

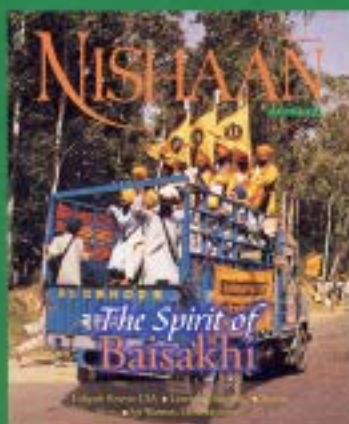
# NISHAAN

1 / 2002

BLOWHORN

## *The Spirit of* Baisakhi

Lohgarh Retreat-USA • Listening (Suniyai) • Simran  
• Air Warriors Extraordinaire



**Cover: The Spirit of Baisakhi**  
Photograph by Pushpinder Singh

# Contents

Issue II / 2002

## Editorial Director

Prof. Darshan Singh Maini

## Executive Editor

Pushpinder Singh

## Editorial Board

Sikandar Singh Bhayee

G. P. Singh

Birinder Singh Malhans

Hardev Singh

Manjit Singh

## Editorial Office

D-43, Sujjan Singh Park  
New Delhi 110 003, India

Tel: (91-11) 4617234

Fax: (91-11) 4628615

e-mail : nishaan@lycos.com

website : www.nishaan.com

## Published by

**The Nagaara Trust**

16-A Palam Marg

Vasant Vihar

New Delhi 110 057, India

## Designed by

Kraftwerk

kwerk@mantraonline.com

## Printed by

Aegean Offset

F-17, Mayapuri Phase II

New Delhi 110 064

The opinions expressed in the articles published in the Nishaan do not necessarily reflect the views or policy of The Nagaara Trust.

- 2 Editorial:**  
**The Sikh Establishment in Disarray**  
by Darshan Singh Maini

- 4 Baisakhi: Beyond The Symbols**  
by Narayani Ganesh

- 5 Listening (Suniyal)**  
by Dr. Jaswant Singh Neki



- 9 Lohgarh Retreat: In the USA**  
by Inni Kaur



- 14 Air Warriors Extraordinaire**  
**Marshal of the IAF Arjan Singh, DFC**



- 23 Lest We Forget: NWFP and J&K**  
by Pushpinder Singh



- 27 Rendezvous on the Sutlej**  
by Ravinder Singh Somi & Rishi Singh

- 32 God Is**  
by Kartar Singh Duggal



- 34 Dalip Kaur Tiwana: The Leading Punjabi Novelist of our Times**

- 38 The Punjab: 2000-2002**  
by Dr. Sangat Singh

- 43 Hum Sab Ek Hain**  
by Bhagwant Singh Dalwari



- 45 Landscaping The Welcome Gates at Anandpur Sahib**  
by Sonia Dhami

- 48 Simran**  
by Bhai Ardaman Singh of Bagrian

- 59 The Scorching Flame**  
by Kamal Gurtaj Singh

- 60 News from the Sikh Commonwealth**

- 64 Vaisakhi**  
by Inni Kaur

# The Sikh Establishment in Disarray

Why I have elected to take on the Sikh Establishment at this point of time is to remember or recall its organic infirmities and delinquencies, something that we have seen, time and again, in moments of crisis and confusion. Thus, the recent defeat at the polls of the Akalis, divided, dispirited, mired in scams and sleaze and scandals, is one such moment and one needs to understand the character and chemistry of this Establishment. This is not to say that the return of the Congress party, long in wilderness and even more compromised and soiled morally since the infamous Emergency of 1975, is any comfort to the voters. It may also be noticed that it's really the rout of the BJP candidates in their city strongholds which has given the Congress a dubious mandate, to rule by default, as it were. However, my theme here is not the Akali loss of power, but the question of confronting the Sikh Establishment in general to determine its hegemonic, patriarchal, regressive character.

It's in the nature of each society to throw up hegemonies of power and prestige which in a loose way add up to what the sociologists are pleased to call "the Establishment." That's to say, certain sections and certain groups succeed in imposing their values on the vast majority over a period of time, and then that point of view becomes the general point of view as though it were a part of the natural order of things. Any challenge to it, or any departure from its code is frowned upon and, where possible, put down in a heavy-handed manner. Indeed, all its energies are directed

towards preserving the *status quo*, and it sets up an elaborate and transparent system of punishments to strike fear in the heart of potential offenders. The Establishment is, then, the voice of conservatism, of vested interests and of privileged minorities. Its elites do change gradually in response to the pressure from within, but the outer shell is preserved, the shell of image, authority and inquisition. A *persona* of collective and institutionalised power, in short.

Within the large Establishment there are sub-Establishments such as the family, the clan, the *jati* or caste, and, above all, the church, and all have their own little empires and tyrannies to squeeze life into a dull and grey uniformity. And their support comes from the ruling elites, moneyed classes, the landed aristocracy, and though the instrumentalities of power such as the bureaucracy, the judiciary and the police-army combine. When, therefore, some radical voices are raised against them, they are nipped in the bud, so to speak. And where some bolder spirits still manage to breach its defences, they are pilloried, chastened and ostracised and eventually hounded out of business. In most cases, they even exact not only obedience and retraction, but also abject apologies from them. There is an air even of sadism in the proceedings, an obscene pleasure in the discomfiture and humiliation drama. In short, there is a travesty of truth, and the Establishment in question asserts its authority to have it in its own way. And its younger sister, madame hypocrisy, sets up shop next door. A suitable rhetoric of duplicity

and deceit is hoisted to control the community. That's the only way to hold the flock together.

This introductory comment is meant to serve as a prelude to my engagement with the Sikh Establishment, that grey eminence which lays down the rules of polity, of theology, and of the community in general and is as firmly ensconced as any other in this country. It's difficult to describe its dynamics in an editorial of this scope, and thus I propose to confine myself to its means and methods of controlling the Sikh mind. Let me observe at the start that I have no personal quarrel with it and I'm in no way entangled in any argument. If any thing, I have sought over the years to live an authentic inner life which permits me to work out my *nirvana* on my own terms. All life, as the American novelist, Ross Lockbridge, puts it, is "personal beyond escape." It's not as though I run away from the dust and heat of things to land "inside the whale", to use an Orwellian phrase. Retreat from reality is not my view or my ethics. And if I do not tread on the corns of the Sikh Establishment more frequently, it's chiefly because my muses are involved elsewhere, as also my spirit. I grieve deeply and endlessly over the continuing political tragedy of the Sikhs in my writings, a tragedy for which the Sikh Establishment is directly responsible along with its adversary, the Congress (I), but that's not the same thing. And where too I see that tragedy in its larger human context, as those familiar with my work know too well.

As a member of the Sikh community, I salute its radical energies, its revolutionary character, and its supreme scriptures, but I have no such loyalties to that congeries of *thekedars* known as the Sikh Establishment which largely consists of the Jat Sikh landlords, the obliging high priests and paid village elders. Indeed, no true writer anywhere can ever be a part of it. His role is perennially an adversary role. As both George Orwell and the Russian novelist, Alexander Solzenitsyn affirm, no government ever loves its writers and artists. Indeed, when I set out some years ago to start a

new column, I defined my brief in these words: "One of the prime targets would be the Indian species of *homo politicus*, a very special variety of sanctimonious hamburgs and hoodlums...." And that's broadly how I react to the political clergy of the Sikhs. All Establishments have a lot of skeletons to hide, as even the Communist type in the Soviet Union lived to see its own inner corruptions. The Sikh Establishment is no exception. To live by the dogma is to violate the spirit of the doctrine. Above all, to use religion as a force of obedience is to violate its sanctity. As Guru Gobind Singh himself noted: "In the name of religion the world has witnessed such sinful deeds that even sinfulness per se hangs its head in shame." (Transaltion: Narain Singh).

Now one of the great ironies of the situation is that the Sikh Gurus in whose name the Establishment operates were clearly opposed to all closed hierarchies and hegemonies. In scores of hymns, Guru Nanak, in particular, condemns sacerdotalism, political popery and caste imperialism, for all these are chains upon the human love of freedom, of inquiry, of research. I would even make bold to say that Sikhism is the only major creed in the world to have a cosmopolitan character. Show me any other scripture that carries the songs and hymns of other communities. In other words, Sikhism, unlike other religions around, is against all absolutisms and fundamentalisms. Its whole history affirms this. The crisis, then, of the Sikh Establishment today is that it has fallen into *doublethink* and *doubletalk*.

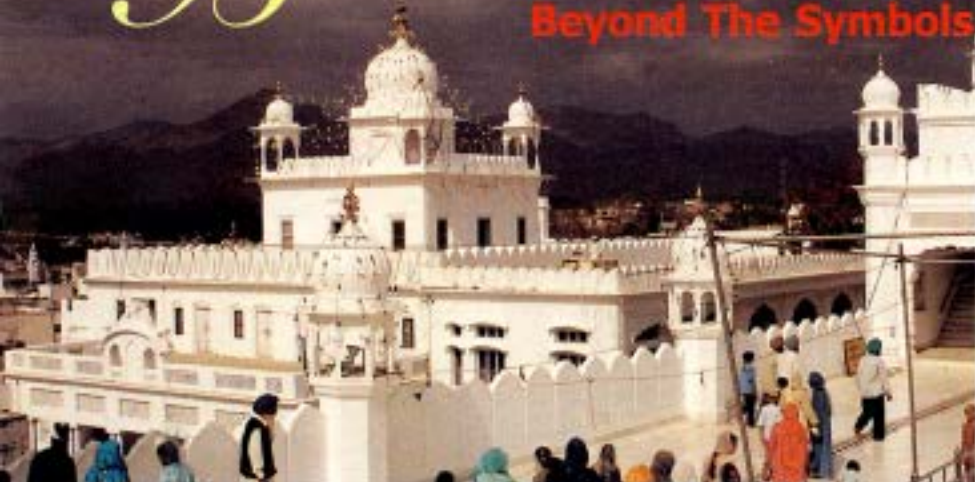
In conclusion, I may aver that it's time for disgraced leaders of the Akali Party to let in some fresh air of thought in to their deliberations. And it's time for the Sikh youth of an awakened consciousness and new perceptions to dislodge a moribund set of 'oldies'. Both the Akalis and the Sikh Congressmen continue to worship dubious 'gods' and 'goddesses'. They have failed to modernise their world view and their ways.

And both need to be chastened, if not chastised.

**Prof. Darshan Singh Maini**

# Baisakhi

## Beyond The Symbols



Baisakhi, which falls on April 13, is generally associated with agriculture since it is a harvest festival. But Baisakhi celebrations hold a special significance for the Punjab and the Sikh community as it was on Baisakhi day three hundred and three years ago, that the Khalsa was born.

Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Guru of the Sikhs, instituted the new order of the Khalsa at Anandpur Sahib with a view to create a way of life that would transcend all man-made barriers, with the mission to "do or die".

He initiated the *Panj Pyare* or the five chosen disciples into the Khalsa, infusing spirit and strength into the Sikh community and give it a new martial direction. He was charged with the purpose of abolishing slavery of any kind, whether political, social or economic. For this, he wanted to inculcate the spirit of sacrifice and instill discipline in the community.

The Guru is said to have addressed his followers thus: "From now on, you have become casteless. No ritual will you perform, nor will you believe in any superstition. You will believe in one God who is our creator, protector, destroyer.

"You will be brothers to each other with no dividing ranks. Be a householder while maintaining the highest standards, inward and outward. Women will be treated on par with men...

"You will wear your hair unshorn, like

the ancient sages or warriors as a pledge of dedication; a comb to keep it clean; a steel bracelet to denote the universality of God; an underwear to denote chastity; and a steel dagger for your defence and as a symbol of royalty. No smoking, as it is unclean and injurious to health...Physical prowess should be given importance, to be held as sacred as a spiritual sensitiveness. Bridge differences between religions, serve the poor unreservedly, establish community kitchens and call yourselves Singhs or lions".

Devout Sikhs adhere to the five K's (*keshi, kirpan, kanga, kada and kaccha*) which, although symbolic, nevertheless infuses the feeling of brotherhood and unity of purpose in the community. The greatest gift of the Khalsa to society lies in what was propounded, beyond the symbolism.

When he initiated the five disciples, Guru Gobind Singh sought, with folded hands, to be baptised in turn by them. In spite of being their Guru, he had the humility to seek to be administered the *amrit* by them, illustrating his belief in universal brotherhood and equality. He demonstrated how a person revered as a leader was not beyond further learning and seeking. No one can know all there is to know; seeking of knowledge is an ongoing process no matter what your station in life.

The Guru inculcated amongst his disciples a spirit of service with humility;

stressed on the importance of a healthy body (through exercise and judicious habits) in order to attain a healthy mind; and showed how easy it was to share *langar*: community kitchens and free distribution of food was initiated and popularised by him. We all know how much we relish *Guru ka langar* when we visit a Gurdwara.

The Khalsa Panth does not advocate seeking God to the distraction of one's earthly duties. The Guru expounded on this in simple verse:

"O mind, practise renunciation thus:  
Consider thy homestead to be a forest,  
And keep detached in thy mind.  
Let continence be thy matted hair.  
And the joining with God thy  
ablution..."

Let Wisdom be thy guide, so instruct  
my mind, and besmear thy body with the  
'ashes' of God's name.

Eat sparingly and sleep sparingly, and  
have forgiveness and compassion and  
love within thee.

And live with good conduct and  
contentment, and rise above the three  
modes.

Harbour neither lust in the mind, nor  
wrath,

Nor greed, nor obstinacy, nor undue  
attachment,

And you see the quintessence of the  
soul,

And attain unto the Supreme Being".

His father, Guru Tegh Bahadur, founded the town of Anandpur on the land gifted to him by the Raja of Kahlur. The town began to develop when devotees congregated to pay their respects to the Guru and some settled down there even though the Guru proceeded to Delhi. Anandpur Sahib is one of the places most sacred to the Sikhs, next only to Amritsar which houses the Golden Temple. It was further sanctified when Guru Gobind Singh chose to initiate his followers into the Khalsa Panth at Anandpur on Baisakhi day in 1699.

Khalsa means pure. Purity in thought, word and deed. A very ambitious agenda. But, it is only when we strive for purity can we reach somewhere near its periphery. The more taxing the agenda, the more the onus of responsibility to set the right example on not only the leaders but all members of the Sikh community.

Narayani Ganesh

# Listening (*Suniyai*)

## The Bedrock of Spiritual Praxis

*In the last issue, the essence of the doctrine of "Hukam" was enunciated.*

*Continuing with the JAP(U)JI SAHIB series, this instalment deals with the primeval exercise of "listening", the quest of the seeker to attune his mind to be in communion with Him, and bathe his mind in the mystique and wonderment of the omni present and omni potent Creator.*

**S**ravaṇa is listening to the words or texts as they are uttered by the teacher. This has been the time-honoured method of education in ancient India - the system of oral tradition in *guruparampara* (succession of teachers) or *sampnedaya* (handing down). It has special significance in spiritual training and is accepted as the bedrock of spiritual praxis. In the Hindu tradition, a directly revealed scripture is called *sruti* (that which is heard directly). In Jaina parlance, one who becomes an adept follower is called a *śravak* (proficient listener). It has been said that there are some who can attain salvation by 'listening' alone.

### Varieties of Listening

However, how many of us really listen or care to listen? Here is a fable that illustrates the way we listen. A sculptor brought three identical looking statues to the court of King Bikhmaditya and laid them before the monarch saying, "These statues that I have brought for you are very different, one from the other. Pray, have their value assessed and reward me accordingly". Since to the king all the three statues looked absolutely identical, he asked of his courtiers to examine them more closely and try to make out how they differed, if at all. Even they could not find any difference - they found them to be identical in size, weight, shape, texture, feature and so on. So they gave up.

Yet, there was among them Kalidasa, who, so far, had stood back pondering over the issue. He stepped forth and said, "Let me try". He picked up a longish straw and pushed into one of the ears of the first statue and the straw came out of the other ear. "This statue is not even worth a penny" Kalidasa exclaimed. Taking the straw out, of it, he then pushed it into one ear of the second statue. This time the straw did not emerge from the other ear, but came out from the mouth of that statue. "This one is worth one gold coin only", he said and then tried his straw on the third statue. This time the straw did not emerge at all but simply

slipped into the interior of the statue. "My Lord!" Kalidasa exclaimed, "If my life be spared, I can only say that all the royal treasures put together cannot equal the worth of this statue". The king was perplexed and asked Kalidasa to explain to everyone the basis of such divergence in the value of these statues. Kalidasa explained that the statues symbolised three different types of listeners. The first type are such listeners who let in what is told them into one of their ears and immediately let it out through the other. They are not worth even a penny. The second statue typifies those among us who let in what is said to them and then only verbally appreciate it making such expressions as 'you spoke very well', or 'your talk was interesting'. "Such a commentator", he said, "is worth one gold coin". "The third statue represents a rare individual who simply internalizes what he hears, lets it soak into his soul and metamorphose his life. Nothing can equal the worth of such a one - not even all the royal treasures put together."

Most of us are not even first-level listeners. We only hear what we want to, not what is said. We want to apprehend only what doesn't disturb us, what is conducive to our desire, what mixes well with our temper. But what mixes well with us can hardly change us. A Christian normally listens to Christian sermon, not a Hindu or a Muslim one. The Moslem, likewise, would normally listen to sermon from a Moslem scholar but not from a Hindu or Buddhist priest, and so on. None of them, it seems, has any relationship with Truth. They have been conditioned in a particular way and so can't budge from that. This kind of conditioning has to be overcome. Are we not conditioned to hear only the echo of our own beliefs? If we are able to stop our inner dialogue, then alone we can really 'listen'. If that happens, then heaven will open up for us and we shall become really aware.

Second level listeners are common to come by. Although they are ever ready to comment on what they hear, one is

not sure how much they have really listened. I am reminded of a story relating to Giani Sant Singh who used to deliver an exposition of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* daily in the precincts of *Darbar Sahib*, Amritsar. One day, after such a session, his audience gathered around him and began to praise his exposition. "It was simply superb", they said. The Giani turned to one of his personal attendants and asked him to give his views about his exposition. The attendant said, "It was far less effective than even an abusive word". The crowd became aghast, but the Giani told him to explain why he thought so. He said, before that, he would like to ask your admirers to let me know what you actually said. None of them, however, could come forward to say anything significant. The attendant then said, "Had an abusive word been thrown upon anyone of them, he would, most likely, remember it for his life-time. What you said, they have already forgotten."

### Silence the Substratum

Authentic listening is an art not easily acquired. When one has really learnt the art of listening, one becomes cognizant with silence. It is silence that supports the entire cosmos. The sun rises out of it, the seed sprouts out of it. Worlds arise out of it and merge back into it. It is said, a *sadhu* approached Guru Nanak Dev and requested him to annihilate him and then bring him back to life. The Guru asked him to close his eyes and bid him to observe silence. Then put his hand over the *sadhu's* head and began chanting 'Oankar!' The *sadhu* felt that he had turned into ashes. Then the Guru chanted 'Oankar!' a second time. The *sadhu* felt that he had risen up from the ashes. Both his annihilation and reconstitution took place in the silence inside him.

Talking connects us with 'the other'. It is silence that connects us with ourselves. The talker cannot establish relationship with himself. For that we have to learn to be silent. We emerged out of silence. We have also, in the end, to revert to silence. In between we learnt talking. We start over-talking; incessantly, loudly, and even to ourselves. Then we altogether forget the virtues of silence and lose its habit. We have to reacquire that habit if we want to listen.

Silence is the substratum of talking. There is silence before speech. There is silence after speech. There is silence within speech—interspersed between syllables. Perhaps, there is subtle silence even within syllables that separates the different phonemes. Silence is an ocean on which tiny boats of spoken words float. These boats ferry goods that we need, but they also insulate us from the ocean. If we

want to swim in the ocean and enjoy the flow of its currents, we must come out of the boats and plunge into the ocean. That is how one may join with the ocean and also become conversant with the secrets of the boat:

*Hear and learn the way of 'union' and mysteries of flesh*  
(Japji Sahib Pauri 9)

ਸੁਣਿਐ ਜੋਗ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਤਨ ਭੇਦ।  
(ਜਪੁ ਜੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਪਉੜੀ ੯)

Those who preserve their nascent silence, or are able to re-acquire it through practice, become adept listeners. Heaven begins to resonate in their inner silence. That is how divine revelation descends. They are the real *savaks* within their souls reverberates the Primal Sound (*Naad*) with which the universe was created and which continues to echo even now. One only has to be silent to receive its subtle vibrations.

Silence is not just remaining quiet. It is not even prolonged meditation.

*Not through silence He may be found*  
*Though meditation one maintained.*  
(Japji Sahib Pauri 2)

ਚੁਪੇ ਚੁਪ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ ਜੋ ਲਾਇ ਰਹਾ ਲਿਖ ਤਾਰ।  
(ਜਪੁ ਜੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਪਉੜੀ ੨)

Inner silence is attained by complete and unequivocal submission to the Will of God. Absolute submission alone can enable one to experience that primordial silence in which Truth blossoms, and Wisdom unfolds.

*By Listening one Truth obtains,*  
*Contentment and wisdom gains*  
(Japji Sahib Pauri 8)

ਸੁਣਿਐ ਸਤਿ ਸੰਤਿ ਖਿਆਨੁ।  
(ਜਪੁ ਜੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਪਉੜੀ ੮)

### 'Word' as the counterpart

Listening is raising the antenna of intuitive reception. The counterpart of listening is 'something said' – a Word. The whole cosmic order was initiated by a Word (*kuva*).

A Word from Him and the universe sprang.  
(Japji Sahib Pauri 16)

ਕੀਤਾ ਪਸਾਉ ਏਕੋ ਕਵਾਉ।  
(ਜਪੁ ਜੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਪਉੜੀ ੧੬)

This 'Word' or *Shabad* denotes an impulse, a vibration, the cause-stimulus from a living God-in-action. Sonic impulse being the source of creation, all the elements, represented by sky, air, light, water and earth still seem to be resounding with the Primal Word – their *efficient cause*. Listening (*suniyae*) to this Word is attunement with the creative *sonic energy potential* of the Word. This cosmic

Word, that continues to flow incessantly with amazing regularity, can be perceived by a numinous sensibility that awakens in the receptivity of a silence.

### Does God still talk to us?

It can be said without fear of contradiction that God, even today, continues to talk to us in various ways.

#### *Through the revealed Word*

God continues to talk to us through the Revealed Word that His Grace caused to descend on Guru souls who left it in recorded form for the eternal guidance of mankind.

*He (the Lord) installed Himself in the heart of the Guru  
Who, in turn, revealed Him to one and all.*

(SGGS P.466)

ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਵਿਚਿ ਆਪੁ ਰਖਿਉਨੁ ਕਰਿ ਪਰਗਟੁ ਆਖਿ ਸੁਣਾਇਆ।  
(ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਪੰ ੪੬੬)

And again:

*He installed Himself in the Guru to  
be revealed as the 'Word'.*

(SGGS P.1279)

ਗੁਰ ਮਹਿ ਆਪੁ ਸਮੋਇ ਸਥਾਏ ਵਰਤਾਇਆ।  
(ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਪੰ ੧੨੭੯)

No wonder, it has become customary for Sikh individuals as well as congregations to read out a random passage from the holy *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* as a commandment (*hukamnamah*) after the prayer (*Ardas*) in every congregational service.

Spirit of the scripture is revealed essentially to blessed

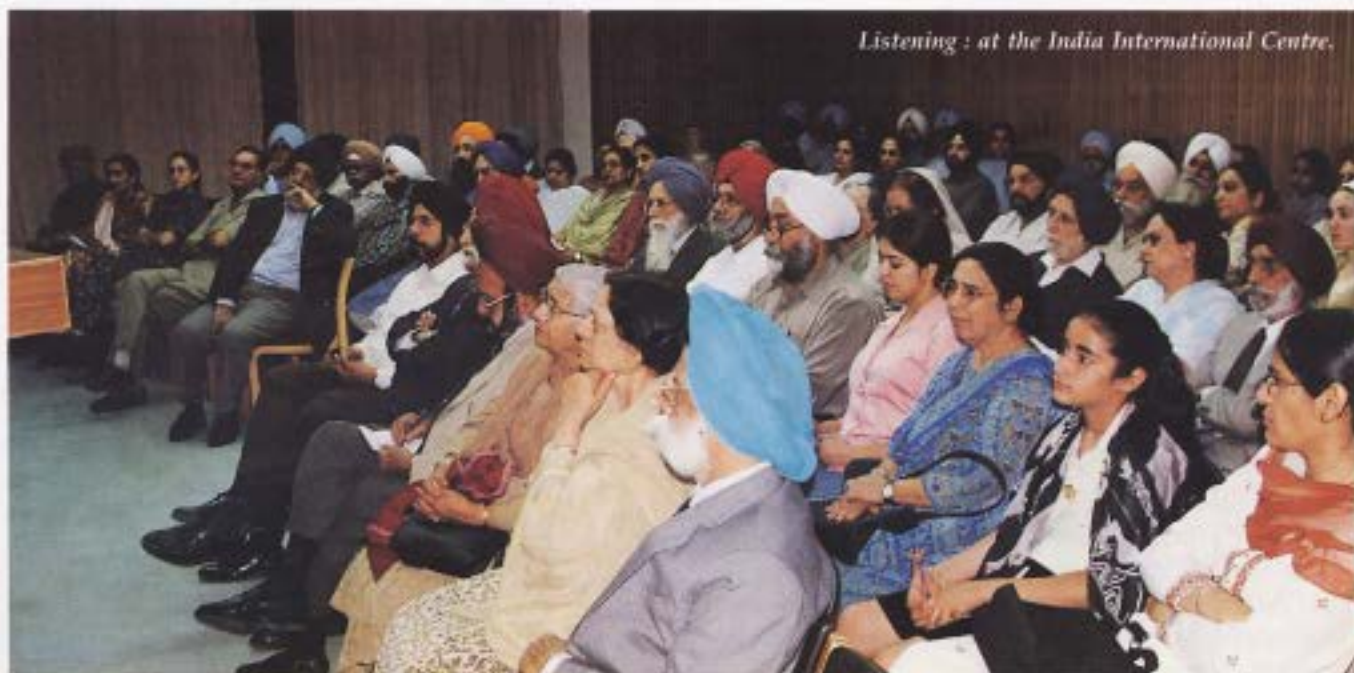
souls who become imbued with profoundly mystic virtue. Such souls are above mortality. They have been raised to divinity. The fathomless deep of the world, for them, becomes easily fordable. They come to possess the understanding of gods such as 'Shiva, Brahma and Indra'. Truth, contentment and wisdom sprout in their beings. Such souls are abloom forever (*sada vigas*). They blossom in perennial joy (Japu ji Sahib Pauris 8-11).

#### *Through people*

A well known Sikh dictum is: *Ik Sikh, doe sadh sang panjeen Parmeshar* i.e. one Sikh is an individual, two make a holy congregation and five together represent God Himself. God is supposed to talk through the consensus of a holy congregation who think together dispassionately without any selfish considerations but with complete surrender to the Will of God. Any decision taken in this way is considered to be the Guru's counsel (*Gurmatta*). In fact, a Sikh is advised that he must carry out the Guru's command a hundred per cent (*hees bistre*), but he ought to carry out the holy congregation's decisions a hundred and five per cent (*ikkess bistre*). Five authentic Sikhs together have had the authority to direct even the Guru to carry out their orders even when he had a different viewpoint. Another institution of historical significance has been that of *Sarbat Khalsa*, a representative gathering of the entire community, in which major decisions of global import were taken and studiously adhered to by all.

Apart from these institutional ways, there are still other ways in which God acts through people. There is an instructive story that can drive this point home with a

*Listening : at the India International Centre.*



telling effect. Once, owing to incessant heavy rain, a certain town got flooded. When the flooding had just started, people began to vacate the town to go to some safe place. While leaving, they thought of their priest and went to the church to take him along. He, however, declined to go with them, saying, "Don't worry about me. Jesus will take care of me". As waters rose further, people went back to rescue him in a jeep. He declined again and reaffirmed his dependence on Jesus. As the waters rose further, they went back to him in a boat, but the priest stuck to his decision. By then, the waters had risen still higher and the priest went on to the housetop. People went back in a helicopter to make yet another attempt to save him. However, the priest did not budge, and eventually was drowned. After his death, he went to the other world where he met Jesus and complained to him for not saving him though he had reposed his faith in him alone. Jesus smiled and said, "I went to you four times. First on foot, then in a jeep, then in a boat, and finally in a helicopter, but it was you who always declined to accept my help." God often chooses to come to us in the garb of people but we do not recognise Him and so fail to pay heed to what He tells us.

### Through circumstances

God may choose to talk to us by creating circumstances that seem to communicate some message from Him. I can recount several events from my own life when such a message seemed to have come. In 1949, I graduated from my medical college. Our family, that had been uprooted due to partition of the country, urgently required that I start earning for their sustenance. I decided to go in for private practice instead of going in for residency even though the latter should normally have been my preference. For my practice, I took a shop on rent and planned to start work the next morning. That night, however, it rained so heavily that the shop that I had rented simply collapsed. My grandfather then remarked, "God seems to have other plans for you. Go, take up your residency".

In 1967, my wife and I had gone to Lagos. Then, a civil war was raging in Nigeria. The very night that we arrived there, a powerful blast occurred in the sky that broke all the glass panes of our doors and windows and we were exposed to irritating smoke that filled the air and made us cough almost incessantly. As if that was not enough, I soon got an attack of renal colic that caused unbearable pain. We knew no one there, not a soul, not even the telephone number of a doctor whom we could call. My wife, who was by my side, at that point said, "My dear, my feeling is that God has a design to enhance our power of endurance." Suddenly, fresh courage welled up in me that made it easier for me to endure that pain.

Such examples can be discovered in every life, if a little thought is given. I am sure readers of this article would find some events of their lives through which, God made some understandable communication with them.

