Dal decided to launch an agitation to undo discrimination against the Sikh backward classes.
17.11.1953	The Indian government bowed before the Sikh backward classes' demands.
24-25.10.1954	Punjābī Subā Convention at Amritsar inaugurated by Dr. Lanka Sundram.
6.4.1955	The Punjāb government banned Punjābī Subā slogans in the district of Amritsar.
10.5.1955	The Akālī Dal started agitation against imposition of ban on the slogan "Punjābī Subā Zindābād". Master Tārā Singh arrested.
4.7.1955	Police entered Darbār Sāhib complex and arrested several Akālī leaders.
10.7.1955	Ban on 'Punjābī Subā Zindābād' slogan withdrawn by the government.

- 1.3.1956 To solve the issue of 'Punjabi Subā' (a Punjabi speaking state), a 'Regional Formula' scheme (prepared by Hukam Singh) presented.
- 11.3.1956 Akālī Dal gave conditional approval to the "Regional Formula."
- 30.9.1956 The Executive of the Akālī Dal resolved to give up its political agenda (as a part of agreement to form Akali-Congress alliance).
- 1.11.1956 Patiala & East Punjāb States Union (PEPSU) merged with the Punjāb.
- 17.7.1957 Extremist Hindus threw cigarettes in *Amritsar Sarovar* (Darbār Sāhib, Amritsar).
- 18.7.1957 The Sikhs throughout Punjāb observed strike against sacrilege of Darbār Sāhib.
- 11-21.8.1957 The Sikhs observed 11 days protest against the sacrilege of Darbār Sāhib by extremist Hindu (mostly belonging to Jan Sangh Party, now known as BJP).
- 12.4.1959 Nehru-Master Tārā Singh meeting held. Nehru-Tārā Singh Pact signed. The Indian government promised not to interfere in the Sikh religious affairs.
- 7.5.1959 Akālī Dal announced that it will contest the S.G.P.C. elections on the issue of creation of Punjābī Suba.
- 17.1.1960 Akālī Dal won 136 of the 140 seats of the S.G.P.C.
- 24.1.1960 129 members of the S.G.P.C. and thousands of Sikhs took a vow before Akāl Takht Sāhib to lay their lives for Punjābī Suba.
- 22.5.1960 Punjābī Suba Convention, held at Amritsar, attended by Dr. Kitchlew, K.G.Jodh, Zahir Quraishi and leaders of Socialist and Swatantra Parties.
- 24.5.1960 Master Tārā Singh and hundreds of the Sikhs arrested. The arrested included Chowdhry Kartār Singh M.L.C., Harguranād Singh, Ātmā Singh, Dhannā Singh Gulshan, Master Partāp Singh, Udham Singh (all M.L.A.s), Ajīt Singh Bālā, Pritam Singh Gojrān, Kehar Singh Vairāgī, K.G.Jodh etc.
- 26.5.1960 Publication of the Sikh papers *Akālī* and *Parbhāt* stopped by government. All the employees were arrested and sent to jail.
- 29.5.1960 First batch of the Sikhs, led by Principal Iqbāl Singh, arrested while coming out of Darbār Sāhib.
- 12.6.1960 The Sikh procession at Delhi fired at by the police. Harbans Singh and three others killed and several others injured, some of whom, later, died.