### Identifying the voice of God

God has several ways of getting our attention. Some of these methods are positive in nature, while others are negative. Among the former may be a word from others (as in the two examples given above), or by simply generating restlessness in our spirit, or even by showering a blessing upon us. Among the negative ones are an unanswered prayer, an unexpected disappointment or failure or sickness or tragedy of some kind. Here one may ask, "How does one identify the voice of God?" One might do so by virtue of a sudden sprouting of unusual courage from inside. Another indicator may be enhanced patience, or experiencing inner peace. At times, one even senses a real spiritual growth.

There are some common obstacles to our being able to listen. One is that we are simply untrained to listen. Or, we may have a rebellious spirit and tend to reject God's message. We might be too busy and our mind preoccupied in mundane trivialities. Proper self-image may not allow one to believe that God can talk to him/her.

### Conclusion

The life that listens, not only hears the Divine Word, but also flows with it. Continuing to practice attentive listening, he acquires 'effortless *dhyan*'.

By listening one attains effortless attentivity.

(Japji Sahib Pauri 8)

ਸੁਣਿਐ ਲਾਗੈ ਸਹਜਿ ਧਿਆਨੁ । (ਜਪੁਜੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਪਉੜੀ ੮)

Standing on this bedrock, the practitioner of *gurmata* ascends further to eventually achieve personal liberation. But he does not stop there.

Liberated himself, he  
liberates others as well.

(SGGS P.295)

ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਮੁਕਤੁ ਮੁਕਤੁ  
ਕਰਹਿ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ।

(ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਪੰ ੨੯੫)

Thus the Ultimate comes  
within the reach of his  
hand.

(Japji Sahib Pauri 11)

ਸੁਣਿਐ ਹਾਥ ਹੋਵੈ ਅਸਗਾਹ ।  
(ਜਪੁਜੀ ਪਉੜੀ ੧੧)



Dr. Jaswant Singh Neki

# In the USA, to the LOHGARH RETREAT



*The new generation: Chardiyan Kalan!*

250 miles from New York  
Far from the hustle and bustle  
In a small town called Chambersburg  
To a place called Lohgarh Retreat.

What is Lohgarh?  
What are its hopes?  
I don't have all the answers,  
But I'll share what I know.

From what I can gather  
This place was a dream.  
A dream of a young man  
Straight out of college.

He wanted to have a place  
Where the children had the opportunity  
To learn about Sikhi  
And feel a sense of community.

He sweet-talked his parents  
And six other families  
Into buying this riding school  
Which is a sprawling 60 acres.

Nine years have passed;  
Each year it gets better  
The sense of community prevails  
The commitment grows stronger.

At the insistence of my daughters  
I'm dragged to camp.  
I have no choice,  
I'm out numbered.

I cross many bridges  
Drive through quaint towns.  
Smile at the cornfields  
As I drive along.

The road has gotten narrow  
The driveway is steep  
I slow down  
And take in the scene.

All of a sudden,  
I see the Nishaan Sahib  
Standing tall and mighty  
Swaying in the breeze.

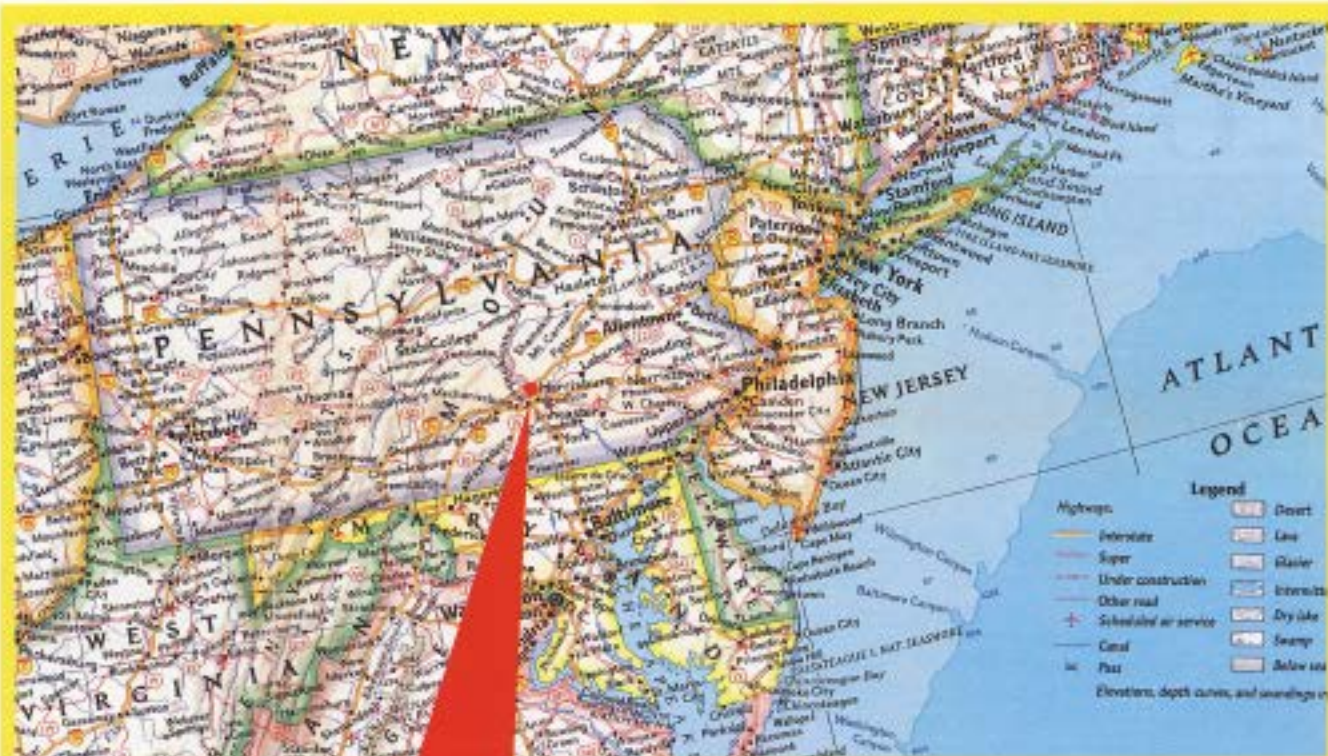
Tears roll  
For no reason;  
I take a deep breath,  
I feel I've come home.

The children are everywhere  
Unloading their things,  
Registrations are underway  
I am here to stay.

Parents wave their goodbyes  
Surprisingly there are no tears.  
The children settle in  
So do I.

The first night is rough,  
Rules are laid out.  
But a camp without rules  
Is asking for disaster.

The day begins early,  
Showers are often cold,  
Diwan is at seven  
We are on the move.



The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is one of the middle Atlantic states, its 117,412 sq.km. located in the eastern United States, bounded on the north by Lake Erie and the state of New York and on the east by New York and New Jersey, on the south by Delaware, Maryland and West Virginia. The Allegheny Front and Mountains form a north east-to-south west diagonal across the centre of the State.

The State's capital is Harrisburg, the state's population being some 12 million and major cities are Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. Historically, four major native Indian groups occupied Pennsylvania at the time when European immigrants arrived, being the Lenni Lenape, the Susquehannas, the Shawnee and various Iroquois types. There was much resistance with the native Indian's fighting the Europeans stoutly during the ten years 1754-63. By the eve of the U.S. war of Independence, Pennsylvania had become a keystone state geographically and a centre of military, economic and political activity, housing for a short while, capital of the fledgling United States. When the American Civil War broke out in 1861, Pennsylvania once more became the centre of military activity and at Gettysburg, the Union Army won one of the most decisive victories of the war. At the end, a period of great economic, industrial and population growth was witnessed, which consolidated Pennsylvania's position as a major commercial power of the USA, which it remains today.

The children run the Diwan  
Starting from the Parkash;  
Kirtan fills the air  
As they sing with flair.

With folded hands  
Ardaas is said,  
Hearing it from the young  
Makes my heart take a turn.

Hukamnama is taken  
It's meaning explained,  
Karah Prashad is distributed  
The little ones want seconds.

We leave the Diwan  
In an orderly fashion  
And proceed to the Nishaan Sahib  
To sing the Sikh anthem.

The children love this part  
Their voices resonate,  
Jakaaras are bellowed  
Smiles are everywhere.

Breakfast is served  
We are all starved,  
The children get their cereal  
And I get my *chat*.

Schedules are up  
Announcements are made.  
The children now know  
Their classes for the day.

They moan and they groan  
For all they want to do - is play  
But Sikh history and philosophy  
Must somehow be taught.

The sessions are varied  
Many topics are covered.  
Rehat Maryada and Gurbani  
Are topics for the next day.

The volunteers take great pains  
To explain the meaning of the prayers  
For blind recitation  
Is not the Sikh way.

I have learnt so much  
From these wonderful people  
They truly have  
The children's welfare at heart.

We break for lunch  
And proceed to the lodge.  
The noise is deafening  
Everyone has much to say.

The Kohlis are here  
Their food is divine  
This is the place  
To put on weight.



*Morning Diwan - melodious voices fill the air.*



*Under the sweep of the Nishaan Sahib, "Jai Jai Tegan" and "Deh Siya Bar Moha" are sung.*

Lunch is cleared  
We're back in class.  
Protocol in the Gurdwara  
Is the topic for this class.

It's sports next  
And we all relax.  
Tennis and basketball  
Are favoured today.

There are other sports  
To hold their fancy  
But what the children love  
Is just to chill.  
The music of Punjab  
Blasts the air  
It's hard to decipher the words  
I'm told its a "mix".

The girls practice giddha  
The boys, bhangra;  
New moves are invented  
As they impress each other.

I smile and watch  
As they play this game.  
They think I'm too old  
To read their every move.

But this game is old  
As old as Adam and Eve.  
Somewhere in my memory  
I remember playing it too.

We hit the showers again  
For everyone is in a sweat.  
It's time to get ready  
For Rehras is next.

But before that can happen  
The lodge gets filled again.  
As the boys line up  
To have their turbans tied.

I can't even begin  
To describe the joy I feel  
To see the little ones  
Learning this skill.

Rehras is said  
Sitting in the open field.  
I go back in time  
I feel blessed.

Chow time again  
The Kohlis have outdone themselves  
Life is sweet!!  
Jell-O and ice-cream are the treats.



*Bhai Gurdarshan Singh imparting knowledge.*



*A State Trooper talking to the campers about being good citizens.*

Evenings are relaxed  
With fun things planned  
Pillow fights, talent shows, bonfire night  
Deserve special mention.

Graciously I'm allowed  
To join the girls' discussion.  
Sitting under the stars  
As hearts are poured out.

I feel their pain  
As they struggle with issues  
There's not much I can do  
It's a process we all go through.

I'm told the boys' discussion  
Was equally awesome  
I was not allowed  
To enter their sanctum.

Bedtime is ten  
But before that can happen.  
It's milk and cookies  
A little extra nourishment.

I am exhausted  
It's been a full day  
All I want to do  
Is to crawl into bed.



*Rehras being recited in the open field.*

Lights are turned off  
I still hear laughter  
Their level of energy  
Is truly amazing.

Before I know it  
It's morning again.  
The drill is the same  
We march another day.

Today is Amar's birthday  
There is much excitement.  
The boys can hardly wait  
To cream him tonight.

Birthdays are celebrated  
With much fan fare  
Huge cakes are ordered  
What a joyous celebration.

A week passes,  
With many events  
I look forward to Sunday  
I could use the extra sleep.

But oops I forgot!  
It's hairwash day.  
It's so nice to see  
Flowing kesh everywhere.

In this organized confusion  
Learning happens  
Friendships are made  
Hope they stand the test of time.

I've met a gentle soul  
Her name is Jivanjot.  
We've had many talks  
Shared a few jokes.

She is the one  
Who looks after this camp.  
What a remarkable Sewa  
Though she doesn't see it that way.

"Sewa is a state-of mind"  
It is not something you want to do  
It just happens  
Without pomp and show.

Her words haunt me  
For deep down I know  
That is what my Guru  
Would want me to do.

I can honestly say  
There's something in this place  
That makes one think  
Like never before.

There is not enough money  
That can buy this kind of commitment  
For what these adults take on  
Is truly a labor of love.

So dearest friend  
If you are here in July  
Come to Lohgarh  
And share the joy.

Goodbyes are said  
There are tears  
A year will pass  
Before we return.

In my rear-view mirror  
I see the Nishaan Sahib  
Standing tall and mighty  
Flowing in the breeze.

Tears roll  
My heart feels heavy  
I feel I'm leaving  
Something precious behind.

**Pride of The Nation**

# AIR WARRIORS



The President of India, K.R. Narayanan, hands over the gold-adorned Baton to Marshal of the IAF Arjan Singh, DFC at Rashtrapati Bhawan, 23 April 2002.



A rare occasion indeed: S. Hardit Singh Malik, in the early 1950s, received by (then) Air Commodore

# EXTRAORDINAIRE



World War I fame, visiting the Air Force Station at Palam  
Arjan Singh DFC, AOC Operational Group.

In the Premiere Issue (April 1999) of the *Nishaan* was included the article HIGH FLIGHT, on the *Sikh Pioneers of Aviation*. Having been at the forefront of military and civil aviation, as pilots or engineers, through the 20th Century, we focused on some of them, beginning with Sardar Hardit Singh Malik, the first Indian fighter pilot in 1917, "Chacha" Manmohan Singh, who actually won the England-to-India air race in 1930, the A.Singh and B.Singh duo who were the first to get their wings from RAF Cranwell in 1932, Harjinder Singh, the first *Havai Sephai* in 1933 (later Air Vice Marshal), Kartar Singh who won the first mention-in-despatches in 1937, and others. There were the legendary "Baba" Mehar Singh, Shivdev Singh, Prithipal Singh and Arjan Singh who distinguished themselves and their Service in the Second World War.

Near six decades after the Distinguished Flying Cross was pinned on his uniform in person by the Supreme Commander of South East Asia Command, Arjan Singh was honoured by the Supreme Commander of Indian Armed Forces with the rank of *Marshal of the Indian Air Force* at an impressive ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhawan in New Delhi on April 23, 2002.

It is with pride that we recollect the flying times of these two great air warriors whose careers were climaxed early in their lives before they went on to even greater distinction. There are incredible similarities between the records and associations of Sardar Hardit Singh Malik and Marshal of the IAF Arjan Singh.

Hardit Singh flew and fought with the Royal Flying Corps (later RAF) in World War I, primarily with No. 28 Squadron RAF, flying Sopwith Camels. Many decades later, he was appointed India's High Commissioner to Canada and then Ambassador to France. He was Prime Minister of Patiala State and became one of the finest golfers of India.

Arjan Singh flew and fought with the Indian Air Force (later RIAF) in World War II, primarily with No. 1 Squadron IAF, flying Hawker Hurricanes, whose sister squadron in war and peace was the same No. 28 Squadron RAF. Many decades later, after being Chief of the IAF, he was appointed as India's High Commissioner to Kenya and then Ambassador to Switzerland. He was Lt. Governor of Delhi and has been one of the finest golfers of India, and remains so.

[The extraordinary life and times of S. Hardit Singh Malik will be featured in the *Nishaan* III/2002.]

## A Many Splendoured Career

**A**ir Chief Marshal Arjan Singh, who was Chief of Air Staff of the Indian Air Force from 1964 to 1969, is the epitome of a military leader and it is in the great fitness of things, and truly a grand morale booster to the officers and men of the Indian Air Force that he was honoured with the rank of *Marshal of the Indian Air Force* (equivalent to the Army's Field Marshal), on the Republic Day of 2002. This is appropriate and timely even as the world's fourth largest Air Force prepares for a major upgradation of its capabilities in the new millennium.

Born on 15 April 1919 in Lyallpur and educated first in Montgomery (now Sahiwal in Pakistan) and then at the Government College in Lahore, Arjan Singh joined the infant Indian Air Force in 1938. He was commissioned from the RAF College Cranwell on 23 December 1939, and as a Pilot Officer with 'A' Flight at Drigh Road, Karachi first saw operations on the North West Frontier Province (NWFP).

Arjan Singh's two operational tenures on the Burma Front during World War II—the first as a Pilot Officer with No.1 Squadron ("Tigers") and subsequently in 1944, as Commander of the same Squadron, are outstanding landmarks of his enviable flying career. In the first, he assiduously learnt the techniques of air warfare in the thick of battle, during ceaseless sorties that he flew day in and day out. During the second, as a consummate Squadron Commander, he displayed masterly leadership to the maximum advantage of the IAF during the siege of Imphal. In recognition of his leadership and gallantry in the air, he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) on the spot, the first Indian pilot to be so honoured by the Supreme Allied Commander, South East Asia. The citation read:

*Squadron Leader Arjan Singh is a fearless and exceptional pilot, with a profound knowledge of his specialised branch of tactical reconnaissance and he has imbued those under him with the same spirit. The success of No. 1 Squadron Indian Air Force reflects the greatest credit on him.*

When India became a Republic in 1950, Arjan Singh was commanding the Operational Group, then responsible for all air operations from Kashmir



*Air Commodore Arjan Singh inspects Spitfire Mk.XVIII (1952).*



*Air Marshal Arjan Singh inspects Hunter Mk.56 (1965).*

to Kanya Kumari. Arjan Singh held the Command of this Group, the only fighting arm of the IAF, till December 1952 and again from December 1955 to April 1959, initially in the rank of Air Commodore and then in the rank of Air Vice Marshal for over 6 years, longer than any other officer of the IAF.

After India became independent, Arjan Singh was detailed to undergo a number of prestigious courses in the United Kingdom:



*The Chief of Air Staff and Minister of Defence with aircrew of No. 7 Squadron at Halwara airbase in January 1965.*



*Air Marshal Arjan Singh DFC with senior Army Commanders in Kashmir during the 1965 operations.*

- RAF Staff College, Brackwell
- Joint Services Staff College, UK
- Imperial Defence College, London

His long tenure of the all-embracing Operational Group well groomed and equipped Arjan Singh for higher Command. In between, from December 1952 to December 1955 he was Air Officer-in-Charge Personnel Organisation and Air Officer-in-Charge Administration from May 1961 till December 1962, which provided him with necessary administrative experience so essential for an Air Chief in the making.

On 1 August 1964, Air Marshal Arjan Singh took over as the IAF's third Indian Chief of Air Staff.

With the well-recognised qualities of leadership, experience and inborn confidence, Arjan Singh consummately directed the air campaign during the war of September 1965. But for the timely and effective action by the Indian Air Force in the Chhamb sector on 1st September, history could well have

had been different. In the subsequent weeks, the IAF consolidated its air superiority by deep penetration attacks against enemy targets, including the farthest Pak airfields like Peshawar and Mauripur before the conflict came to an end.

Arjan Singh, who on 1 August 1964 had become Chief of Air Staff in the rank of Air Marshal at the young age of 45, was the first officer of the Indian Air Force to don the tapes of *Air Chief Marshal*, on January 15th 1966.

By the time he was 50 he had completed his tenure and retired, after having held the exalted office of Chief of Air Staff for 5½ years, the longest of any Chief of the three Services. The career graph of Arjan Singh is an inspiration, and he remains an icon for subsequent generations of the Indian Air Force.

Arjan Singh has flown no less than 65 different types of aircraft and continued his passion for flying till the last day of retirement. Arjan Singh's zest for flying percolated right down the line, which enthused the flyers for combat flying training and who then gave ample proof of their readiness in the 1965 war. Arjan Singh's leadership from the cockpit won him not only the confidence of the flyers, but earned him their complete reverence too.

In 1967, Arjan Singh had the unique honour of being invited to take the salute at the passing out parade of the Royal Air Force Flying College, Cranwell, where he had first learnt flying 28 years earlier, and presented the 'Sword of Honour' to the best Cadet.

Arjan Singh is an amiable, soft-spoken man of few words, and by nature averse to confrontation. He does not believe in throwing his weight about, nor likes to tread on others. However, despite his discreetly maintained soft exterior, he is a man of



*Air Chief Marshal Arjan Singh DFC visiting an IAF unit before retirement in 1969.*



*Air Chief Marshal Arjan Singh DFC after flight in a supersonic MiG-21FL fighter.*

firm action. He did not hesitate in discarding three senior officers ("directed to resign"), on account of their inept performance during the 1965 War.

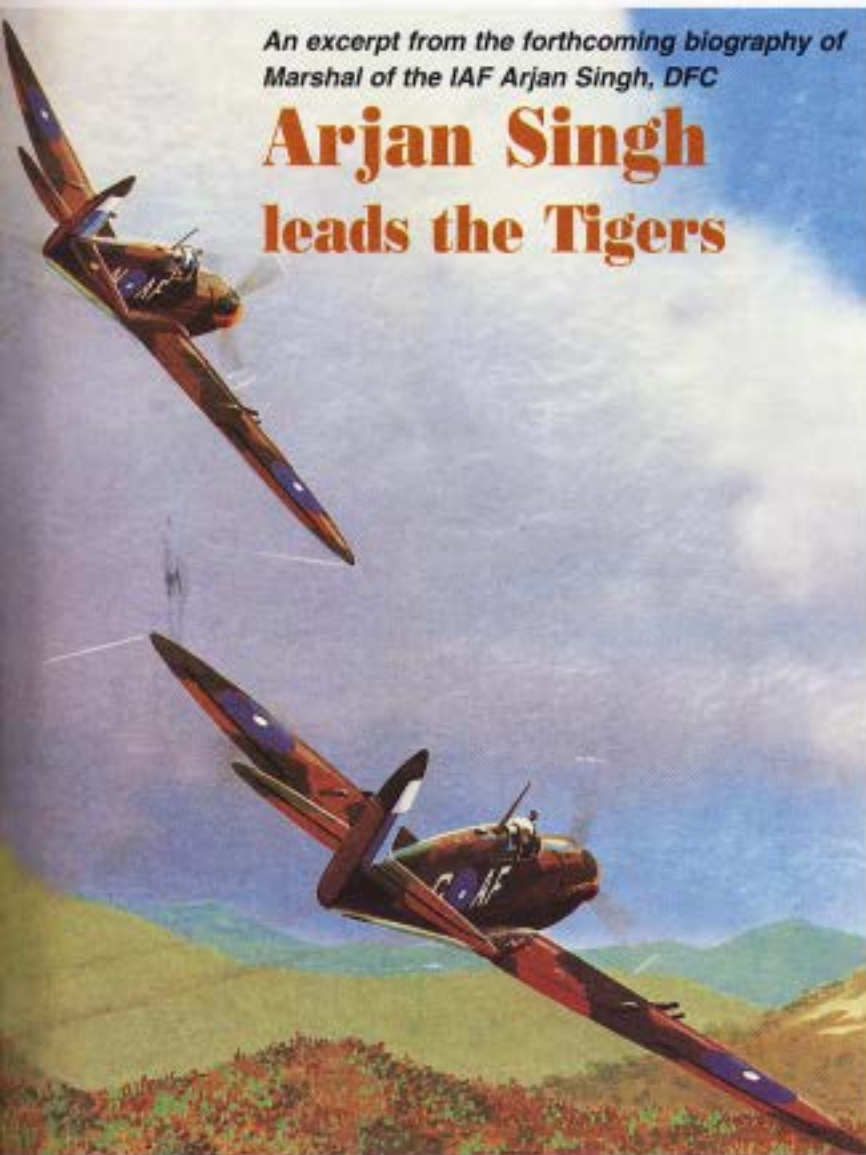
During Arjan Singh's tenure as Chief of Air Staff, the IAF was equipped with new generation supersonic fighters, strategic reconnaissance aircraft, tactical transport aircraft and assault helicopters, still in service today. The long overdue establishment of the Air Force Academy at Hyderabad was started. Work on modern radar and communication network also commenced.

Measured by any standard, Arjan Singh has had some fine innings. Even after retirement he continued to serve the country. In 1971, he was accredited as India's Ambassador to Switzerland. From there, in 1974 he went to Kenya, as the Indian High Commissioner, and returned to India in 1976, after having had a six-year long ambassadorial stint, longer than any other officer from the Armed Forces. Some years on, he became the Lt. Governor of Delhi.

For his meritorious services in the conduct of the 1965 Indo-Pak War, Arjan Singh was honoured with the *Padma Vibhushan*.

An excerpt from the forthcoming biography of  
Marshal of the IAF Arjan Singh, DFC

## Arjan Singh leads the Tigers



Sqn. Ldr. Arjan Singh with aircrew of No. 1 Squadron, and Hurricane IIBs at Imphal, 1944.

In May 1943, a detachment of the famous No. 1 Squadron (the *Tigers*) went to Miranshah for bombing trials and then moved to Kohat where command was assumed by Sqn. Ldr. Arjan Singh on 3 September 1943. During the next few months, No. 1 Squadron detachments carried out army co-operation exercises at Adampur, in the Punjab.

In early December 1943, Field Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck visited the RAF Station at Kohat and inspected No. 1 Squadron. Sqn. Ldr. Arjan Singh advocated the intense desire of his Squadron to go back into battle. This was supported by the RAF Station Commander. Within a week of this request, No. 1 Squadron (now with Hurricane IIBs) was ordered to move immediately to Imphal on the Manipur front where massive buildups were taking place on both sides of the Assam-Burma border. The next year was to be breathless with action and epoch marking in the already chequered history of the *Tiger Squadron*.

No. 1 Squadron reached Imphal (Main) on 3 February 1944 and were to remain in action thereafter for a record period of 14 months, taking vital part in the fateful siege of Imphal followed by the trans-Chindwin and trans-Irrawaddy offences. Once again, No. 1 Squadron IAF shared the base with their old colleagues-in-arms No. 28 Squadron RAF, both being Tactical Reconnaissance Units (Tac R), co-operating closely with the Army.

The *Tigers* under Sqn. Ldr. Arjan Singh commenced operational flying immediately, with sector reconnaissances flown on 5 February, carrying out offensive, tactical and photographic reconnaissance to observe Japanese movements on the Chindwin, beyond Tiddim, and as far east as the Mytkyina-Mandalay railway, much valuable information being obtained by the Squadron.

The Japanese offensive against Imphal started on 8 March, attempting to cut off the 17th Indian Division as it retreated. No. 1 Squadron's task was to locate the position of the retreating troops day to day and to keep the tracks leading from the Tiddim road under observation for Japanese movements. Fighting

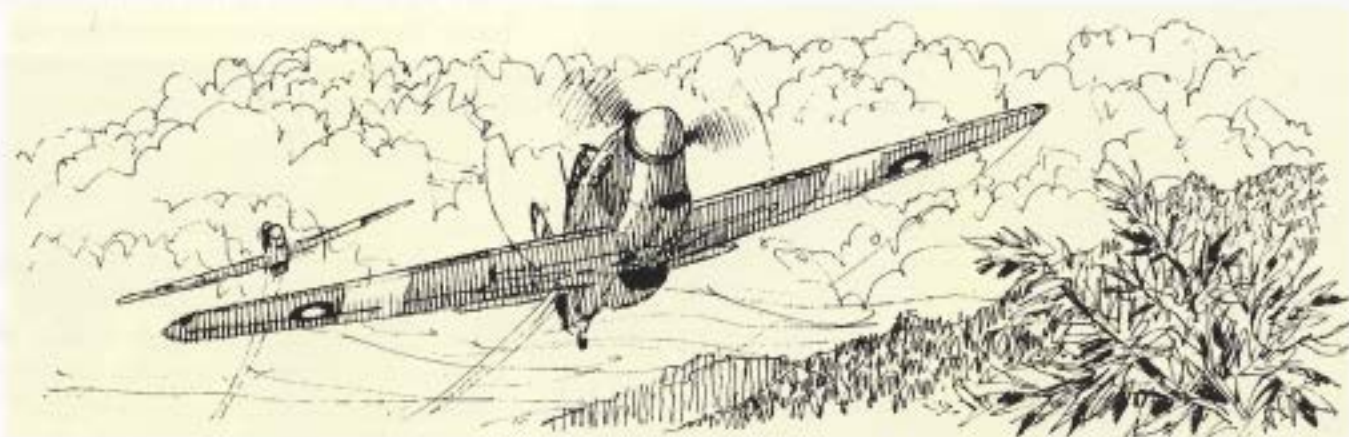
in the thick jungle-hills was confused. On 29 March, during a late evening reconnaissance by Arjan Singh, Japanese troops were seen clambering down the hills. Landing back at Imphal Main to refuel, the entire Squadron was led back into the area by him before sunset and the Hurricanes hammered the enemy with machine guns and bombs, decimating the Japanese advance battalion, with 14 officers and 217 men killed and wounded.

During March, the Squadron had flown 366 sorties but April 1944 was to be a crucial month when the siege of Imphal tightened and the Japanese came so close that the Imphal airfields were within range of enemy artillery fire. Maximum air effort was put in by No. 1 Squadron, flying 412 sorties in April, tactical reconnaissance mostly over the Tiddim road, Pael-Tamu-Sittaung road, Imphal-Kohima road and Ukhrul road. The Tigers strafed bashas, mechanical transport, gun positions and troops. In turn, Japanese Kawasaki Ki-48 and Mitsubishi Ki-21 bombers

raided Imphal on 15 April, damaging two of No. 1 Squadron's Hurricanes.

During May 1944, the weather deteriorated with early monsoon rains which curtailed flying yet No. 1 Squadron flew 372 sorties, including 32 by night, that month, which also had the loss of a long range reconnaissance Hurricane to prowling Japanese Nakajima Ki-43 (Oskar) fighters. No. 1 Squadron's aircraft ranged over almost the entire battlefield, carrying out continuous tactical reconnaissance as in the area north-east of Imphal the Japanese were being gradually pushed back.

June 1944 was an even more trying month, the runways waterlogged and rain storms which made flying hazardous. No. 28 Squadron RAF has been pulled out of Imphal, leaving No. 1 Squadron IAF solely responsible for tactical reconnaissance in the area, flying 327 sorties that month. The Tiger's Hurricane IIBs (with machine guns) were replaced by Hurricane IICs (with cannon) for greater



Lord Louis Mountbatten, Supreme Commander SEAC, pins the Distinguished Flying Cross on Sgt. Ldr. Arjan Singh during the battles for Imphal and Burma 1944-45.



*Squadron Commanders of the Indian Air Force outside South Block, at GHQ, New Delhi, 1945.*



*Arjan Singh in cockpit of Hurricane IIB.*

effect in ground attack missions. The siege of Imphal was broken by the month-end and the Squadron was tasked to keep harrasing the retreating Japanese, mainly in the Ukhrul area and south of Imphal. Reconnaissance was carried out over the roads and tracks from Pael to Sittaung on the Chindwin, from Tamu to Kamjong, from Htinzin to Yazagyo, the Chindwin river and so on, a total of 307 sorties being flown in July.

During the ensuing battle for Central Burma, the British-Indian forces mounted relentless pressure on the retreating Japanese beyond the Chindwin and No. 1 Squadron, as part of the 221 Group, operated from forward bases covering a front of some 200 miles to the limits of their endurance and range. In August, No. 1 Squadron flew 354 sorties, with targets of



*Sqn. Ldr. Arjan Singh inspects the waterlogged runway at Imphal.*

opportunity being attacked, but deteriorating weather in September reduced sorties, to 292, but these were longer in duration, the Hurricanes fitted with extra fuel tanks. On 17 September, the *Tigers* attacked bunkers on a hill feature in the Yazagyo area and Taukkyan airfield south-west of Kalemyo. And so into October, with the Squadron flying a record 439 operational missions totalling 780 hours, the *Tigers* operating to as far as the Mandalay-Myitkyina railway. The value of No. 1 Squadron's tactical reconnaissance was gratefully acknowledged by XXXIII Corps, the Squadron commended "for the skill and speed with which aerial photographs have been produced and dropped on forward troops".

The Japanese continued to fall back and in November, No. 1 Squadron were discovering their lines of retreat. With an average strength of 17 pilots, the *Tigers* flew 524 operational sorties, totaling just over 1000 flying hours, a most fantastic effort!

On the night of 3 November, Sqn.Ldr.Arjan Singh had carried out a vital low level tac-recce of the bridge at Hpaungzeik, enabling the allies to move across and No.1 Squadron received a notable appreciation of its efforts from GOC 20th Indian Division who presented them with a Japanese sword of honour captured in the battle of Imphal in recognition of "assistance readily and courageously given by its pilots and crews".



(Above): The Canberra bomber which Air Chief Marshal Arjan Singh DFC flew while Chief of Air Staff.  
(Inset, the Marshal today, as fit and smart as always.)



(Below left): At No. 1 Squadron's Diamond Jubilee 1993  
(inset, the original Tiger emblem)

(Below right): Air Chief Marshal Arjan Singh DFC with recipients of awards after the passing out parade at RAF Cranwell from where he himself was commissioned in 1939.

(Above):  
Marshal of the  
IAF Arjan Singh  
DFC and his  
wife Teji at their  
elegant home in  
New Delhi,  
April 2002.



# LEST WE FORGET

## When the Sikhs incorporated the NWFP and J&K into India

History records that it is because of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and the Khalsa Army that the State of Jammu & Kashmir and North West Frontier Province became part of undivided India. Alas, the former has been brutally fought over by India and Pakistan now for over half a century and the latter remains turbulent and uneasy.

At the beginning of 1810, Prince Shah Shuja of Afghanistan had been driven out of his Kingdom by his rivals, backed by the Persians. After receiving assurances of support from Ranjit Singh at Sahawal, Shah Shuja re-crossed the Indus and invested Peshawar for about six months, before being seized by Jehan Dad Khan, the Governor of Attock who then imprisoned him in Kashmir.

This, the real "Great Game" began between the Sikhs, Afghans and Persians (the English only skirted the wings then) and continued for several years, till the Afghans were decisively defeated by the Khalsa in pitched battles near Attock in July 1813.

In various campaigns over the next few years, Ranjit Singh's armies reduced the northern plains



# Invasions of India for Millennia : Reversing The Tide

Wedge in between the landmass of the Indian sub-continent and the plains of Central Asia, the north-western frontiers of what is now Pakistan and its neighbour to the west, Afghanistan have always had a fatal impact on the history and destiny of the peoples of this land, and timeless fascination.

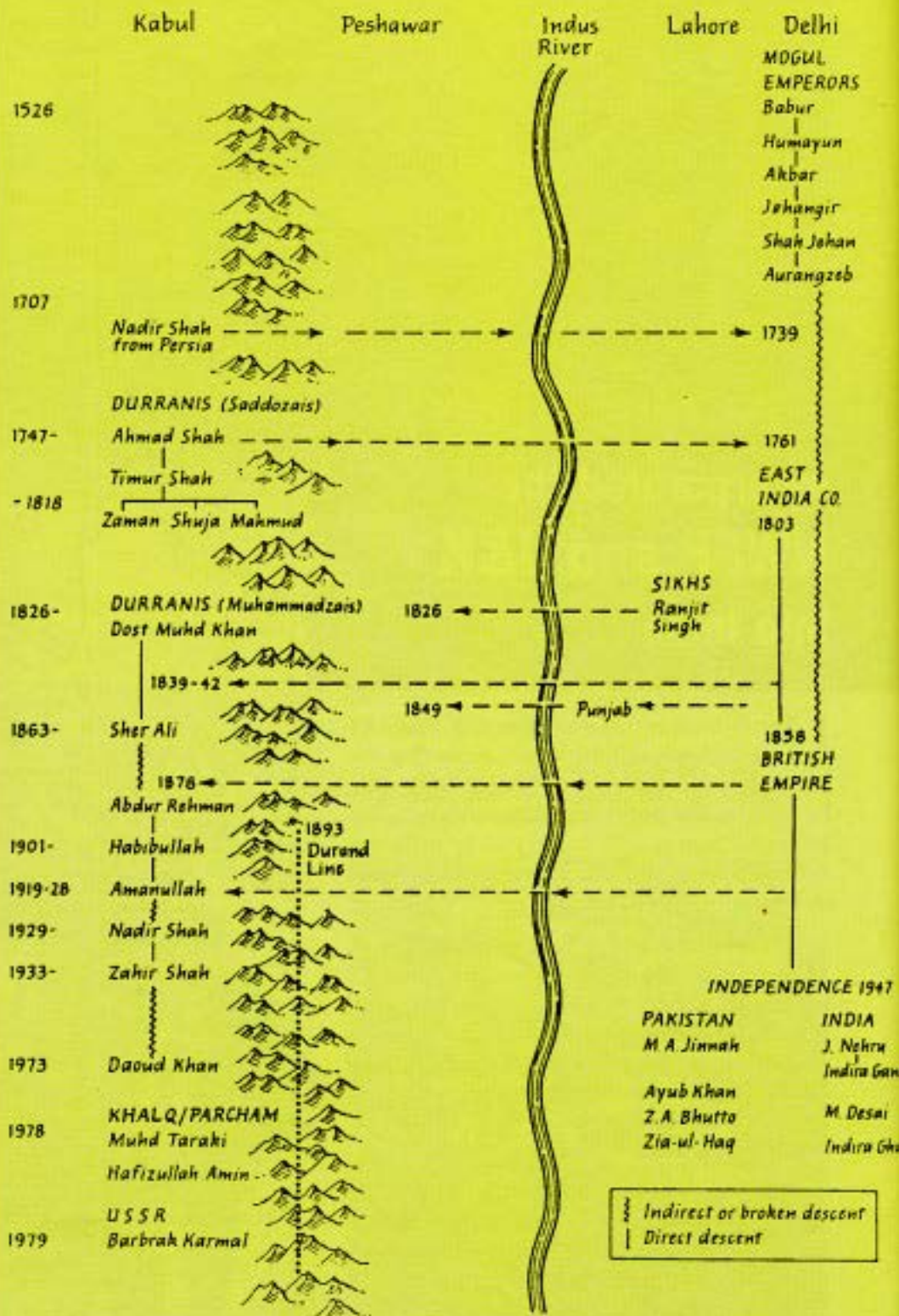
Shrouded in fable and myth, but also fact, the Aryans are believed to have entered the Indian sub-continent around 1500-2000 BC. The Persians, Cyrus and Darius the Great, conquered Kabul and Gandhara, the ancient valley of Peshawar and then annexed the Punjab, incorporating these into the empire of Persia around 550 BC. Two hundred years on, came Alexander the Great of Macedonia (or "Sultan Sikander") who crossed the formidable Hindu Kush, and eventually the Indus north of Attock, defeating King Porus on the right bank of the river Jhelum.

And so, on for another thousand years, the Graeco-Bactrians, the Scythians, Parthians, Kushans, Sassanians and White Huns, crossing into the fabled Indian sub-continent from west to east, the Ghaznavids and Ghoriids and Seljuk Turks preceding the devastating Mongols under Genghis Khan and Timurids under Tamerlane till, in 1504 AD, the Moghuls under Zahir-ud-din Muhammad Babur crossed the Indus and invested Northern India after the first battle of Panipat in 1526.

Thereafter, Babur's successors ruled from Delhi for many centuries but never really managed to incorporate the tribal areas lying to the north-west of their empire. Their inability left the way open for further invasions from the west, notably Nadir Shah from Persia in 1739, followed by the Durranis of Afghanistan who consolidated their hold in the vast arc from the Oxus to northern India, defeating the Maharattas in Panipat in 1761.

At last after several millennia, the tide was reversed in 1826, when the Sikhs of Maharaja Ranjit Singh crossed the Indus, going westwards to take - in permanence - the lands of the north-west frontier upto the Khyber and the territory of Kashmir from those who had occupied them for nearly a thousand years.

The British Empire, and now India and Pakistan, have inherited these territories.



and the lower hills of the Punjab to obedience and order. To the south, in the bitter fighting for Multan, an Akali named Sadhu Singh went forth to do battle for the Khalsa and the very suddenness of assault by his small band of warriors led to the capture of Multan and expulsion of the Afghans. In the same year, 1818, Fateh Khan, the Wazir of Kabul, was put to death by Kamran at Herat, where they had been repelling an attack by the Persians.

Such a manner of unrest, and change of rulers, did not conform to the views of Ranjit Singh who then in late 1818, crossed the Indus and took over Peshawar. Thus this present capital of Pakistan's NWFP became part of the Kingdom of the Sikhs on 19 November 1818. It was the first time in 700 years that an Indian conquerer had expelled the Afghans from this territory.

Ranjit Singh's thoughts were now towards annexation of Kashmir from the Afghans. He went to the Golden Temple at Amritsar to pray for success. By April, the snows were melting, the passes to the valley of the Jhelum were accessible. Withdrawing detachments of his finest troops from Kabul, the handpicked Sikh cavalry and gunners marched on foot along with the infantry and crossed the Pir Panjal.

Passes into the Vale of Kashmir were scaled on 5 July 1819. The Sikh forces first concentrated at Wazirabad from where they moved in three columns, together towards Rajauri after which they made pincer movements towards Shupaiyan, outflanking the



Poonchis, and confronted 12000 Afghans in battle formation. Desperate fighting ensued and after Afghan cavalry had captured some Sikh guns, Akali Phula Singh flung his Nihangs against the Afghan horsemen and infantry. The Afghans recoiled from the shock of the Nihang charge and turned to flee into the hills.

Prince Kharak Singh entered Srinagar the next day. The paradise-like Kashmir so came within the possession of the Sikh Kingdom whose frontiers now extended to the borders of China and Tibet.

And so they remain today, nearly two centuries later, but as India's northern and Pakistan's north-western frontiers.

# ".....otherwise the frontiers of Pakistan would have been near Delhi, with J & K sliced off"

If the nation has become self sufficient in food grain, credit has to go to the Sikh farmers of the Punjab.

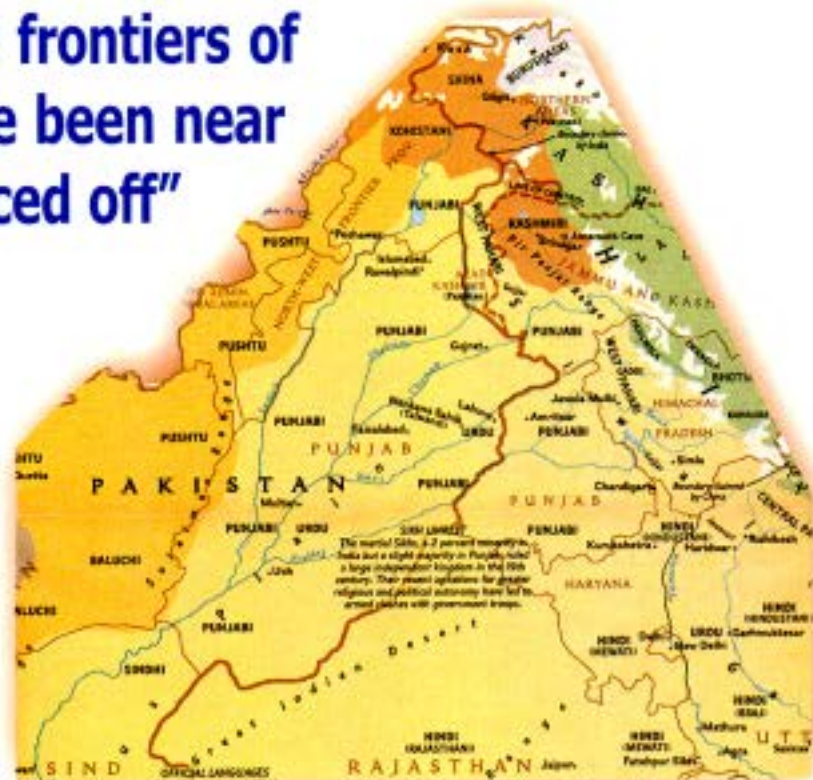
Out of the millions of tonnes of rice procured for public distribution, as much as 86 per cent has come from the Punjab. Out of the millions of tonnes of wheat procured, 50 per cent has come from the Punjab.

Sikhs, more than anybody, have been responsible for the surplus food in our granaries. As a minority man, I strongly feel that the Sikhs represent what is most stout and dynamic in India.

Sikhs have relatively shed more blood for India than any other community. Out of the 2125 martyrs for freedom, 1557 or 75 per cent were Sikhs. Out of 2646 sent to the Andamans for life sentence, 2147 or 80 per cent were Sikhs. Out of 127 Indians who were sent to gallows, 92 or 80 per cent were Sikhs. In Subhash Bose's Army of 20000, 12000 were Sikhs – and Sikhs were just 2 per cent of the total Indian population.

A capacity to absorb scientific technology is the hallmark of a Sikh farmer. While the food-grain yield in rest of India is just 1.5 tonnes per hectare, there are districts in Punjab where the farmers have reached world standards of five tonnes per hectare and more.

Punjab leads the country in irrigated area, fertiliser consumption, electricity used and motor vehicles. It also leads in per capita bank deposit. It is second to none in schools, newspapers, hospital beds, which are social necessities. Per capita assets in Punjab are three times more than the average for India.



From: National Geographic.

All this has given birth to the most prosperous state of the Indian Union. Below the poverty line population in Punjab, as a percentage of total population, is 15.1 per cent while it is 48.1 per cent for the country as a whole. Availability of cereals per day in Punjab was 2050 grams, while it was 385 grams in the country. Milk availability per year was 190 kgs. per head in Punjab, while it was only 45 kgs. for India as a whole.

Sikhs need more and sustained water for their agriculture, which they deserve. They want a separate capital which is their right. They want some adjustment in Punjabi speaking districts which should be looked into.

These are the basic demands and immediate action will settle the situation, and clear the atmosphere.

The Sikh is the militant child of India, born of necessity, shaped and tempered by history, to fight oppression. The Sikhs threw in their lot with India in 1947. Otherwise, the frontiers of Pakistan would have been near Delhi – with Jammu and Kashmir sliced off.

The Sikh has taught us how to pull oneself out of poverty by self-help. At the same time Sikhs in Punjab have seen more devastation and disturbances through wars since 1947 than any other community. Despite wars, or their threat, they have stood rock-like and made the border state the most prosperous. What can be more patriotic than that?

All minorities – whether Sikhs, Muslims, Christians, Jains, Buddhists—arose essentially from Hindus. Hindu is the mother, minorities are the children and a mother has to be more kind, understanding, loving than the children; even a prodigal son should be dear to her. An unkind, unwise mother destroys herself – and soon her children too.

**Gilbert Lobo**  
Bombay

# Rendezvous on the Sutlej



Rendezvous point in the bank of the river Sutlej near Rohtas marks the place where Maharaja Ranjit Singh met Lord William Bentick, the British Governor General in 1831. A bridge of flat bottom flyboats was constructed over the River Sutlej. In the Maharaja's pavilion on the other side, a silvery canopy had been raised in the open land for a grand parade, by the side of which were pitched the royal tents of deep red with marquee of yellow silk and satin. On the morning of 26th October 1831, William Bentick awaited the Maharaja's arrival. British troops were lined on either side of the road in a guard of honour. At the end of the line, the Maharaja stood up on his elephant and went over to the elephant of Governor General. The army of the Punjab was then conducted to the Reception. Lord William Bentick leading Ranjit Singh to his camp where musicians and dancers then entertained them.

Travel has long been part of human experience. From the dawn of recorded history, there were voyages to colonise new territories, wage war, go on pilgrimage, find new trade routes across unfamiliar lands or, uniquely in the 16th century when Guru Nanak travelled to establish dialogue with the propagators of different faiths in the then known world.

With advent of the Industrial Revolution in the late eighteenth century, travel became easier, at least for the more privileged segments of society. Sturdier roads, then railways and soon steam-powered ships shortened journey times. Industrial expansion generated greater wealth, giving birth to leisure travel and vacation. People embarked on extended visits for health reasons and even on grand tours of continents. They were drawn to unexplored regions by the mystique of exotic scenery and culture, in search of remote lands and peoples. By the mid-20th century, a massive, worldwide tourism industry was engaged to pamper the traveler, complete with booking agents, guidebooks, package tours, hotels, airways, railways and an organised itinerary. Proliferation of the automobile and expanding network of roads and highways accelerated the pace of cross-country travel. Today, nearly two thirds of people travel for vacation, leisure and recreation, as opposed to visiting friends and relatives or travelling for health, business and religious purposes. However, growing impatience with heavily commercialised and polluted destinations is spurring a shift from the highly packaged and standardised mass travel of the past half-century and in its place, rising numbers of more flexible and independent travelers are pursuing more personalised experiences, appreciating culture and nature.

Which is what we, our family, planned to do: instead of going on a holiday along the beaten golden triangle (Delhi-Agra-Jaipur), we decided to undertake a different itinerary, retracing history and our roots. From Delhi, taking the Grand Trunk Road north-westward, we arrived at the 'city beautiful', as Chandigarh is known, then continued towards the river Sutlej, through the historic town of Ropar. We drove to the *Pinkcassia* Resort, on the eastern bank of the river. This was British Territory when along the opposite bank, the Lion of Punjab. Maharaja Ranjit Singh ruled. Not far from here, is the rendezvous where Lord Bentick and Maharaja Ranjit Singh met under a tree, witness to this historic meet, which is still there. A magnificent memorial, commemorating the rise of the Maharaja's Empire which emerged from the twelve Misls



*Takhat Keshgarh Sahib, where the Khalsa was born in 1699*

of the Sikhs has been raised here, surrounded by a beautiful garden. A rest house built in days of the Raj is located adjacent to the Memorial.

After lunch at the *Pinkcassia* Resort, we drove to the *Kisan Haveli*, in the lap of the Shivalik ranges in the 'city of bliss', Anandpur Sahib. The Haveli is an attractive building, with a rural but comfortable ambience, copying the life style of erstwhile zamindars. It has an imposing gate which takes you to the porch of the Haveli. This structure could be seen from a distance because of its location on a raised ground, with the hills of Nainadevi as the backdrop. Behind flows the riverine Charan Ganga, meandering through the green pasture land. The famous *Hola Mohalla* celebrations are held here. It was a great experience to stay in the Haveli, engulfed in the misty fog of a Punjab winter morning, a dreamy palace in bliss!



*Gurdwara Sehra Sahib marks the place where Guru Gobind Singh tied the Sehra before proceeding to Guru ka Lahore for his wedding.*



*Gurdwara Thara Sahib and Damdama Sahib are in the Guru ka Mahal complex. Gurdwara Thara Sahib marks the site where Pundits from Kashmir met Guru Tegh Bahadur and requested him to save them from forcible conversion to Islam. The Guru addressed large congregations from Gurdwara Damdama Sahib.*



*Gurdwara Taragarh is the outermost fort from the city of Anandpur.*



*Gurdwara Sis Ganj. After the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur in Delhi on 11 November 1675, the severed head of the Guru was cremated at the place where now Gurdwara Sis Ganj stands.*

After obeisance at the *Takhat Keshgarh Sahib*, we embarked the next day to visit the other historical shrines located around Anandpur Sahib. The farthest was Gurdwara *Guru Ka Lahore* where the Tenth Master Guru Gobind Singh's marriage was solemnised with Mata Jito the daughter of a resident of Lahore. The shrine is built high on a hill, at the foot of which is located Gurdwara *Triveni Sahib* where the Tenth Master guided a stream of water by piercing the hard black rock surface with his *Karpa Barchha*, now on display at *Keshgarh Sahib*. At another nearby shrine is the source of water coming from where the Guru's horse struck the ground with his hoofs. The shrine is called Gurdwara *Paur Sahib*.

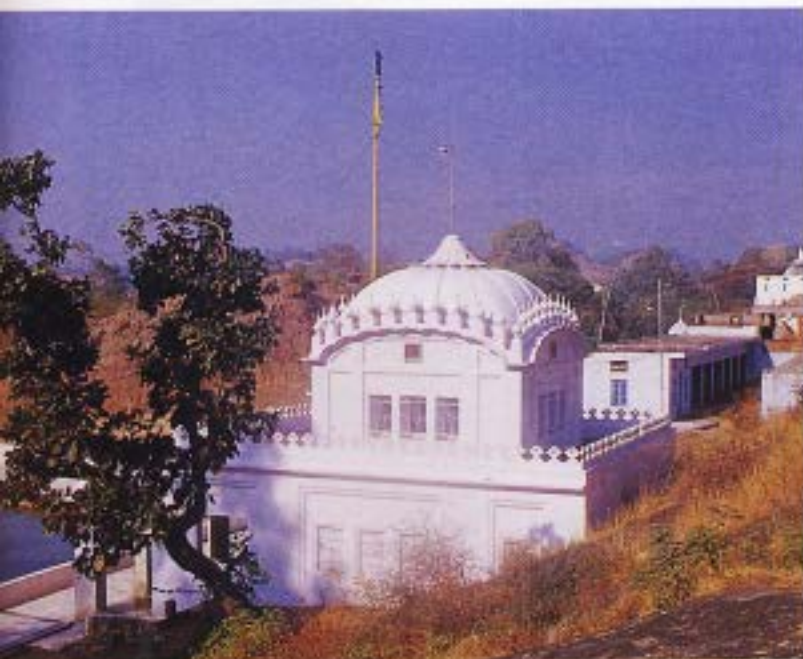
A short distance from *Guru Ka Lahore* is the place where the Tenth Master's *sehra bandi* took place, at the time of his marriage: Gurdwara *Sehra Sahib* is located near a hamlet called Bassi, an excellent site for a camping holiday during the winter months. This shrine and *Guru Ka Lahore* are in the Bilaspur district of Himachal Pradesh.

Another shrine on the way is Gurdwara *Suhela Ghora* built in the memory of Sixth Master Guru Hargobind's horse that fell and was cremated here. According to legend, this horse served the Guru through many battles and, like a true warrior, suffered innumerable wounds.

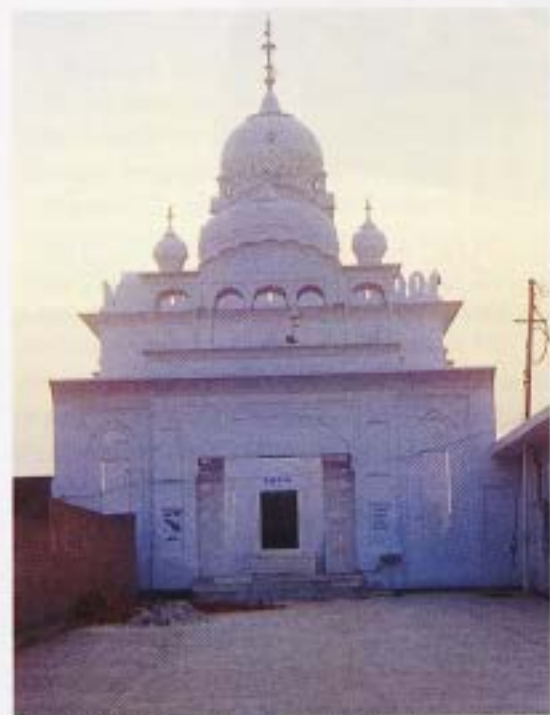
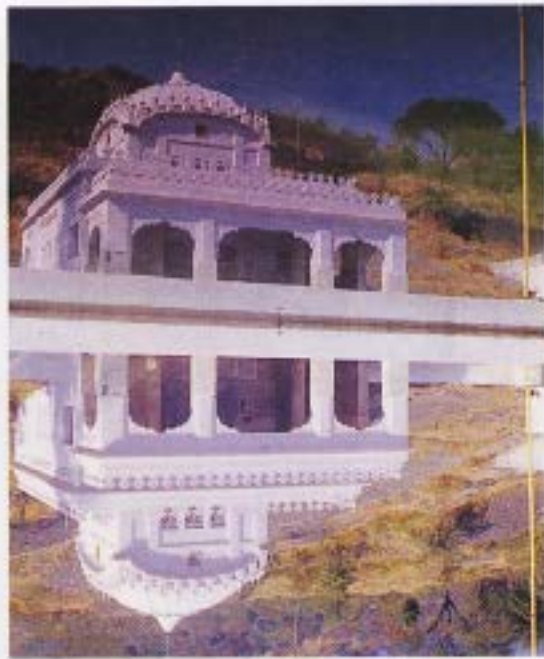
Amongst the shrines, the fortress of Taragarh's location amongst dense foliage, and on a high vantage point, is very fascinating. This was the northern-most fortification around Anandpur Sahib, the four others being Lohgarh, Anandgarh, Keshgarh and Holgarh. Each has much history and a unique location from the point of strategy.



*Takht Keshgarh Sahib, one of the five Takhts or seats of temporal authority of the Sikh Panth marks the place where Guru Gobind Singh created the order of the Khalsa on the Baisakhi of AD 1699. Relics associated with Guru Gobind Singh, Bhai Bachitra Singh and Hazrat Ali, son-in-law of Prophet Mohammed, are preserved here.*



*Gurdwara Tribeni Sahib marks the place where Guru Gobind Singh pierced the ground with his Karpa Barcha, which gave birth to a stream of water. Gurdwara Guru ka Lahore can be seen in the background. At this place the Guru married Mata Jitoji.*



*Guru ka Mahal was the residence of Guru Tegh Bahadur and later Guru Gobind Singh. Gurdwara Bhora Sahib marks the site where Guru Tegh Bahadur used to mediate.*

Near Taragarh, on the other side of the ravine, is the village of Mahiwal. Its fields have been historic battlegrounds. It was there that Bhai Kanhaiya served water to friends and foe alike. In the southern part of the village, a single Sikh family resides next to the baoli, the source of water,

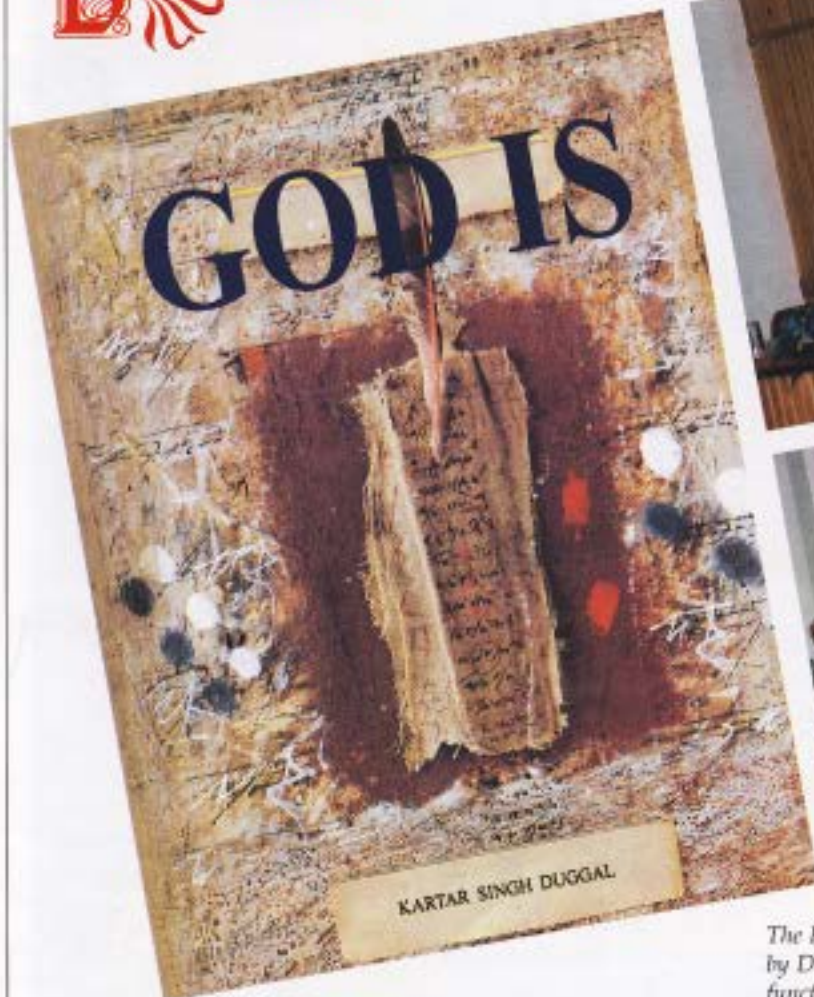
from where Bhai Kanhaiya filled his leather bag for quenching the thirst of the wounded. We partook water from there with great reverence. We were told that a sant of Anandgarh had already paid a visit to the place, performed *ardas* before starting the construction of a shrine and here installed a Nishaan Sahib. We took some pictures of the place to preserve the original look for posterity.