- 13.6.1960 World press condemned atrocities on the Sikhs.
- 21.9.1960 Kākā Inderjīt Singh, who was raising pro-Punjābī Suba slogans, killed by the police at Karnal. His body was thrown into a well.
- 24.9.1960 To protest against the killing of Kākā Inderjīt Singh, 'Kaka Inderjit Singh day' observed by the Sikhs throughout the Punjāb.
- 9.10.1960 The Sikh prisoners, who refused to sign apology papers, were fired at in Bathinda jail. Chainchal Singh, Ranjīt Singh, Jaswant Singh, Nāzar Singh were killed and several were injured.
- 11.10.1960 Police cane-charged and fired at a Sikh protest procession at Patiala and killed 2 Sikhs.
- 18.12.1960 Fateh Singh started fast unto death for Punjābī Suba.
- 9.1.1961 Fateh Singh broke his fast after assurances from the Government.
- 15.8.1961 Master Tārā Singh began his fast unto death.
- 1.10.1961 Master Tārā Singh broke his fast. Government announced formation of a High Powered Commission to deal with the charge of discrimination against the Sikhs.
- August 1965 Indo-Pak war.
- 23.9.1965 Indian government appointed a 3-member cabinet committee (comprising of Indira Gandhi, Y.B.Chawan, Mahanvir Tayagi) to discuss Punjābī Subā issue. To advise this committee, another 'Advisory Committee' of 22 M.P.s (chaired by Hukam Singh) also formed. Indira Gandhi opposed the formation of Punjabi Suba (because she was in favour of the fanatic Hindus who opposed it). Before she could manoeuvre, the 'Advisory Committee' supported Punjabi Suba. The cabinet committee too did not oblige Indira Gandhi and accepted the 'advice' and decided to form Punjabi Suba.
- 9.3.1966 Congress Party finally conceded Punjābī Suba.
- 11-15.3.1966 Hindu extremists belonging to Jan Sangh (now Bhārti Jantā Party) took out processions against Punjābī Suba. The terrorist Hindu processionists attacked and Sikhs and burnt, looted and destroyed their (the Sikhs') properties.
- 15.4.1966 Census of 1961 accepted as basis of demarcation of territories of the Punjāb and Haryana. During these censuses, the Jan Sangh, the Arya Samaj and other

- extremist Hindu organisations had instigated the Hindus of the province to state their language Hindi instead of Punjabi (in spite of the fact that they always spoke Punjabi).
- 15.4.1966 Jai Parkash Narayan condemned acceptance of 1961 census as basis for deciding boundary between Punjāb and Haryana.
- 5.6.1966 Boundary Commission submitted report. Shah and Phillip granted Chandigarh and whole Ambala and Karnal districts to Haryana. Subimal Dutt granted Chandigarh to Punjāb.
- 9.6.1966 Indian government decided to keep Chandigarh as union territory.
- 1.11.1966 Emergence of new Punjābī speaking state.
- 21.2.1967 Elections to the Punjāb Assembly held. Master Akālī Dal won 2 and Fateh Singh group won 24 seats whereas Congress got 48 seats out of a total of 104 seats. Akālī-led front managed to get support of 53 members.
- 8.3.1967 Akāl is formed government in the Punjāb. Gurnām Singh became the Chief Minister.
- 22.11.1967 Master Tārā Singh died.
- 22.11.1967 Lachhman Singh Gill and 16 MLAs withdrew support and Gurnām Singh government fell. Later, Lachhman Singh Gill was sworn as new Chief Minister of the Punjab.
- 8.10.1968 Master and Sant Akālī Dal merged. *Khālsājī de boal bāley* (Sikh sovereignty) was accepted as the goal of the newly united Akālī Dal.
- 15.8.1969 Jathedār Darshan Singh Pherumān started his fast unto death (for return of Chandigarh to the Punjāb and for the freedom of Sikh Homeland).
- 27.10.1969 Jathedār Darshan Singh Pherumān died after a hunger strike of 74 days.
- 29.1.1970 Indira Gandhi announced the so-called "Award" on Chandigarh. According to the "Award" Chandigarh was to be given to Punjāb (after five years, on January 29, 1975), in exchange for 114 villages to Haryana. It was like buying a white elephant to save the life of Fateh Singh. (Though Fateh Singh would not have died even otherwise; a hypocrite and coward as he was!).