All the shrines in the area have been painted in dazzling white and are lit with floodlights, so shining from afar. During the day also, with the deep forest as background, the shrines are visible from a distance. The serene and calm ambience of each place make them places of beautiful retreat and meditation, far from the noise and pollution of today's crowded cities.

Our trip was very educative, enjoyable and purposeful. The drive was exciting but easy because of good road conditions and facilities available along the way. Driving through the green fields of Punjab is always an exhilarating experience. Throughout the Punjab, pure milk and plentiful supply of *keenu* (citrus juice) is available. The people are warm-hearted and hospitable, with large builds, flowing beards and magnificent turbans. They are naturally kind and helpful. Guests and travelers are very special for them. One comes across many prosperous people in the rural areas who, in fact, may be NRIs from England or America or Malaysia or Canada .... the Sikh diaspora is now very spread out, being all over the world. Back in their original villages, some have built beautiful villas and equipped them with modern gadgetry.

The Punjab, indeed, is a glorious mix of history, past and which is being made at the present.

*Ravinder Singh Somi  
Rishi Singh*



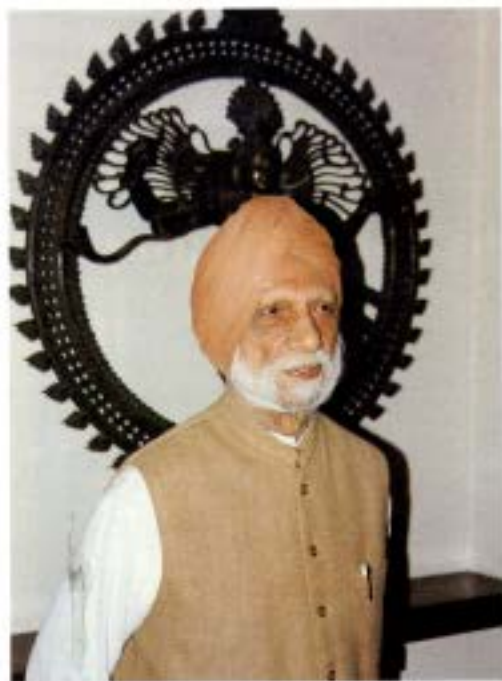
The Book release at the "India International Centre", New Delhi by Dr. Najma Heptulla, Deputy Chairperson Rajya Sabha, the function presided over by the famed Scientist Dr. Raja Ramanna.

God is. The Guru whom I have accepted as my master and my guide, whom I love and admire, says so. No more argument. That so and so is my father, I accept because I am told this. He gives me the love and affection of a father; it confirms what I am told. I put off the light and go to sleep under a roof without ever dreading the fear that the pucca roof might cave in. It is not as though no roof has never caved in. But a building constructed scientifically with care, is relied upon. One can have faith in it. Without faith life can become miserable. You cannot take the next step; who knows it may land in a ditch?

During my tenure at All India Radio, Ranchi, I had a Gujarati friend, an engineer in the Extension Department. He claimed no faith in the Divine Entity. I listened to him but never entered into an argument with him. Every time he had an opportunity, he would have something new to support his disbelief. At times, he would laugh at me. He

wondered how a modern man, a progressive writer, highly educated and enlightened, could continue to subscribe to the faith of his father, his father's father, his father's father's father.

Once it so happened that he was travelling with his young son from Calcutta to Ranchi by train. As ill luck would have it, the train running at the top speed derailed at a sharp curve and plunged into a ditch at the dead of night. A virtual hell was let loose; shrieking and screaming, wailing and howling. He didn't know for how long my Gujarati friend lay unconscious. When he regained his senses in the calamitous darkness with the dead around and the wounded crying for help, he folded his hands and solicited, "Lord ! If I can find my son, I will be your slave for the rest of my life." And as these words came to his lips, there was the cry of his young child - "Papa!" from down the boulder on which he lay. Hundreds were killed, many more were wounded. My friend and his son arrived home the next day without a scratch. The first thing he



came and narrated to me the fact of his discovery.

Another happening: Serving on the Editorial Board of the *Lotos*, an organ of the Afro-Asian Writers Association, I had to visit Moscow frequently. My interpreter Tania, a confirmed Communist couldn't believe that with all my progressive writing, I said my prayers regularly. My telling her that my Guru believed that one should labour hard and share one's earning with others, is the essence of Socialism by which she swore, she wouldn't understand. God and religion were, as if, anathema for her. Every time she had an opportunity, she would try to argue with me, ridiculing faith in anything excepting what Marx and Engel had "revealed". Temperamentally non-argumentative, I listened patiently and would seldom refute her. I used only to tell her that if my faith made me better man than many confirmed Communists I saw around, what was wrong with it? And yet I could never convince her.

Once she took me to visit one of the ancient monasteries outside Moscow. A huge complex which housed a seminary and a grand church with splendid deities. It was Sunday. There were hundreds of devotees. As we entered the sanctum sanctorum, there was something in the atmosphere, for a split

second my eyes closed, my hands were folded. Opening my eyes, I looked around. Tania was nowhere. Where could have she disappeared? And then I spotted her with a candle in her hand going along with the rest of the devotees offering her obeisance to the Icon.

A Punjabi poet has said

"We may not believe in the Lord;

But what do we do with the void in the heart?"

A leading progressive writer, one of the founders of the Progressive Writers Movement in India and a confirmed leftist who had been jailed several times during the freedom struggle, would carry a volume of Hafiz, the celebrated Persian poet every time he came to Delhi and stayed with us. "It seems it is the only classic which has caught your fancy," once my curiosity had the better of me. "I carry it as my constant guide," he explained. "How?" I was intrigued. Reading a book once or twice at best should do, one has to read so much around. Finding me unconvinced my non-believer friend who swore by Marx explained, "Every time I am in a dilemma, I know not my mind, I open Hafiz at random and read the verse which catches my eye and, believe it or not, I find what is said in it a clear signal for what I am going to do. It serves as my guide." "But this is exactly what we the Sikhs do every morning," I butted in, "We read a *shabad* from the Holy Granth opened at random and treat it as a signpost for the day."

I found that my senior colleague didn't wish to continue with the argument. We started talking something else.

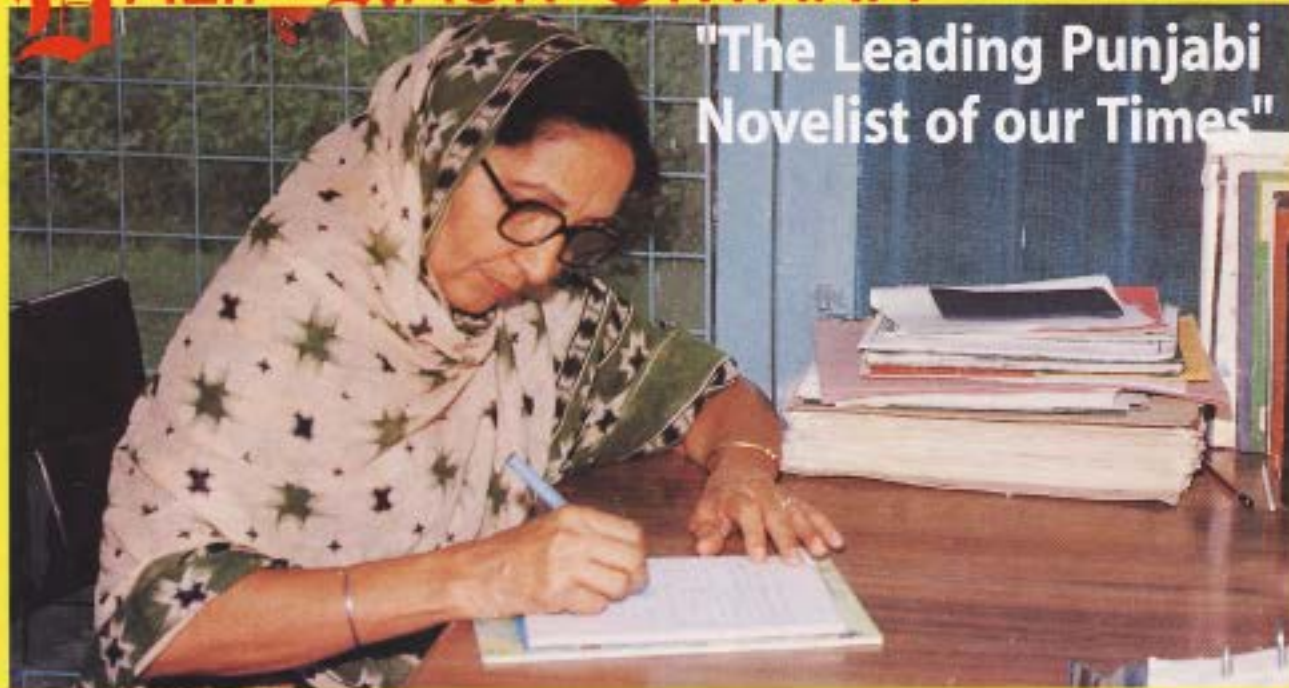
God Is. Though, perhaps not as commonly visualised—a saintly, grey-haired sage, with inebriated eyes, beaming face, halo around His head; a regal monarch sitting on a majestic throne; a master-craftsman; a savant exuding wisdom; a mystic lost in trance and so on. God is a concept. He is Just. He is Love. He is Compassion. He is Truth. He is Working-Hard-Earning-Enjoying-And-Sharing. He is, therefore, known in some quarters as Divine Entity.

**Kartar Singh Duggal** (born 1917) has to his credit twenty-three collections of short stories, ten novels, three collections of poetry, seven plays, more than fifty short plays, an autobiography in two volumes and several works of prose. K.S. Duggal has been honoured with the Padma Bhushan, the Soviet Land Nehru Award and Punjabi Sahitya Academi's Sarva-Saresht Sahityakar Award for his contribution to Indian literature, besides the National Academy of Letters Award for short stories, the Ghalib Award for drama, the Bhasha Parishad Award for fiction and the Bhai Mohan Singh Award for autobiography. Shri Duggal was conferred the degree of D.Litt (Honoris Causa) by the Punjabi University in 1994 and nominated as a member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) in 1997. He was named Punjabi writer of the millennium (Waris Award) by the Chief Minister of Punjab in the World Punjabi Conference at Chandigarh in December, 2000. Having served as Director, All India Radio, Director, National Book Trust, and Adviser (Information) in the Planning Commission, he is currently devoted exclusively to literary activity.



# DALIP KAUR TIWANA

"The Leading Punjabi Novelist of our Times"



The most striking aspect of Dalip Kaur Tiwana, after her little-girl laughter that reaches her eyes and lights up her being, is her utter lack of any pretensions or airs that signify her "writerly" status. Born on May 4, 1935, in Rabbon village in Ludhiana district to a wealthy land-owning family, this eminent novelist has published 27 novels, seven collections of short stories, the first part of her autobiography and a literary biography. The eldest of five sisters and a brother, she was adopted by her paternal aunt who had the apprehension that her husband would marry again because they didn't have a child. Recipient of regional and national awards, including the Sahitya Akademi, the Saraswati Samman for the year 2001 was an apt recognition of a literary career spanning more than four decades. Instituted by the KK Birla Foundation, the Saraswati Samman carries a cash prize of Rs. 5 lacs and is given every year for an outstanding literary work written in any Indian language during the past ten years. Dalip carries the crown of her achievements lightly because honours and awards have chased her rather than it being the other way around. She has many firsts to her credit: the first girl to top in MA in Punjab, first one to do her Ph.D, head a department in the university and become Dean, Faculty of Languages. As she says "After all I am also the first-born!"

## Excerpts from an interview:

*Though you have received numerous awards, what was your reaction at being awarded the Saraswati Samman?*

I have never chased awards but they have chased me! What makes me happy is the response and joy of all those who have reached out to me. A wider readership and more awards also mean more responsibility. Honestly, I feel I have no achievements to my credit and have done nothing in life and am yet to write my best book.

*In your novel "Puchchte ho to Suno" you have made a distinction between a karrigar (craftsman) and a kalakar (artist). Why so?*

## Collection of Short Stories

- Prabal vahan 1954 • Tratan, 1956
- Vairage nain, 1957 • Vedna, 1958
- Tui bharin hungara, 1960
- Sadhna • Yatra • Ek kudi
- Tera kamra, mera kamra

## Novels

- Agniparikhya, 1967
- Eho hamara jeevana, 1968
- Vaat hamari, 1970
- Tili da nishaan, 1970
- Suraj te samundar, 1971
- Doosri Sita, 1975
- Within without, 1975
- Sarkandeyan de desh, 1976
- Dhap, chchaan te rukh, 1976
- Sabhu desu paraya, 1976
- He Ram, 1977 • Lamhi udaari, 1978
- Peele patian di daastan, 1980
- Hastakshar, 1982 • Pairh chaal, 1984
- Rin pitran da, 1985
- Air vair mildenein, 1986
- Lang gaye darya, 1990
- Zami puchche aasman, 1991
- Katha kuknoos di, 1993
- Duni suhava bagh, 1995
- Katha kaho Urvashi, 1999

A craftsman will only hone things that are need-oriented but an artist will strive for perfection and give a voice to deeper longings. The manner in which an artist strives for perfection is almost divine. No individual can create literature that is greater than his own self - *Koi vi apne to wadah sahit nahin rach sakda*.

The *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* could have only been written by *rishis*—not an ordinary mortal.

*What, according to you, is the test of a good book?*

The ability to survive time. *Agar jeon joga hoyega te rahega*. It is what remains after 100 years that matters. Just as it is the level of your creation that is of consequence and not your physical name which will pass on as it is. The Vedas have no name and there is no identification as to which *rishi* gave which *shloka*. Your work should outlive you. Instead of focusing on transitory things in life, we should attend to fundamentals. As it is, the age we are living in is an age of information alright but there is little knowledge and absolutely no wisdom. Even the education being imparted might equip you to tackle the material world but does not have the ability to transform your life and mould your thoughts or make you a better human being.

*You did not write anything for five years after your brother's death in 1995. Did "Kaho Katha Urvashi" help you?*

I had almost lost my balance in trying to cope with the intensity of my grief. I had literally brought up my brother who was younger to me by 15 years. It was a blow when he committed suicide and when my nephew (his son) too committed suicide within a year of my brother's death, I couldn't handle it. It was a double blow. I tried to explore the times we were living in, what are we looking for in life, relationship with the self, and creation. It was a quest for trying to seek answers to questions that bothered me as I tried to overcome my grief.

*Punjabis are usually perceived as Epicureans who do not engage with philosophical questions and prefer the superficial pleasures of life. Is it not unusual to get a response to the philosophical element in your novels?*

We only see the superficial self but it is a fact that it is the same sort of problems that engage the deeper selves of people, cutting across boundaries of culture, community and religion. In fact, my book is dedicated to all those children who get lost while searching for a home. *Kaho katha Urvashi* is divided into six parts: *Katha kale kohan di* (A difficult journey), *Katha Kalyug di* (The tale of Kalyug), *Katha ankahi* (The untold tale), *Katha ek hauke di* (The tale of a sigh), *Katha kaal akal* (Of time and beyond) and *Te katha turdi rahi* (And the tale carries on).

*How long do you take to finish a novel and do you have a neurotic need to write ... I mean is it a compulsive need?*

I try and finish my novel (or a part of it) in five days because I want to rest on weekends. I often feel that I am a medium

## A list of literary awards:

- ✦ Govt. of Punjab award for *Sadhana*, as the book of short stories, 1961-62.
- ✦ Sahitya Akademi award for the novel *Ehu Hamara Jeevana*, 1972.
- ✦ Ministry of Education and Social Welfare award for *Pancham Vich Parmesar*—book of short stories for children, 1975.
- ✦ Nanak Singh Puruskar (Languages Department, Govt. of Punjab) for the novel *Peele Patian Di Daastan*, 1980.
- ✦ Gurmukh Singh Musafir Award (Languages Department, Government of Punjab) for the autobiography *Nange Pauran Da Safar*, 1982.
- ✦ Canadian International Association of Punjabi authors and artists Award, 1985.
- ✦ Shriromani Sahitkar Award, Languages Department of Punjab, 1987.
- ✦ Praman Pattar award from Punjab Govt., 1989.
- ✦ Dhaliwal Award, Punjabi Sahit Academy, Ludhiana, 1991.
- ✦ Best Novelist of the Decade (1980-90), Punjabi Academy, Delhi, 1994.
- ✦ Nanjanagudu Thirumalamba Award for the novel *Katha Kukhus Di*.
- ✦ Wagdevi Award for the novel *Duni Suhava Bagh* from Bhartiya Bhasha Parishad, Calcutta, 1998.
- ✦ Honoured during Tercentenary celebrations of the Birth of Khalsa for outstanding contribution in the field of language, art and literature at Anandpur Sahib on April 11, 1999.
- ✦ Saraswati Samman for the Year 2001 by the KK Birla Foundation.

## Some other distinctions

- ✦ Entries in "Famous Women of India," "Who's Who of India," "Reference Asia," "International Biographia," "International Who's Who, 1995."
- ✦ Works have been translated in English, French, Russian, Urdu, Hindi, Bengali, Gujarati and other Indian languages.
- ✦ Three novels have been telecast from Doordarshan and many more are on the waiting list.

and the story is being written through me. Once, I had gone to visit my sister at Ludhiana. I was restless, even had fever. I asked for a pen and paper. Once the story finished, the fever was gone.

I do not revise or work at crafting my novels. Once the first draft is done, I have to write it neatly before sending it to the publisher because my writing is particularly bad!

*What would you like to say about the state of Punjabi literature and are there any writers who have influenced you?*

It is the lack of philosophical writing that bothers me as also the absence of serious and evaluative criticism. It is important to do your work honestly without bothering about hype, publicity and the need to make it big. There is no one author but works of many authors that have engaged my



"Sikhism is, in fact, a religion that has transcended death. And the *Guru Granth Sahib* is replete with philosophical wisdom. If the *Bible* can reach the world, why not the *Guru Granth Sahib*?"

attention. I like the early poetry of Amrita Pritam, Shiv Kumar Batalvi, stories of Kulwant Singh Virk, Chekhov, novels of Doris Lessing, Virginia Woolf, Ayn Rand, Afzal Tauseef, Qurratulain Hyder, Sarat Chandra, Vishnu Prabhakar, Agave, Raja Rao. The source of inspiration is, I feel, the collective unconscious.

*Aren't writers exempt from all codes of conduct and can they flout all norms and justify everything in the name of creativity?*

In fact, writing is all about linking yourself with a higher consciousness and if you have no control over your own life, gaining a higher consciousness is a remote possibility. One can lead any kind of life but you should not justify your actions with your writing.

*What would you like to say about the man-woman relationship, are the sex-specific stereotypes breaking down?*

As far as the man-woman relationship is concerned, there is a demarcation and in a majority of the cases it is as if they are leading two separate lives and there is no commonality of experience. If sex-specific stereotypes are breaking, it is only at the level of intellect, not in reality. So you have some men who spout Marxism and talk of bettering the lot of humanity but beat their own wives. Are their wives not a part of humanity?

*Your heroines are too passive and accepting and you do not dwell on economic problems.*

Many people have asked me why my heroines don't rebel. The books' pages might end but the narrative continues in the hearts and minds of the readers and forces them to ask questions, offer solutions or nags them. Even if the seeds of rebellion are sown in the minds of the readers, it is worthwhile. As far as economic problems are concerned, I have never had to plan and wait to buy anything. So, obviously I have no first hand experience and cannot write about these matters.

*Do you specifically visualise yourself as a woman writer?*

A writer has no gender, but I do feel that because of their sensibilities women might be closer to some concerns. The manner in which a woman and a man relate to a child is

different. Similarly, the relationship a woman has with her creative work is different from the one a man has. Modern women commit the mistake of thinking that they are the same as men. They are equal, but not the same. Due to culture and conditioning, there are bound to be differences. It does not bother me when people react to my work without even reading it or dismiss it as being about *auratan da rona dhona*.

*Any defining moments or something that has remained with you all this while?*

Two things that my mother once said remain with me even now. A deeply religious person, when someone told her about how I had attained fame as a writer, she had quipped: *Akal taan batheri si... agar chuij de passe laandi*. (She has enough intelligence, if only she had used it for a good cause.)

I am still searching for that good cause!

The second thing that she said was *agar mangna hi hai te bhagwan kolon mungo kuenke ohi hai jehra hisaab nahin mangda*. Similarly, once Tarsem Purewal offered me the editorship of *Des Pardes*, with a salary that was ten times more than the one I was drawing at that time along with a house, car and a trip to India twice a year. When I told my mother about the offer, she promptly shot back, "If you get everything ten times more then will you eat twenty *chappatis* and wear ten suits at the same time?"

*How does your husband react to your work?*

He is an extremely mature and serious-minded scholar and feels that my novels can definitely be much better if I work harder. He feels I am much more intelligent than my novels portray me as and that I am definitely capable of better work!

**In a career that has spanned more than four decades, you have been known for your stress on merit but that has also made you difficult to work with.**

I have never been overawed by those in authority or believed in kow-towing. When one of my detractors thwarted my PhD viva, I had shot back: *Main vi jattan di dhi haan, Kanakan ne uggan ton nahin hatna, meehan ne varhan ton nahin hatna taan main vi bhukhe nahin marna*.

**D**r. Dalip Kaur Tiwana is universally regarded as one of the leading Punjabi novelists of today and has published twenty seven novels, seven collections of short stories, the first part of her autobiography and a literary biography. She has won awards, both regional and national, and is widely translated author.

Born on May 4, 1935 in Village Rabbon of Ludhiana district in a well-to-do land-owning family, she was educated at Patiala where her uncle, Sardar Sahib Sardar Tara Singh Sidhu was Inspector General of Prisons. She had a distinguished academic career, getting a first class first M.A., and the first woman in the region to get the Ph.D. degree from Punjab University. In 1963, Dr. Dalip Kaur Tiwana joined the Punjabi University at Patiala, as a Lecturer and then went on to become Professor and Head of the Department of Punjabi and Dean, Faculty of Languages. She was a brilliant teacher and researcher and made a significant contributions to literary and critical studies in Punjabi. She was also a UGC National Lecturer for a year.



Dr. Dalip Kaur's literary career as a creative writer commenced with the publication of her first book of short stories *Sadhma* in 1961, which was declared the best book in its genre by the Department of Languages, Government of Punjab. She produced seven collections of short stories before switching over to novel-writing, in which art-form she was destined to achieve great eminence. Her second novel *Eho Hamara Jeerna* won her the Sahitya Akademy Award in 1972. Thereafter, virtually every one of her works won her an award. The Ministry of Education and Social Welfare honoured her book of stories for children called *Panjan vich Parmeshwar* in 1975, while the Department of Languages, Government of Punjab, conferred the "Nanak Singh Puruskar" on her novel *Peele Patian di Dastan* in 1980 and "Gurmukh Singh Musafir Puruskar" on her autobiography *Nange Parion da Safar* in 1982. Awards and honours have flowed from outside the Punjab as well. In 1985, the International Association of Punjabi Artists and Authors (IAAPA) based in Canada honoured her with an award in 1985. "Narjanagudu Thirumalamba" award for her novel *Katha Kuknos Di* came from Shashwathi, Karnataka and "Vagdevi" award for *Duni Suhata* Bagh was given by Bhartiya Bhasha Parishad, Calcutta, in 1998.

For her outstanding contribution to Punjabi literature, Dr. Dalip Kaur received the "Shiromani Sahityakar" award from the Punjab Government in 1987, the "Best Novelist of the Decade" award from Punjabi Academy, Delhi, in 1994 and the "Kartar Singh Dhaliwal" award from Punjabi Sahit Academy, Ludhiana. She was among the distinguished Sikh personalities who were honoured on the occasion of the Tricentenary Celebrations of the Birth of the Khalsa at Anandpur Sahib in 1999.

Many of Dr. Dalip Kaur Tiwana's short stories and novels have been translated into Hindi and other Indian languages, and English. *Such is her Fate* (Punjabi University), *Journey on bare feet* (Orient Longman), *Gone are the Rivers* (Macmillan) are some of the English translations, which are readily available. The *Tale of the Phoenix* (Ajanta) translated by Nikky-Guninder Kaur Singh and Bhupinder Singh and Elizabeth Siler of the USA will soon be out. *Urvashi* is being rendered into English by Prof Jasbir Jain. Khushwant Singh, Jai Rattan and Danielle Gill from Paris are some the other translators of Dr. Tiwana's works. Doordarshan has also telecast a few serials based on her writings.

Dr. Dalip Kaur has played important roles in distinguished bodies, both academic and literary. Currently, she is associated with the Sahitya Akademy (Delhi), Punjab Arts Council (Chandigarh), Punjabi Sahit Academy (Chandigarh), Punjabi Sahit Academy (Ludhiana), National Book Trust of India, Bhartiya Janapith, K.K. Birla Foundation, Kendri Punjabi Lekhak Sabha in various capacities. She is President of the Punjabi Sahit Academy, Chandigarh and Life-Fellow and nominated Senator of the Punjabi University.

During the course of her career as writer and academician, she visited several countries to preside over or participate in important international conferences. For example, she chaired sessions at the *International Punjabi Conference* held in U.K. in 1980, participated in *International Writing Together and Women in the 20th Century* held in Scotland in 1990 and presided over an international literary meet organised by California Sahit Sabha in the U.S.A. in 2000.

By common or general consent, Dr. Dalip Kaur Tiwana is the leading, most productive and most popular Punjabi novelist of our times. For the last forty years or more, she has been engaged in creative writing without any major interruption. There is thematic and formal variety in her writings. Her language in particular is spontaneous, lyrical and compressed to the point of being a marvel of economy and elegance.

Over the years, she has moved from a preoccupation with gender issues to intellectual contemplation of fundamental human problem, and from there to spiritual transcendence. While negotiating the problems of life and death, tradition and modernity, men and women, towns and villages in her works, she remains committed to the Indian spiritual and ethical vision. One could say of her that she combines European energy with Asiatic calm in her life and thought.

***Extracts from "The Sikhs in History", Edition 2002***

The second half of 2000 saw a two pronged action in the Punjab. One, an intensification of the forces of Hindutava - of BJP, RSS, Rashtriya Sikh Sangat and others - with a great deal of propaganda that the Sikhs were Hindus, on the relevance of idol worship, installation of idols, even of Sikh Gurus sometimes by Sikh Sant-Babas and others, importance of cow, gods and goddesses, temples, havans or fire worship, recitation of Ramayana, etc. BJP President Rinwa even went to the extent of laying emphasis that their nominee would be the next Chief Minister. Anti-Gurmat propaganda by a score of journalists and choice of selected Sikh intellectuals by media was order of the day. The RSS workers published considerable anti-Sikh literature and went to the extent of going over to the countryside, into most of villages in Punjab, hitting at even the Badalite Akalis.

This went on till the end of 2000, when a finally shaken Badal contacted the central BJP leaders to lower the Hindutava profile and not to affect his credibility. This resulted in second ring RSS leaders appearing before Tarlochan Singh, Vice Chairman, National Commission for Minorities in New Delhi in January 2001 and giving in writing that they regarded Sikhism "as a separate religion". This undertaking was not worth the paper written on. Rashtriya Sikh Sangat was not wound up and could restart their campaign anytime they liked. What was needed was internal strength of Sikhism which was lacking. Badal Akalis however got a reprieve.

Then, on Bibi Jagir Kaur's completing her term amidst sniping by her opponents, Badal's choice for Presidentship of the SGPC fell (in November 2000) on Jagdev Singh Talwandi who was duly elected. He was an old war horse, a semi-literate Jathedar, who has long played a dubious role in Sikh polity. However, the general house of SGPC on November 30, unanimously adopted a resolution asking the Government of India to amend the Gurdwara Act 1925 to exclude Sehajdharis from playing mischief in Gurdwara

affairs. Earlier, Manjit Singh Calcutta, then SGPC Secretary had in November 1995 drawn attention to the same matter. The 1996 elections to SGPC had shown that their number, a spurious one, consisted of an exaggerated 15 per cent.

Not surprisingly, Dr. Harbans Lal from Texas, USA, who was once elected President All India Sikh Students Federation, on a visit to Amritsar in February 2001 made a specious plea in favour of Sehajdharis. He went to the extent of making a plea that one Chand, a Muslim who once performed Kirtan at Darbar Sahib, was a Sehajdhari Sikh! This was false.

Harbans Lal was not bothered about cigarette smoking habits of the so-called Sehajdharis or their belief in other faiths. Normally, such a type of recommendation by the SGPC is duly carried out, but since BJP and their cohorts in power at the Centre have ambitions to overwhelm Sikhism, which has been at the receiving end since at least 1984, this has not yet been carried out.

It is one thing for some Sehajdharis to be nominated to the SGPC and quite another for them to participate in the elections.

Jagdev Singh Talwandi soon started showing some independence from Badal. In December 2000, he appointed Giani Puran Singh, removed earlier as Jathedar Akal Takht, as head granthi of the Darbar Sahib. This was taken as a reactionary step, though he shortly apologised for it. He, however, assured that Puran Singh would not sit as one of the five participants under aegis of the Jathedar Akal Takht. This was quite normal. Then on December 22, 2000, he conferred a *saropa*, robe of honour on a *putit*, apostate, Sikh, Ujjal Dosanj, briefly Premier of British Columbia in Canada.

Another person who was conferred *saropa* by Talwandi was his collaborator, Kashmir Singh, Secretary of Khalsa Diwan Society, Vancouver, who had been expelled from the Panth by his predecessor Ranjit Singh in May 1998. Talwandi, however, gets benefit of doubt as he was possibly

unaware of that. These goings on were in sharp contrast with Jathedar Akal Takht Joginder Singh Vedanti's refusal to confer the *saropa* on the apostate son of SGPC's senior Vice President, Balbir Singh Pannu, who had died in a road accident in February 2001.

Mention should be made of a seminar in end-February held by the Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, viz. "Sri Guru Granth Sahib : World's First Interfaith Scripture". The idea was brainchild of Dr. Harbans Lal and a lot of people from North America participated. Invitations were also issued to a select group from India and Pakistan.

The Guru Granth Sahib truly represents an interfaith dialogue of various schools of prevalent thought, and also lays down the parameters of God consciousness. But none of the numerous scholars, during the four days of the conclave, chose to mention, in Bhai Gurdas's words, that Guru Nanak after a series of discussions with various schools of thought had termed six schools of Hindu philosophy as a charade (*khat shastar pakhand janaia*), not appropriate for the human soul. There were indirect attempts to confuse the Sikh mind and make insidious inroads. *The Spokesman*, Chandigarh, was explicit in expressing its candid views.

Such duplicity in the views of the Akalis and the BJP was explicit during the debate on the resolution on 1984 *Operation Bluestar* adopted by the Punjab Assembly in March 2001. Firstly, the Akalis despite their overwhelming majority had been quiet for four years, and then people like Parkash Singh Badal were conspicuous by their absence. Though Badal got clear indications that *Operation Bluestar* still had explosive propensities, Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Vidya Sagar Rao, washed off the Centre's hands on the figures of Sikhs held under TADA or connected with Punjab problem, as if there had been no government, or that the Sikhs did not matter. There now were clear indications of an alienation of Punjabi Hindus from the BJP.

It, however, was successful in blackmailing Badal in May-June 2001, to giving them another seat in the Rajya Sabha. A year earlier, Advani had appointed the Nanavati Commission to have a fresh look into 1984 genocide of the Sikhs, only after obtaining concurrence of Sonia Gandhi, and after assuring that no non-Sikh would come to any grief for the Commission's report! This was thus to be only of academic interest. The Commission's report is expected later in 2002.

Lal Krishan Advani's outburst on August 19 at

Jalandhar granting amnesty to cops indicted by the Supreme Court and prosecuted or facing prosecution by CBI for their atrocities, is to be seen in this context. People like former Justice Rajinder Sachar said that it reminded him of Hitler. Simranjit Singh Mann saw a possible restart of militancy. Inderjit Singh Jaijee of Movement Against State Repression (MASR) wrote to Amnesty International, London, which in turn wrote to Advani. Even Badal, who had rendered assistance to this abominable lot, was forced to express himself against such a move. Some of the policemen had already been sentenced by various courts; others were willing to admit that they had performed wrongs at the instance of their seniors who, however, had got off scot free. The tainted cops were willing to return their medals, admit their crime, but were persuaded by their seniors not to do so. The whole affair was a murky one, and prevented Home Minister Advani, Law Minister Arun Jaitley and another Minister Arun Shourie all from BJP, despite their best intentions, to carry out their resolve. Again, this did not endear them to the Punjabi Hindus.

Already Inderjit Singh Jaijee of MASR's letters to the Punjab Administration on fresh suicides being committed by farmers were now rattling Badal. There were reported to be about 60 suicides during 2001 itself.

Then came startling disclosures on one Piara Singh Bhaniara and his followers burning volumes of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* at various places in Punjab, setting up of his own work of sorts, namely *Bhavsagar Granth*, making low level propaganda, and making some spiritual pretensions. He had been a *Beldar*, a Class IV employee in the Agriculture Department, and was set up by Buta Singh during Rajiv Gandhi's time. Buta Singh now claimed himself to be a *gursikh*, having undergone baptism. Bhaniara's *granth* showed photographs of some of Badal's ministers, members of SGPC and Akali Dal and some police officers among his followers or seeking his blessings for political ends. He had been expelled by a former Jathedar Akal Takht, but now claimed that he was not even a Sikh! The Akal Takht took action against the persons named, some of whom were duly punished. Bhaniara and some of his collaborators were arrested. This seemed to be work of a third agency termed as Star Group by the *Punjab Monitor* working at Chandigarh and was designed to cause a schism between Jats and Mazhbis or downcaste Sikhs.

In early October the SGPC set up a three member committee consisting of two retired High Court Judges and a member of the Dharam Parchar Committee, while shortly afterwards the Punjab government followed by a

one man Committee consisting of a retired High Court Judge. These were seen as a point of conflict between Talwandi and Badal and as devices to prevent a probe, for obvious political reasons.

By the end of 2001, there were a number of elements angling for worsting Badal in the forthcoming elections in February 2002. The Panthic Morcha with Baba Sarabjot Singh Bedi as Convener and Tohra and Mann as its important elements, constituted one angle. Panthic Morcha's attempts to rope in Kanshi Ram of Bahujan Samaj Party are to be seen in this light. Then, Amarinder Singh, President of the Punjab Congress, started issuing missives to hit the people's chord when he spoke of Badal family's personal and his government's widespread corrupt practices which, he said, had put to shame all previous records. Badal's counter charges, or his collaborators reply, that corruption was there even during earlier Congress regimes were not seen as sufficient defence.

Badal was down but not out. The Institute of Sikh Studies, at Chandigarh, organised a two day seminar, in November 2001 on (i) *Institutional Failure in Punjab with respect to Sikhism*, and (ii) *Missing Sikh Prisoners*. The subjects were very sensitive as these would straight-away impact on the forthcoming elections. But the seminar was hijacked, not only regarding its theme or keynote address but also regarding some of the persons who presided over some of the sessions. The SGPC had paid Rs. 500,000 to the Institute, apparently to conduct research on Sikh history. Some of the scholars who otherwise were at Chandigarh did not even attend its sessions. One of the persons who had earlier played a prominent role, told me that the Institute had been badly affected as an independent body.

Badal firstly sought to gain mileage by organising the bicentenary of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's coronation, at Amritsar on November 18, though historians contended that Ranjit Singh never went in for such a formal coronation. Badal was least bothered. A couple of functions fixed prior to that were attended mainly by police personnel with little popular participation. Prime Minister Vajpayee came for the main function but Badal had slipped in the bathroom and broke the upper part of his left leg the same morning. That put him out of action. His son Sukhbir Singh Badal who officiated in the circumstances, proved a poor substitute. Vajpayee, as resolved earlier, announced his "Rs. 150 crore grant" for the building of Punjab's economic infrastructure.

Badal was moved to a Delhi hospital for treatment and it was during this period that Tohra along with his leading cohorts visited him. It was now after two years that the two had heart-to-heart talks. It was obvious that Tohra was not a free man. He carried with himself the burden of his alignment with Sarabjot Singh Bedi, Bhai Ranjit Singh and a host of others. The Sant-Babas were widely regarded as agents of Congress. Badal soon recovered and got designed a special vehicle to carry him through for the forthcoming elections.

Meanwhile, Badal's reply (to rumours of a patch-up) came by end November in the form of his nominating Prof Kirpal Singh Badungar as President of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, in place of Talwandi who had completed his term. That dashed Tohra's hopes of dictating any terms to Badal.

Badal soon won over Kanshi Ram of Bahujan Samaj Party. Kanshi Ram was explicit that his fight was directed against Congress, whereas Tohra of Panthic Morcha only aimed to dislodge Badal. The infighting within Congress, of Jagmeet Singh Brar's diatribes against Amarinder Singh, or that of Rajinder Kaur Bhattal or Harcharan Singh Brar (two former Chief Ministers of Punjab), were seen as acts in desperation.

Badal took necessary steps to accommodate the Sant-Babas and other questionable elements during the scheduled visit of Jathedar Joginder Singh Vedanti to an inter-faith conference organised by the Pope in Rome on January 23-24, 2002. Vedanti must have got orders from political quarters when he announced that his delegation would include Sant-Baba Amar Singh of Burundi, Sant-Baba Daljit Singh of Chicago, Jasdev Singh and Dr. Rajwant Singh of USA, Giani Mohinder Singh of Birmingham apart from his personal staff. It included some persons who had been expelled by some of the foreign countries, or even had charges of rape registered against them, or were widely believed to have links with Indian Intelligence abroad, etc. Badal was only bothered about garnering some votes in the following month. So was the case with Vajpayee who wanted Badal to make up with Tohra and so give BJP some Sikh votes in urban areas. The efforts of men like Yogi Bhajan of USA to persuade Tohra proved of no avail.

The importance of Supreme Court's verdict delivered on January 15, 2002, on the Sutlej-Yamuna Link Canal (SYL) issue is now to be analysed. It had been reserved for quite some time. One tends to agree with a paper written by Tarlochan Singh, Vice Chairman, Minorities Commission, that the Supreme Court could have waited for another

month to announce the verdict once the elections had been over. Anupam Gupta of *Tribune*, Chandigarh, wrote multiple articles pointing out that Supreme Court had not only erred grievously but also exceeded its jurisdiction in passing that order. It had adopted different yardsticks, was not based on equity and did not show much grasp of history. Briefly, it asked the Punjab Government to construct the SYL within one year and failing that asked the Union Government to do so. This was the only clause of the so-called Rajiv Longowal Accord of 1986 which was now to be implemented, irrespective of the chicanery of Justice Eradi and others. Punjab was again at the receiving end.

Punjab leaders including Badal, Mann, Amarinder Singh and Jagmeet Singh Brar saw reasons to file an appeal to a larger bench of Supreme Court, but Congress spokesman, in charge of Punjab affairs, Moti Lal Vohra expressed himself in favour of the verdict. This verdict tended to give a new heart to Punjabi Hindus to muster in favour of the Congress which could also count on support of Mazhabi Sikhs and other backward classes, apart from sections of other people not well disposed to Badal. Then there were Sant-Babas, Namdharis, Radha Soamis, Ramgarhias, Sant-Nirankaris and Christians in Gurdaspur. Sonia Gandhi campaigned in Punjab, but no mention was made of Indira Gandhi. Badal diehards brought in the question of 1984 or atrocities against the Sikhs only in the last days, and that too in not a convincing manner. There was no mention of state terrorism despite some suggestions to Badal elements.

The ruralities who were affected most by the Supreme Court verdict on the SYL remained solid in their support to Badal who said he would rather go to jail if the Canal was dug. That was the easiest part for him; he had been satisfied to be the first to go to jail during various agitations in the last two decades but this did not make him use his brain or intelligence as how to run the movement! He, however, had garnered all the credit. He had also not read the election manifesto for the February 1997 elections, even after he was one month in power. He shattered the romanticised Sikh belief that election of Shiromani Akali Dal would resolve the imbalance in their favour or make them assertive. Badal continued to be surrounded by his "yes men." Amarinder's open letter to Badal on February 5, 2002, enumerating 10 points including mis-management of the SYL case before the Supreme Court, was masterly timing. Badal simply chose not to reply.

Then there were so-called survey polls by Aaj Tak, Zee-CMS, and DD-Cfor. They predicted, over the radio and

press, a broad sweep by the Congress, giving it as much as 91 (Aaj Tak)/ 80(Zee) or 70-75 (DD), out of 116 seats (one seat had been countermanded). This was seen as a big conspiracy, and tended to persuade those on the fringe to now vote for the Congress.

When the results came, the BJP was the worst loser. All its leaders including Balramji Das Tandon, Manmohan Kalia and other ministers, even the most reactionary Laxmi Kanta Chawla, had licked the dust. It retained two seats and got one more as against 18 seats in 1997. This time they had fought on 24 seats, and at one time even had asked for their nominee to be the next Chief Minister! Akalis (Badal) got 41 seats (with another three for BJP) while the Congress which was routed in 1997 now got 64 seats (including one Communist). Kanshi Ram's BSP got one seat while others like Panthic Morcha, Lok Bhalai Party, and CPM were routed, not even saving their security deposits on most seats. The by-election to the Malout seat held on April 4 went to Congress-supported CPI against Badal's Akali Dal in a low level affair amidst charges and counter-charges.

It was surmised that Badal had lost half a dozen seats because of voting for the Panthic Morcha, and eight seats to independents including some Ministers who had not been given tickets by Badal. Tohra and Ranjit Singh spoke through their turbans when they analysed the results. Only an alignment with Kanshi Ram's BSP could have given them a judicious majority.

According to *The Tribune*, Badal could have ruled Punjab for another decade or so, "if he had intelligently exploited the goodwill among the Hindus and the Sikhs he enjoys." That was the precise problem. The continued terrorism by Punjab Police in the rural Punjab areas as detailed by Justice Ajit Singh Bains, or the SGPC's monthly *Gurmat Parkash*, (November 2002) which reported 115 cases of rape in six months registered against policemen, is indicative of Badal's continued hold over that section, or rather the compulsions under threat held out on the SYL dispensation.

Badal had been defeated but not humiliated. The Congress had got 38.2 per cent vote to Badal's 36.6 per cent. Except for Jat Sikhs, the Congress had won a majority of votes polled by OBC Sikhs, Dalit Sikhs, Upper Hindus and Dalit Hindus.

Amarinder Singh of the Congress was inducted as Chief Minister of the Punjab on February 27. He ordered a wholesale transfer of officials at all levels to revamp the administration. It took Sonia Gandhi another week to decide the composition of the Punjab cabinet. Rajinder



Amarinder Singh.

Kaur Bhattal, who had earlier been removed as Chief Minister by Harcharan Singh Brar, and who had corruption charges against her in the court of law, was inducted as number 2 in the Cabinet. As late as 3 February, she had said that she would never accept Amarinder Singh as leader of Congress legislature party, which caused some dent in the image. The importance of Bhattal lay in the fact that like Beant Singh earlier, she had an identity of outlook on issues facing Punjab or Congress brand of secularism, as against Amarinder Singh or Jagmeet Singh Brar's who had their Panthic background despite their opposition to Badal. This was immediately apparent at

Amarinder Singh's clash with Haryana Chief Minister on April 1, at the National Water Resources Council meet at New Delhi over the Supreme Court Judgement. Earlier, Badal's Akali Dal had lent full support to POTO, a dangerous successor to TADA, in the Joint session of Parliament, reversing its earlier stand.

In a bizarre judgement, which came into light on April 3, 2002, a three-member bench of the Supreme Court upheld by two to one the death sentence on Devender Pal Singh, earlier extradited from Frankfurt, for an attempt on the life of the then Youth Congress President. Majority Judges B.N. Agarwal and Arijit Passayat referred to the militants attack on the World Trade Centre at New York on September 11, and an attack on Indian Parliament on December 13. That showed the kind of influence that was working on them. They also said they were "not bothered about proof." As against that, Justice M.B. Shah the presiding judge, held that Devender Pal Singh was innocent, as the confessional statement was retracted. Also, that the independent witness produced by the police contradicted Devender Pal Singh's statement. The other persons named were neither convicted, nor tried, and a person could not conspire with himself! Obviously, this will be a fit case for the President of India to exercise his powers.

This judgement raised much furore on some TV Channels over the application of former TADA or present POTA (Prevention of Terrorism Act) on justice for minorities. It was contended that, firstly, the police in India was not an independent entity but in league with some politicians; and secondly, there was the nagging concerns on nexus between the politicians, criminal elements and some sections of the judiciary.

A five-member bench of the Supreme Court headed by Chief Justice S.P. Bharucha, in a radical judgement delivered on April 10, laid down a "mechanism" for a "curative petition" against violation of "principles of natural justice." It provided that such a petition would go to three senior-most judges apart from the bench which heard it in the first instance. If a majority approved, it would be heard by the same or a similar bench "to cure a gross miscarriage of justice." Obviously, some judge-ments have rattled

even the Supreme Court.

The question of elections to the SGPC glares at both Badal and the Tohra-led Panthic Morcha, with a lot of spurious so-called Sehajdhari thrown in by the BJP and Hindutava forces as voters. The Panthic Morcha, in March 2002 accepted Sehajdhari voters in the hope of garnering their votes, but by the month-end some sections expressed their reservations. Justice J.S. Sekhon took over as new Chief Commissioner Gurdwara election on April 12, 2002 replacing Harbans Singh.

The Sikh Panth today is facing dire, and unforeseen, circumstances, affecting its very being at the hands of forces that would like to throw it to the emerging Hindutava, or Gandhian brand of chicanery, or Marxist sophistication. There is now no real Sikh party in the Punjab. Control over funds, power and patronage constitute the main propelling factors.



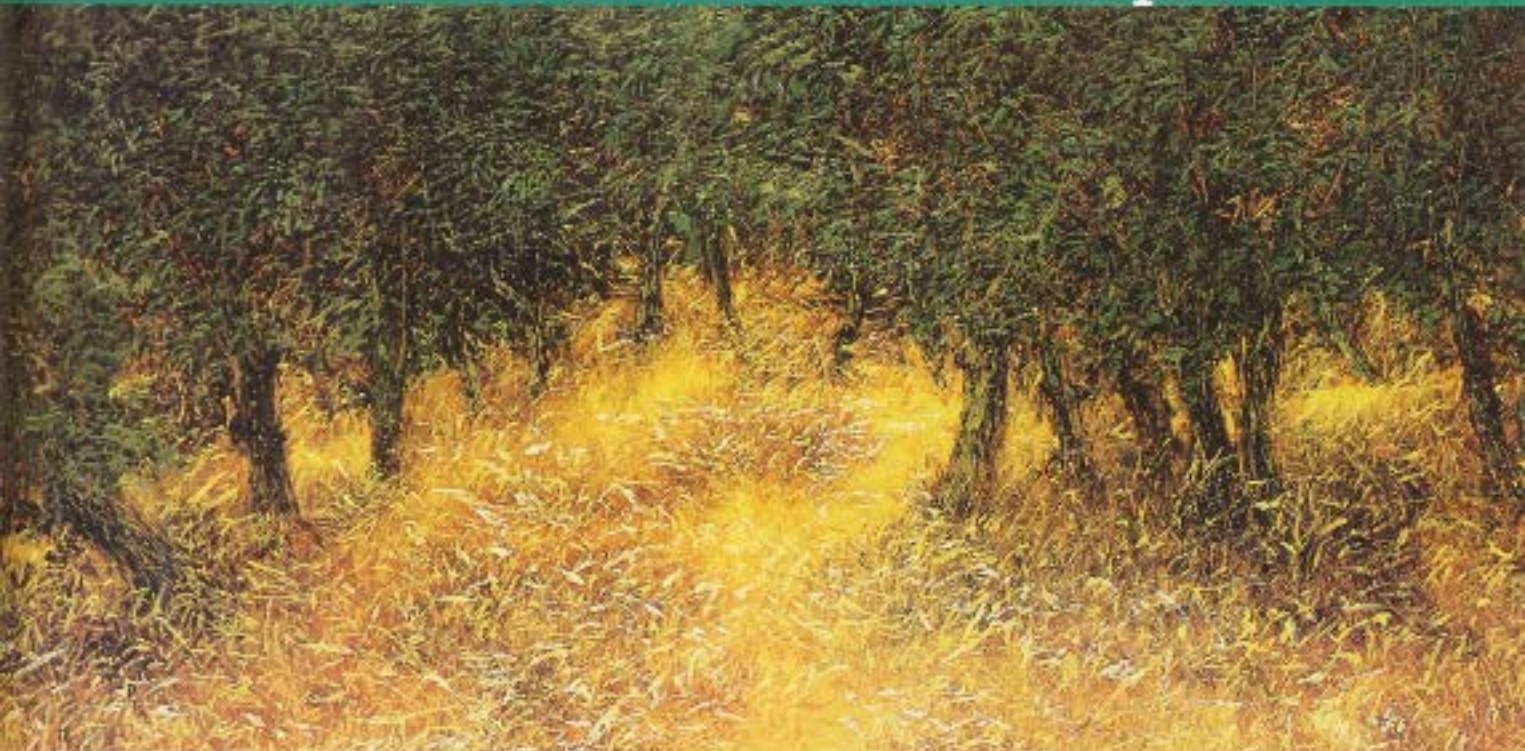
Dr. Sangat Singh

(Author of

"The Sikhs in History")

# Hum Sab Ek Hain

## The Basic Sikh Principle



*(Painting by Paramjit Singh)*

When we take pride only in being Hindus or Sikhs or Muslims or Christians, we produce terror which takes the form of extremism, in the Punjab or anti-Sikh carnage of 1984 throughout the country or anti-Hindu killings at Godhra Railway Station or anti-Muslim slayings in the entire state of Gujarat, but when we talk of our pride in being one as *Indians*, we produce unity within the country and integrity as human beings. Whosoever incites violence in the name of any religion is a disgrace to his religion. He is a simple criminal and needs to be dealt with sternly.

I am now 72 years of age and have spent more than 22 of these in Tapovan, as a lone Sikh in the service of leprosy patients started by Dr. Shivajirao Patwardhan. I have always enjoyed being an Indian whether as a diplomat abroad or as a citizen at home. And, since I belong to the Pakistani part of Punjab, I have seen, at the age of 17, the beastly character of human beings, Indians or Pakistanis whether they were Hindus, Muslims or Sikhs. And it was at that age that I was introduced to the Independence of India. We are all aware of the unfriendly feelings towards the police and I cannot forget that even as a child having no bell or lamp on my bicycle at night, the sight of a policeman produced chill in my bones. All of us have a general feeling of uneasiness when we have to deal with the police.

But the inter-religious citizens peace rally organised by

Ankush Dhanvijay, the Police Commissioner of Amravati on March 14, 2002 with the help of distinguished citizens and efficiently assisted by his police colleagues changed my perception of the police forever. I hope it stays. One is generally dismayed at the presence of legislators with criminal record in the Assemblies and Parliament, one is astonished at the degeneration of political debate, one is shocked to see the politicians unconcerned with human distress.

When I was in the procession, hand in hand with the Bishop, the Muslim leader and the Hindu neta, my mind was mulling over the presence of all of us together along with many citizens including the Mayor and several corporators, Hindu and Muslim and the fact that we were being led by the Police Chief with the sole aim of assuring all the citizens that we would not only be protected against all evil but encouraging all of us to maintain peace despite the Ayodhya tangle looming on March 15th. The rally was addressed by the Minister Wasudhatai Deshmukh. But I could not help remembering the jugglery of words displayed by politicians both in Parliament and outside on sectarian basis as if a Hindu Indian is more valuable than a Muslim Indian or vice versa.

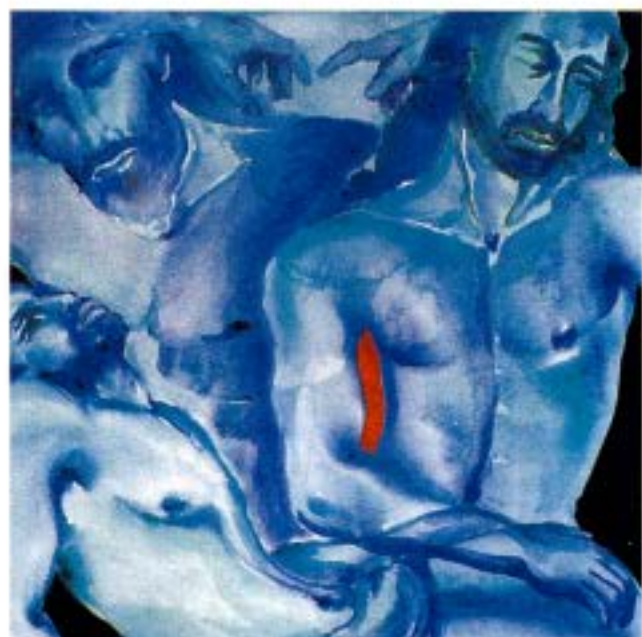
The procession was passing through the main bazaars and people were watching us from the housetops and their

windows and cheering us. They were all happy people, as was the condition of the participants who loudly sang:

*Saare jahan se Achcha.... Hindustan Hamara.... Ham Sab... Ek hain..*

*Hindu Muslim Sikh Isai.... Apas Mein Sab Bhai Bhai*

In the midst of all this celebration and enthusiastic participation of both the bystanders, as also processionists, I could not remove from my mind the horrible scenes of carnage on television of our own brothers and sisters, victims of madness of people like us, disciplined and



responsible. Then I thought of the madness of the politicians who only blamed the media for reporting the happenings instead of feeling ashamed that the happenings had happened the way they happened.

We reached a pre-dominantly Muslim area, where a map of India on the road was bedecked with flowers and we all jostled with each other as if we really all belonged to the one and the same family. Later we had tea together in a school and the scene was really marvellous on many counts, but most of all, that it was organised by the Police Commissioner. I wished that we had acted in time, we had left the police unpoliticised and not at the mercy of politicians, we had remembered the saintly work of Mahatma Gandhi and not paid only lip service to his principles but acted on them.

I recalled Guru Gobind Singh's words: *Manas Ki Jaat Eke Pehchanoo* (Recognise the entire human race as of one caste). Are we all really dead? I am sure those responsible for Gujarat killings and those inciting those killings as also

those taking no action against the killers will find the rest of their lives miserable, even if they escape the Law.

In Tapovan, amongst the leprosy patients, where there is no Sikh or Punjabi of my religion or state, we sing every evening prayers from all religions, with the old and infirm cases. While in the procession, and at the meeting later, I thought of the Bhajan we sing with the patients, which concentrates on Ram. Would Ram ever permit his name in the killings of the innocent?

*Mujh mein Ram tujh mein Ram sab mein Ram samaya  
Sabse karlo pyar jagat mein koi nahin paraya.*

(Ram is in me, Ram is in you, He is there in everyone. Love everyone, therefore, because no one is alien to you)

*Jitne hain sansar mein prani sab mein ek hi jyoti, Ek bagh  
ke pushp hai saare ek haar ke moti, Na jaane kis karighar ne ik  
mitti ka banaya.*

(All the people in the world have the same light in them. They are like flowers of the same garden and the pearls of the same necklace. It is a wonder which master craftsman made us all of the same clay)

*Ek baap ke bete hain ham ek hamari maata Daana Paani  
dene wala ek hamara daata, Na jaane kis moorakh ne ye larna  
hamein sikhaya.*

(All of us are the children of the same mother and father, the one who provides all for us is the same one for everyone. It is a wonder which fool taught us to quarrel among ourselves)

This fool must be the politician. And I am personally very happy that for once the police showed me a very compassionate, considerate face in order that peace should prevail in our city, no matter what provocation came from wherever. I am glad that the VHP, the Shiv Sena, the Muslim organisations, the Christians, we were all there to celebrate the prevention of evil and in preservation of peace which is the strategy of our Police Commissioner, Ankush Dhanvijay.

For me personally, it was the great triumph of human values, because with over a thousand people who live in Tapovan, I find them belonging to my own family, for they are my brothers and sisters, my mothers and fathers, my children. Yet none of them are from my state or my religion.

Kudos to our Police Commissioner and his establishment. Should peace, God forbid, ever be disturbed, we should, as *Ham Sab Ek Hain*, restore peace even at the cost of our lives.

*Bhagwant Singh Dalawari  
Tapovan, Amravati, Maharashtra*

# Landscaping The Welcome Gates at

## ANANDPUR SAHIB

Sri Anandpur Sahib, birthplace of the Khalsa and where the Sikh heart beats strongly, has been adorned with a landscape development that adroitly responds to its social, cultural and religious setting.

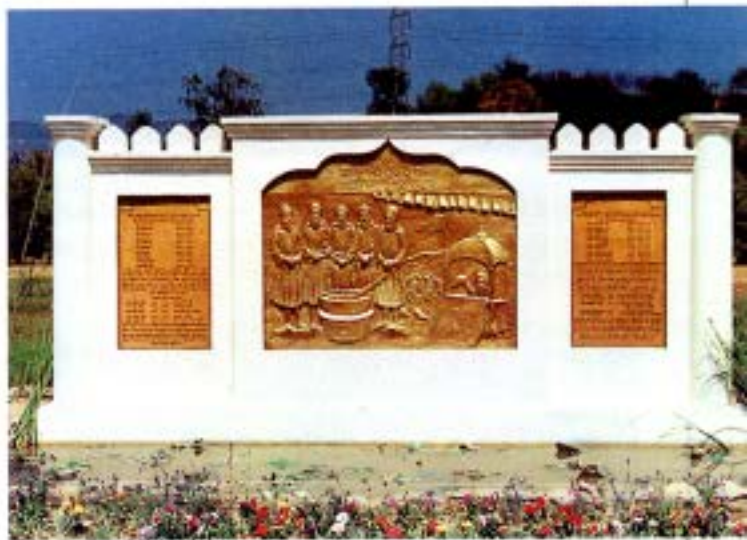
Specific history of the community has been depicted in the landscaped garden adjoining the welcome gates on the highway from Ropar to Anandpur Sahib. The landscape design enlightens and informs the visitor via visually appealing artwork, comprising life-size statues, relief panels, stonewall panels and engraved rocks and boulders. These features have been very harmoniously blended into the landscape.

Free flowing curved walkways link the main central focal point – a fort wall surrounded by a lotus pool – with smaller rock and boulder compositions, culminating in sculpture compositions.

The wisdom of the Sikh Gurus is magnified by the engravings on rock and boulder compositions. The engravings depict the travails and tribulations of the Khalsa and the historical sites of Anandpur Sahib.

The sequence starts with a detail of Guru Tegh Bahadur, the 9<sup>th</sup> Guru who founded the settlement of Anandpur Sahib, buying land of village Makhowal on the banks of the Shatdrav (Sutlej). Set against the picturesque Naina Devi range, this was where Guru Gobind Singh ji created the Khalsa. Then there are engravings of Gurdwara Guru ka Mahal, the shrine that marks the residence of Guru Tegh Bahadur. There is information on the three gurdwaras – Gurdwara Bhora Sahib, Gurdwara Manji Sahib and Gurdwara Damdama Sahib. It was at this place that Guru Tegh Bahadur gave a hearing to the Kashmiri pundit's account of the forcible conversions they were being subjected to by Aurangzeb.

Following this is the depiction of Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom and Gurdwara Sis Ganj Sahib. Engraved on



the rocks is account of the day when Bhai Jaita brought Guru Tegh Bahadur's severed head to Anandpur Sahib.

The rocks are also engraved with depictions of Gurdwara Kila Anandgarh Sahib, Gurdwara Kila Fategarh Sahib, Gurdwara Kila Lohgarh Sahib, and Gurdwara Kila Holgarh Sahib, which mark the sites where Guru Gobind Singh built forts for the defence of the town.

Departing from the norm, the literary aspects of Guru Gobind Singh's fantastic personality have been highlighted.

The sanctimonious fort wall displays a central relief panel, depicting baptism of the *Panj Piyaras* (Bhai Daya Singh, Bhai Dharam Singh, Bhai Himmat Singh, Bhai Mokham Singh and Bhai Sahib Singh) and the martial zeal of the Nihang Singh's during Hola Mohalla. The lotus pool is symbolic of the Spirit of the Khalsa, the bloom of the lotus flower in its pure beauty risen from the mud of its origin. Flanking the murals are two wall panels giving an account of the Sikh religious beliefs.