27.3.1970	Parkash Singh Bādal replaced Gurnām Singh as Chief Minister of Punjāb.
12.3. 1972	Elections held to Punjāb assembly. The Akālīs won only 24 of 104 seats. This was the beginning of the fall of the leadership of Fateh Singh as leader of the Akali Party.
17.3.1972	Zail formed government in Punjāb. Gurcharan Singh Tohrā asked Fateh Singh to retire from active politics.
25.6.1975	Indira Gandhi unseated by the high court. Instead of resigning, she imposed Internal Emergency and arrested thousands of the leaders of the opposition parties.
9.7.1975	Akālī Dal launched agitation against imposition of 'Internal Emergency' by Indira Gandhi.
17.1.1977	Internal Emergency came to end. Elections held to the Indian Lower House. Jantā Party assumed power.
June 1977	Elections to the Punjāb Assembly held. Akālī Dal won absolute majority. Parkash Singh Bādal became the Chief Minister of Punjāb.
13.4.1978	13 Sikhs killed and several injured by the Nirankārī cult at Amritsar. Later, the police registered a criminal case against him.
10.6.1978	<i>Hukamnāmā</i> issued to the Sikhs for social boycott of the Nirankārī -called Mafia type cult.
24.1.1980	Gurbachan Singh Nirankari acquitted (in the case of killing of 13 Sikhs at Amritsar on 13.4.1978).
24.4.1980	Nirankārī cult chief Gurbachan killed.
15.3.1981	Sikh Educational Conference passed a resolution to seek <i>Associate membership</i> for the Sikhs in the U.N.O.
25.3.1981	The S.G.P.C. passed "Sikhs are a nation" resolution.
11.5.1981	Shiromanī Akālī Dal passed "Sikhs are a nation" resolution.
9.9.1981	Hindu journalist Lālā Jagat Nārāyan killed near Ludhiana. (Bābā) Jarnail Singh Bhindrānwālā, chief of Bhindrān-Mehtā Jathā named as planner of the murder. Warrants of his arrest issued by the magistrate.
20.9.1981	Bābā Jarnail Singh Bhindrānwālā courted arrest at Mehtā Chowk. The police opened fire at the Sikhs, killed 11 and wounded several.

- 8.4.1982 Inauguration of Sutlej-Yamuna link canal by Indira Gandhi at Kapūrī (Haryana). The Sikhs, led by Dr. Rajinder Kaur, held demonstration against the inauguration.
- 24.4.1982 Akālī Dal began agitation to stop the construction of the Sutlej-Yamuna-link canal.
- 10.7.1982 Akālī Dal announced support for Zail in presidential elections.
- 19.7.1982 Bhāi Amrīk Singh and Thārā Singh arrested by the police. Bhindrānwālā began an agitation for the release of Bhāi Amrīk Singh and others.
- 25.7.1982 Akālī Dal decided to adopt Bābā Bhindrānwālā's agitation from 4.8.1982.
- 4.8.1982 *Dharam Yudh Morchā* agitation launched.
- 19.11-4.12.1982 Asian Games held at Delhi. Several thousand Sikhs courted arrest during the games. On November 27, Dr. Rajinder Kaur led a big Jathā to court arrest.
- 19.11- 4.12.1982 **All the Sikhs travelling to Delhi were insulted, harassed, arrested, beaten, wounded and even killed by the Haryana police, under special instructions from Bhajan Lal, the then chief minister of Haryana. These Sikhs included senior Judges, army officers, and government officials.**
- 12.4.1983 The Akālī Dal began enrolment of *Marjīwarās* (literally: the living martyrs; i.e. those who took a 'vow' that they will sacrifice even their lives for the fulfilment of Sikh demands). Bābā Jarnail Singh was the first to enrol. Total number crossed 100,000.
- 26.5.1984 Last of the several meeting between the Akālī and the Indira regime (16-17.11.1982, 17.1.1983, 24.1.1984, 27.3.1984, 28-29.3.1984, 21.4.1984). This last meeting, held on May 26, 1984, too was, in fact, just a show. In fact, the government had been planning an attack on Darbār Sāhib for several months. Russian K.G.B. and the British intelligence had been guiding the invasion of the Darbār Sāhib.
- 1.6.1984 Indian forces fired at Darbār Sāhib and killed 11 Sikhs.
- 2.6.1984 Indian army replaced Central Reserved Police Force (C.R.P.F.).
- 3.6.1984 Indian army occupied the whole of the Punjāb. Curfew imposed and undeclared Martial law promulgated.