Visually appealing artworks comprising life-size statues focus on the humane and universal appeal of Sikhism.

The first composition is on a battlefield which comes across as a live screen which flashes not only the martial fervor of the Khalsa, valiantly fighting the enemy but also his humane side. Bhai Kanhaya is shown offering water to an enemy soldier. When Bhai Kanhaya was confronted by Guru Gobind Singh on this account, he explained his conduct saying, "Master, since I have come in touch with you, I see God everywhere and His entire creation as His children. Amongst the wounded, I fail to distinguish between a friend and foe". The message of universal brotherhood strongly resonates here: it is this service which is forerunner of the Red Cross movement of modern times: *Sarbat da Bhalla*.

The second composition portrays the dynamics of langar – the unique Sikh institution. The balance of striving for excellence, yet sharing its rewards with others less fortunate, underlines the basic tenet of the religion: *Kirt karo, Naam japo, Wand chacko*.

The plants were chosen to depict the thorns, the dryness and the rough terrain of the lower Shivalik hills, for such is the reality of life.

Interspersed in the battlefield area are cacti and other succulent – bearing red flowers, symbolising blood on the battlefield. From here one is lead to areas of lush greenery, to bliss and the complete balance – no duality within and without. One does not need the idyllic escapes to reach a state of bliss: it can be attained in these very lower Shivalik

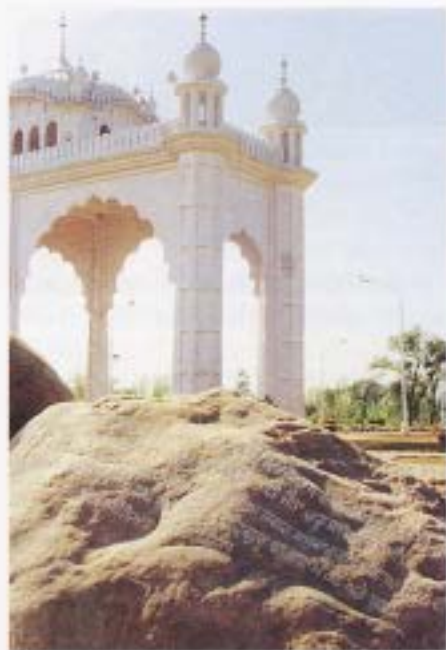


hills of Sri Anandpur Sahib.

A synergy of art, architecture and landscaping, this site is a dialogue of strong words reinforced by the strength of voice in which it is spoken. The message of altruism preached by Guru Gobind Singh now resonates at the entrance gates of the birthplace of the Khalsa.

The grand task of completing the project in a record time of just two months was made possible by a dedicated and highly motivated team.

- Sonia Dhami and Ar.Sukumar Jeirath conceptualised the design.
- The workforce on the site was under the supervision of Engineer A.S.Dhami.
- Jarnail Singh, Amarjit Viridi and Manjit Singh brought the artistic elements of the design to life.



*Sonia Dhani (seen above at the Smithsonian at Washington D.C.) studied at St.Bedes College at Simla and did her post graduation (an MBA in Finance) from the Punjab Agriculture University at Ludhiana.*

*Sonia's interest, nay passion, for plants and nature led her to becoming a landscaper artiste and an expert in garden design and maintenance. Daughter of an Army officer, she recollects "we had homes with huge lawns. To me it always seemed sheer magic how a patch of green would come alive with a profusion of colours and fragrances that the blossoms of flowers brought. Over the years, nurturing plants and flowers became a passion with me and this was something I shared with my father".*

*She founded Terrier Utility Services which took on many assignments, doing the landscaping of many homes in Chandigarh, offices and restaurants in "The City Beautiful", before moving further away, to take on assignments both in the Punjab and overseas, in London, Los Angeles...*

*Work on the Guru Singh Sabha Gurdwara at Southall in London was followed by that on the Sikh Temple at San Jose in California, some private properties in Los Angeles and a restaurant "Village Tandoor" in the same city. "The look was purely ethnic, featuring rural lifestyles of the Punjab, Rajasthan and Gujarat".*

*For Sonia, to be given the responsibility of designing and landscaping the Welcome Gates at Anandpur Sahib at the time of the Tercenary of the Khalsa in 1999, was a wonderful, spiritual experience. "We all did the job as part of our seva to the Guru's abode".*

# S I M R A N

For a Sikh, the goal of life is not the search for personal salvation after death, an entry into heaven, but attainment of the status of a Gurmukh (God oriented), living in effortless harmony with the will of God (in *ਸਹਿਜ*), here in this life. *ਹਸੀਦਿਅ ਖੇਲੀਦਿਅ ਪਹਿਨੀਦਿਅ, ਫਿਰੇ ਹੋਵੇ ਮੁਕਤ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪੂਰਾ ਭੇਟੀਐ ਪੂਰੀ ਹੋਵੇ ਜੁਗਤ*. For this the primary requisite is to remember Him, always everywhere consciously (*ਚਿਤ*) and non-consciously (*ਅਚਿਤ*). The true religious consciousness blossoms on its own inner beauty when the inner self of man and the outer self of Nature (*ਭੂਦਰਤ*) unite. For achieving this state for a Sikh, no time of the day, no season, no locale, no posture and no specific word (*mantra*) are specified. It is the practice of presence of God (*ਵਾਹਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਹੋਦ ਨੂੰ ਮਹਿਸੂਸ ਕਰਨਾ*) which is required. *Simran* is remembering Him in the above context, which is the basic prescription of Sikh way of life.

We reproduce the spontaneous thoughts of Bhai Sahib Bhai Ardaman Singh of Bagrian, on *Simran*.

Sikhism is based on two main principles: harmony and clean actions (*ਨਿਰਮਲ ਕਰਮ*). The fifth Guru says in *Gauri Sukhmani*:

*Meditate on the Lord's Name and do what is clean.*

SGGS P.266

ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਨਮ ਜਪਿ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਕਰਮੁ ॥

(ਗਉੜੀ ਸੁਖਮਨੀਮ: ੫)

*Simran* literally means "remembering". In the *Gurbani* we also find the word ਨਮੁ ਜਪਿ, as used for meditation.

## On What to Concentrate

It is of basic significance to determine as to what to concentrate on during the practice of *Simran*. The tenth Master in his thirty-three *Savaiyas* says:

*Some worship Brahma as the God, others point to Shiv as God,*

*ਕੋਈ ਦਿਸੇਸ ਕੋ ਮਾਲੁ ਹੈ ਅਰ ਕੋਈ ਮਹੇਸ ਕੋ ਏਸ ਬਣੈ ਹੈ।*

*Some say that Vishnu is the Lord of the world, and that by worshipping Him all sins are erased;*

*ਕੋਈ ਕਹੈ ਬਿਸਨੋ ਬਿਸਨਾਇਕ ਜਾਹਿ ਭਜੇ ਅਘ ਚਿਘ ਕਟੈ ਹੈ।*

*Think on this, thousand times, O fool, at the last hour all thy gods will forsake thee.*

*ਥਾਹ ਹਜਾਰ ਬਿਚਾਰ ਅਰੇ ਜੜ ਅੰਤਿ ਸਮੇ ਸਭ ਹੀ ਭਜਿ ਜੈ ਹੈ।*

*Meditate on Him in Thy heart Who was, is, and ever shall be.*

*ਤਾਹੀ ਕੋ ਧਿਆਨ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਣਿ ਹੀਏ ਜੋਊ ਬੇ ਅਥ ਹੈ ਅਰੁ ਆਧੀਉ ਹੈ ਹੈ।*

(ਸਵਾਈ: ੧੦)

At the very beginning of the Holy Granth, we have clear injunction as to Whom to remember and on Whom to concentrate. The first *shlok* gives the definition thus:

*The True One was in the beginning, before all ages begun;  
The True One exists even now, and shall for ever be.*

SGGS P.1

ਅਹਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚੁ, ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ਲਗੈ ਹੋਸੀ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ॥

(ਜਪੁ)

This is preceded by a clear cut concise conception of the Satguru about the Ultimate Truth:

*The One Supreme Being, Whose Name is Eternal Verily, the Creator, devoid of fear and enmity, Immortal, Unborn, Self-existent, the Enlightener; and Grace.*

SGGS P.1

ੴ ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ  
ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

(ਜਪੁ)

The fifth Guru in *Rag Maru* has also clarified that:

*In the heart cherish the Timeless being, and remember Him day and night.*

*ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਰਿਦੈ ਧਿਆਇਦਾ ਦਿਨੁ ਰੈਣ ਜਪੈਥਾ ॥*

(ਮਾਰੂਮ: ੫)

Because Sikhism enjoins upon us the worship of the Formless God (*ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ*),

*God hath no quoit or marks, no colour, no caste, no lineage.*  
*ਚਕ੍ਰ ਚਿਹਨ ਅਰੁ ਬਰਨ ਜਾਤਿ ਅਰੁ ਪਾਤਿ ਨਹਿਨ ਜਿਹ ॥*

*No form, no complexion, no outline, no costume, none can in any way describe Him.*

*ਰੂਪ ਰੰਗ ਅਰੁ ਰੇਖ ਭੇਖ ਕੋਊ ਕਹਿ ਨ ਸਕਤ ਕਿਹ ॥*

(ਜਪੁ: ੧੦)

But God, the Creator, can be observed functioning in His Manifestation, Creation, and Nature wherein He obviously works meticulously (*ਵਰਤੈ ਤਾਕੇ ਤਾਕ*) as Guru Nanak says in *Var Asa*:

*Bless Thee, O Thou, Manifest in Nature.*

SGGS P.469

ਬਲਿਹਾਰੀ ਬੁਦਰਤਿ ਵਸਿਆ ॥

(ਆਸਾ ਵਾਰਮ: ੧)

It is further explained in *Rag Parbhati*:

*The Creator is in His manifest creation, and the creation is the Creator, Who is present everywhere.*

SGGS P.1350

ਖਾਲਿਕੁ ਖਲਕ ਖਲਕ ਮਹਿ ਖਾਲਿਕੁ ਪੂਰਿ ਰਹਿਓ ਸੂਝ ਨਾਈ ॥

(ਪਰਭਾਤੀ ਕਬੀਰ ਜੀ)

Satguru's conception of God can be summed up somewhat in the following way: He is both *Nirgun* (Absolute) as well as *Sargun* (Personal). Before there was any creation, God was contained absolutely in Himself. At the time when He manifested Himself, there was none else. Taking counsel with Himself, what He did, came to pass. There was no world, nor any virtue nor sin nor any caste, creed, or gender. There was only the Formless One Himself. When He thought of making Himself *Sargun* or manifest in creation, He became related to what is called Name (*Naam*). To manifest Himself He made nature where He established His seat and is immanent, diffused everywhere in the form of Love.

According to Sikhism, God is not an abstract imagination, but is a Personal Functioning Being. He is the Father of all, shaping the world and supporting all from within. He does not take birth. He has no incarnations. He Himself stands for all creative agencies. He Himself is All-in-All and is independent of all material conditions. There can be no question of creating the Creator, nor can He be set up as an image.

ਬਾਪਿਆ ਨ ਜਾਇ ਕੀਤਾ ਨ ਹੋਇ ॥ ਅਪੇ ਆਪਿ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਸੋਇ ॥ ਜਪੁ

So, it is such a God, All-in-All, the Uncreated One, on 'Whom' we have to meditate and 'Whose' Name we have always to repeat and in 'Whose' presence we have to live and act.

*Simran* is meant to take us from the *Sthul* (*Sargun*-Personal) to the *Sukham* (*Nirgun*-Absolute) God. Development in this process takes place through stages which can be enumerated as follows.

The first is to recite and repeat the Name audibly with the tongue:

*Had I a hundred thousand tongues instead of one, Nay, if twenty times as many.*

ਇਕ ਦੂ ਜੀਭੋ ਲਖ ਹੋਹਿ ਲਖ ਹੋਵਹਿ ਲਖ ਵੀਸ ॥

*I would call upon the Name of God hundred thousand times with each tongue.*

SGGS P.7

ਲਖੁ ਲਖੁ ਗੋਤਾ ਅਖੀਅਹਿ ਏਕੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਗਦੀਸ ॥

(ਜਪੁ)

and:

*The tongue that utters not the Name, should better be cut and cut.*

SGGS P.1362

ਰਸਨ ਜਧੈ ਨ ਨਾਮੁ ਤਿਲੁ ਤਿਲੁ ਕਰਿ ਕਟੀਐ ॥

(ਫੁਲੋਮ: ੫)

The first step, which being audible, keeps the ears and the mouth occupied, but along with it we have to occupy the mind also by devoting it to what we recite. To understand the meanings is, therefore, necessary for

further advance. Without understanding we will just be repeating like parrots. The eyes observe the creation, ears hear the bani and the tongue repeats the Name (*Naam*)  
ਅਖੀ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ, ਕੰਨੀ ਬਾਣੀ, ਮੁਖ ਆਖਣੁ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਮੁ.

*I see only God and hear only Him and speak of Him alone.*  
ਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਦੀਸੈ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਸੁਣੀਐ ਏਕੁ ਏਕੁ ਵਖਾਣੀਐ ॥

*For, it is all manifestation of the same Creator; without that One God I know of none other*

SGGS P.846

ਆਤਮ ਪਸਾਰਾ ਕਰਣਹਾਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਬਿਨ ਨਹੀ ਜਾਣੀਐ ॥

(ਬਿਲਵਲਮ: ੫)

The second step follows when the repetition becomes inaudible and continues without break with every breath and morsel. In *Var Gauri*, the fourth Nanak says:

*The Guru's Sikh who remembers God with every breath and morsel is loved by the Guru.*

SGGS P.305

ਜੋ ਸਾਸਿ ਗਿਰਾਸਿ ਧਿਆਏ ਮੇਰਾ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਸੋ ਗੁਰਸਿਖੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਮਨਿ ਭਾਵੈ ॥  
(ਗਉੜੀਮ: ੪)

If the word *Waheguru* is being repeated for *simran*, then inhale with *Wahe* and exhale with *Guru*. This practice will help the recitation of the Name by itself in every condition. But along with it the mind must also be kept devoted towards His bounties, His kindnesses and His immanence in everything.

*One who cherishes the Name in his heart,*  
ਉਰਿ ਧਾਰੈ ਜੋ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ॥

*Sees the Lord reflected in all others,*  
ਸਰਬ ਮੈ ਪੇਖੈ ਭਗਵਾਨੁ ॥

*And salutes Him every moment.*  
ਲਿਖ ਲਿਖ ਨਕੁਰ ਨਮਸਕਾਰੈ ॥

*Such a man is capable of saving (redeeming) everybody.*  
SGGS P.274

ਨਾਨਕ ਚਿਹੁ ਅਪਰਸੁ ਸਗਲ ਨਿਸਤਾਰੈ ॥

(ਗਉੜੀਮ: ੫)

It is always essential to do *simran* in His Grace and in deep gratefulness to Him. *Simran* should be continuous:

*Rising, sitting and in sleep remember the Name,*  
ਊਠ ਬੈਠ ਸੋਵਤ ਨਾਮ ॥

*For this is the constant practice of the servant.*

SGGS P.268

ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਨ ਕੈ ਸਦ ਕਾਮ ॥

(ਗਉੜੀਮ: ੫)

When this repetition becomes a habit and the mind gives up being bored but enjoys the calm sweetness which *simran* affords, then the stage arrives about which the Guru says:

Those who do not forget but cherish the Name of the Lord  
in their mind while breathing and eating,  
ਜਿਨ ਸਾਸਿ ਗਿਰਾਸਿ ਨ ਫਿਸਰੈ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮ ਮਨਿ ਮੰਤ੍ਰੁ ॥  
Are blessed, for they alone are perfect saints.

SGGS P.319

ਧੰਨਸਿ ਸੇਈ ਨਾਨਕ ਪੂਰਨੁ ਸੇਈ ਸੰਤੁ ॥

(ਵਾਰ ਗਉੜੀ ਮ: ੫)

This third stage is then reached, when the inaudible recitation and repetition is re-inforced with the mind remaining devoted night and day to the reality of the Timeless Being (Akal Purakh):

In the heart meditate upon the Timeless Being and remember Him night and day.

SGGS P.1101

ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਰਿਦੈ ਧਿਆਇਦਾ ਦਿਨੁ ਰੋਨਿ ਜਪੈ ॥

(ਵਾਰ ਮਧੂ ਮ: ੫)

When the Name is never forgotten and while sitting, walking, doing worldly duties, we remain and work in the presence of the Supreme Master, our mind remains anchored in the Divine Presence without any effort—this is the fourth stage called the stage of *Sahej Anand* (Undisturbed Bliss or Bliss of effortless co-existence within). Then the *Shabad* and our spiritual insight harmonise and *simran* continues without any recitation, meditation or effort. This is called *Ajapa-Jaap* (ਅਜਪਾ ਜਾਪ). Here the mind begins to enjoy untold bliss of the Divine Nectar:

When with good fortune mind begins to feel the presence of the Lord, it reposes in the state of Eternal Bliss.

SGGS P.773

ਸਹਜ ਅਨੰਦੁ ਹੋਆ ਵਡਭਾਗੀ ਮਨਿ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਮੀਠ ਲਾਇਆ ॥

(ਸੁਹੀ ਮ: ੪)

This is the top-most stage (the highest) to be achieved.

*Simran* can very easily be continued while we are walking or riding a horse, in a car or a bus or while ploughing the field, sitting on a truck or tractor or churning curd for butter or cooking meals (*langar*), fanning the *sangat*, or serving the *pangat* or doing any other service or work. Discussing the *bani* and anecdotes from history depicting the sufferings and sacrifices the Sikhs and the Satguru bore to bring about our uplift and spiritual enlightenment, and talking about the unlimited bounties, grace and blessings showered on us by the Satguru as compared to our own weakness and worthlessness, are in a way a part of *Simran*. Remembering the battles fought for our deliverance and other acts of the Satguru to uphold righteousness and exact justice and stem the tide of bigotted tyranny, also form a part of *simran*. Feeling grateful and offering thanks while sitting by the fire in the

biting cold or reposing under a fan and before a cooler in burning heat of the day and enjoying other comforts are also *simran*.

No special age is set for *simran*. It should be started straight away lest this span of life is snapped and we are called to account. The bell may toll and time be up any moment. Nobody can vouchsafe whether the next breath will come or not (ਮੜੁ ਕਿ ਜਾਏ ਸਾਹੁ ਆਵੈ ਕਿ ਨ ਆਵੈ ਰਾਮ). Experience also tells that it becomes very difficult, almost impossible, to concentrate the mind when in pain or suffering from an ailment. It can best be done in good health and while we are fit. In *Rag Bhairon*, we get the clear warning in these words:

So long as your age and health are good,

ਜਬ ਲਗੁ ਜਰਾ ਰੋਗੁ ਨਹੀ ਆਇਆ ॥

So long as time has not overpowered the body,

ਜਬ ਲਗੁ ਕਾਲਿ ਗ੍ਰਸੀ ਨਹੀ ਕਾਇਆ ॥

So long as your speech has not faltered,

ਜਬ ਲਗੁ ਬਿਕਲ ਭਈ ਨਹੀ ਬਾਲੀ ॥

O mind! Dwell on the Master who supports the Universe.

ਭਜਿ ਲੇਹਿ ਰੇ ਮਨ ਸਾਰਿਗਪਾਲੀ ॥

If you do not meditate now, then when will you do it?

ਅਬ ਨ ਭਜਸਿ ਭਜਸਿ ਕਬ ਭਾਈ ॥

For, when the end approaches no meditation will be possible.

SGGS P.1159

ਅਵੈ ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਭਜਿਆ ਜਾਈ ॥

(ਭੈਰਵ ਕਬੀਰ ਜੀ)

Time is passing by fast. We should take time by the forelock and imbibe *simran* in our heart, making it an inseparable part of our life in such a way that even in distress, calamity, adversity and shock of suffering, His remembrance is not disrupted.

We should set out to do *simran* with a concentrated, clear mind and with consciousness of the presence of the Providence, with spirit and prayer:

According to my actions I only find place in hell; I depend only on Your Grace.

ਅਪਣੇ ਕਰਮ ਕਰ ਨਾਕ ਹੂੰ ਪਾਵਉ ਨਹਿਰੁ ਤੁਮਰੇ ਬਿਰਦ ਕੋ ਆਸਰੈ ਸੰਭਾਰ ਹਉ ॥

(ਪਾ: ੧੦)

and:

Grant me understanding to sing Thy praises,

ਤੇਰੇ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਵਾ ਦੇਹਿ ਬੁਝਾਈ ॥

So that I may abide in Truth in accordance with Your Will.

SGGS P.795

ਜੈਸੇ ਸਚ ਮਹਿ ਰਹਉ ਰਜਾਈ ॥

(ਬਿਲਾਵਲ ਮ: ੧)

During this progress, naturally there will be some hurdles, difficulties, and obstacles which one may have to face and overcome. For instance, people begin to talk and criticise, some in praise and some to ridicule, that such and such person has become a *bhagat* and is posing to be a spiritual person. This will create pride and fan the ego and after some time offerings and other services will begin to pour in abundance. This onslaught has to be safeguarded against by inculcating humility in the mind:

*I am sacrificed to that Guru-conscious person who has inculcated humility in the mind.*

ਹਉ ਤਿਸੁ ਘੋਲਿ ਯੁਮਾਇਆ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਰਿਦੈ ਗਰੀਬੀ ਆਵੈ।

(ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ)

We should proceed unmindful of them all as:

*I now seek the Master's protection after all.*

ਅਬ ਹਮ ਚਲੀ ਠਕੁਰ ਪਹਿ ਹਾਰਿ॥

*O my God, I have sought Your refuge, save me or punish me as You will.*

ਜਬ ਹਮ ਸਰਣਿ ਪੁਛੁ ਕੀ ਆਈ ਰਾਖੁ ਪੁਛੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਮਾਰਿ॥ ਰਹਾਉ॥

*The clever flatteries of the people have been cast in the fire. ਲੋਕਨ ਕੀ ਚਤੁਰਾਈ ਧੁਪਮਾ ਤੇ ਬੈਸੰਤਰਿ ਜਾਰਿ॥*

*Let them say good or bad, I have surrendered myself.*

ਕੋਈ ਭਲਾ ਕਹਉ ਭਾਵੈ ਬੁਰਾ ਕਹਉ ਹਮ ਤਨੁ ਦੀਓ ਹੈ ਢਾਰਿ॥

*Anybody who seeks Your protection, O Master, save him with Your kindness.*

ਜੇ ਆਵਤ ਸਰਣਿ ਠਕੁਰ ਪੁਛੁ ਤੁਮਰੀ ਤਿਸੁ ਰਾਖਹੁ ਕਿਰਪਾਧਾਰਿ॥

*Nanak has sought Your protection, O Master, save his honour.*

SGGS P.527

ਜਨ ਤਲਕ ਸਰਣਿ ਤੁਮਾਰੀ ਹਰਿ ਜੀਉ ਰਾਖਹੁ ਲਾਜ ਮੁਰਾਰਿ॥

(ਦੇਵਗੰਧਰੀਮ : ੪)

At a certain stage, the nearness to the Divine Master starts to affect what one says. If one then begins to indulge in showering of blessings or curses on others, whatever is earned and gained is then lost. In advanced stage of *simran*, a very interesting hurdle is sometimes experienced. Our mind (*atma*), when deep in *simran*, sometimes leaves the physical body and soars on high. It enjoys spiritual flight. But as we have not yet reached the stage of perfect harmony, a lurking fear steps in and works like a spoke in a moving wheel, the fear that the *atma* may not find its way back to the body. The incidence of Baba Ram Rai's end is recollected. Baba Ram Rai used to practise yoga and indulge in spiritual flights, leaving his physical body lying prone. One day when the attendant knowing this practice of Baba was away on some work, some people seeing the body thus lying motionless, thought that Baba Ram Rai was dead and so cremated the body.

In this state of *simran*, fear of the unknown around the corner becomes another serious obstacle. If we have a clear conscience and nothing to be shy of in our actions, this fear and hesitation turn into an enthusiasm (ਚਾਉ) to view and enjoy the unseen. It is the sustained effort and understanding of the *Shabad* that help overcome such hurdles. When these hurdles are crossed and super-natural powers generated are subdued, our intelligence and spiritual insight are energised. As a consequence, the vision is widened and one gets flashes of the unknowable past and future and other unperceivable happenings. The visions, the beautiful flashes and other experiences that we get as we advance in the process of *simran*, cannot be described. These can only be felt and cherished by personal experience. They are like a sweet nectar whose taste can only be enjoyed by the one who drinks it. As is said in *Rag Gauri*:

*It is like sweet wine of Mahua flower;*

*he alone can know its taste who has drunk it.*

SGGS P.333

ਅਲਤੁੰਡੀ ਕਾ ਜੈਸੇ ਭਇਆ ਬਰੇਛਾ ਜਿਨਿ ਪੀਆ ਤਿਨਿ ਜਾਣਿਆ॥

(ਗਉੜੀ ਬੈਰਾਗਣ ਕਬੀਰ ਜੀ)

And:

*If a dumb person tastes the juice of heavenly nectar, how can he describe the taste when asked?*

SGGS P.657

ਗੁੰਗੇ ਮਹਾ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਰਸੁ ਚਾਖਿਆ ਪੁਛੇ ਕਹਨੁ ਨ ਜਾਈ ਹੈ॥

(ਸੋਰਠਿ ਨਾਮ ਦੇਵੀ ਜੀ)

Recitation of the *Gurbani* is an important part of *simran*. We are enjoined upon to commit to memory the five *banis* which are recited when *amrit* is prepared, and *Rehras* and *Keertan Sohila*. These are to be recited during morning, evening and at night when going to bed. This is to ensure regularity and continuity of *simran* in all conditions. In initial stages, sometimes we get bored by reciting over and over again the same words or *bani*. But it affords good opportunity to practise concentration and create will power to keep in control the mind which is so very fickle and wild. All the same, if we switch to reciting for a little while some other *bani* from the Scripture, it helps revive interest and brings the mind back from its wild wanderings. Achievements and experiences are gained only by personal effort. But this is not the final stage. The veil of ignorance and superstition is torn aside only by the flash of Divine Love.

*When one eats up the desires, spiritual discipline is attained and then enlightenment dawns.*

ਅਚਰੁ ਚਰੈ ਤਾ ਸਿਧਿ ਹੋਈ ਸਿਧਿ ਤੇ ਬੁਧਿ ਪਾਈ॥

*When the arrow of love pierces the body doubt is removed.*

SGGS P.607

ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਕੇ ਸਰ ਲਾਗੇ ਤਨ ਭੀਤਰਿ ਤਾ ਝੁਮ ਕਾਟਿਆ ਜਾਈ ॥  
(ਸੋਰਠਿ ਮ: ੪)

It is then that in the admiration and love of the Master, one forgets the self and the 'I-am-ness' (ਹਉਮੈ) is effaced, as a result of which complete harmony is achieved with God. This stage is described as:

*In the human soul abides God, the soul exists in God, this is realised through the Guru's teaching*

SGGS P.1153

ਆਤਮ ਮਹਿ ਰਾਮੁ ਰਾਮ ਮਹਿ ਆਤਮੁ ਚੀਨਸਿ ਗੁਰ ਬੀਚਾਰਾ ॥  
(ਫੈਰਉ ਮ: ੧)

*When "I" was there You were away; now that You are there my 'I-am-ness' has disappeared.*  
ਜਬ ਹਮੈ ਹੋਤੇ ਤਬ ਤੂ ਨਹੀ ਅਬ ਤੁਹੀ ਮੈ ਲਹੀ ॥

*Winds blowing in the seas raise high waves, but they too are nothing but water*

SGGS P.657

ਆਨਲ ਅਗਮ ਜੈਸੇ ਲਹਰਿ ਮਇ ਓਦਧਿ ਜਲ ਕੇਵਲ ਜਲ ਮਾਹੀ ॥  
(ਸੋਰਠਿ ਰਵਿਦਾਸ ਜੀ)

Then one begins to say:

*I am but nothing, O God, every thing belongs to You.*  
ਮੈ ਨਾਹੀ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਸਭੁ ਕਿਛੁ ਤੇਰਾ ॥

*On one side You are the Absolute Lord, while on the other, You are the Related Immanent One. Between these two ends my Master is playing His plays.*

ਈਐ ਨਿਰਗੁਨ ਧ੍ਰਿਐ ਸਰਗੁਨ ਕੇਲ ਕਰਤ ਬਿਚਿ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਮੇਰਾ ॥ਰਹਾਉ॥

*You are within the body and also without, for You pervade everywhere.*

ਨਗਰ ਮਹਿ ਆਪਿ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਭੁਨਿ ਆਪਨ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਮੇਰੇ ਕੇ ਸਗਲ ਬਸੇਰਾ ॥

*You are the Ruler and also the Subject, at some places You are the Master while at other You are the Servant.*

ਆਪੇ ਹੀ ਰਾਜਨੁ ਆਪੇ ਹੀ ਰਾਇਆ ਕਹ ਕਰ ਨਾਕੁਰੁ ਕਹ ਕਹ ਚੇਰਾ ॥

*From whom do we hide and whom do we cheat, for wherever I see, Your Presence gets near and near.*

ਕਾ ਕਉ ਦੁਰਾਉ ਕਾ ਸਿਉ ਬਲਬੰਸਾ ਜਹ ਜਹ ਪੇਖਉ ਤਹ ਤਹ ਨੇਰਾ ॥

*Nanak, since I have met the Guru-saint, I see no difference between the ocean and the drop.*

SGGS P.827

ਸਾਧ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਗੁਰੁ ਭੇਟਿਓ ਨਾਨਕ ਮਿਲਿ ਸਾਗਰ ਬੂੰਦ ਨਹੀ ਅਨ ਹੋਰਾ ॥  
(ਬਿਲਵਾਲ ਮ: ੫)

Here one transcends the need to understand. One has only to accept and adore. The Satguru has offered a new approach, above the traditional paths of knowledge, work, devotion and renunciation. This is the path, the doctrine, of Name. This means creation of the mood of aesthetic ecstasy, which in other words means aesthetical insight

leading man through appearances to reality. One gets intuitional understanding of the Divine Being. That is why Sikhs are sometimes referred to as mystics. When proceeding on this way we come across many distractions and we gain some such powers which are not understood by a common man but get wondrous flashes and experience other inexpressible visions. We should be careful and not get attracted by and involved in them. The goal is far beyond them which is the place of the Formless and Timeless God, about whom Satguru says:

*The Lord is without form, feature, or hue, beyond the world's senses.*

SGGS P.283

ਤੁਪੁ ਨ ਰੇਖ ਨ ਰੰਗੁ ਕਿਛੁ ਤਿਹੁ ਗੁਣ ਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਬਿੰਨ ॥

ਗਉੜੀ ਮ: ੫

A stage is achieved when, in the perceptible and imperceptible, the Light shines from only One Source. Then:

*The Master alone speaks in every heart.*

ਸਭੈ ਘਟ ਰਾਮੁ ਬੋਲੈ ਰਾਮਾ ਬੋਲੈ ॥

*Who else but God speaks.*

ਰਾਮ ਬਿਨਾ ਕੋ ਬੋਲੈ ਹੋ ॥ਰਹਾਉ॥

*Of the same clay are moulded the elephant and the ant, and vessels of different shapes.*

ਏਕਲ ਮਾਟੀ ਕੁੰਜਰ ਚੀਟੀ ਭਾਜਨ ਹੈ ਬਹੁ ਨਾਨਾ ਰੇ ॥

*The Master is functioning in every thing, in plant life, animal life, crawling life and winged life.*

SGGS P.688

ਅਸਬਾਵਰ ਜੰਗਮ ਕੀਟ ਪਤੰਗਮ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਰਾਮੁ ਸਮਾਨਾ ਰੇ ॥

(ਮਾਲੀ ਗਉੜੀ ਨਾਮਦੇਉ)

And:

*Whatever, even the deer, the fish and the birds utter, I hear in them none else but my God.*

SGGS P.1265

ਜੋ ਬੋਲਤ ਹੈ ਮ੍ਰਿਗ ਮੀਨ ਪੰਥਿਗੁ ਸੁ ਬਿਨੁ ਹਰਿ ਜਾਪਤ ਹੈ ਨਹੀ ਹੋਰ ॥

(ਮਲਾਰ ਮ: ੪)

Previously we were proceeding from *asthul* to *sukham*, now at this stage we observe *asthul* in the *sukham* as well. All the notes and noises originate through the five elements in this world. It is the Supreme Master who strikes the notes:

*Now that my Friends (Guru-conscious loved ones) have come into my home (mind), the five strains of Divine Music have begun to ring within me, unstruck.*

SGGS P.764

ਪੰਚ ਸਬਦ ਧੁਨਿ ਅਨਹਦ ਵਜੈ ਹਮ ਘਰਿ ਸਾਜਨ ਆਏ ॥

(ਸੂਹੀ ਮ: ੧)

The vision of the immanent God is then observed and enjoyed through our senses:

This Universe that you perceive, is the manifest image of God; in it we have the vision of the Lord.

SGGS P.922

ਏਹੁ ਵਿਸੁ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ਭੁਮ ਦੇਖਦੇ ਏਹੁ ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਰੂਪੁ ਹੈ ਹਰਿ ਰੂਪੁ ਨਦਰੀ  
ਆਇਆ।

(ਰਮਕਲੀਮ : ੩)

Beyond the circle of religions (Vedas, Semitic Texts, etc.),  
and the whole world,

ਬੇਦ ਕਤੇਬ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਹਭਾ ਹੂੰ ਬਾਹਰਾ ॥

Nanak's Master is clearly seen manifest all over.

SGGS P.397

ਨਾਨਕ ਕਾ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੁ ਦਿਸੈ ਜਾਹਰਾ ॥

(ਆਸਾਮ : ੫)

God is thus delivered from the bonds of religions and is brought back to man. With the help and strength of the Guru, by and by, with *simran* we reach a stage when we forget our self completely. There our soul forgets even our body and enjoys the Bliss of the nearness to the Universal Soul. Ultimately, when we attain complete harmony, we reach the City of Bliss which is described as:

"Without Sorrow" is the name of the Town,  
ਬੇਗਮ ਪੁਰਾ ਸਹਰ ਕੋ ਨਾਉ ॥

Where there is no suffering or anxiety.  
ਦੁਖੁ ਅੰਦਿਹੁ ਨਹੀ ਤਿਹਿ ਨਾਉ ॥

Nor is there any harrasment of tax on goods.  
ਨਾ ਤਸਵੀਸ ਖਿਰਾਜੁ ਨ ਮਾਸੁ ॥

Neither is any fear of mistake, nor dread of any slump.  
ਖਉਛੁ ਨ ਖਤਾ ਨ ਤਰਸੁ ਜਵਾਲੁ ॥

I have now found my wonderful fatherland.  
ਅਬ ਮੋਹਿ ਖੂਬ ਵਡਨ ਗਾਹ ਪਾਈ ॥

There it is eternal peace and bliss.  
ਊਹਾ ਬੇਰਿ ਸਦਾ ਮੇਰੇ ਭਾਈ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

The Sovereign is everlasting and eternal.  
ਕਾਇਮੁ ਦਾਇਮੁ ਸਦਾ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੀ ॥

There is no second or third rivit but only one Master.  
ਦੇਮ ਨ ਸੋਮ ਏਕ ਸੋ ਆਹੀ ॥

The population is ever famous, for there abide who are wealthy-and content.

ਆਬਾਦਾਨੁ ਸਦਾ ਮਸਹੂਰ ॥ ਊਹਾ ਗਣੀ ਬਸਹਿ ਮਾਮੂਰ ॥

They are free to go about anywhere they like and enjoy.  
ਤਿਉ ਤਿਉ ਮੈਲ ਕਰਹਿ ਜਿਉ ਭਾਵੈ ॥

They know the secrets of the Mansion and nobody checks them.

ਮਹਰਮ ਮਹਲ ਨ ਕੋ ਅਟਕਾਵੈ ॥

Says Ravidas the emancipated tanner;  
ਕਹਿ ਰਵਿਦਾਸ ਖਲਾਸ ਚਮਾਰਾ ॥

He who is my fellow citizen in this land, is my loved friend.

SGGS P.345

ਜੇ ਹਮ ਸਹਰੀ ਸੁ ਮੀਤੁ ਹਮਾਰਾ ॥

(ਗਉੜੀ ਗੁਆਚੇਰੀ ਰਵਿਦਾਸ ਜੀ)

Thus, we arrive at the Divine Door which is described as:

How beautiful Your Door; how lovely the Mansion where  
You sit to watch over all.

ਮੈ ਦਰੁ ਤੇਰਾ ਕੇਹਾ ਮੈ ਘਰੁ ਕੇਹਾ ਜਿਤੁ ਬਹਿ ਸਰਬ ਸਮਾਲੇ ॥

How many minstrels are there with countless instruments  
of different kinds.

ਵਾਜੇ ਤੇਰੇ ਨਾਦ ਅਨੇਕ ਅਸੀਖਾ ਕੇਤੇ ਤੇਰੇ ਵਾਵਣਹਾਰੇ ॥

How many heavenly musicians who sing in various tunes  
and different measures.

ਕੇਤੇ ਤੇਰੇ ਰਾਗ ਪਰੀ ਸਿਉ ਕਹੀਅਹਿ ਕੇਤੇ ਗਾਵਣਹਾਰੇ ॥

The elements of water, wind, and fire serenade at Your  
Door and there is the Lord of Justice singing to Your glory.  
ਗਾਵਣਿ ਤੁਧਨੋ ਪਵਣੁ ਪਾਣੀ ਬੈਸੰਤਰੁ ਗਾਵੈ ਰਾਜਾ ਧਰਮੁ ਦੁਆਰੈ ॥

To You sing Chit and Gupt, the scribes of heaven, on whose  
record the Lord of Dharam weighs the deeds of beings.

ਗਾਵਣਿ ਤੁਧਨੋ ਚਿਤੁ ਗੁਪਤੁ ਲਿਖਿ ਜਾਣਨਿ ਲਿਖਿ ਲਿਖਿ ਧਰਮੁ  
ਬੀਚਾਰੇ ॥

To You sing Siva, Brahma and the spouse of Vishnu, all  
beautified by Your kindness.

ਗਾਵਣਿ ਤੁਧਨੋ ਈਸਰੁ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਦੇਵੀ ਸੋਹਨਿ ਤੇਰੇ ਸਦਾ ਸਵਾਰੇ ॥

At Your door sing Indras, seated on their thrones with the  
choirs of other gods and goddesses.

ਗਾਵਣਿ ਤੁਧਨੋ ਇੰਦ੍ਰ ਇੰਦ੍ਰਾਸਨਿ ਬੈਠੇ ਦੇਵਤਿਆ ਦਰਿ ਨਲੇ ॥

The Siddhs, wrapt in meditation, and the seers in their  
discourses, sing to You.

ਗਾਵਣਿ ਤੁਧਨੋ ਸਿਧ ਸਮਾਧੀ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਗਾਵਣਿ ਤੁਧਨੋ ਸਾਧ ਬੀਚਾਰੇ ॥

The celibates, and men of Truth and Contentment and  
mighty warriors also sing to You.

ਗਾਵਣਿ ਤੁਧਨੋ ਜਤੀ ਸਤੀ ਸੰਤਪੀ ਗਾਵਣਿ ਤੁਧਨੋ ਵੀਰ ਕਰਾਰੇ ॥

To You sing the great sages with the scriptures of different  
ages, and the Pandits who read them.

ਗਾਵਣਿ ਤੁਧਨੋ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਪੜਨਿ ਰਖੀਸੁਰ ਜੁਗੁ ਜੁਗੁ ਵੇਦਾ ਲਲੇ ॥

To You also sing the beauties that enchant the hearts in  
heaven, on earth, and in the nether regions.

ਗਾਵਣਿ ਤੁਧਨੋ ਮੋਹਣੀਆ ਮਨੁ ਮੋਹਨਿ ਸੁਰਗੁ ਮਛੁ ਪਇਆਲੇ ॥

Gems created by You along with the sixty-eight places of  
pilgrimage sing of You.

ਗਾਵਣਿ ਤੁਧਨੋ ਰਤਨ ਯੁਪਾਏ ਤੇਰੇ ਅਨਸਨਿ ਤੀਰਥ ਲਲੇ ॥

Valiant warriors and the brave-hearts sing to You, and so  
do the four sources of life.

ਗਾਵਣਿ ਤੁਧਨੋ ਜੈਧ ਮਹਾਬਲ ਸੁਰਾ ਗਾਵਣਿ ਤੁਧਨੋ ਖਾਣੀ ਚਾਰੇ ॥

To You sing earthly regions, heavenly spheres, and the  
whole Universe, created and sustained by You.

ਗਾਵਣਿ ਤੁਧਨੋ ਖੰਡ ਮੰਡਲ ਭ੍ਰਮੰਡਾ ਕਰਿ ਕਰਿ ਰਖੇ ਤੇਰੇ ਧਾਰੇ ॥

But to You sing those who please You and who are steeped  
in the nectar of Your love.

ਸੇਈ ਤੁਧਨੋ ਗਾਵਨਿ ਜੋ ਤੁਧੁ ਭਾਵਨਿ ਰਤੇ ਤੇਰੇ ਭਗਤ ਰਸਾਲੇ ॥

Many more also sing to You whom I cannot even visualise  
or recall.

SGGS P.8

ਹੋਰਿ ਕੇਤੇ ਤੁਧਨੋ ਗਾਵਨਿ ਸੇ ਮੈ ਚਿਤਿ ਨ ਆਵਨਿ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਕਿਆ ਥੀਚਚੇ ॥

(ਆਸਾਮ: ੧)

An outline of the daily routine of a Sikh is given by the  
fourth Guru :

He who is called a Sikh of the Guru, should rise early and  
remember the Lord's Name.

ਗੁਰ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਜੋ ਸਿਖੁ ਅਖਾਏ, ਸੁ ਭਲਕੇ ਉਠਿਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਵੈ ॥

He should start the day early and take bath and have a dip  
in the Pool of Nectar (Naam).

ਉਦਮੁ ਕਰੇ ਭਲਕੇ ਪਰਭਾਤੀ ਇਸਨਾਨੁ ਕਰੇ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਸਰਿ ਨਾਵੈ ॥

Through the Guru's teachings, he should dwell upon the  
Lord, so that all his sins are washed off.

ਉਪਦੇਸਿ ਗੁਰੁ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਜਪੁ ਜਾਪੈ ਸਭਿ ਕਿਲਵਿਖ ਪਾਪ ਦੇਖ ਲਹਿ  
ਜਾਵੈ ॥

And when the sun rises, let him sing the Guru's word  
and reflect on God's Name while sitting and standing.

ਫਿਰਿ ਚੜੈ ਦਿਵਸੁ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਗਾਵੈ, ਬਹਦਿਆ ਉਠਦਿਆ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ  
ਧਿਆਵੈ ॥

He who remembers my God with every breath and morsel,  
that Sikh becomes the beloved of the Guru.

ਜੋ ਸਾਸਿ ਗਿਰਾਸਿ ਧਿਆਏ ਮੇਰਾ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਸੋ ਗੁਰਸਿਖ ਗੁਰੁ ਮਨਿ ਭਾਵੈ ॥

To whom my Lord becomes kind, the Guru gives  
instructions to that Sikh.

ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਦਇਆਲੂ ਹੋਵੇ ਮੇਰਾ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਤਿਸੁ ਗੁਰਸਿਖ ਗੁਰੁ ਉਪਦੇਸੁ  
ਸੁਣਾਵੈ ॥

Nanak craves the Dust of that Sikh of the Guru who always  
remembers and makes others remember the Name.

SGGS P.305

ਜਨੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਧੂਤਿ ਮੰਗੈ ਤਿਸੁ ਗੁਰਸਿਖ ਕੀ ਜੋ ਆਪਿ ਜਪੈ ਅਵਰਹ ਨਾਮੁ  
ਜਪਾਵੈ ॥

(ਗਉੜੀ ਵਾਰਮ: ੪)

## Purpose of Simran

The purpose of *simran* is never to forget the presence  
of God. It creates a feeling of His Presence in us and our  
existence in Him. In *Baramaha, Rag Majh*, the fifth Satguru  
says, "When the flow of sap is stopped, the branch withers  
and the tree cannot bear fruit." ਜਲ ਬਿਨੁ ਸਾਖ ਕੁਮਲਾਵਤੀ ਉਪਜਹਿ  
ਨਾਹੀ ਦਾਮ । *Simran* keeps the sap flowing and the contact  
fresh with the fountain-head of Life. Thus, when both God  
and Guru have filled the individual, Godly virtues, powers  
and vigour are generated. This presence of the Guru as  
the functioning force in the Sikh links him to an  
inexhaustible source of power and virility. *Simran* is,

therefore, an exercise in experiencing the Presence of God.  
Through *Simran* we realise the Truth and get our minds  
attuned to the Will of the Ultimate Truth. This is impressed  
in *Jap* as follows :

O Satguru, make me understand one thing,

ਗੁਰਾ ਇਕ ਦੇਹਿ ਬੁਝਾਈ ॥

That there is but one Benefactor of all creatures.

May I never forget Him.

SGGS P.2

ਸਭਨਾ ਜੀਆ ਕਾ ਇਕੁ ਦਾਤਾ ਸੇ ਮੈ ਵਿਸਰਿ ਨ ਜਾਈ ॥

(ਜਪੁ)

*Simran* will lead to the realisation of His presence  
everywhere around and within us, and of our being  
existing in His lap. When we get the awareness of His  
unfailing presence within us, we realise that we cannot  
hide even our inner thoughts from Him.

Nothing can be concealed from You, the Omnipresent, who  
watches everywhere.

SGGS P.156

ਅਗਹੁ ਦੇਖੇ ਪਿਛਹੁ ਦੇਖੇ ਤੁਝ ਤੇ ਕਹਾ ਛਪਾਵੈ ॥

(ਗਉੜੀਮ: ੧)

Our actions, our thoughts, our feelings, our living will  
by itself, become unblemished and we are on the right  
track. *Simran* will take us nearer and nearer to the  
Fountain-head of Life. Suffice it to say that this "nearness"  
and "presence" will generate saintly virtues and Godly  
values in us and make us God-conscious. The basic  
purpose of *simran* is that the human mind be controlled  
and trained to become attuned with the Divine will so that  
whatever is brought about by the Almighty Creator is  
accepted not only without demur and complaining, but  
with calm pleasure. Persistent, patient, continuation of  
remembering will create love. Remembrance and love,  
thus, become inseparable. The *Sawaiya* of bard Balh gives  
a moving detail thus:

Satguru, contemplating and remembering Whom the  
vision is cleared of darkness.

ਜਿਹ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਸਿਮਰੈਤ ਨਯਨ ਕੇ ਤਿਮਰ ਮਿਟਹਿ ਖਿਨੁ ॥

By dwelling on the Satguru the Lord's Name comes to  
dwell in our minds every moment.

ਜਿਹ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਸਿਮਰੈਥਿ ਰਿਦੈ ਹਰਿਨਾਮੁ ਦਿਨੋ ਦਿਨੁ ॥

It is Satguru by remembering whom the fire burning in  
the heart is quenched.

ਜਿਹ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਸਿਮਰੈਥਿ ਜੀਅ ਕੀ ਤਪਤ ਮਿਟਾਵੈ ॥

By dwelling on the Satguru one is blessed with miraculous  
powers and all the treasures.

ਜਿਹ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਸਿਮਰੈਥਿ ਰਿਪਿ ਸਿਧਿ ਨਵ ਨਿਧਿ ਪਾਵੈ ॥

Balh says, that is Guru Ram Das, associate with his sangat,  
and praise Him in gratefulness.

ਸੋਈ ਰਾਮ ਦਾਸੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਬਲ ਭਣਿ ਮਿਲਿ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਧੰਨਿ ਧੰਨਿ ਕਰਹੁ ॥

*By following the Satguru, one realises the Supreme Being,  
O man! Ever remember and contemplate the Satguru.*

SGGS P.1405

ਜਿਹ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਲਗਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਪਾਈਐ ਸੇ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਸਿਮਰਹੁ ਨਰਹੁ ॥

(ਸਵਾਈਏਮ: ੪)

*This is the reason we get the instruction of the Guru.*

(ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਟੇਕ ਰਹਹੁ ਦਿਨ ਰਾਤਿ).

## The Guru

Along with *simran* of Akal Purkh, in the Scripture, *Gurbani* impresses upon us *simran* and *Jap* of the Guru as well. To go to an unknown place it is necessary to have instructions from a guide who knows the place thoroughly and can point out the obstructions, pitfalls and difficulties and other troubles that we may have to face on the way. Such a guide is the Guru who, in his heart, belongs to that very place. He will not only tell us which way to go and which difficulties and obstructions we will have to face, but also the ascent being very slippery and difficult, he will take us by the hand and lead us to the goal. Without the Guru it is pitch dark and nothing can be perceived (ਗੁਰ ਬਿਨੁ ਘੋਰੁ ਅੰਧਾਰੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਬਿਨੁ ਸਮਝ ਨ ਆਵੈ ॥ ਸਵੱਯੇਮ: ੪ ਕੇ). To attain the goal, therefore, we have first to create in us devotion, faith, and love for the Guru and surrender our intelligence, thoughts, mind and body to the Guru (ਤਨੁ ਮਨੁ ਧਨੁ ਸਭੁ ਸਉਪਿ ਗੁਰ ਕਉ ਹੁਕਮਿ ਮੰਨਿਐ ਪਾਈਐ). That is why Bhai Nand Lal says:

*Remember Him, remember Him, always remember His remembrance.*

ਯਾਦਿ ਰੂਪੁਨ ਯਾਦਿ ਰੂਪੁ ਗੋਯਾ ਮੁਦਾਮ।

It is the Guru who lifts the veil of ignorance and shows the light. It is the Guru who reveals the mysteries of the the known and Unseeable. In *Rag Gaund*, the fifth Guru says:

*The Creator is known through the Guru.*

SGGS P.864

ਜਿਨਿ ਕੀਆ ਸੋ ਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਜਾਨਿਆ ॥

(ਗੋਡਮ: ੫)

Then again we come across another such command:

*I am sacrifice to that mediator friend, by meeting whom the Master is known.*

SGGS P.964

ਘੋਲਿ ਘੁਮਾਈ ਤਿਸ ਮਿਤ੍ਰੁ ਵਿਚੋਲੇ ਜੈ ਮਿਲਿ ਕੰਤੁ ਪਛਾਣਾ ॥

(ਵਾਰ ਰਾਮਕਲੀਮ: ੫)

And further:

*O my mind, recite only the Guru's Name.*

ਗੁਰੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਕਰੁ ਮੈਰ ॥

*For me there is no one else but the Guru.*

SGGS P.864

ਗੁਰੁ ਬਿਨੁ ਮੈ ਨਾਹੀ ਹੋਰ ॥

(ਗੋਡਮ: ੫)

In the above quotation the words —“Guru Gur”—need to be clearly understood. They mean the Guru of the Gurus, i.e., God. So here the order is to meditate on the Guru and also Guru's Guru. So the Guru functions like a small engine which is used to turn on the larger machine. So the Guru works and functions to switch us on to the Guru God. The first step, therefore, is to grasp the Guru's Lotus Feet and absorb the Guru's wisdom.

The Baani is the Guru and Guru is the Baani

SGGS P.982

ਬਾਣੀ ਗੁਰੁ ਹੈ ਗੁਰੁ ਹੈ ਬਾਣੀ ॥

(ਨਟ ਨਰਾਇਨਮ: ੪)

So much so that we become and function only as instruments under the command of the Guru Master. In *Rag Jait Sri* the fourth Nanak says:

*The jewel of the Lord's Name is enshrined in my heart, as the Guru has placed his hand of Blessing Grace on my forehead.*

ਮੇਰੈ ਹੀਅਰੈ ਰਤਨੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਹਰਿ ਬਸਿਆ ਗੁਰਿ ਹਾਥੁ ਧਰਿਓ ਮੇਰੈ ਮਥਾ ॥

*Sins and sorrows, gathered birth after birth, have all been washed away; the Guru having blessed me with the Name, all my accounts have been settled.*

SGGS P.696

ਜਨਮ ਜਨਮ ਕੇ ਕਿਲਬਿਖ ਦੁਖ ਊਤਰੇ ਗੁਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਦੀਓ ਰਿਨੁ ਲਥਾ ॥

(ਜੈਤਸਰੀਮ: ੪)

The fifth Nanak says in *Rag Parbhati*:

*Meditating on the Lord's Name, one is rid of all the sin.*

ਸਿਮਰਤ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਿਲਬਿਖ ਸਭਿ ਕਾਟੇ ॥

*The records of our deeds with the Dharmraj are all torn away.*

SGGS P.1348

ਧਰਮ ਰਾਇ ਕੇ ਕਾਗਰ ਫਾਟੇ ॥

(ਪਰਭਾਣੀਮ: ੫)

A Sikh is thus linked up with an inexhaustible source of power. A change then takes place not only in physical fitness but also in his mental-and spiritual outlook. He will become and work as a garrison of the Lord of Hosts, a host in himself.

The Guru being one with God, our life line with the Fountain-head of Life will thus be energised.

## The Mind

The hardest part is to control the mind and mould it to become attuned to the Will of the Universal Mind. About mind being defiant, restless and unstable, the Satguru says:

O mother! my mind is not in my control.

ਮਾਈ ਮਨੁ ਮੇਰੇ ਬਸਿ ਨਾਹਿ ॥

Night and day it hankers after vice; I know not how to stop it.

ਨਿਸ ਬਾਸੁਰ ਬਿਖਿਅਨ ਕਉ ਧਾਵਤ ਕਿਹਿ ਬਿਧਿ ਰੋਕਉ ਤਾਹਿ

॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

It listens to different scriptures but cares not about their teachings even for a moment.

ਬੇਦ ਪੁਰਾਨ ਸਿਮ੍ਰਿਤਿ ਕੇ ਮਤ ਸੁਨਿ ਨਿਮਖ ਨ ਹੀਏ ਬਸਾਵੈ ॥

Lured by another's riches and woman, wastes the life in vain.

ਪਰਧਨ ਪਰ ਦਾਰਾ ਸਿਉ ਰਚਿਓ ਬਿਰਥਾ ਜਨਮੁ ਸਿਰਾਵੈ ॥

(ਸੋਰਠਿਮ: ੯)

The mind may be hard nut but there can be no advancement in *simran* (ਨਾਮ ਅਭਿਆਸ) without cracking it and training it. It is only when we are able to conquer the mind that we conquer the world (ਮਨਿ ਜੀਤੈ ਜਗੁ ਜੀਤੁ). The human mind is like a spark from the Universal Soul. It is essential, therefore, to understand this reality. The Guru says :

O mind! You are the embodiment of Light, better appreciate your origin.

SGGS P.441

ਮਨ ਤੂੰ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਰੂਪੁ ਹੈ ਅਪਣਾ ਮੂਲ ਪਛਾਣੁ ॥

(ਅਸਾਮ: ੨)

The human mind is like a double-edged sword. It cuts both ways. It can lead us to deliverance and can also drag us to hell. So when the reality has dawned, the mind will work as a driving force and take us to the desired end. The Satguru explains in the following words :

The mind is like a ruler, it is pacified when it is satisfied through the grace of the Guru. Its cravings are then stilled. ਮਨੁ ਰਾਜਾ ਮਨੁ ਮਨ ਤੇ ਮਾਨਿਆ ਮਨਸਾ ਮਨਹਿ ਸਮਾਈ ॥

The mind, united with God, when separated, is wasted away. When understanding dawns it sings the praises of the Lord.

ਮਨੁ ਜੋਗੀ ਮਨੁ ਬਿਨਸਿ ਬਿਚਿਗੀ ਮਨੁ ਸਮਝੈ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਈ ॥

Rare persons mould the mind with the Shabad and control the mind with the grace of the Guru.

ਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਮਨੁ ਮਾਰਿਆ ਸਬਦੁ ਵੀਚਾਰਿਆ ਤੇ ਵਿਰਲੇ ਸੰਸਾਰਾ ॥

Nanak: The Master is All-prevailing; emancipation truly comes through the Shabad.

SGGS P.1125

ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਭਰਿਪੁਰਿ ਲੀਣਾ ਸਾਚ ਸਬਦਿ ਨਿਸਤਾਰਾ ॥

(ਭੈਰਉਮ: ੧)

The human mind becomes blurred because of hopes and fears, desires and attachments, and so on. This dirt has got to be cleansed to make the mind crystal clear

(ਨਿਰਮਲ ਮਨ). As a consequence, our intelligence will also become capable of discriminating between good and bad (ਬਿਬੇਕ ਬੁਧਿ). It is only the understanding of the Shabad and its interpretation in our actions which can do this cleansing.

The human mind works in two ways. Firstly, it functions through our physical organs and senses. Secondly, it works by itself, direct and straight, without any help of our organs. In the second way, it functions by becoming one with things. As for instance when we get annoyed, we get enraged straight away. Similarly, the mind functions during love, lust, and passion. But we remain aware and in knowledge of being in that state, as we become one with wrath, love, lust, or passion and so on. In the same way, we are aware of our origins and have the knowledge of our being, though the experience of Reality follows only if we get into complete harmony and become one with it. We miss the harmony and the feeling of oneness, because we work under the impression of being separate and independent from others: the Creator and other beings His Creation. The Mind is in the habit of working independently of our physical organs and senses as in hypnotism, in dreams, and under other subconscious conditions. So if we link our mind with something and become one with it, we can realise its identity and origin and can appreciate its intentions without the help of our organs. In the same manner, if we can lift our mind above human failings and attachments, and link it with the Supreme Being, we can get the Divine vision and experience spiritual oneness. It is the Supermind who can lead and take us to this state. And this Supermind is the Guru - the Naam - the Shabad.

The mind can be stabilized but with some centre. This centre is not to be static or dead as stone. But to direct the mind and put it under discipline in due course leads to its centre. We have to search for this centre with the help the light of intelligence. The void, the longing, the urge, and the unsatisfied desires and incompleteness in us are indications that everything is not a myth but there is some Central Reality. In lack of perfection, there is lurking desire to attain perfection without feeling any frustration. This longing and urge, in spite of awareness of being transitory, points towards something which is real, and this Reality is the centre around which the mind is made to revolve by Nature. Within this centre is the Ultimate Reality. We have first to link with the perceptible Reality, the functioning Immanent Force and then switch on to the imperceptible Central Reality. We can understand it with intelligence but we attain the goal only by actually proceeding towards it. Bhai Gurdas has said

Enquiring about the way but not taking a step to proceed will not take us to the domain of the Beloved.

ਪ੍ਰਫੁੱਲਤ ਪਥਕਿ ਤਿਹ ਮਾਰਗ ਨ ਧਾਏ ਪਗ  
ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਕੇ ਦੇਸ ਕੈਸੇ ਬਾਤਨ ਸਿਉ ਜਾਈਐ ॥

(ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ)

Even about *kirtan* which is the sole way of worship in Sikhism, it is said :

By singing and listening with closed eyes, deliverance is not attained unless Guru's instructions are imbibed and lived upon.

ਗਾਏ ਸੁਨੈ ਆਈ ਮੀਚੈ ਪਾਈਐ ਨ ਪਰਮ ਪਦੁ  
ਗੁਰ ਉਪਦੇਸੁ ਗਹਿ ਜਚਿ ਲਏ ਨ ਕਮਾਈਐ ॥

The fourth Satguru in *Rag Asa* says:

Some people sing His praises by singing, some through instruments like a conch and some by reciting scriptures and other ways but the Providence is not pleased or appeased by such acts.