- 4.6.1984** Indian forces invaded Darbār Sāhib and more than 40 other shrines. Thousand of the Sikhs killed. All the Akālī leaders arrested.
- 5.6.1984 The Indian army's attack and the killings of the Sikhs continued in the Darbār Sāhib complex. Several Sikhs were killed with their hands tied on their backs. A bomb was thrown on the Sikhs after their arrest. Sikh women were raped by the India army.
- 6.6.1984** Indian forces occupied the Sikh shrines, archives, libraries, museums. It carried away the Sikh archives. Later, the buildings of archives were set ablaze. Martyrdom of General Subeg Singh.
- 6.6.1984** Several thousand Sikhs marched towards Amritsar to stop sacrilege. Hundreds of the Sikh marchers were shot dead. Several thousand Sikhs, including women and small children were arrested.
- 7.6.1984 Martyrdom of Bābā Jarnail Singh Bhindrānwālā and Bhāī Amrīk Singh.
- 7.6.1984 Sikh soldiers' rebelled, to protest against attack on Darbār Sāhib, and began marching to Amritsar. They were chased by the Hindu army officers. Fighting took place at several places. Several Sikh soldiers were killed and thousands were arrested.
- 8.6.1984** "Operation Woodrose" started by the Indian military. Hundreds of Sikh youth from villages picked up and eliminated. McCarthy style witch-hunt led to killing of hundreds of the Sikhs and arrest of thousands of the Sikhs.
- 10.6.1984 The Sikhs took out huge processions at London, New York and in the capitals of all the major countries, throughout the world .
- 11.6.1984 Dal Khālsā announced its "Government in Exile" at London.
- 11.7.1984 So-called "White Paper " on the Sikh situation, full of lies, released by the Indian regime.
- 16.7.1984 Dr. Rajinder Kaur led a *Shaheedī Jathā* for the freedom of Darbār Sāhib. All the members of the *Jathā* were arrested.
- 31.10.1984** Bhāī Beant Singh and Bhāī Satwant Singh killed Indira Gandhi who had attacked the Sikh shrines and had killed thousands of innocent Sikhs. Both the Sikhs offered themselves for arrest. D.K.Bhatt and Narain Singh arrested them. Later, Tarsem Jambhwal

and Ram Sharan, the police officials, fired at both the Sikhs. Bhāi Beant Singh died at the spot and Satwant Singh was very seriously injured. Body of Beant Singh was secretly burnt by police. Even his ashes were not given to his family.

31.10.1984-7.10.1984

"Black November-1984". Thousands of the Sikhs killed in butchery by terrorist Hindu Congress leaders and workers, in collaboration with the ministers, the police and the army. Unspeakable and hitherto unknown butchery of the innocent Sikh men, women and children. Thousands of Sikh women were raped, and children were roasted alive. The property of the Sikhs was looted and burnt. Gurdwārās were burnt and demolished. The international leadership witnessed the savagery from a few hundred meters but kept mum. The book *Who Are Guilty* named 16 senior Congress Party leaders, 13 police officials and 198 others among the major killers of the Sikhs. Rajiv Gandhi himself blesses the carnage. Later, he justified by saying "whenever a big tree falls, the earth trembles." (Later, Rajiv himself met the same fate).