SGGS P.450

ਕੋਈ ਗਾਵੈ ਰਾਗੀ ਨਾਦੀ ਬੋਦੀ ਬਹੁ ਭਾਤਿ ਕਰਿ  
ਨਹੀ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਭੀਜੈ ਰਾਮ ਰਾਜੇ ॥

(ਆਸਾਮ : ਖ)

For those, who had deceit and vice in the mind, their bewailing is in vain.

ਜਿਨਾ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਕਪਟੁ ਟਿਕਾਏ ਹੈ ਤਿਨਾ ਰੋਇ ਕਿਆ ਕੀਜੇ ॥

God the Creator knows every thing howsoever we may hide our vices.

ਹਰਿ ਕਰਤਾ ਸਭੁ ਕਿਛੁ ਜਾਣਦਾ ਸਿਰਿ ਰੋਗ ਹੁਬੁ ਦੀਜੈ ॥

Those who have clear conscience will achieve harmony through His *Simran*.

SGGS P.450

ਜਿਨਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਹਿਰਦਾ ਸੁਪੁ ਹੈ ਹਰਿ ਭਗਤਿ ਹਰਿ ਲੀਜੈ ॥

(ਆਸਾਮ : ਖ)

## The Word

Some people who labour under Brahminical influence are very fussy about a particular word being used while repeating the Name in *simran*. This is like propitiating a particular god with a particular sanskrit mantra with a set of specified observations and rituals to be performed correct in the minutest detail; or like offering *Namaz* while reciting *Ayats* in Arabic, both Sanskrit and Arabic being understood by only a select few. The attitude of mind, which is the mainstay of Sikhism is absent everywhere. The Satguru has, therefore, attached no sanctity to any particular word being used. The Word which is best understood by the recitor and which has a tradition and association, connected with it to help in concentration and focussing the mind, should be taken up for *simran*. It may be *Ram*, *Rahim*, *Parmaatma*, *Ishwar*, *Waheguru*, *Akalpurkh*, *Satnam*, *Allah*, *God*, *Rabb*, *Almighty Lord*, *Gobind*, *Gopal* or any other word indicating the Supreme Being. Amongst

the Sikhs nowadays, 'Waheguru' is generally used, because for us, behind this word lies a tradition, a history, and a philosophy. But it is not necessary that it may have the same association and haloed sanctity for all people in all lands of the earth. In the *Gurbani* we find innumerable words for God being freely used. There is a full *Shabad* of considerable length in *Rag Maru* by the fifth Guru, in which almost all the words prevalent at that time, irrespective of any school of thought or religion, are used for the "Godhead" without any distinction. This *Shabad* is generally known as *Sahansar Nama* which means "millions of Names." The whole of the *Jap* by the tenth Guru having 199 *Chhands* contains only the different names of God with different adjectives attached to them. On the first page of *Guru Granth Sahib* just after the *Mool Mantra*, in which the Satguru's conception of God is summed up, there is the order 'Jap' followed by the *shlok*:

True One was in the beginning, before all ages began;  
The True One exists even now and shall ever be.

SGGS P.1

ਅਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚੁ ॥ ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੋਸੀ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ॥

(ਜਪੁ)

*Jap* means repeat, recite, and meditate. But nowhere, either before or after, is there any such word used as *Waheguru*. In fact, this is the least used word in the Scripture. Mostly *Wah* is used in praise and admiration of the Guru: ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਵਾਹਿ ਜੀਓ or sometimes it is used for God himself. Presumably 'Waheguru' was brought into vogue by Bhai Gurdas during the fifth and sixth Satgurus' period and it gained ascendancy during the period of the tenth Guru when the Sikhs accosted each other saying:

*Waheguru ji ka Khalsa; Waheguru ji ki Fateh.*

In the Scripture we find different names used for God with instructions to repeat (ਜਪੁ) in *Simran*, Such as :

O my mind, recite and dwell always and continuously on God who is the Truth (*Satnam*)

SGGS P.670

ਜਪਿ ਮਨ ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ ਸਦਾ ਸਤਿਨਾਮੁ ॥

(ਰਾਗ ਧਨਾਸਰੀ ਮ : ਖ)

Recite and dwell ever on the Immanent God (*Ram*)

ਰਮ ਰਾਮ ਰਾਮ ਰਾਮ ਜਪ ॥

So that the afflictions of greed, attachment and ego are rid.

SGGS P.1341

ਕਲਿ ਕਲੇਸ ਲੋਭ ਮੋਹ ਬਿਨਸਿ ਜਾਇ ਅਹੰਤਾਪ ॥

(ਪ੍ਰਭਾਤੀ ਮ : ਪ)

And

Dwell upon the Lovable Sustainer of the Universe (*Govind*, *Gopal*, *Lal*).

SGGS P.885

ਜਪਿ ਗੋਬਿੰਦੁ ਗੋਪਾਲ ਲਾਲੁ ॥

(ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਮ: ਪ)

*O my mind, dwell upon the Immanent God who sustains the earth (Ram Gopal)*

SGGS P.1296

ਮਨ ਜਾਪਹੁ ਰਾਮ ਗੁਪਾਲ ॥

(ਕਾਨੜਾ ਮ: ਖ)

And

*I have become undoubtedly blessed by dwelling upon the Supreme Being. (Har or Hari)*

SGGS P.1296

ਹਉ ਹਰਿ ਜਪਿ ਭਈ ਨਿਹਾਲ ਨਿਹਾਲ ਨਿਹਾਲ ॥

(ਕਾਨੜਾ ਮ: ਖ)

*O mind, dwell on the Lord of the earth and of maya; (Gobind Madho)*

ਜਪਿ ਮਨ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਮਾਧੋ ॥

*The Supreme Being who is Unfathomable and Infinite (Hari)*

ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਅਗਮ ਅਗਾਧੋ ॥

(ਕਾਨੜਾ ਮ: ਖ)

### Time and Place

No time and place are particularly specified for *simran*. Whenever the mind can be brought into proper mood and concentration, and away from worldly worries and responsibilities, it is the best and most appropriate time and place for *simran*. Some people try to be 'spiritual mystics' and say that the doors for the Divine audience open at 2.30 a.m. and one must be ready to enter at that moment, as if at other times of the day and night they remain closed and shut. Evidently they display their ignorance of the Satguru's teachings and the Sikh tenets. *Simran* can be at any time of the day or night. Generally, people are free from their worldly duties and anxieties at night. During the second half of the night, the pressure of sleep also diminishes and Nature is calm, the air is clean, purified and light and the body is also relaxed. If the mind is applied to *simran* at that time it can be focussed with comparative ease (I have found that sometimes while going in an automobile the mind gets concentrated pretty

### The Peace of Simran

The moth dies flying into the light it loves. The woman is forever dead in the chosen beloved of her heart. Bhai Nand Lal, the poet and scholar went to Anandpur to meet Guru Gobind Singh. One glance from the Guru was enough. The bee went deep and slept in the rare fragrance of the white lotus. Bhai Nand Lal never left the presence after.

*Simran* is death in love of Him. But death-love comes when it comes. His beauty falls on the soul like the sudden flash of lightning. The body then is a mere vehicle of the Spirit of God.

Puran Singh

quickly as there is nothing else to do except to observe the Wonderful Master functioning in His beauteous Creation and at play in His Nature, provided, of course, the person at the wheel is known to be dependable!). If this is done after an early morning bath, it is still better. Sikhism does not believe in dogmas and stunts. There is no sanctity attached to any particular time or date or period. The Satguru clearly says that :

*All the months and days and periods are good if the Master looks with favour,*

SGGS P.136

ਮਹ ਦਿਵਸ ਮੂਰਤ ਭਲੇ ਜਿਸ ਕਉ ਨਦਰ ਕਰੇ ॥

(ਮਾਝ ਮ: ਪ)

And

*All the places are sacred where the Shabad Guru (Satguru) repairs.*

SGGS P.450

ਜਿਥੈ ਜਾਇ ਥਹੈ ਮੇਰਾ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਸੈ ਥਾਨੁ ਸੁਹਾਵਾ ਰਾਮ ਰਾਜੇ ॥

(ਆਸਾ ਮ: ਖ)

*Blessed is the hour, the second, the moment,*

*ਧੰਨੁ ਸੁ ਵੇਲਾ ਘੜੀ ਧੰਨੁ ਧਨੁ ਮੂਰਤੁ ਪਲਸਾਰੁ ॥*

*Blessed is the day, the auspicious opportunity, when I see the Guru's vision.*

SGGS P.958

ਧੰਨੁ ਸੁ ਦਿਵਸੁ ਸੰਜੀਗੜਾ ਜਿਤੁ ਡਿਠਾ ਗੁਰ ਦਰਸਾਰੁ ॥

(ਵਾਰ ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਮ: ਪ)

**Bhai Ardaman Singh**  
*Bhayee Sahib of Bagrian*

### Form IV

1. Place of Publication	New Delhi
2. Periodicity of Publication	Quarterly
3. Printer's Name	Aegean Offset Printers
[Whether citizen of India?	F-17, Mayapuri, New Delhi
if foreigner, state the country of origin]	Yes
4. Publisher's Name	Pushpinder Singh
[Whether citizen of India?	Yes
if foreigner, state the country of origin]	
5. Editor's Name	Prof. Darshan Singh Maini
[Whether citizen of India?	Indian
if foreigner, state the country of origin]	743, Sector 11-B Chandigarh 160011
6. Names and address of individuals who own the newspapers - partners or share holders holding more than one per of the total capital	The Nagsara Trust 16-A Palam Marg Vasant Vihar New Delhi 110057

I, Pushpinder Singh, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to my best knowledge and belief.

New Delhi: April 2002

# The Scorching Flame

From the cradle to his grave, man has to contend with the interplay of FIVE evil forces which can be called the wily tentacles of *Maya*! These are *kam*, *krodh*, *lobh*, *moh* and *ahankar* i.e. lust, anger, greed, love and pride. All these can collectively be termed as *haumen* which obsesses and entraps the being.

Rightfully has Confucious said: "Our headstrong passions shut the door of our souls against God".

Sikhism teaches how to overcome this force with Prayer, Faith and Discipline of the mind. Unlike some other religions, one does not to run away from such problems to live the life of a celibate or an ascetic. The Guru shows us how to face and then overcome anger through self control.

The Guru tells us that

ਹਉਮੈ ਖੁਜੈ ਤਾਂ ਦਰ ਸੁਭੈ

And

ਹਉਮੈ ਦੀਰਘ ਰੋਗ ਹੈ, ਦਾਰੂ ਭੀ ਇਸ ਮਾਰਿ

The greatest victory one can achieve is the victory over oneself. The flame of anger not only engulfs the body and the mind but also singes it to the core. Not only does this poison the body, as well as the cognitive process but also corrupts the mind like a cantankerous sore, spreading throughout.

A. Shaftsbury has this to say: "Temper of the ungoverned governs the whole man".

It is like a "ego-trip", proving one's false superiority over others. This may also arise because of frustration. When our wishes are thwarted, we feel constricted and "suffocated", says S.L. Wiener. "An ego-trip" (*haumen*) is something that gets you nowhere".

That is why wise men say that a sharp tongue sometimes cuts its own throat.

Anger, or *krodh* is a form of escapism where under the garb of temper, man thinks that he has become a power to reckon with.

In the Sukhmani Sahib, Guru Arjan Dev ji discusses the various facets of man's life in *Ashtapadi* 11, *Padh* 6th, thus:

ਕਬਹੂ ਸੋਇ ਰਹੈ ਦਿਨ ਰਾਤ ॥ ਕਬਹੂ ਮਹਾ ਕ੍ਰੋਧ ਬਿਕ੍ਰਾਸ ॥

A person succumbing to anger deviates from the path of 'Gursikhi'. Such a person falls easy prey to 'base' thoughts. True victory comes when by self analysis (ਆਖੀਨਾ) Man is able to tune into himself and then to a Higher Power.

Ashtapadi:

ਸ੍ਰੁਮ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਕਾ ਸਗਲ ਅਕਾਰ, ਸ੍ਰੁਮ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਅਪਿ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ॥

Nothing good, nothing worthy comes out of negative emotions like anger. They are mere energy wasters. We should vanquish such feelings before they take root in our mind. The fourth Guru, in *Rag Gauri Paabi* (Kirtan Sohayla), so explicitly tells us:

ਕਾਮਿ ਕਰੋਧਿ ਨਗਰੁ ਬਹੁ ਭਰਿਆ, ਮਿਲਿ ਸਾਧੂ ਖੰਡਲ ਖੰਡਾ ਹੋ ॥

There is an old Arab saying "The tongue is a wild beast. Loosen it, and it bites you".

Has not our Guru called this vice as a ਅਗਨ ਕ੍ਰੋਧ ਦੰਡਾਲ.

Drunk with the spirit of anger, man fumes and frets like a wild horse on the rampage. One can only "lasso" this anger by following the path of Gurusikhi i.e. ਗ੍ਰਹਿਸਭ ਦੁਦਾਸ.

A true Sikh seeks solace in *nitnem*, *seva* and *ardas* and thus helps gain mastery over the vice of anger.

ਸੋਰਠ ਮਹਲਾ ੫

ਕਾਮ ਕ੍ਰੋਧ ਲੋਭ ਝੂਠ ਨਿੰਦਾ, ਦਿਨ ਤੇ ਅਪਿ ਚੜਾਵਹੁ ॥

Sure enough, anger wrinkles the soul and reduces man to a non-entity. It has been aptly said that anger often begins in pity and ends in remorse. Let us be clear on this. Losing one's temper is like a "sharp nail" that tears the thread of something durable and lovely. We may use every bit of our patience for mending and repairing but we can never make it like new again. The 'patch' will always stand out, like a painful sore.

It is only through His *mehar* that man can save himself from this burning cauldron of 'maya'. In *Rag Danasari*, Guru Arjan Dev ji calls this world as a:

ਅਗਨਿ ਕਟੁੰਬ ਜਾਗਰ ਸੰਸਾਰ

All is farce, for in ਸੁਖਮਨੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਮਹਲਾ ੫

The Guru has this to say

ਮਿਟਿਆ ਰਾਜ ਜੋਬਨ ਧਨ ਮਾਲ ॥ ਮਿਟਿਆ ਕਾਮ ਕ੍ਰੋਧ ਬਿਕ੍ਰਾਸ ॥

Man spends many a *janam* (life) drowning in the vast sea of vice and hypocrisy. Only a life of the highest moral precept can help him wade through the morass of greed, jealousy and malice.

ਗਾਉੜੀ ਸੁਖਮਨੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੫ (Ashtapadi 4)

ਬੈਰ ਬਿਰੋਧ ਕਾਮ ਕ੍ਰੋਧ ਮੋਹ, ਝੂਠ ਬਿਕਾਰ ਮਹਾ ਲੋਭ ਧ੍ਰੋਹ ॥

Finally

ਇਆਹੁ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਬਿਰਾਠੇ ਕਈ ਜਨਮ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਰਾਖਿ ਲੇਹੁ ਅਪਨ ਕਰਿ ਕਰਮ ॥

Accumulated anger is akin to a man sitting on a time-bomb; unless it is defused, it can destroy a relationship, a life, even an entire family.

Kamal Gurtaj Singh



# News from The Sikh Commonwealth

## The Sikh Communications Council (SikhCom), California

Events following September 11 brought to light the lack of understanding about Sikhs in America. What also became evident was that the Sikh community had never undertaken a consistent effort to educate fellow Americans. The Sikh Communications Council (SikhCom) was formed to solve these problems. Our mission is to educate the public about Sikhs and to improve the overall image of the Sikhs.

SikhCom has been working on several fronts – public relations, legal, education and community. In its first month of operation, SikhCom has completed more than 40 projects in these areas. These projects range from the management of Public Relations at a Gurdwara event to providing Sikh traveler's legal materials, to producing advertisements for placement in newspapers. One common theme runs through these projects – to promote a professional, consistent and positive Sikh image.

A brief description of some of the projects SikhCom has completed follows. Some projects were completed with large teams of five people working collaboratively over a week while smaller projects involved one person's time for a day.

### Public Relations Project # 2 (Advertisements):

Following the September 11 tragedy, and recognising the need for a professional, consistent message, two advertisements were created for our Sikh community. One ad showed pictures of various Sikhs and the other showed President Bush with Sikhs. They were produced and placed in the *Washington Post*, *San Jose Mercury*, *Contra Costa Times* and *Oakland Tribune* newspapers. We would like to thank the Washington DC community for paying for the placement of the advertisements in the San Francisco Bay area newspapers.

### Public Relations Projects # 6 and # 7 (Newspapers):

The *Wall Street Journal* and the *New York Times* published front-page stories on backlash issues against Sikhs after working with us. We worked with the editors to facilitate the interviews and to deliver a consistent

message. These relationships have resulted in additional ongoing projects.

### Public Relations Project # 9 (California's Lt. Governor):

The Lt Governor of California was invited to Fremont Gurdwara for a press conference. The event was well attended and covered by all TV channels – ABC, NBC, CBS, Univision and Fox in the evening news. The *San Jose Mercury* also published a front-page article using materials from this event. Thanks to the Fremont Gurdwara committee and a sangat who managed the logistics of the event and made the Lt. Governor welcome.

### Public Relations Project # 27 (Norm Mineta):

Some may have personal knowledge of Sikhs being forced to remove turbans before they can travel on U.S. airlines. We have been able to participate in a meeting with Transportation Secretary Norm Mineta to outline the civil violations that take place against Sikh travelers. The meeting resulted in the FAA putting out guidelines to the Aviation Industry. The U.S. national news media, CNN, the *Los Angeles Times* and Associated Press have all covered the ongoing story.

### Legal Project # 11 (Rights of Sikh Travelers):

Working with the law firm of Cooley-Godward, we produced a memo on the legality of turban searches at security checkpoints. These findings were packaged in a brief outline called "Right Rights as a Sikh Traveler" for all Sikhs to carry. Simultaneously, we are working on another project to educate security firms at airports.

In summary, we are delivering approximately a project per day. We are currently working on another 30 open projects. We need more volunteers who are qualified professionals in the areas of marketing, public relations, education, and professional editing/writing who can commit time to these projects – anything from 4 hours a week and more. We hope you will help!

SikhCom is an IRS approved non-profit organisation funded by the Sikh Community. SikhCom has retained the services of the law offices of Latham & Watkins for corporate counsel, of the law offices of Cooley-Godward for legal counsel, of A&F Agency for PR services and of a



full-time marketing executive for marketing and public relations services.

The Sikh Communications Council ("SikhCom") has a simple but crucial mission: to educate the public, the media and the government about Sikhs and to improve the overall image of the Sikhs. This is a brief description of some of the projects SikhCom has completed recently.

#### **Media Project (CNN):**

SikhCom worked with a CNN news crew to produce a segment showing a day in the life of Sikh children impacted by backlash events. The two and one-half minute segment took six hours of shooting and was shown several times on CNN, <http://radio.sikhnet.com:8080/ramgen/WTC-News/CNNHeadlineNews09-26-01.rm>

#### **Media Project (MTV):**

SikhCom worked with a Hollywood producer to produce a segment titled "Kuldeep" showing a day in the life of a 17-year old Sikh boy, Kuldeep Singh, from North Hollywood High School. This six-minute segment is very powerful and ideal for showing at schools and community gatherings. We would like to thank the Los Angeles sangat for coordinating the candidate selection and segment production processes. This video can be viewed at: <http://homepage.mac.com/haidarian/Menu5.html>

#### **Legal Project (Sher Singh)**

SikhCom provided legal resources from its two volunteer law firms, Latham & Watkins and Cooley Godward, to Sher Singh for the preparation of his legal strategy regarding his wrongful arrest in Rhode Island for carrying a kirpan. Upon the dropping of all charges against Sher Singh, SikhCom helped Sher Singh prepare his media comments and coordinated the press conference with the media. We would like to thank the Boston sangat and the New England Sikh Study Circle for their financial and other support in this matter. For more information, visit: <http://www.sikhcommunications.com/pages/media18.html>

#### **Public Relations Project (Yuba City):**

SikhCom coordinated and managed all media at the recent four-day Nagar Kirtan in Yuba City. Attended by more than 40,000 Sikhs from around the world, this event was covered very extensively in local news. Feedback from the media was excellent, and the event generated a substantial amount of goodwill. We would like to thank the sangat of Yuba City Gurdwaras for hosting such a wonderful event, which allowed us to portray the Sikh

community in a very positive light. For more information, visit:

<http://www.sikhcommunications.com/pages/media20.html>

[http://dailynews.yahoo.com/h/kcra/20011104/lo/941869\\_1.html](http://dailynews.yahoo.com/h/kcra/20011104/lo/941869_1.html)

#### **Public Relations Project (Sacramento):**

SikhCom worked with the Sacramento Sikh sangat in arranging a vigil at the State Capitol. More than 3,000 people attended the event, and the Sacramento sangat raised \$ 20,000 for the New York City Police and Fire Departments. SikhCom coordinated the extensive media coverage, which included all major area TV stations. We would like to thank the sangat of Sacramento Gurdwaras for organising a well-planned and well-attended event. To read more about this event, visit:

<http://www.appeal-democrat.com/archive/2001/111201/111201Sikh.shtml>

#### **Media Project (Business 2.0)**

SikhCom worked with the Business 2.0 magazine staff to research and publish an article on how Sikh executives are facing new hurdles while traveling and conducting business after September 11. SikhCom recruited a Chicago-based Sikh executive as the subject of the article, and a staff writer from the magazine accompanied him on several flights during his business trips. The resulting article is very well written and can be found at

<http://www.business2.com/articles/mag/0,1640,34998,FF.html>



April 2002: The annual Sikh Day Parade in New York, down Broadway from Times Square to Madison Square Garden. Sandeep Singh, 5, of Cherry Hill, New Jersey nearest camera.



## Sikh Arts & Heritage at V&A Museum, London

Following the success of last year's series of Sikh Arts and Heritage lectures, the Victoria and Albert museum is pleased to present the second series of lectures that will run monthly from April to November 2002.

Presenting Sikh arts and heritage in connection with the India and South East Asian collections at the Museum, the lecture series will provide a valuable forum within which to study and learn about various aspects of Sikh heritage. The 2002 series covers a diversity of topics such as photography, architecture, and Punjabi textile traditions.

This year, the lectures will deliberately explore some of the more contemporary themes in Sikh heritage with talks on Sikh architecture in the west, modern Sikh arts and the contribution of contemporary Sikh female artists. In contrast, talks on the subjects of Janamsakhi paintings and 19th century Lahore will give a glimpse of the past.

Immaculately researched and drawing on images and resources from a variety of UK, Indian and private collections, the speakers present an opportunity to view aspects of the rich and often hidden heritage of the Sikhs.

As with last year, the lectures will be presented by expert speakers in a highly engaging and accessible style, with an opportunity to question the speaker and interact with the audience at refreshments afterwards.

The first lecture will be on the 3rd April 2002 on the topic of Ranjit Singh and the Royal City of Lahore by Susan Stronge – curator of the *Arts of the Sikh Kingdoms* exhibition and editor of the book that accompanied it.

To attend any of these lectures, tickets are available from the V&A booking line on +44-20-7942 2209. Adult tickets are £7.50 and Student/OAP tickets are £2.50.

## Sikh Lobby Day

At the Sikh Lobby Day on Tuesday 16 April we will be asking for two specific actions from Members of Parliament and the Lords.

Firstly, they will be asked to write to the Home Office in relation to the meeting to be held with Angela Eagle on 29 April. Letters have already been sent to around 130 "target" MPs and Lords informing them of the *Sikh Lobby Day* and asking them to write to the Home Office requesting Angela Eagle to:

- a) Instruct all public authorities, via guidance to be issued by the CRE in May 2002, to monitor Sikhs as a separate ethnic group as part of the implementation of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act.

The law recognises Sikhs as a separate ethnic group, therefore monitoring seems an absolute must to provide protection to Sikhs. Failure by the Home Office to issue such instructions would leave little option for the Sikh community but to legally challenge any public authority not monitoring Sikhs, as this in itself constitutes discrimination.

- b) Work with and urge other Government Departments to change practices and remove limitations that unfairly discriminate against Sikhs and prevent them from observing the requirements of the Sikh faith. This includes restrictions on the wearing of the 5Ks or the turban, including in employment.
- c) Provide details on the specific support the government will be giving for a Sikh Awareness Week.

This issue was raised at the last *Sikh Lobby Day* in November 2001. Following a Parliamentary Question in the House of Lords by Baroness Cox, an announcement by Lord Rooker was made in February 2002 supporting such an initiative. The BBC has already shown considerable interest, therefore there is an urgent need to encourage Angela Eagle, MP to provide details of the specific financial and other support the government will provide when she meets Sikh representatives on 29 April.

- d) Introduce a joined-up and inclusive approach with the Sikh community through an effective consultative and advisory mechanism. Proposals have already been put to the Home Secretary for the Government to support the establishment of an independent group of full-time staff.

This resource would meet the needs of both the UK Government and the Sikh community and reflect the disparate parts of the 600,000—strong British Sikh community. A three-year proposal has been outlined to establish a national and regional network to bridge the gap between government and the grass roots of the Sikh community at a cost to the government of less than £1.50 per annum for each Sikh person living in the UK. This seems a perfectly reasonable and sensible approach to ensure the Sikh community's work with the UK Government and



Parliamentarians is more effectively organised and co-ordinated and better able to tackle issues of mutual concern.

Secondly, MPs and Lords are to be asked to raise very carefully worded Parliamentary Questions to exert pressure to the UK Government. A request is made by the Sikh Secretariat for members of the Sikh community and Sikh organisations in the UK to suggest possible questions relating to each of the items in the Sikh Agenda.

Please e-mail questions to  
[Sikh\\_agenda@yahoo.com](mailto:Sikh_agenda@yahoo.com)

likely to relate to the main theme for this Sikh Lobby Day—the SIKH IDENTITY (Agenda Item 3).

Agenda Item 1 – British Sikhs and the establishment.

How many of the 30,000 Public appointments are held by members of the estimated 600,000 strong British Sikh community?

What steps is the UK Government taking to increase the number of Sikhs with Public Appointments?

What steps is the UK Government taking to increase the representation of Sikhs in the House of Lords?

Which Government Departments have a Sikh organisations that each Government Department use to provide advice on matters relating to the Sikh community?

When can the British Sikh community expect a formal and positive response to the Sikh Agenda for the UK Government, which Government Departments have been considering since December 2001?

The final list of questions that are to be put to MPs and Lords will be available on the Sikh Lobby Day.

#### Sikh Secretariat

"Helping deliver the Sikh Agenda."

## The Centennial Foundation, Toronto

*The Centennial Foundation*, a Toronto-based Sikh organisation, held their annual Vaisakhi celebration at the Marriott Hotel. As part of their mission to promote Sikh heritage and culture, the *Centennial Foundation* organises its Vaisakhi function around a particular theme. This year's motif was aptly name "*People of the Book: A Journey Through Raag & Rhythm*".

In keeping with the theme several different musical instruments were on display in a room adjoining the banquet hall. Prominent among the percussion instruments were the nagaara, tabla, and dholak while the string instruments included a sitar, sarangi and the rabab.

Old photographs of Sikh soldiers from various wars and battles, suitably described, were also on display. There were loaned by Sardar Sandeep Singh Brar. Also on exhibition at another end of the room were several oil paintings.

Dr.Cynthia Keppley Mahmood, assistant Professor of Anthropology, member of the Joan B.Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame, was the keynote speaker. She chose "A Sea of Orange" as a caption of her address, a title which will grace her forthcoming book. The title was inspired by a Sikh friend who once so described a large gathering of Sikhs wearing saffron turbans.

The gist of her speech urged Sikhs to be more communicative and interactive with people of all faiths. Using the analogy of the four portals of the Golden Temple – facing the four cardinal points of the compass – welcoming one and all (inward), she prompts Sikhs to take their message with them and spread it to every corner of the world (outward).

Over 500 jubilant Sikhs later whooped it up. Among the dignitaries were Gurbaksh Singh Mahli MP and Raminder Singh Gill MPP. As is their custom, *The Centennial Foundation* awarded 'Centennial Awards' to a number of persons, Sikhs and non-Sikhs, who in their judgment have "lived their lives in accordance with Sikh ideals". Among this year's recipients were Senator Mobina Jaffer, Professor Parshotam Singh (community service), Dr.Jasdev Singh Rai and Manjit Singh QC (human rights advocates from the UK), Priscila Uppal (author and poet) and Dr.Cynthia Keppley Mahmood.

A surprise presentation was also in the offing. Sardar T.Sher Singh, a founding member of *The Centennial Foundation*, was being honoured by the Sikh collectivity for his recent induction into the *Order of Canada*.

Musical performances interspaced throughout the lavish dinner which included delicacies such as quails, rasilla kum kum and arbi baigan. Noteworthy were the table 'jugalandhi' performed by Gurpreet Chana and Jiwanjot Gill, a ghazal by Onkar Singh and a classical vocal rendition by Ramneek Kaur.

Ramandeep Kaur Grewal (MC) introduced the kar-sevaks (volunteers) who had worked tirelessly for a better part of six months to make the event supremely enjoyable. Satwinder Singh Gosal, President of *The Centennial Foundation*, spoke at both the introduction and vote of thanks.



# V A I S A K H I

*You are here  
And not a moment too soon.  
I need your strength  
As I try to march ahead.*

*The year has been difficult  
I've faced many challenges.  
Blood has been shed  
Turbans have been viewed with dread.*

*I have cried;  
Gone into silence  
Trying to understand  
What happened in this land—that I call home.*

*The tears have now stopped  
A commitment has risen  
To take a stand  
For I am a Sikh.*

*Instill in me  
The courage of 1699  
When ordinary people  
Became 'Akal Purakh di Fauj'.*

*Inspire me  
To rise to these challenges  
To defend my rights  
As a 'sant sipahie'*

*But more than that  
I ask you, dearest Vaisakhi  
To take away my 'haumai'  
And make me worthy of this sewa.*

*I ask alot  
But—I know I can  
For you and I are connected  
Because of 1699.*

*Inni Kaur*