27.11.1984 Simranjīt Singh Mann arrested while crossing border to Nepal.

Nov-Dec. 1984 Akālīs held secret talks with the Delhi regime. Barjinder Singh Hamdard, Balwant Rāmuwālīā, Atar Singh, and Prithipāl Singh Kapūr played major role. Congress leader Arjan Singh managed all these Sikh activists and professors.

24.7.1985 Rajiv-Longowāl agreement announced. (Everything was already finalized).

25.9.1985 Elections were held to the Punjāb Assembly. It was 'a friendly contest' between Surjīt Barnala and Congress Party. Surjīt Barnala-Congress alliance made Surjīt Barnala chief minister. Surjīt Barnala was sworn as chief minister of the Punjāb on 29.9.1985.

26.1.1986 Bhindrān-Mehtā Jathā held a congregation in front of Akāl Takht Sāhib in the name of *Sarbat Khālsā*. The meeting confirmed 'excommunication' of Zail Singh, Būtā Singh, Kirpāl Singh, Santā Singh Nihang and some others from the Sikh Panth. It also "disbanded"

- the S.G.P.C. and formed a so-called *Panthik Committee* (comprising of Wassan Singh, Dhannā Singh, Arūr Singh, Gurdev Singh Usmān and Gurbachan Singh Mānochāhal). Jashīr Singh Rode was appointed so-called *Jathedār* of Akāl Takht Sāhib, Gurdev Singh Kāonke was to officiate till his (Jashīr Singh's) release. Bakhshish Singh was nominated as the head *Granthī* of Darbār Sāhib. Shaheed Beant Singh and Satwant Singh were proclaimed "national heroes".
- 29.4.1986 Khalistan Government announced by the so-called *Panthik Committee*. The leaders left Darbār Sāhib complex after making the announcement.
- 30.4.1986 Under instructions from Rajiv Gandhi, Surjīt Barnala attacked Darbār Sāhib (apparently to justify the invasion of June 4, 1984).
- 1.5.1986 Several Akālī M.L.A.s left Barnala government to protest against attack on Darbār Sāhib.
- 4.8.1987 Rāgī Darshan Singh called a Sikh convention at Darbār Sāhib. He had planned to pass a resolution "more autonomy to provinces" but the militant participants rejected this suggestion. Rāgī claimed passing of a resolution which was even less than "special status for Punjāb." The Sikhs did not support this resolution.
- 27.12.1987 Dr. Jagdīsh Singh Buttar presented resolution of Khalistan at Fatehgarh Sāhib. All the Sikhs presented supported the resolution with one voice.
- 9-18.5.1988 Punjab police and the Indian army again attacked Darbār Sāhib, killed 36 Sikhs and arrested 500.
- 6.1.1989 Bhāī Satwant Singh and Bhāī Kehar Singh hanged in Delhi jail. *Jallād* (executioner) Fakīrā was brought from Patiala. The bodies of the two martyrs were cremated inside the Delhi jail. Curfew was imposed in the whole of the Punjāb.
- 13.1.1989 Sikh procession attacked by Hindus at Jammu. Several Sikhs were killed.
- 26.11.1989 Elections to the Indian parliament held. Simranjīt Singh Maan won by securing 90% votes. Bimal Kaur, Suchchā Singh (wife and father of Shaheed Beant Singh), Atinderpāl Singh, Dhiān Singh Mand, Jagdev Singh Khuddīān, Rājdev Singh, Rajinder

	Kaur Bulārā etc won. It was a sort of referendum in favour of Khalistan.
12.1.1990	Simranjīt Singh Maan released a 9-points programme: 1. Release of all the Sikh detainees. 2. Reinstatement of the Sikh soldiers who had rebelled in June 1984. 3. Punishment to the guilty men of the carnage of Black November 1984. 4. Punishment to the persons guilty of killings at of Bidar, Jammu and Haryana. 5. Withdrawal of armed forces from Punjāb. 6. Release of the names of the Sikhs killed in 1984. 7. Abolition of all the Black Laws. 8. Released of Harjinder Singh Jindā and Sukhdev Singh Sukkhā. 9. Change of anti-Sikh machinery in the Indian and Punjāb administration.
10.11.1990	Indian government ordered deployment of army in 3 districts of Punjāb.
10.4.1991	Maan disclosed: "There are more than 240,000 soldiers in Punjāb."
6.12.1992	Bābarī mosque at Ayodhyā demolished by fundamentalist and extremist Hindus.
1993-94	Thousands of the Sikh youth killed in fake police encounters. Their bodies cremated as 'unidentified' or thrown into rivers/canals.
14.2.1994	Benazīr Bhutto confessed that she had collaborated Rajiv Gandhi against the Sikhs.
1.5.1994	Akālī Dal (Amritsar) formed at Akāl Takht Sāhib. Manifesto demanded "confederation between India and Punjāb."
4.6.1994	12 U.S. Congressmen supported independent Khalistan as a buffer State between India and Pakistan.
7.10.1994	35 Congressmen wrote to Clinton to help the Sikhs.
31.8.1995	Assassination of Beant Sinh, the chief minister of the Punjāb.
February 1996	Bādal became the chief minister of the Punjāb.
Dec. 1998	Gurcharan Singh Tohrā's opponents provoked Bādal presenting a minor statement by Tohrā and compelled him to expel Tohrā from Party.
February 1999	Bādal expelled Tohrā from Akālī Dal. Tohrā removed from president ship of the SGPC. Jagīr Kaur became new president of the SGPC.
May 30, 1999	Tohrā formed a new Akālī Dal.

Dec. 1999 Elections to India Lok Sabha. Badal lost all but 2 seats.

March 2002 Badal lost Punjab Assembly elections. Captain Amarinder Singh became the chief minister.

26.10.2003 The Sikh missionaries held a big convention at Mohali to discuss the Sikh issues. The SGPC, Bhindran-Mehta Jatha (so-called Damdami Taksal), Akhand Kirtani Jatha, Badal Akali Dal etc opposed it but still it was attended by thousands of elite Sikhs.

1.12.2003 Parkash Badal and Sukhbir Badal arrested and sent to jail in corruption cases.

8.12.2003 Parkash Badal's birthday celebrated in the Punjab. Tohra spent lakhs of rupees of the SGPC for this function.

1.4.2004 Gurcharan Singh Tohra died.

5.7.2004 Elections to the SGPC held. Badal group won 136 seats out of a total of 170 seats but 43% of the votes went to anti-Badal groups. Badal group won mainly due to Hindu and Patit votes.

12.7.2004 Punjab, under the command of Captain Amarinder Singh, passed a bill cancelling all the agreements with Haryana regarding Punjab waters (most of these agreements had been signed by Badal and previous Congress governments).

1.9.2004 Quad-centenary of the first *Parkash* (16.8.1604) of Guru Granth Sahib celebrated. The Badal group honoured fanatic and anti-Sikh BJP leaders in various Sikh functions in spite of opposition by the Badal Aali Dal, the SGPC and several other groups and deras.

7.11.2004 Elections to the three vacant seats of the SGPC held. Badal group captured all the three seats with very big majority. Sikhs voted for the corrupt candidates of Badal.

3.3.2005 Akali Dal Badal group lost Ajnala bye-election by a margin of more than 19000 votes.

21.4.2007 The SGPC finally rejected the 'dossier' submitted to UNESCO for grant of 'heritage building' status to Darbar Sahib. The SGPC had paid 20 lakh rupees to Mrs Gurmit Roy to prepare this 'dossier'. Kiranjot Kaur was the main person at the back of this project.

21.11.2005 Awtar Singh Makkar became the president of the SGPC.

2005-2006 Badal used the SGPC for corrupt practices. Billions of rupees of the SGPC funds, embezzled by members and employees. Insult to Akal Takht by Joginder Singh Vedanti. Dark days for the Sikh nation.

30.6.2006 Elections held to the Delhi SGPC. Paramjit Singh Sarna captured power.

13.11.2006 A group of the Sikhs installed controversial 'Dasam Granth' in fact Bachitar Natak) at village Dyalpura Bhaika along with Guru Granth Sahib. This act of sacrilege was reacted with protests from the Sikh intellectuals and the Gurmat Taksal.

2007 Badal government accepted agenda to spend 600 crore rupees for celebration functions of Ram Singh and his Kooka (Namdhari) cult.

2.3.2007 Badal became the chief minister of the Punjab by securing 47 seats in 117 seated Punjab Assembly (Congress won 41 and BJP won 19 seats). Elections results were announced on 27.2.2007.

13.7.2007 Gurmit Ram, the debauch chief of the Sarsa cult, tried to personate and insult Guru Gobind Singh Sahib. It resulted into protest from all the quarters of the Sikhs.

18.5.2007 Simranjit Singh Mann was arrested and charged with sedition by Badal regime simply for putting a poster in the neck of the statue of Beant Singh, the terrorist chief minister of the Punjab.

June 2008 Dr Harjinder Singh Dilgeer released his *magnum opus* "Sikh Twareekh" (complete Sikh history in 5 volumes) in Punjabi.

May 2009 Elections (results declared on 16.5.2009) to the Indian parliament put Congress again into power. Badal Akali Dal lost eight and won four seats. Badal won Bathinda and Firozpur seats with very active support from the anti-Sikh Sarsa cult chief, with whom Badal had made a secret pact.

April 2009 Badal's daughter-in-law worshipped the *Shivling* (penis of mythological Hindu god Shiv) in gross violation of the Sikh edicts.

24.5.2009 Some Sikhs punished Rama Nand and Sarwan Das of Dera Ballan) for committing grave sacrilege of Guru Granth Sahib, in Ravidas Temple in Vienna, Austria. There, the Ravidasi congregation cruelly beat five Sikh youth (who had not recovered still in October 2009).

24-25.5.2009 The Ravidasis attacked innocent people and their properties to 'protest' against Vienna incident. Badal government did not take any action in order to win their vote bank. Later, Badal sent a chartered plain (cost 80 lakh rupees) to bring the dead body of the one who was guilty of sacrilege of Guru Granth Sahib. Later, Badal arranged an *akhand path* of Guru Granth Sahib at Akal Takht, for those who had committed sever sacrilege of Guru Granth Sahib. This path again was sacrilege of Guru Granth Sahib. The priests (who call themselves Jathedar) too attended this *path's* Bhog (closing) ceremony.

28.5.2009 Badal visited Radhasoami cult centre at Beas twice to thank them for their active help during Parliament elections.

May 2009-09-21 Secre circular of RSS revealed that several Sikhs were associated with its apex body. The names included: Dr Jodh S. Patiala, Ratinder S. Indore, Harbhajan S. Dehradun, Kashmir Singh (a mechanic of Pbi. Uni. Patiala), Ranjit Rana (Birmingham England), Dr. Gurdip Jagbir (Punjab Radio London) etc.

28.8.2009 Badal regime arrested Daljit Singh Bittu under false charges of terrorism in order to stop him from participating in SGPC elections.

November 2009 Giani Gurbahan Singh summoned Prof. Darshan Singh Raagi at Akal Takht for his alleged comments on the so-called Dasam Granth.

5.12.2009 Giani Gurbachan Singh declared Prof Darshan Singh as 'tankhahiya' for his alleged comments about the so-called Dasam Granth. All this was done as per instructions from Parkash Badal and Harnam Singh Dhumma (Bhindra-Mehta Jatha). The Sikhs from USA, Canada, England, Europe as well as all the missionaries condemned and rejected this action.

5.12.2009 Badal government killed one and wounded several Sikhs protesting against anti-Sikh propaganda of Ashutosh of Nurmahal sect.